Minnesota Department of Education

Time-Study Sampling

Instructions and Rationale for Completing Forms

The time-study sampling is for individual staff members who, in addition to special education assignments, have regularly assigned duties that are not eligible for reimbursement with special education funds. Typically, they are school nurses, social workers, school counselors, psychologists, cultural liaisons, and teachers. In other words, this form is for those who work with general education and special education students. This worksheet is not to be completed by those personnel who work full time in special education and have no regularly assigned duties other than special education and related services.

Some teachers, counselors, therapists, and others have general and special education assignments in the school. If the assignment of these teachers and therapists is on a scheduled basis, then the time dedicated to special education or related services may be claimed without a time-study sample. If the teacher or therapist is on a flexible schedule, then the time-study sample will be required. For example, if a speech therapist provides phonetic language services to a kindergarten class each morning for a specific amount of time, then the therapist would not need to have a time-study sample. However, if the same phonetic language services are scheduled by the classroom teacher and it is a flexible schedule, then the time-study sampling procedures would be required.

Services that school nurses, social workers, counselors, and psychologists normally provide to all students as a part of their duties cannot be claimed as special education and related services, regardless of whether they are listed on an individual education program (IEP). Only those related services which enable a student to benefit from his/her special education and which are over and above the services normally provided to general education students are reimbursable. Because school personnel, especially those working in the related services area, perform general and special education duties, it is advisable for each staff member to have a series of time-study samples to document the time they work in reimbursable special education activities.

Services such as screening, first aid, student intakes, attendance issues, instruction to students without IEPs, and so on that are normally provided to all students as a part of a school employee's duties, cannot be claimed on the time-study sampling as a special education or related service regardless of whether they are listed on the IEP. It is important to note the actual time worked that particular day will be used to create a ratio of the number of minutes of services available to the services provided for students with disabilities.

The time-study form (side two) allows the employee to record the time spent on various activities so as to determine the portions that are reimbursable as special education or related services that are being provided by "essential personnel" as defined by Minnesota Rule 3525.1310. The employee is to record the amount of time spent in each of those activities during the week of the time-study sample as well as the number of minutes worked that day.

Side one of the time-study sampling allows the documentation of special education reimbursable time when the teacher or other service provider is working with both general and special education students. This form can also be used during monitoring as verification for special education or related services provided to students who do not have this service documented on the students' IEPs.

The time-study sample should be completed four to five times per year. These samples should be equally spaced throughout the year (for example: September, November, January, March, and May). The frequency can be determined by the mobility of the student population. The duration of the sample is for five consecutive full workdays.

Side two of the time sampling can be done in several ways; namely:

- Record an activity from the list (1-7) with a tally system in 10-minute increments
- Log time for every procedure
- Keep a diary of activities and assign time accordingly

Summarize the time in minutes under each of the functions on the worksheet. It is also important to note the total minutes worked in the workday.

To compile the information on side two and have a total number of hours to report for special education services, follow the procedures listed below:

1. Total time down and across on the worksheet (please be sure the total is the same for the total column and row).
2. Average the time samples to get an average number of minutes per week.
3. Convert the minutes to hours by dividing by 60.
4. Multiply the hours per week for special education services, times the number of weeks in a contract year.
5. Divide the total special education time by the total time worked. This will create a ratio, which will account for the portion of the day you spent providing reimbursable services to children with disabilities.

The staff member needs to complete side one of the time sampling worksheet if direct, face-to-face services are provided to students. In other words, if the staff member indicated time on side one, line 4, "Instruction or related and support services," the individual should complete side two. The numbers of general and special education students create a ratio of eligible time to be claimed on EDRS. If there are entries on side one and side two, then the data must be consolidated to a single FTE. Enter the minutes of direct eligible services (side two) on the line on the bottom of side one. This will be the FTE that can be used for this time sampling.

The FTEs from all the time samplings completed in a school year are then averaged to get an FTE for the special education reimbursable time for this employee. The average of the samplings is the time worked in special education and may be reported on EDRS for reimbursement.

The use of a school nurse, cultural liaison, psychologist, social worker, and so on, assigned to a separate site special education program is reimbursable for the portion of the time the personnel are assigned to the building or program. The general reimbursement of these related services personnel is only for separate sites and not just to a program, unless it is a block of time when they are assigned to a special education program exclusively. Again, in cases where the person is not assigned full-time to a special education program or site, the personnel must complete a time-study sample to document the time spent in special education for reimbursement purposes.

School health service is one area where there is a need to assure that the time being reported for reimbursement is documented with time-study samples. If there is a documented need for the health care services in an IEP and there is a statement(s) of adaptations or a listing on the Service Grid of the IEP, then the individual who is providing the health care service is reimbursable. A licensed school nurse or a nurse licensed by the Board of Nursing may deliver health care services. The district will have to have on file the appropriate Board of Nursing licensure for the individual health care provider. If this individual, who is not licensed by the Minnesota Department of Education as a school nurse and doing nursing service, is also acting as a school nurse by doing the duties of a school nurse in the district, then it would be an ethics issue that would have to be addressed. The health care services provided as listed in the students IEP would be reimbursable, however.

The Minnesota Department of Education will look at both time study logs and IEPs during the fiscal monitoring process. In certain cases, IEPs will be reviewed to assure that they support the needs for the services being provided.