TN Department of Education

MEMO

TO: Special Education Directors
FROM: Theresa Nicholls
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DATE: November 9, 2017
SUBJECT: Writing IEP Services to Reflect the Use of Special Education Aides

Context
The statewide special education data management system, EasyIEP, is revised each summer based on feedback from the EasyIEP task force and policy changes. In the summer of 2017, related services listed in the system dropdown menu were revised. Prior to the system updates, there were four different options for aide services under the related services section of EasyIEP: *ancillary attendant*, *ancillary other*, *ancillary interp*reter, and *aide in the regular education setting*. The array of options led to confusion about when to select which option and often caused incorrectly reflected services.

All four of these aide services were intended as **one-on-one or one-on-two support** to specified students with disabilities, **provided in the general education setting**. In practice, however, these services were often selected in EasyIEP when a classroom aide was supporting more than two students, and in some cases, in the special education setting. As a reminder, decisions about related services, including one-on-one or one-on-two aides in the general education setting, should be determined by the IEP team and be based on what services are necessary for a student to benefit from education.

Please note that unless a student requires one-on-one or one-on-two aides for more than 20 hours per week, **this service is not funded**. As a result, students who do not require the intensive support of a one-on-one or one-on-two aide but instead need classroom support for a handful of classes each week do not receive funding when aide-related services are written for less than 20 hours per week.

Revisions to EasyIEP
The department condensed the four aide services into two categories in the related services dropdown menu to minimize confusion and misreporting in EasyIEP. The two categories are a*ide in the general education setting* and *sign language interpreter*. **The former should only be selected when an aide is providing one-on-one or one-on-two support in the general education setting.** If special education setting is selected for this service, it will result in an error that must be corrected to finalize the IEP.

In addition, the department developed a new service under the direct special education services dropdown menu: *aide in the special education setting*. Much like the new related service of *aide in the general education setting*, this new direct service should be reserved for students who are receiving one-on-one or one-on-two support from an aide in the special education setting. If general education setting is selected for this service, it will result in an error that must be corrected to finalize the IEP. Information about these new features can be found in the EasyIEP summer 2017 manual.

Other Types of Aide Services
The department has received questions about how to denote services provided by an aide to more than two students. For example, a group of five students with disabilities may go to Geometry I for core instruction but require support from an educational assistant/aide to effectively access this curriculum. In this instance, this student does not need the direct one-on-one or one-on-two support of a related service like a*ide in the general*

education setting. Instead, this would be a direct service in which the aide is simply a classroom support. Further information about this can be found in the [EasyIEP guidance document](#) on the services page of EasyIEP. Figure 1.1 below provides a flow chart on how to designate such services in the IEP.

Figure 1.1
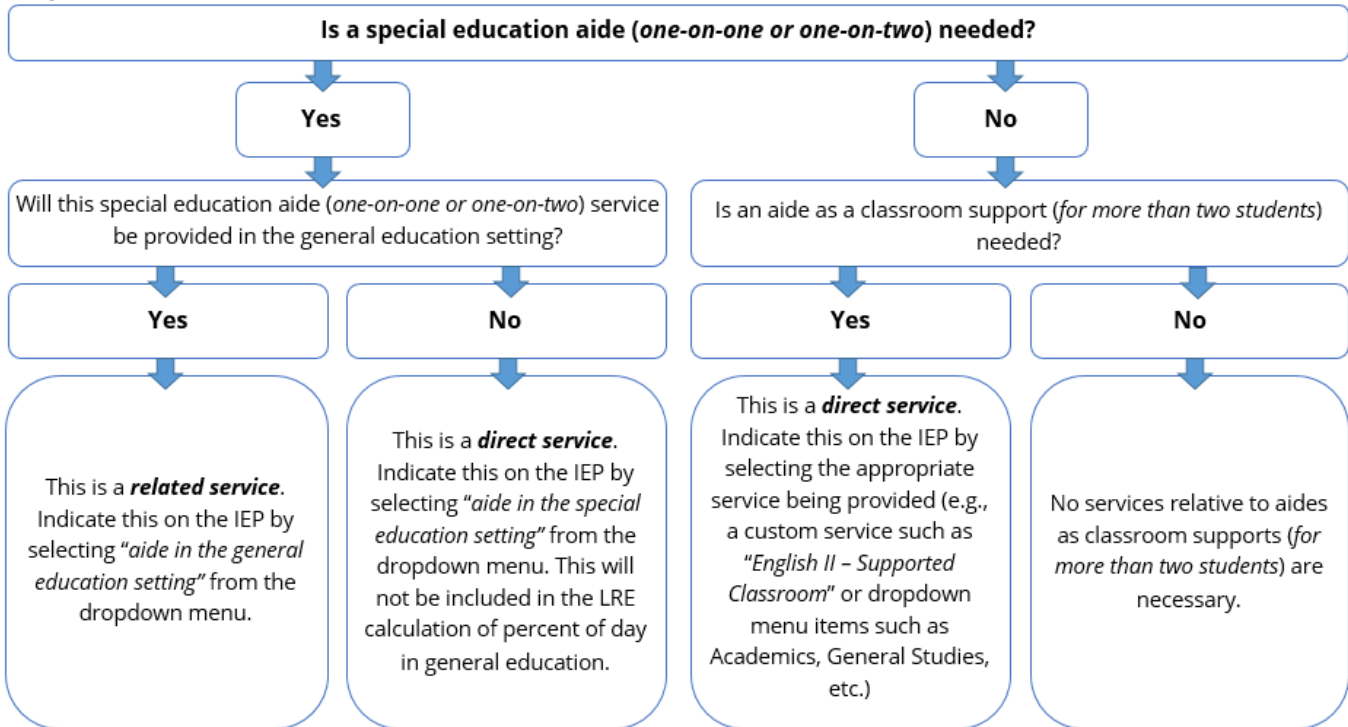
District Impact

In summary, districts will now be able to appropriately code in EasyIEP the students requiring the most intensive supports to help them access content. With the addition of error checks based on the where services are offered, miscoding will be reduced. The addition of the *aide in the special education setting* service in the dropdown menu for direct special education services will now ensure that one-on-one or one-on-two aides in the special education setting are reflected in the IEP, and funding can be generated for these services. Note that this particular service will be excluded from the least restrictive environment calculation that assesses percentage of time in the general education setting, as this service runs concurrently with another service in the special education setting.

For questions about entering services in the EasyIEP system, please contact Rachel.Wilkinson@tn.gov or post a message to the EasyIEP message board. For specific instructional questions about the use of these services, please contact Blake.Shearer@tn.gov.