

# ENGAGING RELATED SERVICE PROVIDERS

## TOOLKIT OBJECTIVES

- 1 Explain the services included in “related services” according to IDEA.
- 2 Identify the importance and benefits of collaboration among key stakeholders.
- 3 Name the steps to successful practices in engaging Related Service Providers (RSPs) into academic settings.
- 4 Illustrate the “roadblocks” encountered with engaging Related Service Providers and how to avoid these barriers.
- 5 Understand the role of school-based educators in engaging Related Service Providers into academic settings.

## WHY IS THIS IMPORTANT?

**As a wide variety of diverse learners are found in classrooms, all educators must acquire more knowledge so as to better accommodate these children in the general education and/or special education classrooms.**

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## RELATED SERVICES & IDEA

**IDEA, Individuals with Disabilities Education Act**, is a federal law which regulates special education services. Through IDEA, students with exceptionalities have a right to related services in order for them to make progress in and access the general education curriculum.

According to IDEA, “related services means transportation and such developmental, corrective, and other supportive services as are required to assist a child with a disability to benefit from special education...” (IDEA, <https://sites.ed.gov/idea/regs/b/a/300.34>)

**These services include:** speech-language pathologist, audiology services, interpreting services, psychological services, physical and occupational therapy, recreation, including therapeutic recreation, early identification and assessment of disabilities in children, counseling services, including rehabilitation counseling, orientation and mobility services, and medical services. Also included are school health services, school nurse services, social work services in schools, and parent counseling or training.

## RELATED SERVICES IN ACTION

- ★ Students who are non-verbal may require speech-language therapy services to help them communicate functionally.
- ★ Students who are blind may require orientation and mobility services to help them navigate the school building safely.
- ★ Students with developmental delays or Autism may require fine motor support to appropriately access scissors or hold a pencil adequately.
- ★ Students with feed tubes may require school nursing services to ensure the student can safely eat during the school day.
- ★ Students with social and emotional regulation needs may require counseling services or social work services in school to maintain behavioral expectations.



## PREVALENCE & RELATED SERVICES

*As of the data collected from the National Center for Education Statistics in the 2017-2018 school year:*

- ★ **Speech-Language Impairments** were the second most common disability category,
- ★ **Autism** was the fourth most common disability category,
- ★ **Emotional Disturbance** was the fifth most common, and
- ★ **Intellectual Disability** was the sixth most common disability category.

***Most of the students in these categories qualify for one or more related service throughout their education career.***

How many of your students receive ONE related service?	How many of your students receive more than one related service?

## COLLABORATION WITH RELATED SERVICE PROVIDERS

John Hattie, researcher and author of Visible Learning, reports that “collective teacher efficacy” has the most positive effect on student outcomes and learning. Collaborative Teacher Efficacy starts with collaborative expertise practices. These practices are grounded in the impact and importance of collaboration among professionals.

How often do teachers and Related Service Providers currently collaborate?	What does this currently look like at your school?

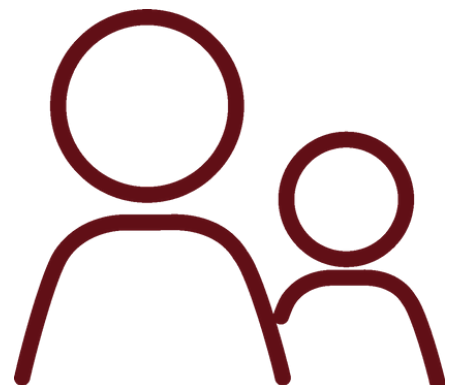


# STEPS TO ENGAGING RELATED SERVICE PROVIDERS

Step	Examples	Guiding Questions - How will this occur at your school?
<p><b>ONE:</b> Provide teachers with IEP At A Glance sheets so they understand and know the services each of their students receive.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <a href="#">Example 1</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">Example 2</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">Example 3</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">Example 4</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">Example 5</a></li> </ul>	<p>What will this look like at my school?</p> <p>When will this be provided to teachers and by whom?</p>
<p><b>TWO:</b> Ask RSPs to provide a “cheat sheet” of ways to address needs or supports in the classroom setting.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <a href="#">Example 1: SLP Cheat Sheet - Language</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">Example 2: SLP Cheat Sheet - Language</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">Example 3: SLP Cheat Sheet - Language</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">Example 4: SLP Cheat Sheet - Speech</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">Example 5: SLP Cheat Sheet - Template</a></li> </ul>	<p>When will this be provided to teachers and by whom?</p>

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# STEPS TO ENGAGING RELATED SERVICE PROVIDERS

Step	Examples	Guiding Questions - How will this occur at your school?
<p><b>THREE:</b> Allow time in RSP's schedules to collaborate with key stakeholders (i.e. General Ed. Teachers, Special Ed. Teachers, Special Ed. Coordinator, other RSPs, paraprofessional aids, etc.).</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• If staffed with full-time RSPs, ensure time is allotted in their schedules to collaborate regularly with stakeholders. Depending on caseload sizes, this may mean a RSP isn't used for as many school-related duties as other staff members.</li> <li>• If using contracted RSPs, this should be outlined in contracts. For example, allowing RSPs to charge up to 30 minutes per day of planning and preparation and up to an hour of collaboration time.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• How can collaboration, or more collaboration, time be built into teacher's and Related Service Provider's schedules?</li> <li>• What needs to change in RSPs schedules to ensure collaboration occurs?</li> </ul>
<p><b>FOUR:</b> Allow opportunities for co-treatment of students across RSPs.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Co-treatment can involve two or more RSPs such as Speech-Language Pathologists (SLPs) and Occupational Therapists (OTs) or can involve treatment including a RSP and a teacher or paraprofessional aide.</li> <li>• RSPs provide therapy simultaneously while utilizing and combining their own areas of expertise. RSPs consistently discuss and advise each other to deliver the best services possible.</li> <li>• Co-treatment provides overlapping areas of knowledge that can help advance progress for the child.</li> <li>• Co-treatment ends to organic collaboration between RSPs and/or educators.</li> <li>• Co-treatment is not ideal for all students; however, can be a beneficial option for students receiving several related services.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• When will this be provided to teachers and by whom?</li> </ul>

# "ROADBLOCKS"

*"Roadblocks" may occur and hinder positive collaborative practices between teachers and related services providers or engagement of RSPs.*

Roadblock	Solutions /Examples	How" or "why" does this roadblock exist at your school?	How can you solve or avoid this roadblock?
<p><b>TIME</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Collaboration time must be purposeful and built into a schedule to ensure it occurs.</li> <li>• Collaboration must be scheduled and set times and is seen as "sacred time."</li> </ul>		
<p><b>COMMUNICATION &amp; PARITY</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Educators must be open-minded, willing to work together, and have honest communication.</li> <li>• There must be a circulation of knowledge and communication between team members to experience successful collaboration and outcomes for students.</li> </ul>		



# "ROADBLOCKS"

Roadblock	Solutions /Examples	"How" or "why" does this roadblock exist at your school?	How can you solve or avoid this roadblock?
<p><b>KNOWLEDGE &amp; UNDERSTANDING OF STUDENT NEEDS</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Educators must participate in professional development on students' specific needs.</li> <li>• This provides a foundational knowledge of students' needs and RSPs can then fine-tune that knowledge for their specific students.</li> <li>• This professional development may include participation from RSPs educating staff on their roles and disabilities they serve.</li> </ul>		
<p><b>ADMINISTRATION</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Administrators must promote collaboration among staff members, as well as ongoing staff development in inclusive practices and effective support for students with exceptionalities.</li> </ul>		



# "ROADBLOCKS"

Roadblock	Solutions /Examples	"How" or "why" does this roadblock exist at your school?	How can you solve or avoid this roadblock?
<p><b>PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Parents should be provided opportunities to be involved in the collaboration process.</li> <li>• Parents can provide teachers and RSPs with vital information on students' likes, dislikes, behaviors, etc.</li> <li>• Parents should also be involved to continue services and supports in the home environment.</li> </ul>		

## PUTTING THE STEPS IN ACTION

*Given your role in engaging RSPs, fill in the table and answer the guiding questions for your role. Read through the other role's responsibilities to familiarize yourself with their role to ensure success.*

What Can Teachers Do?	Guiding Question
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Know their student's related service needs.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Who do I need to talk/reach out to ensure an IEP or IEP At A Glance is provided for my students?</li> </ul>



# PUTTING THE STEPS IN ACTION

## What Can Teachers Do?

- Established a designed, regular collaboration meeting time with RSPs. Also, ask RSPs for tips and tricks for supporting their students in the classroom setting when new concerns arise.

## Guiding Question

- What days/times am I available to collaborate?
- Which RSPs do I need to share this information with so we can schedule a time to meet?
- Who do I need to talk to/ reach out to ensure collaboration time is allotted into my schedule?

- Be a liaison between RSPs when collaboration time is unavailable by updating providers on student's current performance and goals in class or with other providers.

- How will I ensure I provide RSPs with updated information on my student's performance?

- Communicate with parents on student's progress. This provides a united front to parents ensuring that all providers and educators are on the same page.

- How often will I communicate or update parents on my student's progress?
- How will I communicate or update parents on my student's progress? (i.e. phone call, text, email, etc.)



## PUTTING THE STEPS IN ACTION

### What Can Related Service Providers Do?

- Provide teachers with resources to understand their student's related service needs.
- Establish a designed, regular collaboration meeting time between RSP, educators, other providers, and parents (when necessary).
- Communicate with educators, parents, and other RSPs on student progress and goals.
- Provide key stakeholders (teachers, parents, paraprofessionals, other RSPs, etc.) with resources on current supports and interventions to be used in the classroom.

### Guiding Question

- When should I provide teachers with my "Related Service Cheat Sheet" including suggestions to target the student's needs in the classroom setting?
- What days/times am I available to collaborate?
- Who do I need to share this information with so we can schedule a time to meet?
- How will I ensure I provide teachers, parents and other key stakeholders with updated information on my student's performance?
- How often will I communicate with key stakeholders on student's performance and goals?
- How will I update key stakeholders on current supports or interventions for my students?



## PUTTING THE STEPS IN ACTION

### What Can Administrators Do?

- Provide educators and RSPs common planning and collaboration time.
- Allow opportunities for co-treatment of students across RSPs.
- Ensure professional development opportunities are provided to educators to ensure they understand their students with exceptionalities' needs and supports.
- Check-ins with educators and RSPs to ensure collaboration and communication is effective and advancing progress with students.

### Guiding Question

- How can common planning and collaboration time be built into RSPs schedules?
- If using contracted RSPs, is collaboration time outlined in their contracts? If not, who do I need to talk to ensure this occurs?
- Are RSP's schedules flexible to ensure co-treatment can occur?
- How are parents informed when co-treatment occurs?
- When can professional development opportunities be provided to educators on students' needs and supports?
- What other professional development is necessary to ensure RSPs are engaged in the academic environment?
- How often will I check-in with educators and RSPs?
- When will I meet with key stakeholders?
- How will we measure student progress toward goals? How will this information be communicated to myself and other key stakeholders?

# PUTTING THE STEPS IN ACTION

## What Can Parents Do?

- Communicate regularly with educators and RSPs to aid in carryover of skills or goals in the home environment.

- Provide educators and related service providers with the student's wants, needs, likes, dislikes, etc.

- Provide educators and related service providers updates on progress toward goals and skills development.

## Guiding Question

- How often will I communicate with key stakeholders working with my child?
- If using contracted RSPs, is collaboration time outlined in their contracts? If not, who do I need to talk to ensure this occurs?

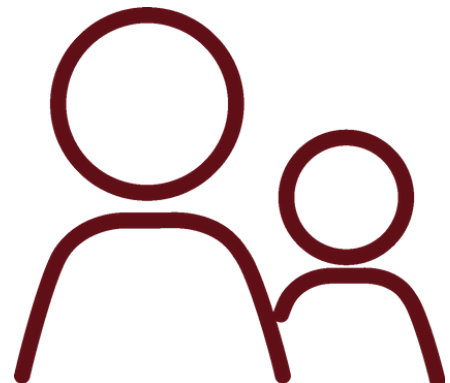
- Educators: When will I ask parents for my students key information?
- Parents: How will I communicate my child's information (wants, needs, likes, dislikes, etc.)?

- How will I communicate my child's progress at home to the key stakeholders at school?
- How often should this occur?

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# DISTANCE LEARNING TIPS

## Recommendations to Engage Related Services During Distance Learning

- Set parameters around expectation of supports during virtual academic experiences.

- Provide inclusive, virtual services in student's classrooms to provide teachers with tips on ways to support their student in the virtual learning environment.

*For examples, Related service providers can provide tips involving sensory or movement needs, communication or comprehending supports, etc.*

- Virtually train families on related service supports to incorporate in the home environment to ensure continued practice and support during distance learning.

- Have RSPs and educators meet with families virtually to ensure supports are provided fluidly across all disciplines.

## Guiding Question

- How will RSPs support my student's during distance learning?
- How often will RSPs support my student during distance learning?

- How will RSPs participate during virtual inclusion classes?
- How will RSPs provide feedback and suggestions to support my student through the distance learning environment?

- How will RSPs virtually train families on related service supports for the home environment?
- How will this be communicated to families?

- How often will key stakeholders (teachers, parents, paraprofessionals, other RSPs, etc.) meeting to review student progress and collaborate on supports for my student?

# RESOURCES

**These resources are recommended books that incorporate steps to engaging related services providers and their practices into academic settings:**

- ★ **Resources for setting up collaborative practices in your school -** [30 Days to the Co-Taught Classroom](#)
- ★ **Resource to incorporate speech/language and occupational therapy practices into fun classroom activities -** [The Out-of-Sync Child Has Fun: Activities for Kids with Sensory Processing Disorder](#)
- ★ **Resource to support challenging behaviors in the classroom -** [Behavior Management Skills Guide: Practical Activities & Interventions for Ages 3-18](#)
- ★ **Resource to support students with attentional struggles and executive functioning deficits in the classrooms setting -** [ADHD, Executive Function & Behavioral Challenges in the Classroom: Managing the Impact on Learning, Motivation and Stress](#)
- ★ **Resources for classroom strategies to support students with Autism in your school -** [Everyday Classroom Strategies and Practices for Supporting Children with Autism Spectrum Disorders](#)

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