Inclusionary Practices and Systems:

FLEXIBLE SERVICE DELIVERY

BACKGROUND

Students who qualify for special education services have individual education plans or accommodations to support their learning in general education classrooms. These services are provided by a variety of professionals from different disciplines. Among others, these professionals often include speech language pathologists, occupational and physical therapists, and special and general education teachers. In inclusive classrooms, educators must be flexible in delivery of these services, consistently assessing and evaluating outcomes of delivery and seeking to increase efficacy and sustainability of interventions and strategies to adjust their instruction.

WHAT IS IT?

Flexible service delivery refers to the continued flexing of delivery of services and supports by educators to best meet a student's needs, while maintaining inclusion in general education classrooms. By thinking outside of the box of traditional service delivery, we are able to create an effective and meaningful learning environment for children with and without disabilities in education settings.

WHY IS FLEXIBLE SERVICE DELIVERY IMPORTANT?

Flexible services are important because they allow educators with opportunities to meaningfully include children with disabilities in general education settings. Further, by implementing fluid, flexible services- educators are able to maximize opportunities for intervention, as well as positive outcomes for all students.

HOW DO YOU IMPLEMENT FLEXIBLE SERVICE DELIVERY?

1. Identify areas of support for each student in the classroom.
2. Identify who can deliver special education services/ IEP minutes.
3. Organize the classroom in a way that allows for flexible learning and ensure that flexible learning environments are for all students in the class, not only students who qualify for special education services.
4. Combine this information into a matrix of students, services/minutes, and professionals/educators that can deliver these minutes
5. Implement and continuously evaluate the effectiveness and sustainability of implementation of services/minutes and supports for students.
6. As a team, discuss implementation of services. If needed, problem solve delivery of these services to maximize outcomes for students. Be flexible!

WHAT ARE THE OUTCOMES?

- Increased opportunities for intentional, meaningful instruction as services are delivered in naturally occurring classroom environments.
- Effective and sustainable instruction for students with disabilities as services and supports are fluid, consistently assessed, and ultimately altered to best meet the needs of each individual student.
- Increased collaboration among educators and professionals as they work together to most effectively deliver instruction to all students.
- Increased knowledge and expansion of professional practice and educators collaborate to provide effective instruction to students.

CASE STUDY, KOKANEE ELEMENTARY

At Kokanee Elementary, staff and faculty are dedicated to delivering services and supports for students in an effective, meaningful way. Often, this means continuous attention and conversation to the services and supports provided for their students, and ongoing evaluations of their effectiveness. The staff and faculty at Kokanee Elementary collaborate together regularly to identify services/minutes for each one of their students, who is providing these minutes, and the outcomes of these services. They seek to not only provide effective services that are producing academic, social, and behavioral outcomes for students, but to do this in the least restrictive environment. By implementing flexible service delivery, Kokanee Elementary is able to promote inclusion and meet the needs of their evolving students.

The staff and faculty at Kokanee Elementary have developed consistent protocols to assess their intervention for students, make changes, and evaluate outcomes of these changes. As a team, educators at Kokanee Elementary meet together during designated time to discuss their delivery of services for each child, read the data and outcomes, and alter or change their delivery plans to always meet the needs of their students. What is inspiring about Kokanee Elementary is their continued dedication to this fluid, flexible process. The expectation of the staff and faculty at Kokanee is that plans to support children will change through the year as sustainable, best practices are identified. This team recognizes that there are times when an identified delivery of services may not be the most effective that it can be. These educators work together and collaborate to pivot-consistently working to achieve best outcomes from services and supports provided.

We would be remiss not to discuss the importance of ongoing, effective collaboration and coordination of services in successful implementation of flexible service delivery. At Kokanee Elementary, staff and faculty have worked hard to establish a safe, trusting environment among educators. This team recognizes their common goal of developing and implementing meaningful support and services for students with disabilities in the general educaiton and works together to meet that goal.

Lastly, implementation of flexible service delivery at Kokanee Elementary is one example of this team's dedication to their continuous path of learning implementing inclusionary practices. This team has established a culture that values learning from mistakes and uses that learning to alter and adapt delivery of interventions to best meet the needs of each student.

As educators, the staff and faculty at Kokanee acknowledge that they are always learning. The implementation of flexible service delivery exemplifies this as they seamlessly engage in continuous evaluation and problem solving of their services to effectively serve their students.

RESOURCES

1. **The IRIS Center: Providing Related Services in Schools**
   https://iris.peabody.vanderbilt.edu/module/rs/cresource/q1/p03/

2. **Delivery of Appropriate Services to Students with Special Needs**
   https://us.sagepub.com/sites/default/files/upm-assets/99400_book_item_99400.pdf