Measuring and Managing SLP Workload and Caseload

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OSSPEAC 2014

Agenda

1. Review outcomes of “Caseload Ratio Study: Final Report to the Ohio Department of Education” (Carlin et al., September 30, 2013) and what we learned about SLP workload/caseload and the provision of FAPE. (10 minutes)

2. Review Revised Operating Standards for Ohio Educational Agencies Serving Children with Disabilities (3301-51-9-09) (July, 2014) and what is mandated about SLP workload/caseload and the provision of FAPE. (20 minutes)

3. Learn and practice one process for quantifying/calculating SLP workload and caseload that was used in 3 districts in Southwest Ohio and by SLPs in Lorain County. (45 minutes)

4. Share strategies for decreasing/managing SLP workload to provide more efficient and effective service to students for FAPE and better outcomes. (15 minutes)

Guiding Workload Documents from ODE:

1. “Caseload Ratio Study: Final Report to the Ohio Department of Education” (Carlin et al., September 30, 2013)


“Caseload Ratio Study: Final Report to the Ohio Department of Education” (Carlin et al., September 30, 2013)

- 21 LEAS from rural, suburban and urban areas (public schools, community schools and career centers) participated in the study.
- Studied workloads and caseloads of intervention specialists, SLPs, OTs/OTA, PTs/PTA, and School Psychologists.
- Developed various processes, standards, rubrics, weights and formulas for calculating caseload ratios.
- Implemented a multitude of workload reducing strategies.

(Carlin, Charles H. and Bernadette Laughlin, March 13, 2014)
Results of Caseload-Ratio Study-
The Philosophy

- In order to ensure students received FAPE and achieved positive outcomes, the majority of LEAs developed their approaches based on one overarching workload philosophy:

| Time for Workload Duties | + | Time for Direct Services | = Total number of hours in a service provider's work week |

(Carlin, Charles H. and Bernadette Laughlin, March 13, 2014)

Results of Caseload-Ratio Study-
The Approaches

Most LEAs used a hybrid approach by studying:
1. **Productivity Approach**: Direct service (60-90%) + indirect + lunch + workload duties (i.e. documentation, assessment, planning, meetings).
2. **Weighted Approach**: Students were weighted based on student characteristics (i.e. grade, disability category), associated workload, and level/frequency of services. Students were equitably assigned to service providers by weights. A predetermined number of weighted students was established as a full-time equivalent for a service provider.

(Carlin, Charles H. and Bernadette Laughlin, March 13, 2014)

Results of Caseload-Ratio Study-
The Outcomes

- **STUDENT PROGRESS**
  - Progress or mastery of IEP/intervention goals; passing of core academic classes; proficiency on standardized testing.
- **PROVISION OF FAPE**
  - Students received IEP or intervention services.
- **WORKLOAD**
  - Reasonable work week for 1 FTE: contracted work week (37.5 hrs.) + 20% (7.5 hrs.) or less AND received full lunch and planning time.
- **STAKEHOLDER PERCEPTIONS**
  - Service providers felt they could reasonably provide FAPE and students would make progress.

Results of Caseload-Ratio Study:
Recommendations

Dr. Carlin and his team found that as a whole, the majority of approaches produced better outcomes than the traditional “headcount” approach in the areas of student outcomes, the provision of a free appropriate public education (FAPE) and reasonable workweeks. The recommendations of this study are:

- Use a workload process approach that aligns with the current rule 3301-51-09.
- Use a team of stakeholders to collect data and calculate.
- Formulate caseload ratios using quantifiable data.
- Number and type of workload duties
  - Data from IEP, intervention plans, and 504's on direct and indirect services
- Evaluate caseload ratios and workload duties on an ongoing basis.
- Implement workload-reducing strategies to focus service providers’ time on services.

(Carlin, Charles H. and Bernadette Laughlin, March 13, 2014)
Revised Operating Standards for Ohio Educational Agencies Serving CWD (July, 2014): 3301-51-09

(1) Workload for an individual service provider shall be determined by following process, which incorporates the following components:

(a) All areas of service provided to children with and without disabilities, including, but not limited to: school duties, staff meetings, professional development, supervisions, travel/transition, screening, assessment, evaluation, progress documentation and reporting, secondary transition service planning, conference/consultation pertaining to individual students, documentation for individual students, and third party billing requirements.

b) The severity of each eligible child’s need, and the level and frequency of services necessary to provide a free and appropriate public education (FAPE).

Can we weight each child according to these needs and IEP services?

Revised Operating Standards for Ohio Educational Agencies Serving CWD (July, 2014): 3301-51-09

(c) Time needed for planning in accordance with paragraph (A)(9) of rule 3301-35-05 of the Administrative Code, including statutory and/or contractual agreements applicable to the educational agency.

This law requires 200 minutes per week of planning time on the schedule of Ohio teachers.
Revised Operating Standards for Ohio Educational Agencies Serving CWD (July, 2014): 3301-51-09

(f) A speech and language pathologist shall provide services to no more than:

(i) Eighty school-age children with disabilities, or
(ii) No more than fifty school-age children with multiple disabilities, hearing impairments, autism, or orthopedic/other health impairments, or
(iii) No more than fifty preschool children with disabilities, or
(iv) A combination of preschool and school-age children with disabilities or children with multiple disabilities, hearing impairment, autism, or orthopedic/other health impairments proportionate to the ratios set forth in (I)(3)(f) (i), (ii), and (iii).

Each school district shall provide speech and language pathology services as required by division (F) of section 3317.15 of the Revised Code.

(K) Waiver

(1) If a school district, county board of developmental disabilities or other educational agency exceeds the workload requirements in paragraph (I) of this rule a waiver request must be filed with the Ohio department of education, office for exceptional children. A school district, county board of developmental disabilities or other educational agency may be granted a waiver for individual service provider limits or for age-range per instructional period as required by this rule.

(2) Requests must be submitted in writing to the Ohio department of education, office for exceptional children or office of early learning and school readiness. The written request shall include, but not be limited to, the following:

(a) Identification of the specific rule for which a waiver is being requested;
(b) Specific period of time for which the waiver is requested; and
(c) Rationale for the request.

(3) Each school district, county board of developmental disabilities or other educational agency shall annually review the reason for its request as it plans for the delivery of services through the strategic planning process as required by paragraph (A) of rule 3301-35-03 of the Administrative Code.

Definition of Terms

- **Workload**: Services and duties assigned to service providers, to include all areas of direct and indirect service to children with and without disabilities (references 3301-51-09 (I)(1)(a)).
  - There is an expectation that children will receive FAPE in their LRE.
  - All workload duties will be completed in a compliant manner.
  - There is an expectation that students will make adequate progress.
  - There is an expectation that workload duties will be completed within a reasonable period of time.
  - A waiver must be obtained whenever a service provider exceeds a reasonable workload.

-Determining Service Provider’s Workload: Guidelines, Resources, and Tools, Dr. Chuck Carlin, Special Education Leadership Conference, October, 2014)
Definition of Terms Continued

- **Caseload or caseload ratio**: ‘Number’ of children who receive specially designed instruction or direct related service from a service provider.
  - After all proposed workload duties are assigned, to include services, the LEA will ensure a service provider has enough time to complete assigned workload (e.g., services, assessments, paperwork, meetings, etc.).
  - If a service provider cannot complete all workload duties, to include services, within a reasonable period of time and compliantly, then workload duties and/or caseload should be reduced.
  - The number of children on the caseload will depend on the amount and type of workload duties already assigned, the time needed to complete each compliantly, and the skills and needs of the service provider.
  - The caseload ratio is adjusted to allow time in the workweek for lunch and planning time.
  - The calculated caseload ‘number’ or ratio reflects proportional calculations or weights whenever a provider is assigned a mixed caseload.
  - A waiver must be obtained in order to exceed the caseload ratio.

(Mixed caseloads: Name used to describe situations when a service provider serves (i.e., case coordination) or provides specially designed instruction or related services to children from different grade levels and disability categories.
- In these instances, caseload ratios are calculated differently using proportional calculations or weights.
- Proportional calculation or weight: A predetermined value that is assigned to certain children on a caseload, and this value reflects differences in associated workload.
- In calculating the caseload ratio, a child with a disability will be counted differently based on the services received, the disability category, and the grade-level category.
- A proportional calculation or weight is assigned to each applicable child, and the value for each child on the proposed caseload is summed.
- After the proposed workload duties are assigned, to include services, the LEA will ensure a service provider’s caseload ratio, after student weights are applied and summed, does not exceed what is allowable.
- A waiver must be obtained in order to exceed the caseload ratio or a mixed caseload.

(Determining Service Provider’s Workload: Guidelines, Resources, and Tools, Dr. Chuck Carlin, Special Education Leadership Conference, October, 2014)

Expected Outcomes

- Whenever workload-based process is used, it should ensure:
  - Adequate student progress.
  - Provision of FAPE.
  - Delivery of services in the LRE.
  - Completion of compliant paperwork.
  - Adherence to third party billing, employer specific, state, and federal timelines.
  - Completion of workload duties within reasonable workweeks.
  - Availability of lunch and planning time.
  - Other (e.g., appropriate supervision provided, use of qualified subs).

(SLP Workload and Caseload Analysis for Three Districts (Spring, 2014):

**Norwood City Schools**
- 4 FTE SLPs
- 5 Buildings + 2 Preschool Programs + Outside Placements

**Mt. Healthy City**
- 5.5 FTE SLPs
- 4 buildings + Preschool + Outside Placements

**Northwest Local School District**
- 11.8 FTE SLPs
- 13 buildings + 1 Outside Facility + Career Centers

(Determining Service Provider’s Workload: Guidelines, Resources, and Tools, Dr. Chuck Carlin, Special Education Leadership Conference, October, 2014)
Calculating Workload: Step 1
SLPs Met to Discuss and Agree Upon a Standard for Each of the Below:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Standard min/initial ETR</th>
<th>265</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Standard min/reevaluation</td>
<td>210</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Standard min/IEP speech only</td>
<td>180</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Standard min/IEP speech related</td>
<td>90</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Standard min/progress report or interim report</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Standard min/week for Medicaid documentation</td>
<td>150</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Standard min/screening</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Standard reasonable min/week for 1 FTE</td>
<td>2400</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Calculating Workload: Step 2
Norwood SLPs submitted a worksheet for each building combining data provided by all SLPs who work in that building:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sharpsburg (Conover &amp; Miller)</th>
<th>Outside Placements (Miller)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Norwood View (Jutte)</td>
<td>Williams Ave. (Twilling)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jr. High (Mendez)</td>
<td>High School (Mendez)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Williams PS (Twilling &amp; Mendez)</td>
<td>Sharpsburg PS (Jutte &amp; Mendez)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Calculating Workload: Step 2
Direct service minutes per schedule

- Use the weekly schedule
- Count minutes of direct service to students: group, classroom, individual sessions, intervention, etc.
- Schedule should reflect minutes on IEPs for each student.
- Do not count minutes that were over-scheduled for cancellations, make-up services, meetings, etc.
- Stick to the required minutes for this number.

Calculating Workload: Step 2
Number of initial ETRs per year

- Will be more in primary buildings.
Calculating Workload: Step 2
Number of re-evaluations per year
▶ Estimate based on due dates.

Calculating Workload: Step 2
Number of speech primary IEPs
▶ Include initial IEPs and annually reviewed.

Calculating Workload: Step 2
Number of IEPs with S/L as related service
▶ Include initial and annual reviews.
▶ Include those for students who move into the district, i.e. transfer IEPs.

Calculating Workload: Step 2
Number of screenings per year
▶ Probably more in primary buildings.
▶ Be sure to agree on why a screening is done.
▶ What activity is included in the screening?
Calculating Workload: Step 2
Minutes per year spent in staff meetings

- How many do you attend per year?
- How long are they?
- Number of meetings \( \times \) minutes for each = \( N \)

Calculating Workload: Step 2
Minutes per year spent in intervention/consultation meetings

- How many minutes per week (average) do you spend in consultation or IAT meetings?
- Number of meetings \( \times \) minutes for each = \( N \)

Calculating Workload: Step 2
Minutes per year spent doing email, parent conferences, SSI paperwork, etc.

- Estimate the time per year spent in miscellaneous contact with outside agencies and parent conferences = \( N \).

Calculating Workload: Step 2
Number of progress reports/interims per year

- How many do you do a year of each for your caseload?
Calculating Workload: Step 2
Minutes per week for planning, making materials, programming devices.

- According to paragraph (A)(9) of rule 3301-35-05 of the Administrative Code, a full-time SLP should have **200 minutes per week for this N.**

Calculating Workload: Step 2
Minutes per week spent for Medicaid documentation

See standard values for a FTE SLP for how many minutes per week for a full-time caseload is the standard value. This standard value X FTE is the N for this value.

Calculating Workload: Step 2
Minutes per week spent in travel between buildings

- How many minutes per week are spent traveling between buildings? This N should be an average.

Calculating Workload: Step 2
Minutes per year for professional development

- What is the average number of days spent away from your building for PD? Multiply this by 7 ½ hours/day and this is the N for this value.
Calculating Workload: Step 2
Minutes per week for lunch periods

- How many lunch periods are spent at this school or by this SLP?
  - If a school has 6 days of SLP service, that would be 6 lunch periods.
  - SLPs are entitled to a lunch period during every work day.

Calculating Workload: Step 2
Minutes per week for building duties

- How many minutes per week is the SLP responsible for building duties, i.e. lunch room, arrival, dismissal, etc.

Calculating Workload: Step 2
Minutes per week mentoring/supervising

- How many minutes per week is the SLP responsible for mentoring/supervising another SLP (CFY/PEY)?

Calculating Workload: Step 3

- Collect data and plug it into an Excel spreadsheet to come up with workload minutes per week for each building.
- Excel formulas take all of the numbers and calculate them into minutes per week for the building.
Calculating Workload for Sharpsburg: Step 3

Jess C. and Barb M. sent these combined numbers for Sharpsburg Elementary.

Calculating Workload for Holly

Verifying one SLP’s current caseload to determine workload equivalency.

Workload equivalency=1.286

Calculating Caseload: Step 4

- SLPs submitted their current case lists each spring with projections of which students will be discontinued, change placement, graduating, change schools, etc.
- Case lists were arranged by building according to these projections.
- Students with primary disability of multiple disabilities, hearing impairment, autism, or orthopedic/other health impairments (major) were counted as 1.6 toward a maximum of 80 per SLP.

Calculated Projected Weighted Caseload for Sharpsburg 2014-15
Calculated Caseload for Holly

Weighted 1.6 according to regs

Quantified SLP Workload and Caseload for Sharpsburg 2013-14

How was this data used by these districts/SLPs to provide effective and efficient services for 2014-15?

- Make decisions about amount of SLP service needed for 2014-15 in each building.
- Make changes to streamline workload.
- Design strategies for decreasing workload and working more efficiently.

Strategies for Streamlining SLP Workload

- Provide clerical assistance for scheduling meetings and sending out paperwork.
- No committee work required of SLPs.
- SLPs not required to attend building staff meetings if not pertinent.
- Agendas sent out for meetings and stick to it.
- Co-teaching with a gen ed or special ed teacher.
- Cluster screening events so minimal service time is missed.
- Form a diagnostic team to cut down on SLP evaluation time.
- Doodle to schedule meetings at a time that direct service does not need to be cancelled.
- SLPs do NOT have to attend entire/any of IEP meeting if they are related service.
- Problem-solve and consult only for RtI for speech-language concerns.
- Word process progress reports/cut/paste & print all at one time rather than use Progress Book, it's complex and slow.
- Format PR-01 to reuse at various meetings but remember to individualize per student/meeting.
- Others?
Resources

- “Caseload Ratio Study: Final Report to the Ohio Department of Education” (Carlin, Charles H. et al., September 30, 2013)
- “Ohio’s Caseload Ratio Project: The Results, The Implications, and Where Do We Go from Here?” (Carlin, Charles H. and Bernadette Laughlin, OSHLA Annual Convention, March 13, 2014)