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SNSP Roundtable Discussion October 18, 2018

Roundtable Participants

- Sharon Wallace and Matt Vahl, Immanuel Lutheran School in Brookfield – Serves 24 students and is in its 3rd year of the program
- Ellen Heiden and Dennel Meinzer, LUMIN Schools – Serves 16 students and is in its 3rd year of the program
- Mike Derrick, Mary Queen of Saints Catholic Academy – Serves 2 students and is in its 1st year of the program
- Lori Sager, Messmer Catholic Schools – Serves 4 students is in its 1st year of the program
- Erin Janetzke, Martin Luther High School – Serves 10 students and is in its 3rd year of the program

Topics

Determining Number of SNSP Seats

- To determine the number of seats to offer, these schools looked at their current student population to see which students qualified under SNSP and readjusted based on new incoming students. They started out slow to stay below the surety bond threshold. To ease into the program, some of these schools first focused on registering their high school.

Public School IEP

- For a student that has a qualifying disability, the student's resident public school district is legally obligated to provide an IEP if the parent requests it. If the district is non-complaint, contact DPI at snsp@dpi.wi.gov

DPI Required Reporting and Compliance

- The student application has a lot of paperwork compliance, similar to the choice program. Some of the requirements include providing proof of residency, checking for name consistency, and tracking email correspondence with public school districts.
- The audit is essentially tracking what money was spent on SNSP students. Your auditor will request documentation, be sure to keep careful records.

- The quarterly progress reports, preliminary enrollment report, and 3rd Friday count report are not difficult but can be time consuming.
- A tip found to be helpful is keeping a file per student of their application, progress reports, etc.

Modified IEP/Service Agreement

- These schools include in their Modified Service Agreements information concerning the student and parent's demographic, contact information, nature of the student's disability, student's strengths, parent's concerns, current provided services, and broad student goals. These agreements also include the accommodations and recommendations for the classroom, regular education teachers, and testing modifications. Some schools also list the student's previous test scores to track growth.
- These agreements are a requirement of the SNSP. Parents have an opportunity to acknowledge which services they may be giving up by not enrolling their student in a public school. And schools have the opportunity to personalize these modified IEPs based on what they have observed of the student in their classroom setting over the years.

Quarterly Progress Reports

- These schools use the progress report forms provided by DPI. For some of these schools, the special education teacher or service provider (e.g.: speech and language pathologist) fills out these reports while the classroom teacher fills out the report card. For others, the resource counsellor fills out the progress reports by compiling the comments received by the student's classroom teachers and by meeting with the student one-on-one.

SNSP Personnel

- The SNSP personnel at each school depends on the number of students in the program. For schools in their first year of the SNSP, they have a student services coordinator to handle the administrative tasks and a special education teacher for the educational side; others with small programs choose to work with regular education teachers to implement the recommended modifications and accommodations.
- For more experienced schools with more expansive programs, they staff their program with a student services coordinator to handle the administrative tasks, a nurse responsible for hearing screenings, a special education teacher(s), a speech and language pathologist, and other contracted services.
 - Contracted services, such as speech and language specialists, are helpful because tracking their expenses for the SNSP can be easily done through invoices.
- DPI does not have specific requirements for licenses of specialists, however, staff qualifications are required to be listed on your school's SNSP profile that is published on the DPI site.

Blended Learning Programs

- These schools utilized programs such as Lexia and Raz-Kids for ELA, and programs such as ALEKS for math.

Professional Development

- Schools did not necessarily change their professional development opportunities because of their involvement in the SNSP since serving students with disabilities has always been relevant. Sometimes schools will send their SNSP personnel to professional development conferences specific to special education and will ask them to share their experiences with the rest of the staff.

Model for Delivering Services

- Speech and language services differ from district to district. For school districts that require private school students to be transported to a public school to receive services, some private schools have opted to bring on a contracted speech and language specialist using their SNSP funds. For school districts that offer to provide services on the private school campus, schools have continued to utilize the district's speech and language services and supplement them with their SNSP funds.

Tracking Services and Expenses

- For contracted services, expenses can be tracked by collecting the invoices.
- For shared teachers, expenses can be tracked in two ways. The first is by student count: if a special education teacher has 8 students and 4 students are in the SNSP, the teacher has a classroom that is 50% SNSP students. The second is by time spent: if a special education teacher has more non-SNSP students than SNSP students in their classroom, they may still meet the 50% requirement if more than half of their time is spent engaging with those SNSP students. For this method, the teacher's hours would have to be tracked. (Regular classroom teachers cannot allocate time for SNSP tracking purposes.)
- These schools track their general cost to educate (in aggregate) and add the cost of their additional services that primarily relate to SNSP.
- In general, if the school's cost to educate is less than the SNSP scholarship, then it would benefit you to track these exclusive SNSP expenses. If the school's regular cost to educate is more than the SNSP scholarship, then it would probably not be worth the effort to track these exclusive expenses. Exclusive expenses can include the cost of the surety bond, SNSP enrollment audit, etc. (See DPI's [bulletin](#) on SNSP eligible expenses)

Partial Scholarships

- When a student is determined to no longer be in need of special education upon reevaluation, they receive a partial scholarship which is equivalent to the regular Choice program voucher. This partial scholarship is non-transferable between schools.
- If your elementary, middle and high schools are separate legal entities, partial scholarship SNSP students will not be able to transfer their scholarship from elementary to middle school/ middle school to high school.

Transfers

- If a student is already on the SNSP at another school, they can [transfer](#) their SNSP scholarship to your school, unless a district re-evaluation determines they are no longer in need of special education services.

- Students needing to transfer for the upcoming year (e.g. middle school to high school) will need to wait until SNSP transfer applications are available on July 1st. If the student's re-evaluation is pending, the parent might want to apply to Choice at the new school in February, just to ensure a tuition payment method, in case their child is found to no longer be in need of special education services.)

SNSP Continuance

- There is no re-enrollment required for students in the SNSP who stay at your school. They remain enrolled in the SNSP until the parent provides written notification that they are pulling their child out or if they age-out of the program or graduate high school.

Mid-Year Applicants

- Once your school is in the SNSP, students can apply for the program at any time throughout the year. Once their eligibility is verified (IEP/district services plan), then they are to be included in your next enrollment report to DPI. However, no scholarship money will be provided for the student until they are reported on a count date AND have their signed modified IEP/service agreement on file.

This means that it is possible for a student to get accepted for the SNSP but receive no SNSP money for that semester if they apply after the count date. For instance, a choice student could receive a voucher for the first semester and then convert to SNSP for second semester funding.

Benefits of Joining the SNSP

- With the additional funding received through the SNSP, these schools have been able to provide more services and service more students with disabilities.
- Schools are more motivated to seek out additional resources now that funding is available (e.g. private practice speech vendors)
- Most importantly, the SNSP students have grown in their confidence and have experienced success through the program.
- This program has allowed for special education students and the school's traditional students to benefit from experiencing a more diverse school environment.