Workload Approach:
A Paradigm Shift for Positive Impact on Student Outcomes

Developed by Representatives of :
American Occupational Therapy Association (AOTA)
American Physical Therapy Association (APTA)
American Speech-Language-Hearing Association (ASHA)

Objectives

The goal of this presentation and the related document is to:

* Heighten awareness of the value of a workload approach

* Advocate for the role of related service/SISP

* Share the value workload has on the success of students

* Encourage all stakeholders to get involved

Background

AOTA, APTA and ASHA have convened to discuss the impact of caseload /workload approaches that impact their members and the students they serve.

They have developed joint comments which have been compiled into one document entitled "**Workload Approach: A Paradigm Shift for Positive Impact on Student Outcomes**"

Rationale for the Document

Workload adoption is becoming even more important when considering :

- The wide range of roles and responsibilities of school professionals (such as specialized instructional support personnel) assume .

- How these roles and responsibilities contribute to positive student outcomes.

Who are Specialized Instructional Support Personnel (SISP) ?

What is their role in schools?

Are there personnel shortages associated with SISP?

SISPs

* **Who are Specialized Instructional Support Personnel?** Specialized instructional support personnel (SISPs) encompass a large number of personnel categories with a broad set of responsibilities in schools. The disciplines included are as follows: school counselors, school nurses, school psychologists, and school social workers; occupational therapists, physical therapists, art therapists, dance/movement therapists, and music therapists; speech-language pathologists and audiologists.

SISP

"Specialized instructional support personnel (SISP) per-
form a wide range of activities in schools, including a
broad array of prevention and intervention services
that promote effective teaching and learning and promote
school success. SISP also collaborate with teachers and
 school staff to ensure that students receive high quality
instruction responsive to their diverse academic, physical,
social, emotional, and mental health needs (NASISP.org)"

Changing Roles of SISP with Reauthorization of IDEA 2004

* Workloads of SISP have broadened from traditional "direct and indirect" services to include:
  * Universal Design for Learning (UDL)
  * Positive Behavioral Intervention Supports (PBIS)
  * Response to Intervention (RTI)
  In order to:
  * Support all students in the least restrictive environment (LRE)
  * Facilitate student participation in the general education curriculum

* A workload approach helps to meet these demands.

Shortages Exist

* Nation-wide, there is a growing shortage of qualified school-employed SISP and in many cases a critical shortage of funded positions.

    Educator Supply and Demands Reports, American

    Association For Employment in Education Research

    Summary (1996-2008).

What is the difference between caseload and workload approaches?

Caseload

This term typically refers to the *number* of students with Individualized Education Programs (IEPs) or Individualized Family Service Plans (IFSPs) who are receiving services.

Burden of Caseload

* Historically, most professional's assignments have been made based on a number of students needing services (caseload)

* Caseload is a medical approach within an educational system

* Assigning professionals in this way, does **not** account for the significantly expanded roles and responsibilities necessary to help all students achieve positive learning outcomes.

* High caseloads leads to compromised quality of service, low morale, and burdensome paperwork.

Workload

This term refers to all activities required and performed by professionals including direct and indirect activities necessary to:

- Support student education programs
- Ensure compliance with IDEA, NCLB and other state or local mandates
- Fulfill the role of professionals working in the school setting

Benefit of Workload

* Includes assessment and interventions as well as ongoing collaboration with regular and special education staff, communication with parents, and participation in school and district-level committees.

* Complies with IDEA 2004 requirements and state and local mandates.

* Transitioning from caseload to workload has been positively correlated with increased job satisfaction
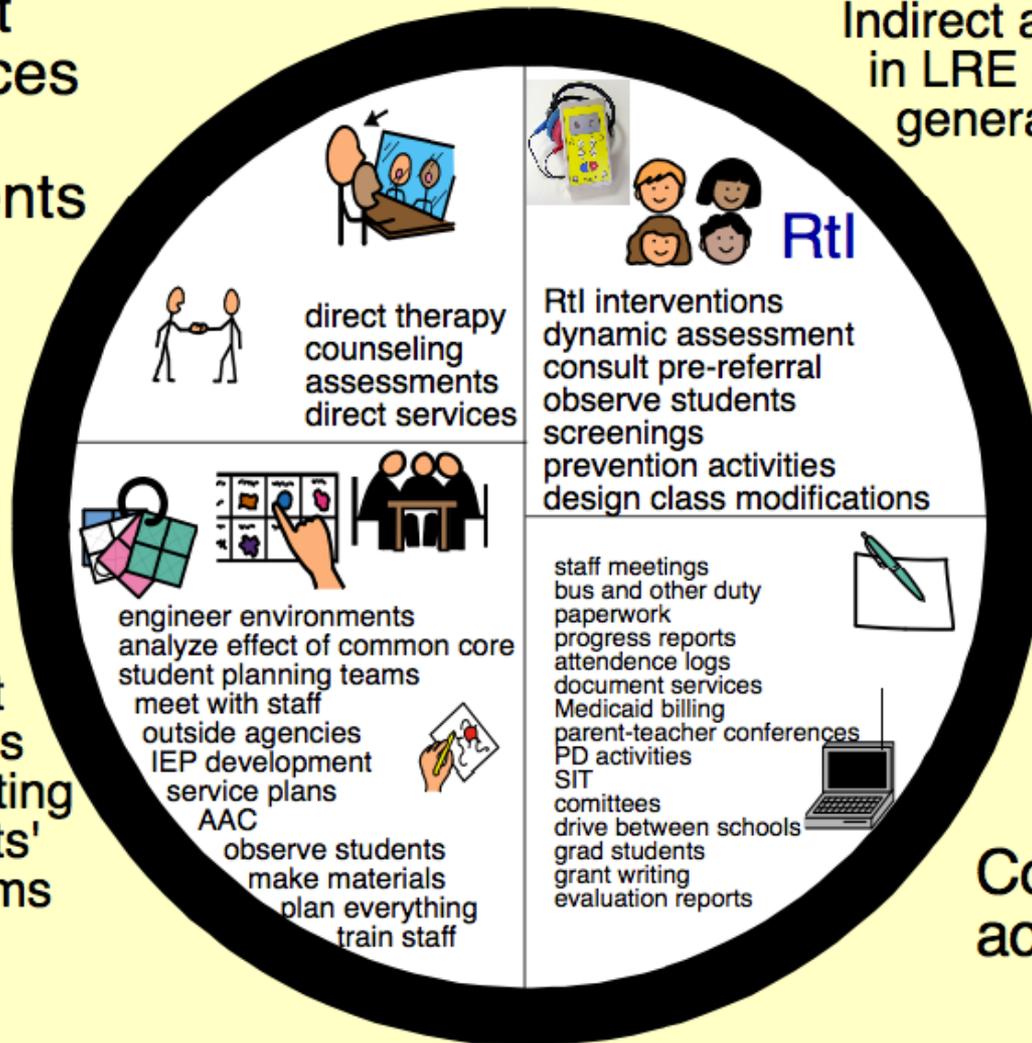
Range of Workload Activities

* When determining a workload all responsibilities should be considered, including:
  * Direct service delivery
  * Travel between work assignments
  * Documentation
  * IEP and other meetings
  * Consultation/collaboration with educational staff as well as families
  * Assistive technology responsibilities
  * Professional development
  * Planning and research
  * Behavior support activities
  * Multi-tiered Systems of Support (MTSS)

Direct services to students

Indirect activities in LRE and general ed

direct therapy
counseling
assessments
direct services

RtI
RtI interventions
dynamic assessment
consult pre-referral
observe students
screenings
prevention activities
design class modifications

Indirect services supporting students' programs

engineer environments
analyze effect of common core
student planning teams
meet with staff
outside agencies
IEP development
service plans
AAC
observe students
make materials
plan everything
train staff

staff meetings
bus and other duty
paperwork
progress reports
attendance logs
document services
Medicaid billing
parent-teacher conferences
PD activities
SIT
comittees
drive between schools
grad students
grant writing
evaluation reports

Compliance activities

From Ruth Morgan's chapelhillsnippets.blogspot.com

Advantages of Workload- for School Community

* Allows professionals to support students where concerns arise regarding their participation in multiple learning environments

* Enhances opportunities for teacher/team collaboration that is instrumental for achieving positive student outcomes

* Incorporates therapists successfully into the school community thereby providing better assessment and provision of system-wide support for the desired school climate

* Improves recruitment and retention of specialized professionals

* Increases the opportunity to provide FAPE

Advantages of Workload- for Families

* Strengthens communication/understanding between families and service providers by:
  * Providing parents with strategies for use in the home and community
  * Empowering families to promote their child's progress and support their child's transitions during his/her school career
  * Promoting greater understanding of their child's strengths and needs

What is the concern?

Although the idea of assigning professionals on the basis of workload has been around for many years, it has been adopted by very few districts.

Action Steps to Support a Workload Approach

* At the national level, Professional Organizations can :

  * Network and advocate with stakeholder groups to adopt a new administrative standard to ensure that workload assignments are made to provide maximum benefit to students

  * Work together to identify caseload issues and promote workload-based systems to advance best practice

Action Steps to Support a Workload Approach

* At the state level, stakeholders can:

  * Work collaboratively with state policy makers to ensure state special education regulations and licensure requirements contain language that supports reasonable workloads for all professionals

Action Steps to Support a Workload Approach

* At the local level, a practitioner can:

    * Partner to conduct a workload analysis. In one Maryland school district, occupational therapy and physical therapy practitioners collaborated to collect data on workload demands.

    * Conduct a workload analysis by examining all work-related activities and bundling them into categories reflecting a wide range of roles and responsibilities "…to the child and [conducted] on behalf of the child" (citation in IDEA)

Learn More:

Coalitions that focus on related issues:

* National Alliance of Specialized Instructional Support Personnel (NASISP)
    * http://nasisp.org
* National Coalition on Personnel Shortages in Special Education and Related Services

    http://specialedshortages.org

* IDEA Partnership
    * http://www.ideapartnership.org/

Share a Resource

* Share the new joint document which can be found at

  (link to our document?)

We Can Do This Together!

* Coming together is a beginning
* Keeping together is a process
* Working together is a success

For more information, visit www.aota.org, www.apta.org and www.asha.org .