

PAPERWORK REDUCTION

**for
SPECIAL
EDUCATION
TEACHERS**

New Ulm Public
Schools

Proposal

WHY ARE WE HERE TODAY?

- Paperwork is an **unbearable burden** for special educators.
- Teachers have less time teaching their students.
- The focus of special education has gotten away from the educational needs of the child.
- Due to the paperwork requirements, licensed SpEd teachers spend less time teaching and more time on paperwork leaving paras to work with the kids. This contributes to the difficulty in closing the achievement gap.

AREAS OF CONCERN

- ❖ Functional Behavior Assessment (FBA)
- ❖ IEP Objectives
- ❖ Prior Written Notice (PWN)
- ❖ Transition Services
- ❖ Conciliation Conferences
- ❖ Reporting on State and District Assessment

FUNCTIONAL BEHAVIOR ASSESSMENT (FBA)

CONCERN: districts must do another comprehensive evaluation if the team needs to address behavior concerns instead of doing the Functional Behavior Assessment as a stand alone process.

- To be in compliance, we take additional resources and time to do a comprehensive evaluation.
- Comprehensive assessments delay SpEd services.
- We can do Functional Behavior Assessments more efficiently:
 - For FBA assessment only - 2 people, 2-3 hours, in 1 day
 - Assessment as required - 5-8 people, 20+ hours, 30 days

RECOMMENDATION: Statutory language stating that an FBA may be conducted as a stand-alone assessment.

IEP OBJECTIVES

HF 1517

CONCERN: Minnesota law requires that all IEPs include short-term objectives, already required to prepare goals for each student.

- The IEP goals are based on annual progress and should not be tied to shorter intervals (objectives).
- The goals are specific and based on the needs of the student.
- It takes a lot of time to do progress reporting on each objective.
For example, 3 goals x 5 objectives for each goal = 15 measures to report per grading period per student.
- Reporting progress on each objective is the MDE requirement.

Let the local IEP teams decide how the annual IEP goals will be achieved.

RECOMMENDATION: Bring Minnesota law into alignment with federal law by eliminating the requirement to include short-term objectives in IEPs.

PRIOR WRITTEN NOTICE (PWN)

Summary of the IEP meeting

HF 1289

CONCERN: SpEd Teachers are required to provide very detailed content in a PWN that is not required under federal or state law.

- MDE requires districts to include excessive amounts of information in a PWN such as options considered but rejected, the explanation of the proposal, and other factors.
- The focus has shifted from giving parents a summary of the IEP meeting to SpEd educators being told what to write specifically to avoid MDE citations.

RECOMMENDATION: Allow districts to follow state and federal law and eliminate the requirement by MDE to put additional information in the PWN.

TRANSITION SERVICES

CONCERN: Under Minnesota law, the IEP team must address transition services starting in grade 9.

- This is unnecessary and creates additional evaluation and paperwork requirements during the 8th grade year or earlier.
- This requirement takes time away from teaching and providing special educational services.
- Transitional services should be aligned with High School planning.

RECOMMENDATION: Bring Minnesota law into alignment with federal law (when student turns 16) by eliminating the requirement to address transition services starting grade 9.

CONCILIATION CONFERENCE

HF 853

HF 854

CONCERN: Minnesota law requires school districts to provide parents an opportunity to participate in a conciliation conference whenever the parent objects to a school district's proposal.

- Federal law does not contain any conciliation conference requirements.
- After the conciliation conference, the district must create another PWN and often must propose another IEP - more paperwork!

RECOMMENDATION: Bring Minnesota law into alignment with federal law by eliminating the requirement to hold a conciliation conference and include an option for informal conversations with the parent/guardian to come up with an agreement.

REPORTING ON STATE AND DISTRICT ASSESSMENTS

HF 1390

CONCERN: Minnesota law states that “IEP Teams shall consider” reporting the results of the pupil’s performance on any state or district-wide assessments within the IEP.

- State and district assessments are not tied to IEP goals.
- Parents receive state assessment results from school.
- Test results can be a year old and do not represent the student’s current level of performance at the time the IEP is written.
- Teachers spend too much time reviewing data that is not related to the student’s unique needs addressed in IEP.

RECOMMENDATION:

Remove the requirements to include state and local testing results that are not specific to the student’s educational needs from the IEP.

MEETING ONLY FEDERAL REQUIREMENTS WOULD SAVE

32 - 61 HOURS

PER STUDENT

WITH THE AVERAGE CASELOAD OF 15 STUDENTS,
THIS TRANSLATES TO

480 - 915 HOURS

FOR TEACHING AND CLOSING THE ACHIEVEMENT GAP