

Submitter : Ms. Monica Reising
Organization : Woodford County Special Education Association
Category : Health Care Provider/Association

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Issue Areas/Comments

Background

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We are a special education cooperative that serves approximately 1200 students with special needs. A number of those students receive Occupational, Physical, Counseling, and Speech Therapy as a part of their Individual Education Plan (IEP) or Response to Intervention (RtI) Plan. We host centralized programs for students with moderate mental impairments, multiple handicapping conditions, moderate to severe emotional disabilities (including significant mental health diagnoses of Bipolar Disorder, Depression, Anxiety Disorder, etc.), and Early Childhood students with a variety of significant mental, physical, and emotional delays.

GENERAL

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The students who would be most adversely affected by the proposed criteria for evaluating intermediary and carrier performance are the students with the greatest need. These students benefit from therapy that may not help them to make great gains but **KEEPS THEM FROM LOSING GROUND**. Imposing a requirement for specific satisfactory rates of progress for these students would be unrealistic as well as unfair. In addition, those students with less severe disabilities would also be penalized if an inflexible standard for progress is imposed. Instead, making use of the clinical knowledge of their caregivers as well as the pre-existing goals and objectives set to measure their progress could be more useful and more equitable in determining whether they are benefitting from receiving services. The professional organizations that these clinicians belong to, for example ASHA, provide their own standards and guidelines for matching the level of service to the level of severity of a student's delays as well as guidelines for gauging the effectiveness of therapies and the student's response to intervention.