

Related Services

Based upon a student's needs and the extent to which those needs affect educational performance, the IEP Team may recommend that related services be provided. Related Services are defined as "developmental, corrective and other support services" required to assist a student with a disability to benefit from instruction. They are intended to assist the student in meeting the objectives of his or her instructional program, to be involved in the general education curriculum, to experience success in his or her classroom setting and to be educated with non-disabled peers. When Related Services are provided to students whose primary program is general education they are considered a supplementary aid and service. Related Services may also be a support for students in special classes.

Related Services may include counseling; hearing education services; occupational therapy (OT); orientation and mobility services; physical therapy (PT); school health services; speech/language therapy; vision education services and other support services. Each related service is described in detail on the following pages.

1. Determining Eligibility for Related Services

Students are eligible for related services only when it is clear that:

- The student's needs are greater than can be addressed in their primary educational setting,
- The services are necessary to benefit from the primary educational setting, and
- The elimination and/or absence of these supports would adversely affect educational performance to the point that appropriate learning would not occur.

A physician's referral must be considered within the context of educational relevance and whether related services will address student function within the school environment. A physician's referral (or prescription) alone is not sufficient to recommend the provision of a Related Service. The IEP Team must consider the student's needs within the educational setting and whether the services are necessary for the student to benefit from his/her primary educational setting and not simply medically necessary.

Any related services recommended are indicated on the Individualized Education Program (IEP). The recommendation includes the frequency (number of times per week that the student should receive the designated service), duration (the length of a session), the maximum group size, if services are provided on a group basis, the language each service is provided in and the location of the services.

2. Determining Frequency and Duration of Related Services

A student with a disability may receive one or more periods a week of Related Services. Frequency of services will depend on a student's individual needs, but may range from daily, individual or group sessions to less frequent provision of services.

The IEP Team must indicate the number of sessions per week and the number of minutes per session for each related service session. The IEP Team's goal in determining frequency and duration is to provide the service while minimizing disruption to the student's school program. In doing so, the IEP Team must also consider the number of

different Related Services that a student is recommended to receive and the overlap, if any, of the goals.

Frequency of related services is determined by the IEP Team and with the exception of Speech/Language Services may be scheduled on a weekly, bimonthly or monthly basis. Bimonthly or monthly services may be indicated for students who require maintenance or are moving toward decertification. 200.6(e) of the Regulations of the Commissioner of Education require that for students with disabilities determined to need speech and language services, such services must be provided for a minimum of two thirty minute sessions per week.

Students who require only the related service of Counseling and/or Speech/Language Therapy for less than 180 minutes (combined or alone) per week should be considered for service within the general education program rather than considered for special education Related Services.

3. Determining Group or Individual Services and Maximum Group Size

The IEP Team must determine whether Related Services will be provided to a student individually or in a group.

Group Related Services May Be Recommended When

- Peer relationships support or aid the attainment of IEP goals.
- Common interests, values or skills create an optimal context for learning.
- Skills can be practiced most effectively in the presence of others.
- Students demonstrate the ability to function in a group.

If services are provided in a group, the IEP Team must also determine the maximum group size. Related Services may be provided to a group of two or more students, with the maximum group size not to exceed eight students. Where services are provided to a mixed group that consists of both students with disabilities and non-disabled students, the combined group size may not exceed the group size maximum for any individual student with a disability in the group.

Individual Related Services May Be Recommended When

- Specialized techniques that cannot be provided in a group are needed.
 - The desired skills and their practice require privacy.
 - Intensive treatment, with maximum opportunities for repetition and learning new skills, is needed.
 - The student's behavior, attention, and/or other factors are managed most appropriately on an individual basis.
 - The student has complex conditions that cannot be addressed in a group setting.
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4. Determining the Language of Service

The IEP Team must determine the language of service, indicating the language separately for each related service. Occupational Therapy, Physical Therapy and/or School Health Services for a student otherwise entitled to bilingual instructional services may be provided by a monolingual professional if it is determined that the services can meaningfully be provided by such a professional and that the student will be able to benefit from receiving such services from a monolingual professional.

5. Determining the Location of Services

The IEP Team must determine whether the related service will be provided in the general education classroom or in a separate location or whether services may be provided within both the general education classroom and a separate location. Location of services should be based on the optimal environment for skill acquisition and may change over time in response to student performance and educational program.

This decision should be made in collaboration between the school-based service provider and the classroom teacher or, for initial referrals, between the evaluator (e.g., Speech and Language Evaluator) and the classroom teacher.

Classroom-based services facilitate the generalization of skills and the application of skills or strategies in the classroom. Classroom-based services should be considered for students who do not generalize skills easily from one setting to another. Classroom-based services may also provide an opportunity to integrate related service goals with the curriculum.

6. Determining Continuation, Modification or Termination of Services

The continuation of related services and the frequency, duration, group size and location should change as the needs of the student change. The IEP Team must determine whether a change is required.

- Continuation of related services occurs when the student's needs are met by the current frequency, duration, location, etc. of service delivery.
- Modification of Related Services may occur in a variety of situations.

Situations That May Require Modification of Related Services

Related Services may need to be modified:

- when a change in frequency, duration or group size (i.e. increase or decrease) is necessary to meet the student's needs;
- in response to significant changes in the student's health or functional status, for example, in the aftermath of surgery or prolonged illness; and
- as part of a transition plan leading to termination from related services.

Termination from related services may also occur in response to several different situations.

Situations That May Require Termination from Related Services

Termination from Related Services may be appropriate:

- when a student can integrate his or her acquired skills into the everyday environment and successfully participate in his or her primary program without services or with declassification services for up to twelve months;
- when a student's skills have reached a plateau and little or no change is expected and the student can successfully participate in his or her primary program without services or with declassification services for up to twelve months;
- when a student has maximized his or her function in the educational setting in keeping with his or her abilities; and
- when a student is able to function independently at a work-site.

Types of Related Services

A. Counseling

The purpose and focus of the counseling provided is determined by an evaluation of the student's needs and the extent to which they interfere with educational performance.

The purpose of counseling is to help students with disabilities recognize and modify behaviors that interfere with learning. The type of counseling (individual and/or group) along with the IEP goals and objectives, frequency, and duration are determined by the IEP Team in collaboration with students, parents/guardians, and general and special education teachers.

Counseling is an interpersonal activity which addresses specific school related counseling goals in order to enable students to succeed in school. It is designed to improve students' social and emotional school functioning in the areas of appropriate school behavior and discipline, social skills, self-control, conflict resolution, problem solving skills, self-esteem, decision-making skills and vocational and transition planning. Counseling may be provided in combination with the development of an individual behavior intervention plan.

Counseling may be recommended for students who have chronic social emotional difficulties which significantly interfere with their learning. These problems can include difficulty interacting appropriately with adults or peers, withdrawal or acting-out, low self-esteem, or poor coping skills.

Counseling is provided by licensed and/or certified school guidance counselors, school social workers and/or school psychologists.

B. Hearing Education Services

Hearing Education Services are designed to provide intensive instruction in speech reading, auditory training and language development to enhance the growth of receptive/expressive communication skills.

Hearing Education Services are delivered to students with a history of chronic fluctuating hearing loss greater than 15 dBHL in the better ear or other hearing loss equal to or greater than 25 dBHL in the ear which adversely affects student performance.

This service is provided by teachers of the deaf and hard of hearing.