



DISTRICT DEVELOPED SERVICE DELIVERY PLAN SPECIAL EDUCATION



“Providing quality education for all in a caring and responsive environment”

REVISED MAY 2024

SPECIAL EDUCATION PROGRAM

The Mason City Community School District (MCCSD) recognizes individualized educational needs among students. The school will provide a free and appropriate public education (FAPE) to students eligible for special education services. The special education services will be provided from age 3 until the appropriate education is completed or until maximum age allowable in accordance with the law. Students receiving special education services will attend general education classes, participate in nonacademic and extracurricular services and activities and receive services in a general education setting to the maximum extent appropriate to meet the needs of each individual student. Students receiving special education services will meet the graduation requirements stated in the board policy.

COMMITTEE REPRESENTATION

The delivery system was developed in accordance with Iowa Administrative Code rule 41.408(2)"c". The plan was developed, reviewed, and revised by the MCCSD Director of Special Education and Student Services and a committee. The following committee members were involved in developing and reviewing this plan:

Molly Kragenbring	Parent of MCCSD Student
Dusty Rhodes	MCCSD, High School Associate Principal
Christiana Junge	Central Rivers Area Education Agency, K-6 Team Representative
Kim Berding	MCCSD, High School Special Education Teacher
Austin Peterson	MCCSD Elementary School Principal
Victoria Davison	MCCSD, District Behavior Coach
Amber Dietz	Central Rivers Area Education Agency, Regional Administrator
Jennifer Velthoff	MCCSD, Elementary Special Education Teacher
Rebecca Rother	MCCSD, High School General Education Teacher
Raechel Bruesewitz	MCCSD, Elementary Special Education Teacher
Jamie Heard	MCCSD, District Social Worker
Marie Conklin	Central Rivers Area Education Agency, Middle School Team Rep
Amber Dietz	Central Rivers Area Education Agency, Regional Administrator
Julie Ulve	MCCSD, Virtual Academy Coordinator
Heidi Venem	MCCSD, Director of Special Education and Student Services
Lindsey Millsap	MCCSD, Elementary Principal
Katie Koehler	MCCSD, School Board Member
Casey Studer	MCCSD, Special School Principal
Gaby Laage	Central Rivers Area Education Agency, K-6 Team Representative
Megan Brood	MCCSD, Intermediate Associate Principal
Lori Curtis	MCCSD, Middle School Principal
Lexie Schultz	Parent of MCCSD Student
Kate Dannen	Parent of MCCSD Student
Sasha Holstead	MCCSD, Elementary General Education Teacher
Sadee Koehler	MCCSD, Early Childhood Special Education Teacher
XX	MCCSD Student

PROCESS FOR PLAN DEVELOPMENT

This plan was developed in accordance with the Iowa Administrative Code rule 41.408(2)"c", the delivery system shall be developed by a group of individuals that includes parents of eligible individuals, special education and general education teachers, administrators, and at least one AEA representative.

CONTINUUM OF SUPPORTS SPECIAL EDUCATION SERVICE DELIVERY OPTIONS

The MCCSD is committed to providing a variety of service delivery options to meet the unique needs of eligible individuals from age 3 to 21, including preschool.

Services will be organized in each building based upon the needs of the student population and in alignment with the options described. Building administrators, with input from the Director of Special Education and Student Services, will determine the appropriate and available service delivery model(s) at each service center to ensure a full continuum of services is available district-wide.

There may be occasions in which a student will attend another service center in order to ensure their IEP needs are met in the appropriate environment. Services may be provided within the district, or through a contractual agreement with other districts and/or agencies. The continuum includes services for eligible individuals from age 3 to 21, if warranted by unique circumstances.

Each service delivery model described below may not be provided in each building. Therefore, IEP teams will determine and describe the instructional needs of the student, including appropriate strategies and time needed for specially designed instruction, as well as any additional modifications, accommodations, supplementary aids, services and supports to ensure FAPE. The IEP teams will not identify a specific service delivery model.

PreSchool Special Education Service Delivery Models

Regular Early Childhood Program with Teacher holding Dual Endorsements (i.e., Endorsement 100: Teacher—Prekindergarten through grade three, including special education). The child is served in the regular early childhood classroom with a teacher who holds a valid practitioner's license issued by the Board of Educational Examiners that includes prekindergarten and early childhood special education. The teacher is responsible for direct instruction, preparation of materials, adaptations and

accommodations as specified in the IEP. The teacher with the dual endorsement is responsible for implementing and monitoring the child's progress according to the IEP.

Special Class/Early Childhood Special Education Program (ECSE): Special Class or ECSE services are defined as direct specially designed instruction provided to an individual student with a disability or group of students with disabilities by a certified special education teacher to provide instruction which is tied to the general education or preschool curriculum, but has been modified to meet the unique needs of the student(s) in a self-contained setting (including, but not limited to special classes/ECSE Program, special schools, home instruction, and instruction in hospitals and institutions). This means the student is receiving his or her primary instruction separate from non-disabled peers.

K-12+ Special Education Service Delivery Models

Consulting Teacher Services:

Consulting Teacher services are defined as indirect services provided by a certified special education teacher to a general education teacher, focusing on adjusting the learning environment and/or differentiating his/her instructional methods using specially designed instruction strategies to meet the individual needs of a student with a disability receiving instruction in the general education classroom and based upon the Iowa Core Curriculum or Iowa Core Essential Elements or Iowa Early Learning standards.

Specially designed instruction in the general education classroom:

Push-In Specially designed instruction (SDI) in the general education classroom is defined as direct, specially designed instruction provided to an individual student with a disability or to a group of students with disabilities by a certified special education teacher in a general education classroom. Collaborative services aid the student(s) in accessing, participating in, and benefitting from the Iowa Core Curriculum, Iowa Core Essential Elements or Iowa Early Learning Standards. These services are provided parallel to the general education content area instruction.

Co-Teaching services are provided by the special education teacher and general education teacher in partnership to meet the content and skill needs of students in the general education classroom based upon the Iowa Core Curriculum, Iowa Core Essential Elements or Iowa Early Learning standards.

Specially designed instruction outside the general education classroom:

Pull-Out Specially designed instruction outside the general education classroom is defined as direct, specially designed instruction provided to an individual student with a disability, or a group of students with disabilities, by a certified special education teacher to provide specially designed instruction that cannot otherwise be provided during the student's regular instruction time. These services are provided in an individual or small group setting for a portion of the day, as determined appropriate by the IEP team.

Specially designed instruction outside the general education classroom services are in addition to and supplement the instruction provided in the general education classroom. The specially designed instruction provided in pull-out settings does not replace the instruction provided in the general education classroom. Pull-out services support the Iowa Core Curriculum, Iowa Core Essential Elements or Iowa Early Learning standards.

Special class/extended core instruction:

The student receives his or her primary instruction separate from non-disabled peers. Direct specially designed instruction is provided to an individual student with a disability or group of students with disabilities by a certified instructional strategist outside the general education setting to provide instruction which is aligned to the general core curriculum but has been modified to meet the unique needs of the student(s) in a small group setting.

- SUN Classrooms

The educational program will be individualized for each student based upon assessment of the student's academic strengths and needs as identified in the student's IEP. The focus will be to demonstrate achievement across multiple environments, including home, school, and community settings, based on the Iowa Core and Essential Element Standards. Within the 21st century skill framework are the common strands of learning and innovation; communication, information, and technology; and, life and career skills. Functional daily living and pre-vocational and vocational skills are addressed. Essential 21st Century Skills identified by the Iowa Legislature include: Civic Literacy, Employability, Financial Literacy, Health Literacy, and Technology Literacy. Adaptive behavior consists of everyday living skills (e.g., dressing, eating, toileting), work skills, or school functioning skills (e.g., meeting timelines, organization of materials, engagement and persistence) that a child learns in the process of adapting to his or her surroundings. A major focus of the program will be to implement functional communication strategies throughout the school day. This will lead to further independence and aid in the transition process to post-secondary education, or into the workforce. Health consists of Hearing, Vision, and Physical (gross/large motor skills, fine/small motor skills, and mobility for learning, living, and work) needs of students.

- Connections Classrooms

The educational program will be individualized for each student based upon assessment of the student's academic strengths and needs as identified in the student's IEP. The focus will be to demonstrate achievement across core curriculum areas based on IOWA state standards. A major focus of the program will be to demonstrate individual social and emotional regulation improvement, which will lead to a successful transition back to a less restrictive setting. All staff

are given training in behavior management techniques, Life Space Crisis Intervention (LSCI) and non-violent crisis intervention (CPI). A phased re-entry to the student's general education classroom will be designed based on sustained level of performance, completion of coursework, and behavior regulation during actual re-entry. The IEP team will meet at a minimum of quarterly to discuss students progress and programming.

Special Program Services (Pinecrest)

Pinecrest Center is identified as a special program of Mason City CSD that is designed to support students with significant service requirements in the areas of Social, Emotional, Behavioral, and Mental Health concerns. These services are considered only when a student has exhausted the continuum of service in a less restrictive environment. Educational services are provided through an off site location and are separate from general education peers. Placement decisions to Pinecrest Center are made by the IEP team. Students placed in an off site program are provided additional accommodation through more intensive supports/services and a higher staff to student ratio. As students successfully progress through the programming, an IEP team will reconvene to discuss the growth and identify opportunities to transition back to less restrictive settings.

Hospital/Homebound Instruction Services: Hospital/Homebound Instructional services are defined as specially designed instruction provided to individual students with disabilities that are unable to attend school for a period of time due to a health need. Instruction is provided by a certified instructional strategist. These services are only provided with appropriate medical documentation and are typically short-term in nature. Team will review the services every 2 weeks.

Homebound Behavior Instruction Services: Homebound Instructional services are defined as specially designed instruction provided to individual students with disabilities that are unable to attend school for a period of time due to behavioral needs. Instruction is provided by a certified instructional strategist in the home or mutually agreed upon location. These services are typically short-term in nature, an interim IEP will be in place during the homebound placement. Team will review the services every 2 weeks.

Notes:

Students may receive different services at multiple points along the continuum based on the IEP. The district will provide access to this continuum for all eligible individuals based on their IEP. Services may be provided within the district or through contractual agreement with other districts and/or agencies. The continuum includes services for eligible individuals' ages 3- 21.

CASELOAD DETERMINATION AND MONITORING

The Mason City Community School District will utilize a Caseload Determination Formula to determine special education teacher caseloads based on the intensity of student needs. Caseloads will be tentatively set in the spring for the following year. Caseloads may be modified based on summer registration staffing and actual fall enrollments.

Caseloads will be reviewed by individual district special education teachers with their building principals at the following times: 1) at the beginning of the school year; and 2) at the end of the 1st semester. Caseloads may also be reviewed by request of the special education teacher or building principal. Requests should be submitted in writing to the Director of Special Education and Student Services.

In determining special education teacher caseloads, the Mason City Community School District will use the following values to assign points to the caseloads of each special education teacher in the district. Level 1 = 1 point, Level 2 = 2 points, Level 3 = 3 points. A full time caseload will be considered by the following:

Early Childhood (3- and 4- year olds): The regular early childhood program and early childhood special education programs must meet the criteria of the Quality Preschool Program standard (QPPS) being implemented regarding maximum class size and teacher-child ratios. An early childhood special education teacher may be assigned a caseload of 18 points in each session.

Kindergarten - 12th+ Grade: A special education teacher may be assigned a caseload within a range of 18-21 points. This caseload limit may be exceeded if doing so does not prevent the affected special education teacher's ability to provide the services and supports specified in the students' Individualized Education Program (IEP).

RESOLVING CASELOAD CONCERNS

Caseloads will be reviewed by individual district special education teachers with their building principals at the following times: 1) at the beginning of the school year; and 2) at the end of the 1st semester. In addition to scheduled reviews, caseloads will also be reviewed under the following circumstances:

- ☐ When a specified caseload is exceeded. If the caseload limit is, or will be, exceeded by 10% for a period of 6 weeks; or
- ☐ When a special education teacher has a concern about his/her ability to effectively perform the essential functions of his/her job due to caseload.

Requesting a Caseload Review:

- ☐ All requests must be in writing.
- ☐ The person requesting the review is responsible for gathering relevant information to support their request, including a completed Caseload Determination Rubric for each student on the special education teacher's current roster. Additional information to consider may include, but is not limited to, schedule and instructional groupings, collaborative-co-teaching assignments, etc.

Procedural Steps:

- ☐ Informal problem solving strategies in relation to caseload concerns have been exhausted.
- ☐ A written request for caseload review is submitted to the building principal/designee.
- ☐ The building principal/designee will arrange a meeting with the special education teacher within five (5) working days of the receipt of the request. The purpose of the meeting is to consider the special education teacher's concern and to problem-solve the situation.
- ☐ Within five (5) working days of the meeting, the building principal/designee will provide a written recommendation for resolution to the special education teacher.
- ☐ If the special education teacher considers the concern to not be resolved, he/she will make a written request to the Director of Special Education and Student Services.
- ☐ The Director of Special Education and Student Services will arrange a meeting with the special education teacher and the building principal within five (5) working days of the request.
- ☐ Within five (5) working days of the meeting, the Director of Special Education and Student Services will provide a determination to the special education teacher.
- ☐ If the special education teacher does not agree with the Director of Special Education and Student Service's determination, he/she may appeal to the AEA Director of Special Education.
- ☐ The AEA Director of Special Education/designee will meet with the personnel involved and will provide a written decision.

STATE OF IOWA PERFORMANCE PLAN

The school district will evaluate the effectiveness of the delivery system to determine if it is leading to improved outcomes for eligible individuals. Administrators regularly monitor IEPs to ensure compliance and effective progress monitoring. If the district meets State Performance Plan/Annual Progress Report requirements, the delivery system will be considered effective. If the district does not meet requirements, the district will collaborate with the State and/or AEA to determine if a revision to the plan is warranted in order to affect the desired change.