

**SPECIAL EDUCATION CASELOAD REVIEW AND COMPLAINT
MANAGEMENT PROCEDURES**
October 2003

The District is responsible for the delivery of appropriate special education services and related services to each student with a disability as determined on his or her individual education program (IEP), as well as for the fiscal management of the available resources for the delivery of these services. The Building Administrator works with central services staff throughout the budget process to assure that the appropriate number of teachers and service providers are assigned to meet the staffing needs of the school. Staffing assignments are based on the service needs of the student population. Attached is a document that reflects the district modification of Statewide Caseload Number Chart (Option B), and is used as a guideline to make such decisions. It is recognized that caseload size impacts teaching and learning. Throughout the year, the Building Administrator is responsible for the oversight of the staff assignments within the building to ensure that high quality IEP services are being delivered and IEP goals being met.

DISTRICT ACCOUNTABILITY MONITORING

As part of an overall district accountability monitoring strategy, the assignment of teachers to students is reviewed regularly throughout the year. All reviews should involve all stakeholders to ensure maintenance of quality services for students. When considering caseloads one must take into consideration individual student needs, including the severity of their disability, complexity and amount of their service needs and the availability of additional supplementary aids and supports including handicapped children assistants, paraprofessional aides, etc.

THIRD FRIDAY AUDIT

Assignments are reviewed as a part of the third Friday audit. The Building Administrator works with central services staff to review and ensure that appropriate staff adjustments, if necessary, are made at that time.

QUARTERLY REVIEW

Caseload reviews are also conducted as a part of a quarterly special education accountability strategy that focuses on IEP accuracy, timelines and service delivery within the school. These quarterly reviews are initiated by the Department of Special Services through the special education leadership liaison (SELL) and the special education supervisor working in collaboration with the building administrator. Staff adjustments may be suggested at these times as well.

Teachers and Building Administrators should maintain an open dialogue throughout the school year regarding caseload size, service delivery and compliance. Discussions should be initiated within the school's community and with the building administrator if issues and/or concerns arise. These discussions often should also involve the special education supervisor or special education leadership liaison (SELL) as well. Adjustments in staff assignments may arise at any time as a result of these discussions. It is the responsibility of the Building Administrator to respond to concerns relative to staffing needs on a timely basis.

A teacher may access the following formal caseload review/complaint procedure when he/she believes that the available building remedies relative to caseload concerns have been exhausted.

CASELOAD REVIEW/ COMPLAINT PROCEDURE

Step 1 _____ Any teacher who has a complaint regarding an excessive caseload assignment shall first present his/her concern to the Building Administrator in writing using the attached form which lists the students' names or identification numbers, grade level, disability(s) and service level.

The Building Administrator shall have five (5) workdays to respond to the teacher in writing. The Building Administrator's responsibility will be to thoroughly investigate the situation in an attempt to resolve the issue. This investigation/resolution process may include the principal seeking advice from other school and/or central services personnel including the special education supervisor, special education leadership liaison, principal coach etc. The investigation must include a review of the allocation of services and staff for the entire building. The Building Administrator's response may include a recommendation for the assignment of an additional teacher (with approval from central services), a balancing or realignment of caseloads, if or an explanation as to why the principal disagrees with the teacher's complaint. If the Building Administrator's response recommends certain corrective action steps, such steps shall be implemented to the maximum extent possible, within five (5) workdays of the Building Administrator's written response.

Step 2 _____ If the teacher does not agree with the Building Administrator's response to his/her caseload complaint at Step 1, the complaint,

including documentation of the teacher complaint and the principals' response at Step 1 may be submitted to the SELL (Special Education Leadership Liaison) assigned to the school.

The SELL will have ten (10) workdays to investigate and to respond to the complaint, in writing, to the teacher and the Building Administrator. During the investigation/resolution process, the SELL will work in conjunction with the Building Administrator, the Special Education Supervisor, Principal Coach, Administrative Specialist or other staff/departments, as deemed necessary. If it is the decision of the SELL that another teacher be assigned, realignment of caseloads, or other corrective action taken, such action shall occur within five (5) workdays of the SELL's response to the teacher. If the SELL does not agree with the teacher's complaint, he/she shall explain the reasons in writing.

Step 3 If the teacher does not agree with the SELL's response to the caseload complaint it may be appealed to the Director of Special Services for review. Such review shall occur and a written response shall be provided to the teacher within ten (10) workdays. The response shall set forth in writing, the corrective action that the district is prepared to take or provide a clear explanation as to the basis for the district's disagreement with the teacher's complaint. The Director of Special Services may consult with the Building Administrator, the Special Services Supervisor, Special Education Leadership Liaison, the Administrative Specialist, Leadership Coach as well as the Chief Officer of Pupil Services during this process.

Corrective action recommended by the Director of Special Services shall be implemented within ten (10) workdays of his/her written response.

A teacher may choose to be represented by the MTEA during any part of this investigation.

DEPARTMENT OF SPECIAL SERVICES

**SPECIAL EDUCATION
CASELOAD REVIEW AND COMPLAINT FORM**

Teacher's Name: _____

_____ Date:

School:

By submission of this form, I am requesting that my caseload be reviewed and relief provided because my caseload exceeds the guidelines. The following describes my caseload:

Caseload (IEP List)

	<u>Student (Name or ID#)</u>	<u>Grade Level</u>	<u>Disability/ies</u>	<u>Service Level</u>
1.				
2.				
3.				
4.				
5.				
6.				
7.				
8.				
9.				
10.				
11.				
12.				
13.				
14.				
15.				
16.				
17.				
18.				
19.				
20.				
21.				
22.				
23.				
24.				
25.				

Total number of students:

Date Step 1 submitted to Principal:

_____ Date Step 2 submitted to SELL:

Date Step 3 submitted to Director of Special Services:

Teacher's Signature:

**MPS SPECIAL EDUCATION STAFFING GUIDELINES
2003-04**

Cross-Categorical (CD, ED, LD, OHI) Teachers

<u>Level of Service</u>	<u>Elementary</u>	<u>Middle</u>	<u>High</u>
1. Minimal	14-18	15-20	15-20
2. Moderate	10-14	10-15	10-15
3. Comprehensive	6-10	6-10	6-10
4. Most Restrictive Placement (MRP)	6-10	6-10	6-10

Early Childhood/Special Education Teachers

<u>Level of Service</u>	<u>One Session Model All Day</u>	<u>Two Session Model A.M. or P.M. Per Session</u>
1. Minimal	10-12	8-10
2. Moderate	8-10	7-9
3. Comprehensive	6-8	6-8

Hearing Impaired (HI) Teachers

<u>Level of Service</u>	<u>Elementary</u>	<u>Middle</u>	<u>High</u>
1. Minimal	9	10	10
2. Moderate	8	9	9
3. Comprehensive	7	7	7

Visually Impaired (VI) Teachers

<u>Level of Service</u>	<u>Elementary</u>	<u>Middle</u>	<u>High</u>
1. Minimal	12	12	12
2. Moderate	10	11	12
3. Comprehensive	7	9	9

SERVICE LEVEL is based on the number of hours of direct special education service (i.e., specially designed instruction provided by or under the direction of a qualified special education teacher) in the IEP.

<u>Special Ed Service</u>	<u>Service Level</u>	<u>LRE Code</u>
1 to 10 hours (per week)	1	Minimal
11 to 20 hours	2	Moderate
21 or more hours	3	Comprehensive
21 or more hours	3M	MRP

- NOTE**
1. Paraprofessional, educational assistant, or health care staff is usually required to support MRP/comprehensive service levels.
 2. Most educators will serve a range of learners (students with minimal, moderate, and comprehensive levels of service). Therefore the student-to-teacher ratio must be adjusted accordingly.
 3. Students with disabilities, where there is generally not a matching categorical program, such as TBI, Autism, OI, or OHI, may be tallied according to service level required.
 4. Subtract ten percent (10%) from caseload maximum if inclusion is the dominant setting.
 5. To determine service level for Early Childhood half-day (two session model) multiply by 0.5.

