

SECTION F: SPECIAL EDUCATION STAFFING RATIOS, RELIEF, AND WORKLOAD ISSUES

1. SERVICE MODEL DESCRIPTIONS AND STAFFING: The SPS Special Education Department offers a number of service models. All are available at every grade level to support the education of students receiving Special Education services and each has an associated staffing ratio(s):
 - a) Collaborative Teaching: Students who receive services through the Collaborative Teaching service model can make progress on their IEP goals spending the majority of their instructional time, including their specially designed instruction, in a general education setting. The Collaborative Teaching service model will begin to be implemented in the 2022-23 school year and will be fully implemented by 2024-25, replacing the Resource, Access, and Social & Emotional Learning service models below. To determine staffing, a calculation of teacher workload based on total student service need will be used instead of set ratios in the Collaborative Teaching service model.
 - b) Resource: Students who receive services through the Resource service model have mild to moderate differences in their instructional needs for specific academic needs and social skills. These students spend the majority of their instructional time in general educational settings with targeted support. Students may qualify in any one of thirteen federally mandated disability categories. Services may be provided in any setting as specified in the IEP. In schools with a full continuum of services, resource services will be staffed at 22:1 ratio and in satellite schools the resource services will be staffed at 18:1:1 ratio. *Staffing ratios will not be used when the new Collaborative Teaching service model is implemented.*
 - c) Access: The Access service model provides specially designed instruction to students with moderate to intensive academic and functional need. These students can make progress on their IEP goals while spending the majority of their instructional time, including their specially designed instruction, in a general education setting. These students may also benefit from a variety of specialized instruction, including smaller group instruction and intervention, for part of the day. Access Services will be staffed at a ratio of 10:1:3. Students may qualify in any one of the thirteen federally mandated categories of disability. Access services-Elementary will be staffed at a ratio of 10:1:3. Access Services-Secondary will be staffed at a ratio of 13:1:3. *Staffing ratios will not be used when the new Collaborative Teaching service model is implemented.*
 - d) Social & Emotional Learning: The Social & Emotional Learning service model, also referred to as SEL, provide specially designed instruction to develop the student's social and emotional skills and social understanding. These students can make progress on their IEP goals spending a majority of their instructional time in a smaller group setting as their least restrictive environment. Additionally, these services may provide some or all of the academic instruction needed by these students as determined by the IEP. Social & Emotional Learning will be staffed at a ratio of 10:1:2. *Staffing ratios will not be used when the new Collaborative Teaching service model is implemented.*
 - e) Focus: The Focus service model provides specially designed instruction to students with intensive academic and functional needs and provide opportunities to participate in the general education curriculum through specially designed instruction at their present level of performance. These students benefit from spending a majority of their instructional time,

including specially designed instruction, in a smaller group setting as their least restrictive environment. Focus Services will be staffed at a ratio of 10:1:2.

- f) Distinct: The Distinct service model provides specially designed instruction to students who benefit from a curriculum which differs significantly from the general education curriculum. These services may include academic, communication, life, and functional skill components. These students benefit from spending a majority of their instructional time in a smaller group setting as their least restrictive environment. Distinct Services will be staffed at a ratio of 7:1:2.

- g) Unique Assignment: Unique assignments provide support to students who may not benefit from any of the identified SPS pathways and/or are delivered at an alternate services location. Students receive specially designed instruction in their least restrictive environment as determined by the IEP Team. Students who may benefit from a concentration of support services or specialized facilities outside their assignment area, will be provided an appropriate placement. Staffing ratios for these groups of students are as follows: deaf/hard of hearing is 9:1:2; deaf/hard hearing itinerant is 15:1; visual impairment is 18:1:1; orientation and mobility itinerant specialist is 18:1; medically fragile is 6:1:2.

- i. Deaf/Hard Hearing Itinerant: The staffing ratio (i.e., caseload) for itinerant deaf/hard hearing teachers will be 15 students to one teacher (15:1). Individual caseloads may vary above or below these ratios. Fractional caseloads will be calculated and prorated by an employee's FTE. Caseloads will be monitored quarterly by the team lead and supervisor who will attempt within reason and good faith to ensure equity in workload distribution with consideration to student population, travel, and technology needs. When the parties do not agree, the supervisor will make the determination on caseloads.

Districtwide roles are required from itinerant deaf/hard hearing teachers for which 0.6 FTE will be dedicated to deaf/hard hearing team beyond the caseloads listed above. The total FTE will cover preschool assessment, new student assessment, and team lead. The team including the team lead will select, and the evaluator will approve, the way to divide and assign the 0.6 dedicated FTE for the additional tasks. A determination of FTE for these department-wide roles will be done at least annually through consensus of teachers, team leader, and supervisor. When the parties do not agree, the supervisor will make the determination.

Itinerant deaf/hard hearing teachers receiving a portion of the 0.6 FTE will have their 15:1 caseload reduced by an amount equivalent to the portion of the 0.6 FTE they are receiving. When there are changes to the number of teachers, the allocation of FTE for preschool assessment, team lead, and new student assessment will be reviewed and adjusted.

The team lead will be issued the appropriate stipend per Appendix E.

- ii. Vision Impairment and Orientation & Mobility Itinerant: The staffing ratio (i.e., caseload) for Itinerant Vision Impairment and Orientation & Mobility will be 18 students to one teacher (18:1). Individual caseloads may vary above or below these ratios. Teachers holding dual certification in Vision Impairment and Orientation & Mobility may have a mixed caseload of Vision Impairment and

Orientation & Mobility students. Students receiving Vision Impairment and Orientation & Mobility services from the same teacher will be counted on the teacher's caseload as one student. Fractional Vision Impairment and Orientation & Mobility caseloads will be calculated and prorated by an employee's FTE. Caseloads will be monitored quarterly by the team lead and supervisor, who will attempt within reason and in good faith to ensure equity in workload distribution, with consideration to student population, travel, and technology needs. When the parties do not agree, the supervisor will make the determination on caseloads.

Districtwide roles are required from Itinerant Vision Impairment and Orientation & Mobility teachers for which 0.9 FTE will be dedicated to the combined vision team beyond the caseloads listed above. That total FTE will cover preschool assessment, new student assessment, assistive technology, and team lead. The vision team including the team lead will select, and the evaluator will approve, the way to divide and assign the additional FTE for additional caseload tasks. A determination of FTE for these districtwide roles will be reached at least annually through consensus of teachers, team leader, and supervisor. When the parties do not agree, the supervisor will make the determination.

Itinerant Vision Impairment and Orientation & Mobility teachers receiving a portion of the 0.9 FTE will have their 18:1 caseload reduced by an amount equivalent to the portion of the 0.9 FTE they are receiving. When there are changes to the number of Itinerant Vision Impairment and Orientation & Mobility staff, the allocation of FTE for preschool assessment, assistive technology, team lead, and new student assessment will be reviewed and adjusted.

The team lead for the combined vision team will be issued the appropriate stipend per Appendix E of the Certificated CBA

- h) Preschool classrooms, including DHH preschool classrooms, will have a ratio of 10:1:2, except for medically fragile classrooms, which will have a ratio of 6:1:2. The teacher will select and admit up to two additional students who are typically developing peers.

2. SCHOOL CATEGORIES: SPS has school categories that provide different Special Education service models:

- 1) Satellite school: An elementary school or K-5 portion of a K-8 school where the Resource service model provides specially designed instruction in specific academics and social skills.
- 2) Continuum school: Continuum schools will have a range of Special Education service options which guarantee a student's access and participation in Resource, Access, and Intensive service models and general education.
- 3) *Satellite and Continuum categories will not be used when the new Collaborative Teaching service model is implemented.*

3. STAFFING RATIOS:

- a. Each service model staffing ratio determines the number of students served by each Special Education classroom teacher. More staffing can be added to meet needs listed on IEPs and to address emergent needs. SPS will provide the following service models using the student to staff ratios outlined below:

Service Model	Staffing Ratio (Student:Teacher:IA)
Access- Elementary*	10:1:3
Access- Secondary*	13:1:3
Social & Emotional Learning*	10:1:2
Focus	10:1:2
Distinct	7:1:2
Deaf/Hard Hearing	9:1:2
Deaf/Hard Hearing Itinerant	15:1
Medically Fragile (including pre-K)	6:1:2
Vision Impairment	18:1:1
Orientation & Mobility Itinerant	18:1
Resource Satellite*	18:1:1
Resource Continuum*	22:1
Preschool (includes DHH preschool)	10:1:2
Transition (Access, Behavior, Focus)	10:1:2
Transition (Medically Fragile/Distinct)	6:1:2

**Note: Staffing ratios will not be used for Resource, Access, and Social & Emotional Learning when the new Collaborative Teaching service model is implemented.*

4. INCLUSION:

- a. Collaborative Teaching: Beginning in the 2022-23 school year, SPS will begin the necessary planning, preparation, and training to replace the Resource, Access, and Social & Emotional Learning service models with a Collaborative Teaching service model to achieve greater educational integration and inclusion for students who would have been served in these three service models. Each year, additional grade levels will be added to follow students through their education while enabling central office staff to support the service model implementation through planning, preparation, and training. Once readiness is identified, schools will begin implementing the Collaborative Teaching service model in grades K-5 during the 2022-23 school year. All SPS schools will implement the Collaborative Teaching service model in grades K-5 by the conclusion of the 2023-24 school year. In the 2024-25 school year, all secondary grades 6-12 will implement the Collaborative Teaching service model and completely replace the use of the Resource, Access, and Social & Emotional services models in SPS.

School staff will be supported by Special Education Department central office staff to implement the Collaborative Teaching service model. Central office support will include service model guidance development, in-person and shoulder-to-shoulder coaching and modeling, professional development, Universal Design for Learning, and supportive scheduling. Every SPS school will implement the Collaborative Teaching service model and replace the Resource, Access, and Social & Emotional Learning service models by the beginning of the 2024-25 school year.

Teachers in the Collaborative Teaching service model will provide their students' paraprofessionals all instructional materials in advance of their instructional lesson(s) to enable each paraprofessional to provide the necessary student supports.

- b. Student Need Workload Determinate: Student service needs will be quantified to determine staffing instead of using set staffing ratios in the Collaborative Teaching service model. This method will take into consideration student SDI and the amount of instructional time a teacher has available as the determinate for a teacher's workload.

When a need is identified for additional staffing, teachers can apply for additional staffing through the Special Education Relief Committee using their application process. The teacher will notify their Special Education Supervisor of the application. The Special Education Relief Committee will review and deliberate on submitted applications every two weeks. Application decisions will be implemented, denied, or shared for additional discussion at the monthly Special Education Joint Labor Management Committee who will select a course of action, if any.

When Special Education teacher minutes are under capacity, supervisors will work with Special Education and administration teams to coordinate and utilize skillsets to respond to special service needs across their school and/or region.

- 5. **FLEXIBLE STAFFING:** At each SPS school, School Special Education Teams consist of Special Education teachers, Special Education paraprofessionals, ESAs, and school principal(s). Before making decisions, the teams will be provided training in the racial equity analysis tool and flexible staffing. School Special Education Teams will work collaboratively to plan and provide services. Teams may flexibly determine staffing recommendations for certificated and classified staff based on student needs. Flexible staffing recommendations developed by the team will not displace a staff member or cause the school to lose staff. Special education paraprofessionals will maintain their current primary classroom assignment with the flexibility to support inclusion of Special Education students and/or grouping of Special Education students outside of and between classrooms. The school principal member of the team will make the final decision on the flexible staffing recommendations developed by School Special Education Teams.

- 6. **OVERAGE:** When the staff ratios are above the established staffing ratio, the following overage adjustments will be made:

Student Overages	Remedies
Resource Services Continuum	Per teacher
1-12	Overage pay
13-22	1.0 FTE Cert
Resource Services Satellite (Elementary)	Per teacher
1-10	Overage pay
11-18	1.0 FTE Cert
Access Services-Elementary	Per Teacher
1-2	Overage pay
3-4	Overage pay or 1.0 FTE IA
5	New classroom -1.0 FTE Cert plus 1.0 FTE IA

Access Services- Secondary	Per teacher
1-4	Overage pay
5-6	Overage pay or 1.0 FTE IA
7-9	New classroom - 1.0 FTE Cert plus 1.0 FTE IA
10	New classroom - 1.0 FTE Cert plus 2.0 FTE IA
Social /Emotional Services	Per class
1-2	Overage pay
3-4	1.0 FTE IA
5	New classroom - 1.0 FTE Cert plus 1.0 FTE IA
Focus Services	Per class
1-2	Overage pay
3-4	Overage pay or 1.0 FTE IA
5	New classroom - 1.0 FTE Cert plus 1.0 FTE IA
Distinct Services	Per class
1	Overage pay
2-3	1.0 FTE IA
4	New Classroom - 1.0 FTE Cert plus 1.0 FTE IA
5	1.0 FTE Cert plus 2.0 FTE IA
Deaf/Hard Hearing	Per teacher
1-2	Overage pay
3-4	Teacher choice: Overage pay or 1.0 FTE IA
5 or more	New classroom - 1.0 FTE Cert plus 2.0 FTE IA
Deaf/Hard Hearing (Itinerant)	Per teacher
1-2	Overage pay
3	1.0 FTE Cert
Medically Fragile Services	Per teacher
1 or 2 over in SPS	1.0 FTE IA
3 or 4 over in SPS	New Classroom - 1.0 FTE Cert plus 1.0 FTE IA
5 over in SPS	1.0 FTE Cert and 2.0 FTE IA
Visually impaired	Per teacher
1-2	Overage pay
3	1.0 FTE Cert

Orientation and mobility	Per teacher
1-2	Overage pay
3	1.0 FTE Cert
Preschool	
1	Overage pay
2-3	Teacher choice: Overage pay or 1.0 FTE IA
4+	1.0 FTE Cert plus 2.0 FTE IA

- b. Process for going outside the contractual limits:
- 1) When the remedy for exceeding the staffing ratio is additional FTE, overage will be provided until the additional position is filled.
 - 2) In situations where the overage chart above provides an option in the overage remedy column central office communicates with the principal and teacher about the possibility of having an overage. The principal and teacher determine the type of overage support based on the chart above. After agreement by the principal and teacher, the principal will communicate the overage request to SEA and the SPS Special Education Office. SEA will contact the employee to verify that the employee agrees with the overage remedy. Once verification has taken place, the remedy will be enforced.
- c. In the case of unfilled positions, staff assigned to do case management for students not on their caseloads will have those students counted toward overage pay. These students will be weighted according to the ratio of their identified service placement.
- d. Special Education certificated staff will receive overage from the date the overage first occurs. When a need is identified for additional staffing, teachers can apply for additional staffing through the Special Education Relief Committee using their application process. The teacher will notify their Special Education Supervisor of the application. The Special Education Relief Committee will review and deliberate on submitted applications every two weeks. Application decisions will be implemented, denied, or shared for additional discussion at the monthly Special Education Joint Labor Management Committee who will select a course of action, if any

7. UNDERAGE: When the staff ratio falls below the established staffing ratio, the following underage adjustments will be made:

Total of students assigned	FTE of staff assigned
Resource Continuum (Elementary)	Per school
9 - 22 students enrolled	1.0 FTE Cert
1 - 8	0.5 FTE Cert
Resource Satellite	Per school
8 - 18	1.0 FTE Cert
1 - 7	0.5 FTE Cert

Resource Continuum (Secondary)	Per school
16 - 22 students enrolled	1.0 FTE Cert
1 – 15	0.5 FTE Cert
Access	Per school
4 students enrolled	1.0 FTE Cert plus 1 FTE IA
1 – 3	1.0 FTE Cert
Access - Secondary	Per teacher
7 - 12 students enrolled	1.0 FTE Cert plus 3.0 FTE IA
4 – 6	1.0 FTE Cert plus 2.0 FTE IA
1 – 3	1.0 FTE Cert
Social & Emotional Learning	Per class
1 - 5 students enrolled	1.0 FTE Cert plus 1.0 FTE IA
Focus	Per class
1 - 5 students enrolled	1.0 FTE Cert plus 1.0 FTE IA
Distinct	Per class
1 - 5 students enrolled	1.0 FTE Cert plus 1.0 FTE IA
Medically Fragile	Per teacher
No adjustments	
Deaf/Hard Hearing	Per teacher
No adjustments	
Visually impaired	Per teacher
6 students enrolled	1.0 FTE Cert
Orientation and Mobility	Per teacher
6 students enrolled	1.0 FTE Cert
Preschool	
No adjustments	

8. RELIEF:

a. Special Education Relief Fund Committee

- 1) The Relief Committee will be convened each school year. The Relief Committee will make monthly adjustments to staffing for overage/underage. Special circumstances that Relief Committee would like additional input on will be forwarded each month to Special Education Joint Labor Management who will select a course of action, if any. The Relief Committee will also review and approve or disapprove staff relief requests, including

allocations from the Special Education Relief Fund to address a need for resources due to: student complexity; headcount; mobility issues; classroom dynamics; medical concerns; and transition issues for students and ensure effective learning environments for Special Education students.

- 2) SPS will provide \$520,000 per year to fund the Special Education Relief Fund. The purpose of the fund is to alleviate unanticipated problems beyond regular baseline staffing in the provision of Special Education services.
 - 3) The Relief Committee will be composed of five (5) representatives appointed by SPS and five (5) representatives appointed by the SEA.
 - 4) The Relief Committee will be appointed by September first each year and will meet on a regular schedule agreed to by the committee members. The committee will also meet in addition to its regularly scheduled meetings in urgent situations when needed to provide relief as soon as possible. Each May, the committee will meet to review the effectiveness of their recommendations and suggest modifications as appropriate.
- b. In situations where students pose a significant problem for classroom management and documentation is available as to the specific behaviors of concern: their intensity, their frequency, and interventions attempted - options for support will be made available by the school -based student support team and supported by the special education supervisor and specialist as needed upon written request by the classroom teacher. Options to relieve outside of school suspension may include, but are not limited to:
- 1) Instructional support in the form of behavioral and intervention strategies;
 - 2) Support for parent/guardian and family as appropriate;
 - 3) Short-term instructional assistant assigned to the particular situation for data collection and/or implementation of school created behavior modification plans.
 - 4) For students receiving special education services, any changes remain subject to IEP process requirements. The intent of this provision is to provide support to the classroom and not a means for evaluating teachers.
- c. SPS will hire and provide training to a pool of itinerant Special Education Instructional Assistants that will be deployed to meet urgent needs determined by the Special Education Relief Fund Committee. Staff selected for this pool can expect their assignment to change frequently and will be paid a 6% premium increase on their hourly rate.

3. WORKLOAD ISSUES:

- a. SPS will provide an IEP content and district procedures training two times per year. One IEP content/procedure training per year is mandatory for employees responsible for writing IEPs.
- b. SPS recognizes the need for appropriate training to better serve all students. The principal/supervisor will allow employees the opportunity to attend a meeting facilitation training, which will include training to assist facilitators to work with difficult teams.

- c. The principal/supervisor will provide employees the opportunity to attend a Special Education Law training at least one time per year.
- d. Certificated staff new to Special Education in SPS, will receive IEP Online training within thirty (30) days of their start date.
- e. To facilitate the educational assessment and to provide services to students with special needs, and to provide health/medical and legal safeguards for the students and employees, all information will, to the extent possible, be made available within the receiving building prior to student placement for students being placed from outside the district.
 - 1) Student Services Assessment Report and Summary;
 - 2) Any medical information necessary for student safety;
 - 3) Specialized Education Services Report(s), if applicable;
 - 4) Parent Appraisal;
 - 5) Student's initial and current IEP's;
 - 6) Former academic program, social information, and behavior plans;
 - 7) Notice of any critical condition.
- f. For Special Education students who are going to be reassigned within the district, access to the student's IEP Online file will be given to the new team as soon as the student's placement has been verified. After the IEP team makes the determination of the least restrictive environment for a student, central staff assigns the student to the appropriate building dictated by the IEP team recommendations of services within the student's middle school assignment area or linked school. The building staff (principal, head secretary, and IEP case manager (receiving teacher)) will be informed of the student assignment with student name and student ID number. IEP Support will be contacted to provide access to the receiving teacher. The receiving IEP team will have 3 days to prepare for the student's transition to ensure the student will receive appropriate services upon entry to the new school.
- g. In addition, certificated Special Education employees, including clinical ESA staff, who are responsible for preparing IEP's and/or Special Education evaluations are entitled to a \$2500 annual stipend, pro-rated by FTE and paid in two installments, in recognition of the workload associated with preparing and completing IEPs and Special Education evaluations, meeting compliance requirements, progress monitoring, and supervising students as required by the IEP. To access this payment, the employee must be current in their responsibility for IEP preparation and completion. In addition, when a Special Education case manager goes above and beyond the recognized service caseload, they will receive additional compensation of \$75 per IEP. Any ESA who has a caseload of at least two (2) above the average caseload for their respective field will also be entitled to the additional compensation of \$75 per IEP.
- h. Employees responsible for preparing the Washington Access to Instruction and Measurement (WA-AIM) are entitled to additional pay of \$50 per section per student.

- i. All employees involved in the Special Education student riser process (including visiting schools, participating in meetings, and transfer of files) will be paid at their workshop hourly rate for any time beyond their contractual day. The Special Education Department will fund up to two days of release per teacher of intensive students, in support of the riser process. Teachers will submit request for release time to their principal and the Special Education Department.
 - j. Special Education Instructional Assistants are intended to provide services students with IEPs. Schools will not usually assign Special Education Instructional Assistants as the primary supervisor of general education-only students. However, Special Education Instructional Assistants may also support general education-only students during the course of their supervision of students receiving Special Education services.
 - k. The Special Education Department will allocate a Team Lead stipend for up to 25 designated Elementary Schools which have a Resource Room, two or more intensive service models, and a higher-than-average number of IEPs. This provision for a Team Lead Stipend will not be applicable when the new Collaborative Teaching service model is implemented.
 - l. Certificated Special Education staff will have access to a fund of up to \$50,000 for the purpose of professional development.
 - m. Certificated Special Education Program Specialists are eligible for up to 16 extra-time hours at per diem to cover summer and before schoolwork.
 - n. Program Specialists may access IEP support funds of \$75 when specialists write IEPs as assigned for coverage and submit extra time for the IEP writing.
4. SPECIAL EDUCATION JOINT LABOR MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE:
- a. The Special Education Joint Labor Management Committee will meet each month to support the work of the Special Education Department and its staff to deliver high-quality services to SPS students.
 - b. SPS representatives will include leaders from both the Special Education and Human Resources departments. SEA representatives will include a range of both certificated and classified staff.
 - c. The Parties may convene subcommittees as mutually agreed.