

Strategy Guidance for use of funds under The American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009



Strategy Number 6

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Statement of need:

Districts must ensure that the requirements of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) are met and that students with disabilities receive the supports and services identified on their individual educational plans (IEP). A critical element of ensuring this is the availability of related services personnel (e.g., physical and occupational therapists, speech-language pathologists, behavioral specialists) and paraprofessionals.

Districts are required to provide services in the least restrictive environment (LRE). Districts must ensure that students with disabilities have access to the general curriculum and are only removed from the regular classroom when the nature or severity of the disability is such that education in the regular class with the use of supplementary aids and services cannot be achieved satisfactorily. School-based ESE specialists, through their support and mentoring of general education teachers, can facilitate access to the general education curriculum and services in the LRE. Additionally school-based ESE specialists can assist with training and oversight related to compliance issues (e.g., procedural safeguards, local and state complaints, and due process hearings).

Proposed areas for implementation:

- Retaining or increasing the number of appropriately certified/licensed related services personnel (e.g., physical and occupational therapists, speech-language pathologists, behavioral specialists)
- Retaining or increasing the number of paraprofessionals who assist teachers with daily classroom activities and classroom management
- Provision of paraprofessionals who are needed to support an individual student with significant needs as determined by the IEP team
- School-based ESE specialists who support general educational teachers, provide training/mentoring, and serve in an oversight role to ensure compliance with IDEA requirements

Funding Sources:

- Title I
- IDEA
- State Fiscal Stabilization Fund (SFSF)