

***UNION COMMUNITY SCHOOL DISTRICT  
SPECIAL EDUCATION SERVICE DELIVERY PLAN  
FOR STUDENTS AGED 3-21***

June 2023



UNION COMMUNITY SCHOOL DISTRICT  
LA PORTE CITY, IOWA

REVIEWED 2022-2023

REVISED 2023

## **Union District Leadership Team**

**Updated May 2023**

### **AEA Representative:**

Julie Miller	Regional Administrator
Justin Miller	Team Representative
Wendy Johnston	Team Representative
Courtney Szamleweski	Team Representative

### **Community and Parents:**

Lindsay Toenges	Community Member
Samantha Clark	Elementary Parent
Heidi Spore	Middle School Parent
Amy Kriz	Elementary Parent

### **Teachers/Counselor:**

Sarah Pospisil	2nd Grade Teacher
Tracie Grosse	3rd Grade Teacher
Dean Bostian	At-Risk Teacher
Jared Pospisil	Special Education Teacher (High School)
Madeline Montag	Special Education Teacher (Elementary)
Julie Schmidt	Special Education Teacher (Middle School)
Sydney Sanford	Counselor (Elementary)

### **Administration:**

John Howard	Superintendent
Jason Toenges	High School Principal
Wayne Slack	Union MS Principal
Derek Weber	DG Elementary Principal
Todd Parker	La Porte City Elementary Principal

### **Student Representatives:**

Rachel Riedmann	High School Student
Lily Lorenzen	High School Student

### **Board Members:**

Corey Lorenzen	School Board President
Brandon Paine	School Board Vice-President

## **BELIEFS**

The Union Community School District Special Education Advisory Committee, through collaboration and cooperation, developed the following beliefs, in accordance with and aligned to our district's mission and vision, to serve our special education students and families. These beliefs were then used to analyze current services and guide the development of this plan. .

- All students can learn at high levels but may learn differently and at different paces.
- All students will receive services in the least restrictive environment.
- All students shall be provided with the necessary resources, based on students' needs, to support/maintain a conducive learning environment.
- All adults (district staff, community members, and parents) will share the responsibility for students' education.
- All special education services should be made available only when all other appropriate interventions have been attempted and found to be ineffective.
- All effort will be made to ensure that initial placement will occur in a timely manner while still adhering to state and federal guidelines.
- All students need continuity of support services, facilitated transitions between buildings, and preparation for life beyond a pre-K-12 education.

## **SERVICE DELIVERY PLAN ASSURANCES**

1. The Union Community School District assures a system for delivering instructional services including a full continuum of services and placements to address the needs of all eligible individuals aged 3-21, and shall provide for the following:
  - Accommodations and modifications to the general education environment and program, including settings and programs in which eligible individuals receive specially designed instruction, including modification and adaptation of curriculum, instructional techniques and strategies, and instructional materials.
  - Specially designed instruction and related activities through cooperative efforts of the special education teachers and general education teachers in the general education classroom.
  - Specially designed instruction on a limited basis by a special education teacher in the general classroom or in an environment other than the general classroom, including consultation with general education teachers.

- Specially designed instruction to eligible individuals with similar special education instructional needs organized according to the type of curriculum and instruction to be provided and the educational needs of the eligible individuals served.
2. The district assures the delivery system plan was developed by a committee, in accordance with the Iowa Administrative Code Rule 41.408(2) “C”, that included parents of eligible individuals, special education teachers, general education teachers, community members, district administrators, students, and at least one AEA representative (selected by the AEA Special Education Director).
  3. The district assures that prior to the school board adoption, this delivery system was available for comment by the general public.
  4. The district assures the AEA Special Education Director verified the delivery system is in compliance with the Iowa Administrative Rules of Special Education.
  5. The district assures the school board has approved the service delivery plan for implementation.
  6. The district assures this plan, after all the necessary approvals, will be made available to the general public and be documented in the Comprehensive School Improvement Plan (CSIP).

## **SERVICES AND DELIVERY**

The district implements the Multi Tiered Systems of Support (MTSS) process to provide support services to students needing extra assistance. Through MTSS, students have access to three levels of instruction: core, supplemental, and intensive. All students receive core instruction. Supplemental instruction supports students in a small group format. Students whose needs are not being met at the supplemental level, may move to the intensive level where they receive individualized or very small group instruction. At all levels cited here, highly qualified teachers use research-based instructional strategies. Progress is monitored closely at both the supplemental and intensive levels and instruction is adjusted based on data.

In addition to these specially designed interventions, the district has a range of services in place to provide support for students. These services include: building problem-solving teams, consultation with special education staff, Title I, building-driven interventions, WIN (What I need), and mentoring, to name a few. When these services do not adequately meet a student’s needs at the intensive level of support, based on the data, a student may be entitled to services in special education. Special education services are available to students following identification of entitlement by a team facilitated by AEA support personnel, and consisting of parents/guardians, general education teacher, special education teacher, principal or other LEA representative, and other personnel as appropriate. The needs of the student will direct the service and placement and may lead to one or several of the options described below.

A range of service options are available in the district. The list is not meant to be all inclusive and other options may be considered on a case by case basis. Whenever possible, and to the fullest extent appropriate, students will receive services in the general education setting.

Our continuum of services for PK-12<sup>th</sup> grade includes:

- The district will provide a full continuum of early childhood placements to children who are eligible for instructional IEP services. These early childhood placements will provide instructional services that adhere to the following Preschool Program Standards:
  - Iowa Quality Preschool Program Standards (IQPPS).
- Student is in general education with services provided through a consultative model.
- Student receives services in a co-taught classroom.
- Student is provided services with varying degrees of pull out to the special education classroom.
- Services are provided entirely in the special education classroom.
- Student receives services in an alternative setting.

### **Notice to the Public: Special Education District Developed Service Delivery Plan**

The Union Community School District has revised their special education district developed service delivery plan in accordance with the Iowa Administrative Code Rule 41.408(2)"C". The plan was developed by the District Leadership Team, which consists of community members, parents of eligible individuals, special education teachers, general education teachers, district administrators, and Central Rivers AEA representative administrators.

Each of the district's four buildings will have the plan available in their respective offices for public viewing from May 26, 2023 through June 16, 2023. In addition, the plan will be posted on the Union Community School District website during the same time period.

The plan will then be sent to the Central Rivers AEA Special Education Director for compliance verification on June 16, 2023. The school board then will approve the plan at their June 19, 2023 school board meeting. The final step in this process includes the plan being added to the district's Comprehensive School Improvement Plan in September.

## **DESCRIPTION OF SERVICE OPTIONS**

**Preschool Program Standards:** The Union Community Schools will provide a full continuum of early childhood placements to children who are eligible for instructional IEP services. These early childhood placements will provide instructional services that adhere to the following Preschool Program Standards:

- Iowa Quality Preschool Program Standards (IQPPS)

**Regular Early Childhood Program:** Services are defined as occurring in the general education classroom. The teacher holds a license issued by the Iowa Board of Educational Examiners that includes pre-kindergarten and early childhood special education. The teacher is responsible for direct instruction, materials, adaptation 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.

**Regular Early Childhood Program Monitored by a Licensed Early Childhood Special Education Staff:** Services are defined as occurring in the general education classroom. The early childhood special education classroom teacher holds a license for pre-kindergarten. The general education teacher is responsible for direct classroom instruction, preparation of materials, and implementation of adaptations and accommodations as specified in the IEP. The licensed Early Childhood Special Education staff is responsible for monitoring the implementation of services described in each IEP and monitoring student progress relative to goals in the IEP.

**Early Childhood Special Education Program:** Services are defined as direct specially designed instruction provided to students with disabilities by a licensed early childhood special education teacher. The curriculum is tied to the general education curriculum, but is modified to meet the needs of the students. Classroom instruction is provided by a licensed Early Childhood Special Education Teacher.

**Co-taught Early Childhood Program:** Services are defined as a general education early childhood classroom. The general education curriculum and specially designed instruction are provided to a group of students with disabilities and without disabilities. All aspects of classroom instruction are co-planned and co-taught by a licensed early childhood special education teacher and an early childhood teacher. The Early Childhood Special Education Teacher is responsible for monitoring the implementation of services described in each IEP and monitoring student progress relative to goals in the IEP.

**K-12 Consulting Teacher Services:** Consulting teacher services are defined as indirect services provided by a certified special education teacher to a general education teacher in adjusting the learning environment and/or modifying 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.

**K-12 Co-Teaching Services:** Co-teaching services are defined as the provision of specially designed instruction and academic instruction provided to a group of students with disabilities and nondisabled students. These 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. These services take shape in a variety of manners. For example, teachers co-plan, divide the class, and provide the instruction to smaller groups, or teachers co-plan and then co-instruct different components of the content. The effectiveness of services provided through co-teaching has a strong research base.

**K-12 Collaborative Services:** Collaborative services are 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 setting to aid the student(s) in accessing the general education content area instruction. These services are provided simultaneously with the general education content area instruction.

**K-12 Pull-out Supplemental Instruction:** Pull-out supplemental instruction is defined as specially designed instruction provided to an individual student with a disability or a group of students with disabilities by a

certified special education teacher in a special education setting. Pull-out instructional services are designed to supplement instruction provided in the general education classroom through the previously described consulting teacher model, co-teaching model and collaborative model of service delivery. Supplemental instruction provided in a pull-out setting does not supplant the instruction provided in the general education classroom.

**K-12 Reverse Consultation Services:** Reverse consultation services are 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 special education setting to aid the student(s) in accessing the general education content area instruction. A general education teacher licensed in the core content area collaborates with a special education teacher to jointly plan lessons and instructional strategies. The general education teacher supervises the curriculum and is responsible for assigning student grades. The special education teacher is responsible for providing direct instruction. Both teachers are responsible for ongoing progress monitoring and formative assessment. Reverse consultation is a model of service delivery used only with a small number of students who exhibit significant learning or behavioral skill needs, yet are expected to achieve district standards rather than alternative standards. Documentation of regular and frequent consultation, joint planning and assessment of student progress is required.

**K-12 Special Class:** Special class services are defined as direct specially designed instruction provided to an individual student with disability or a group of students with disabilities by a certified special education teacher to provide instruction which is tied to the general education 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, 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 Alternate Setting Services:** When a student's needs can't be met appropriately in the district school setting, an alternate setting may be necessary (which may/may not be located within the immediate area). This setting may also be necessary when there exists a significant disruption to the educational environment or a potential risk to themselves or others. The district is responsible for the cost of transporting the student to this alternate setting/site. A district representative will still be an integral member of the student's IEP team.

#### **Additional Considerations:**

- 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.

## **CASELOADS**

Special education teacher rosters will be **informally reviewed** multiple times per year by the teacher, the building principal, and Central Rivers AEA representative. Roster review may be scheduled as follows:

1. At the beginning of the school year (August/September) and at the end of each grading period.
2. During the month of November (following Special Education Child Count)

3. During the month of April (to project rosters and make plans for next school year)

**Note:** An informal review may also occur when a special education teacher expresses concern about his/her ability to effectively perform the essential functions of the position OR the number of students on a teacher's roster, the level of services these students receive, and the amount of time a teacher spends engaged in joint collaboration/planning indicates a need for review as determined by the administration.

Caseload determinations will be made by applying the K-12 Weighted Enrollment Factor Matrix provided by the State of Iowa and Department of Education. The IEP of each student receiving district-provided or district-financed special education services is assigned a score using the Weighted Enrollment Factor (WEF) Matrix and the consideration of unique circumstances. Students with greater special education services and supports have higher a WEF score; students with lesser special education services and supports have a lower WEF score. Note: The WEF matrix is not to be applied to IEPs for preschool aged children or students that have only speech goals and services.

Specifically, the WEF assigns point values, based on a student's IEP, in the following areas:

- Planning and Preparation (scale 0-3)
- Specially Designed Instruction Delivered by a Licensed Teacher (scale 0-6– even numbers only)
- Health, Physical or Behavioral Support (scale 0-3)
- Instructional Support (scale 0-3)
- Support for School Personnel (scale 0-1)
- Specialized Transportation (scale 0-3)
- Assistive Technology (scale 0-2)

Note: The IEP team may also consider unique circumstances, as defined by the state, in determining appropriate student weighting.

To finalize a special education student's weighting, the sum of the above areas is calculated into the following:

Level I	0-5 Points
Level II	6-9 Points
Level III	10 or More Points

### **Caseload Calculation**

The Union Community School District administration and special education coordinator will utilize the WEF to determine a special education teacher's caseload. In general, a special education teacher's caseload should not exceed 22 (based on the level).

Example- A student who has 0-5 points on the WEF scale would be a 1 for the teacher. A student who has 6-9 points on the WEF scale would be a 2 for the teacher, so he/she would have 3/22. Caseloads of 22 or more may be considered for further review.



## **Caseload Concerns**

Staff members who have a caseload concern should communicate with the building principal and the AEA team. All efforts should be made to resolve the concern through informal problem solving. If, after progressing through the general guidelines above, the concern persists the staff member may request a formal caseload review.

## **Caseload Review**

1. The special education teacher will submit a written, formal request for a caseload review in writing to the building principal. The special education teacher requesting the review is responsible for gathering relevant information to support his/her request for a caseload review. This information might include, but is not limited to:
  - a. Total number of points based on WEF matrix
  - b. Number of IEP's
  - c. Teacher's schedule and instructional grouping
  - d. Number of buildings that teacher is assigned
2. Within ten working days, the building principal will meet with the special education teacher and Central Rivers AEA team representative to review and clarify concerns the special education teacher has expressed about his/her caseload. The building principal will provide a written response to the special education teacher's request.
3. If the special education teacher's caseload concern cannot be satisfactorily resolved, the special education teacher's written request and the written response from the building principal will be sent forward to the Union Superintendent.
4. The Union Superintendent will review the request and gather relevant information from the principal, special education teacher and Central Rivers Regional Administrator.
5. Within twenty working days following receipt of the special education teacher's formal request for caseload review, the Union Superintendent and the AEA Special Education Coordinator will send a joint written determination to the building principal, special education teacher.
6. If the special education teacher requesting the review does not agree with the written determination made by the Union Superintendent and Central Rivers AEA, the special education teacher may appeal to the Central Rivers AEA Director of Special Education or designee.
7. The Central Rivers Director of Special Education or designee will meet with personnel involved and render a written decision.

## **PROGRAM EVALUATION**

Union Community School District's Special Education Program has three general goals:

- Provide the best possible assessment, curriculum, collaboration, instruction, programming, services and supports for students.

- Reduce the achievement gap.
- Promote a system that emphasizes student advocacy and independence, both inside and outside of school.

To analyze our progress toward these objectives, district and AEA personnel may provide quality staff development, monitor Iowa Core Curriculum instruction, analyze student achievement and growth data (as measured by district-wide assessments), provide collaboration time, help support any IEP related goal area, emphasize researched-based practices, examine any/all data related to integration, meeting goals and/or exiting from special education services, and continually emphasize student independence and success.

Again, the Union Community School District strives to meet the needs of all students and continuous analysis of this document, and the special education program itself, will enable us to meet this objective.