



The Delivery of Effective Related Services

Related services are a key component of each student’s Individualized Education Program (IEP). Related Services are, “. . . transportation and such developmental, corrective and other supportive services as required to assist a child with a disability to benefit from special education. . .” (Section 300.34(a)).

Provision of related services, in concert with the special education services and supplementary aids and services outlined in the IEP, are designed to enable a student:

“(i) To advance appropriately toward attaining the annual goals;

(ii) To be involved in and make progress in the general education curriculum. . . and to participate in extracurricular and other nonacademic activities; and

(iii) To be educated and participate with other children with disabilities and nondisabled children. . .”
[§300.320(a)(4)]

This publication will describe the fundamentals to ensuring the effective delivery of related services.

Determining a Student's Related Services Needs

IDEA 2004 requires that, during the evaluation or reevaluation process, a student be assessed in all areas related to his or her suspected disability. The IEP team must review all evaluation information to determine whether a student is eligible to receive special education services. Once the student is determined to be eligible, the IEP team identifies the student's need for related services that help the student benefit from special education. These services are defined in the student's IEP. Goals are written for each related service identified in the IEP. The IEP must include information related to when, where, and how often services will be provided to the student. Related services are provided to students at no cost to them or their families. Local educational agencies (LEAs) are responsible for the funding of related services.

IDEA Section 300.34: List of Related Services

Every student with an IEP will not need each service on this list, nor is this list of services exhaustive. As determined by the IEP team, other related services not listed here may be appropriate for an individual student to benefit from special education.

1. *Audiology* includes the identification of children with hearing loss.
2. *Counseling services* must be provided by qualified social workers, psychologists, guidance counselors, or other qualified personnel.
3. *Early identification and assessment of disabilities in children* means the implementation of a formal plan for identifying a disability as early as possible in a child's life.
4. *Interpreting services* includes oral transliteration services, cued language transliteration services, sign language transliteration and interpreting services, transcription services, and special interpreting services for students who are deaf-blind.
5. *Medical services* must be provided by a licensed physician to determine a child's medically related disability that results in the child's need for special education and related services.
6. *Occupational therapy* must be provided by a qualified occupational therapist and includes improving, developing, or restoring functions impaired or lost through illness, injury, or deprivation.
7. *Orientation and mobility services* are provided to those students who are blind or visually impaired by qualified personnel to enable those students to attain systematic orientation to and safe movement within their environments in school, home, and the community.
8. *Parent counseling and training* means assisting parents in understanding the special needs of their child.
9. *Physical therapy* must be provided by a qualified physical therapist, and address a student's posture, muscle strength, mobility, and organization of movement in educational environments.
10. *Psychological services* includes the administering of psychological and educational tests and other assessment procedures, interpreting information about child behavior and conditions relating to learning, consulting with other staff members in planning school programs to meet the special educational needs of students, and assisting in developing positive behavioral intervention strategies.
11. *Recreation* includes the assessment of leisure function, therapeutic recreation services, and leisure education.
12. *Rehabilitation counseling services* means services provided by qualified personnel in individual or group sessions that focus specifically on career development, employment preparation, achieving independence, and integration in the workplace and community of a student with a disability. It also includes vocational rehabilitation services.
13. *School health services and school nurse services* means health services that are designed to enable a student with a disability to receive free, appropriate, public education (FAPE) as described in the student's IEP. School nurse services are services provided by a qualified school nurse. School health services are services that may be provided by either a qualified school nurse or other qualified person.
14. *Social work services* in schools include preparing a social or developmental history of a student with a disability, group and individual counseling with the student and family, working in partnership with parents, and assisting in developing positive behavioral intervention strategies.

15. *Speech-language pathology services* include identification of students with speech or language impairments, diagnosis of specific speech or language impairments, referral for medical or other professional attention necessary for the habilitation of speech or language impairments, the provision of speech and language services, and the counseling and guidance of parents, students, and teachers regarding speech and language impairments.
16. *Transportation* includes travel to and from school and between schools, traveling in and around school buildings, and specialized equipment, if required, to provide special transportation for a student with a disability.

Exceptions to Related Services

IDEA describes specific exceptions to related services. An LEA is not required to provide services related to the optimization of the functioning, maintenance, or replacement of surgically implanted devices, such as cochlear implants, insulin pumps, pacemakers, G-tubes, etc. The LEA is responsible for routine checking of the external component of such devices to determine the device is turned on and working.

Delivery of Related Services

IDEA requires that related services be provided by qualified personnel. Typical related service providers include, but are not limited to: school counselors, school psychologists, social workers, school health professionals, speech-language therapists, occupational therapists, and physical therapists.

In the school environment, related services may be delivered in various ways. Services may be delivered one-on-one to the student, in a small group with other students whose IEPs include the same service, or in a large group such as the general education classroom. In a large group setting, it may be appropriate for the service provider to support other students in the class (with or without IEPs), as well as the teachers and paraprofessionals working with those students.

The student's IEP must provide pertinent information about the need for related services. The IEP must include:

- *Service* – name of the service
- *Location* – where the related service will be provided
- *Frequency* – how often the student will receive the related service
- *Projected Beginning Date and Anticipated Duration* – the date service will begin and end

(Annotated IEP, April 2014)

Direct Services

Direct services are provided by qualified professionals. Direct services are usually hands-on, face-to-face interactions between the related service specialist and the student. Services may be provided on a one-to-one basis, where the specialist works with one student at a time, or in a group, where the specialist works directly with more than two or more students at a time. Examples of this include an occupational therapist teaching a student to write letters of an appropriate size and alignment, or a school

counselor working with a small group of students to practice specific social skills.

Indirect Services

Indirect services are provided by qualified professionals and may involve teaching, supervising, and consulting with other personnel to enable them to implement therapeutically-appropriate activities. Indirect services may be provided to general or special education teachers, paraprofessionals, parents, peers, or others who work directly with the student. As with direct services, indirect services may be provided one-on-one or in a group. Examples of indirect services include a speech therapist instructing a group of teachers in the use of visual cues to enhance a student's communication skills, or a physical therapist working with a physical education teacher to demonstrate proper positioning during an activity for a child who uses a wheelchair.

Location of Services

Where the student receives a specific related service can vary, depending on the student's needs. The IEP team determines where the service is provided.

- *Push-in*: In the "push-in" model, the service provider goes into the classroom, study hall, cafeteria, gymnasium, or other location where the student is and works with the student during the course of the class or activity. The service provider may collaborate with the teacher to blend service delivery into the natural class programming.

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- *Pull-out*: In some cases, it is more appropriate and beneficial for the student to be in a separate area to receive services in order to avoid distractions or maintain confidentiality. In this case, the student leaves the current location and

activity to receive services in another area of the building (*e.g.*, hallway or gymnasium).

- Any combination of these two delivery methods may be implemented to meet the student's needs.

Regardless of where they are provided, related services should not be implemented in isolation of the overall educational program. The IEP team and other educational team members should collaborate to plan and understand how the outlined related services will work together with the other aspects of the student's IEP to ensure student progress.

Commonwealth of Pennsylvania

Tom Wolf
Governor

