

SHAPING 4J'S FUTURE
Special Education
FOCUS GROUP REPORT: DECEMBER 2006

INTRODUCTION

As a part of District 4J's strategic planning process, "Shaping the Future," eight focus groups composed primarily of district staff met the week of November 13 to begin to address several unanswered questions that will have an impact on future decisions about school size, grade configurations, programs, and location of schools.

The Special Education focus group identified a number of implementation options that could be considered by the district and the implications associated with those options. We also reviewed demographic and enrollment information and instructional literature, and identified the key values and beliefs upon which we based our implementation options. Finally we identified a number of issues and questions that we thought should be considered by the school board, a think tank that will be operated by the university, and the community.

Our group was facilitated by Betsy Shepard, and Jim Watson was our listener/writer. The listener writer was responsible for recording what we said and for drafting this report.

The members of our committee were:

Larry Sullivan, Special Education Director
Jeralynn Beghetto, Elementary Principal, Edgewood Community Elementary
Tim Rochholz, Secondary Principal, Kelly Middle School
Barb Forester, Elementary Regular Education Teacher, Awbrey Park ES
Marilyn Williams, Secondary Regular Education Teacher, Kennedy MS
Marlee Litten, Elementary Special Education Teacher, Gilham ES
Brian Naghski, Secondary Special Education Teacher, South HS
Karen Lacey, Special Education Specialist, Speech and Language
Claudette Eberle, Social Skills Specialist, ESS

We must make a disclaimer: our focus group was asked to focus on a specific topic area, knowing that all of the topics discussed during this process are interrelated and what the district does in one area has implications for the others. The focus group process allowed us to share our discussions with the other focus groups, but each group is submitting an individual report.

A broad based think tank will synthesize the work of our focus group and the other focus groups as it develops a set of integrated alternatives or possibilities for consideration by the school board later in the spring.

SPECIAL EDUCATION STRATEGIC PLANNING OVERVIEW

The Special Education Focus Group based the following report on our beliefs and values. Recommendations stated reflect a group process of research, collaboration and reflection.

We Believe

- Instruction and services should be an integrated and collaborative process as a team - not working in isolation - for the best education of students within a full and

enriched curriculum. The team should include general and special educators, classified staff, administrators, parents, students, district and community representatives.

- The goal is to have 80% of the students on IEPs in the general education setting at least 80% of the day
- Ensure a continuum of services for all students

We Believe

- The instructional and social needs of every child should drive instructional practices, strategies, and interventions. Individualized instruction should be scaffolded to ensure educational and social success.
- Begin with student needs, not programs, to design services for students.

We Believe

- Every child should be given an opportunity to achieve and be held to high standards.
- Early reading intervention
- Strategic, targeted and intense academic and social interventions
- Differentiation for all within the core curriculum
- Instructional time outside the regular school day and year
- All students receive instruction and make progress within grade level content.
- Dual endorsements in core content and SPED.

We Believe

- In creating a climate that is culturally competent and embraces the diverse needs of every member of our school community.
- Diversity training
- Instructional materials and content that are culturally sensitive
- Culturally competent interventions and assessments

We Believe

- Behavior and social skills are important for students' overall success.
- PBS
- Staffing allocated for behavioral/social skills

We Believe

- Educators need ongoing, supported professional development and time for collaboration and implementation.
- Coordinated and integrated at school and district levels
- Cross curricular and articulated through the grade levels
- Mentor and SPED mentor programs
- Team and individual based
- Reduce barriers to collaboration and teaming

We Believe

- Interventions should allow all students access to grade level curriculum, in the least restrictive environment, with SPED as a resource to all students and staff.
- Eliminate the current SPED program models (ie LC, RLC) and base services on the needs of each student

- Integrate special ed services across the continuum in each school
- The goal is to have 80% of the students on IEPs in the general education setting at least 80% of the day

Key Elements

Collaboration

Ongoing professional development

Flexibility

Instructional needs of students should direct services/placements

Accountability--everyone is accountable for all students

Differentiation

4J'S CURRENT PROGRAM MODEL

The 4J Educational Support Services (ESS) Director provided the members of the focus group with a description of the district's current program model. In summary:

- There is a trend toward General Education and ESS administrators collaborating on curriculum and practices.
- New laws and regulations (NCLB and IDEA) – require higher expectations and establish higher achievement standards for all children.
- The Instructional Leadership Team (ILT) support the concept that SpEd cannot change alone. A GenEd/SpEd partnership is required for integration academic and support services.
- Many of our students are not adequately prepared for post-secondary success.
- The dropout rate for SpEd students in 4J is high, both relative to Gen/Ed students and to the expectations for graduation rates of SpEd students.
- The students currently served in SpEd have more service needs (the intensity and nature of disabilities) than students ten years ago.
- Access to and participation in the GenEd curriculum is important, but not enough. Students require appropriate instruction to make meaningful gains.
- District enrollment is declining while SpEd enrollment increasing.
- Many students in regional programs are have extended travel times to service locations.
- Disability trends: a growing number of students on the autism spectrum, multiple/severe disabilities, and students with mental health needs.
- SpEd eligibility groups that are over-represented: African American (especially male), Hispanic, and Native American. Under represented: Asian.
- The results of the Oregon State Assessment, suggest that SpEd students scores in reading and math mirror GenEd in that the meet/exceed percentages steadily drop from 3rd to 10th grades (in SpEd - 81 to 26% in reading, 79 to 14% in math).
- Federal Least Restrictive Environment (LRE) and placement benchmarks provide us with a guide toward how much time we will need to support SpEd students' participation in the GenEd classroom: a goal of 80% of all SpEd students to spend no more than 20% of their time out of the regular classroom.
- The District must continue to provide a continuum of services to meet the needs of all SpEd students.
- The structure of the SpEd service delivery programs include: every school has a learning center (LC) and, in addition a large number of schools have one or more regional learning center - cognitive (RLC-C), regional learning center - for behavior or life skills.

- Placement in the regional special education programs is based on the intensity and nature of the student's needs; it is not made based on the student's disability category.
- 4J SpEd services are exceptional for low-incidence, severe/intense disability students. Although a small proportion of SpEd students (<10%) require a much higher level of services and resources.
- Many students in both the learning center and regional programs would benefit from a wider array of services available at every building.
- Home instruction – the number of students being served in home instruction is steadily increasing and additional resources/space is needed to meet their needs (50% GenEd students, 50% SpEd). The increase in students may be due, in part, to the increase in expulsions and the inability of current services/programs to meet the needs of more intense/severe students, for example, behavioral or mental health issues.
- Demand for speech and language and OT services are growing.
- Funding (06-07) – general fund 64%, federal funds 17%.
- Employee group (06-07) - 48.5% classified, 49.6% certified, 1.8% admin. SpEd services in 4J traditionally rely on program assistants (IAs) and one-to-one IAs as a method for instructional support. The use of IAs may not be an efficient and appropriate (delivery) method for instruction and supports.

Following our review of the District's current program, the focus group brainstormed the implications it had for the following issues. **IMPORTANT:** This was a brainstorm and all ideas were recorded.

- Equity –
 - Location of regional programs may not be equitable to some schools (small and/or dual-located schools may be especially impacted).
 - Most students in the achievement gap are SpEd students.
 - Services are not necessarily driven by student need.
 - State funding is not based on needs of districts.
 - Over-referral of some minority students for SpEd.
 - There is a frustrating lack of GenEd alternatives for non-SpEd students who have needs that are not being met (especially in non-Title I schools).
 - Instructional interventions and SpEd services vary depending on the instructional philosophy of building staff (pull-out only, for example) leading to over-referral and isolated services.
 - Inconsistent SST (pre-referral) processes in the buildings lead to inequities in the level of interventions students receive, under/over identification for SpEd services, and delayed identification.
 - General education teachers who differentiate instruction for SpEd and high needs students tend to serve a greater number of students compared to their colleagues.
 - Students who require support on a Cognitive Regional Learning Center level enter these programs in a reasonable amount of time, whereas the referral/placement process to place students in a Regional Learning Center for Behavior takes more time to complete, often delaying services.
 - Assignment of additional staffing does not necessarily match need (one-on-one IAs, parents who request additional services, parents who don't know what services they might ask for, class sizes, caseload sizes, funding).
 - High school students with behavior IEPs are served in the learning centers because there are no high school RLC - Behavior programs.

- Unequal supports for students transitioning from Elementary to Middle to High schools.
- Open Enrollment, Neighborhood Schools, and Alternative Schools
 - The District does not have the continuum of SpEd services at all sites, so students do not have access to all schools.
 - SpEd students are served in their neighborhood schools, if they do not have access to alternative schools.
 - The impact of a RLC – B/C on a co-located neighborhood school is extreme because those schools are generally smaller.
 - Some schools like Jefferson M.S. with a larger number of transfers-out students that results in a greater proportion of SpEd students in the building.
 - Lotteries for alternative schools are functionally not open to SpEd students.
 - SpEd students can transfer to a program that is less academically rigorous. Can we accept lower expectations for SpEd students?
 - It is difficult for neighborhood schools to plan with enrollment number uncertainties caused by open enrollment.
- Program Staffing
 - FTE for instructional staff for Learning Centers is allocated based on student/teacher ratio criteria. The ratios are high for elementary, middle and high schools. Currently, staffing is based on 1:30 for elementary schools; 1:40 for middle schools; and 1:45 for high schools. Staffing allocations for RLC programs have a lower ratio (1:15).
 - Students vary in terms the amount of time receive services and the intensity of services. The allocation for services based on ratios may not meet the service delivery needs.
 - FTE is not adjusted when students move in or out.
 - No program staffing for music, PE, counseling and library. Staffing must be taken out of GenEd's FTE or eliminated.
 - Non-title schools, in order to serve students who require targeted interventions, do not have additional instructional staff available, and must utilize FTI from GenEd.
 - Use and training of IAs is not efficient.
 - The District is locked into some patterns of job descriptions; for example, one-on-one IAs for a student, rather than program IAs.
 - Classified staff does not have paid time for professional development.
 - Smaller schools harder to staff sufficiently to meet the needs of SpEd students.
- State and Federal Mandates
 - New IDEA and NCLB requirements include: increasingly higher student achievement benchmark/outcomes, restricted identification/placement guidelines, mandates for student participation in GenEd and on Least Restrictive Environment (LRE).
 - SpEd teachers have not adequately informed in changes to SpEd law.
 - A percentage of IDEA funding can be (or will be required to be) shifted to prevention services; however, because of SpEd needs – high ratios and supports targeted for high need students - ESS would not have the capacity to allocate funds for both high needs and prevention services.
 - Can a student be identified if placed 100% in a GenEd classroom? (Yes) What does "specially designed instruction" look like if delivered in the

GenEd classroom? Can the general education teacher deliver this instruction?

- Teacher and District reporting requirements are greater (amount and frequency) and extremely complex.
- No benchmarks for social skills or behavior from the state (we're providing them ourselves in 4J).
- Student Transportation
 - Regional programs require extensive transportation and transportation dollars (buses, taxis, bus tokens).
 - Issues: student time, instructional time, behavior issues crop up by having bus rides, stigma of riding the "short bus" especially in secondary.
 - School bus drivers have varied skills in setting up students for success or failure in school.
- All schools
 - Integration of instructional varies school-to-school (effects transferring students).
 - Focus on skills instruction and not enough emphasis on grade-level content puts SpEd students at a disadvantage in content areas and state assessments.
 - Flexibility in 4J allows innovation and creativity with less regard to instructional and learning outcomes.
 - What happens to funding when SpEd, GenEd and Title share the load?
- High Schools
 - Behavior programs are dropped in high school, but student support needs are still there.
 - Small schools initiative schools are struggling to integrate SpEd and GenEd.
 - Schedule flexibility affects student services and instructional options.
- Middle Schools
 - Schedule flexibility difficult affects student services and instructional options.
 - How can students who are struggling in reading get intense, targeted instruction e.g., "double doses" without missing valuable content?
- Elementary Schools
 - Intensive services students are left without assistance in grades 3-5 (a gap that is not filled by behavior programs).
- Regional Impact
 - Services are not the same across the board. When students move they may get a very different model.
 - It is effective and meets the needs of students that we have services in each region.
 - ESD programs have a different regional approach and aren't necessarily in sync with 4J's philosophy and goals.
 - Does the regional model work for SpEd?
- Other (Including impact on other focus group topics) –
 - Title I – Title schools are able to meet some special needs that are not met in non-title schools (equity). Functionally, SpEd and Title are separate, but schools have the flexibility to work together. Progress in integration varies.
 - ELL – SpEd and ELL have worked more closely together on referral/identification and multicultural SpEd services. This fits with proposed changes.
 - Kindergarten – Our early interventions are not implemented consistently to provide the necessary gains for students.

- School size – Smaller schools are harder to staff for SpEd program staffing.
- Technology – Have begun making the connection with General Ed on some things (TESA, for example) and instructional software.

INSTRUCTIONAL LITERATURE

Prior to the meetings of our focus group, the district asked Betsy Shepard to review the literature dealing with Special Education. She summarized recent research and writings in this area. A copy of that full report is attached. Our group reflected on the research report and our discussion is briefly summarized below and more completely in Appendix A.

According to the research report, keys to successful SpEd programs as they might apply to 4J include:

- Special Education and General Education must work together in any successful model, preferably as a single department.
- Change and collaboration require extensive and ongoing professional development as well as time for SpEd and GenEd to work together in support of students.
- The needs of the student should drive services. Placement in "best-fit" existing programs (such as our Learning Centers) should not determine services.
- Least Restrictive Environment is not only the law, but it is best for students. Services should be delivered in the general education classroom as often as possible.
- Well-designed early intervention is highly effective.
- High standards for all students are a must.
- Small class and caseload sizes allow greater gains.
- Social skills and behavior support are important.

COMMON THREADS OF OUR DISCUSSIONS

- Collaboration
- Training and support for all teachers
- Shared workload
- Flexibility
- Needs-based instruction over placement
- Administrative support
- Early instructional intervention that is targeted and intense
- Identify interventions over disability labels
- Make the job fulfilling
- Differentiation
- Social skill and behavior programs

GIVENS (law or belief based)

- 4J demographics – we do have students who must be served. Students on the autism spectrum, on behavioral IEPs and LD students are on the rise. We will continue to get more intense kids.
- The IEP process is legally defined.
- Least Restrictive Environment – 80% of SpEd students served 80% of the time in GenEd. This is a federal benchmark.
- Continuum of services is a must – from pull-out to general education.
- Need, not program, should drive services.
- Access to and participation in general ed are not sufficient. Progress toward goals is required.

- Schools and the district are held accountable for all but 2% of students reaching benchmark.
- Need for adequate staffing and space.
- District support for SpEd compliance that includes: financial, administrative, legal, training for GenEd and SpEd teachers, reporting progress.
- Need for time to support teacher, admin, workload to support the new model of SpEd.
- General and Special Ed need to be together in all facets (example: the Language Arts adoption.)
- Instructional Intervention Progress Monitoring (IPT team) will be part of our process – we're involved in grants.

KEY COMPONENTS OF EACH SPED MODEL

- Team collaboration
- Time
- Professional development
- Incorporate current best practices
- Effective and adequate services at each building (moving away from stand-alones like Pathfinder).
- All support services provided (speech and language, occupational therapy, autism consultants, etc.)
- SpEd team collaboration time.
- Instructional materials and adoptions.
- 80-80 rule.
- District-wide leadership model (rep council, communication, decision-making, accountability)
- Physical locations for the 20% (meeting sensory needs, quiet)
- Adequate technology

PROPOSED IMPLEMENTATION OPTIONS: Special Education

We were asked to identify a number of implementation options for Special Education based on a range of funding assumptions. First, we were asked to assume that no additional funds would be available, second that some additional funds would be available, and finally that the Quality Education Model (QEM) was fully funded by the Oregon State Legislature.

We were also asked to comment on what implications there were for a number of key issues in the district.

Our proposed implementation options are described below, along with what we believe the implications to be. We have also summarized the values and beliefs that we, as a focus group, operated by.

TOPIC NAME – Special Education

Our Values and Beliefs:

- Instruction and services should be an integrated and collaborative process as a team - not working in isolation - for the best education of students within a full and enriched curriculum. The team should include general and special educators, classified staff, administrators, parents, students, district and community representatives.

- The instructional and social needs of every child should drive instructional practices, strategies, and interventions. Individualized instruction should be scaffolded to ensure educational and social success.
- Every child should be given an opportunity to achieve and be held to high standards.
- Create a climate that is culturally competent and embraces the diverse needs of every member of our school community.
- Behavior and social skills are important for students' overall success.
- Educators need ongoing, supported professional development and time for collaboration and implementation.
- Interventions should allow all students access to grade level curriculum, in the least restrictive environment, with SpEd as a resource to all students and staff.

IMPLEMENTATION OPTIONS	IMPLICATIONS
<p>Funding Assumption 1: No additional funds will be available to the District.</p> <p>Implementation Option: Replace Learning Centers with General/Special Education Integrated Service Delivery</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Eliminate current programs (ie Learning Centers, Regional Learning Centers) and replace them with a service delivery system in which, with appropriate supports, 80% of all students receive at least 80% of their instruction in GenEd classrooms. • Change SST model to use of Instructional Intervention Progress Monitoring (IPT model). • Adopt comprehensive core curricula that are aligned to standards and support IPT interventions. • Build in flexibility to meet the needs of changing demographics. • Adjust the school day to allow time to provide ongoing professional development to support GenEd SpEd collaboration. • Scheduled time for collaboration. • Restructure instructional assistant time to match needs and maximize efficiency and effectiveness. • Build in the flexibility to meet the needs of changing demographics. • Diversity training for all staff. • Staff each region with autism and behavior/social skills consultants. • Staff each middle school with case managers. 	<p>Equity</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> + needs-based will cover more students than just helping those who are identified. + professional development for ALL + moves toward early intervention + restructuring of communication - smaller schools could get fewer services - team could share workload unevenly - program will not survive if adequate supports are not provided - scheduling difficult <p>Open Enrollment, Neighborhood Schools, and Alternative Schools</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> + increase numbers who stay in neighborhood schools - does not consider those in the 20% needing alternative education placements. - it would be difficult to provide flexible funding to address changing needs based on open enrollment <p>Program Staffing</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> + targeted K-2 staffing provide additional academic interventions + sensory room would meet need of ASD students. - K-2 reading intervention staffing could take away from other staffing - by restructuring IAs some jobs could be lost and add to certified workload - the model might not meet intensive needs <p>State and Federal Mandates</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> + includes GenEd curriculum and interventions + would provide early intervention services - it may not provide a full continuum of

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Restructure ESS leadership at the district and building levels. • Create new forums of communication at all levels. • Integration specialist (TOSA) at the district level (modeled on the PBS Coordinator position). • Expand the current Community Living Program (CLP) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Expand number of 4J students in the program ○ Reallocate funds for additional staff to support additional 4J students and the greater intensity of needs ○ Add mental health services 	<p>services?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - there may be reduced money due to reduced identification - IEP paperwork responsibilities could get lost in the team <p>Student Transportation</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> + less money spent on transportation + more students would attend neighborhood schools - or maybe not if there is not enough change - some students with needs in smaller schools may have to travel to get them met <p>All Schools</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> +/- change needs processing +changes the makeup of classrooms + eliminates tracking + could work at every level - no money for required professional development <p>Regional Impact</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - possible over-concentration of SpEd kids in some schools or regions. <p>Other Considerations</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Title I and ELL would become one service delivery team – this contradicts ELLs regional clustering proposal. • Full-day Kindergarten – Gives us access for early intervention but may take more resources if we're funded for half-days in SpEd. • School size – small schools are difficult to staff for 80-20 services and planning of services. The mid-sized schools might be best for our model. • Technology – increased use would help provide needed services. Good to eliminate the lines on GenEd and SpEd equipment. Tech guidelines for all students including those with special needs. • School grade configuration – good match with their recommendations • Facilities – need space for kids on the continuum (sensory rooms) • Professional Development – high needs for all models – ongoing • Contractual/JCAC/EEA/OSEA/EA A considerations need to be taken into account
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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Comprehensive core curricula require dollars for training and materials (General and Special Ed). • Pre-service training - teacher endorsement, dual endorsement, highly qualified staff issues. • Numbers of high intensity students on the rise will take up more of the 20% of students not spending 80% of their time in the GenEd classroom. We are maxed out on CLP – we need more services for these tip of triangle students. • Staffing imbalance (K-2 additions would have to come from somewhere) • Changing the model of service delivery will take more resources.
<p>Funding Assumption 2: Some additional funds will be available to the District.</p> <p>Implementation Option: General/Special Education Integrated Model with Many Needed Supports In-Building</p> <p>Overall SpEd Program Design</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The goal is to have 80% of the students on IEPs in the GenEd setting at least 80% of the day • There will no longer be a ‘Learning Center’ or ‘Regional Learning Center’ or ‘Intensive Service’ program. There will be SpEd/ESS support staff allocated to each building (based on students and needs) that will help meet the continuum of student needs in the building. • The programs would work collaboratively and in support of GenEd instruction and curriculum • The lower student teacher ratio would support teachers designing their delivery model to reflect 80% of the student day directly instructing students and 20% of the time consulting, observing, prep, meeting, etc. • The K-2 teacher will provide intensive instructional interventions 	<p>Equity</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> + multicultural specialist + early intervention has potential to close the achievement gap + case manager second set of eyes that could catch inequities + caseload equity is great - can individual needs be met without pullout - expertise spread too thinly - K-2 staffing based on numbers not need - K-2 focus on reading could reduce learning in other important areas - elementary schools could benefit at the expense of secondary <p>Open Enrollment, Neighborhood Schools, and Alternative Schools</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> + keeps students in neighborhood schools + increased staffing could meet needs currently met in pull-outs and alternative programs - FTE could be allocated to schools that don't have as much need - how are alternative ed students served? <p>Program Staffing</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> + additional FTE for all areas including targeted areas and prevention/intervention + supports students in all settings + allows for flexibility <p>State and Federal Mandates</p>

<p>to Tier II and Tier III students (General. ed. and SpEd) in a prevention model</p> <p>District Level</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The ESS administrative structure should be the same as the GenEd/ Instruction structure (5 Admin.) • 2 FTE for SpEd TOSAs that support ESS administrator needs • 1 FTE for a Virtual School that supports SpEd and Home Instruction students • 2 FTE for District Multicultural SpEd Consultants <p>Regional Level</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1 Autism Consultant per region • 1 Social Skill Consultant per region • Elementary Behavior Consultant for each region • High School Behavior Consultant for each region (Middle School Case Managers would also serve as beh. consult.) <p>All Elementary Buildings</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • •Base funding of SpEd • 1 certified FTE and 12 hours IA = 20 IEPs • K-2 Early Intervention= 1 FTE per 200 students K-2 • Additional FTE based on intensity of student needs <p>All Middle Schools</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Base funding of SpEd - 1 certified FTE and 12 hours IA = 20 IEPs - 1 FTE per bldg = Case Manager/Beh. Consult. (non-teaching position) • Additional FTE based on intensity of student needs <p>All High Schools</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Base funding of SpEd - 1 FTE = 30 IEP - 1 FTE = clerical support per building • Additional FTE based on intensity of student needs <p>Itinerant Staff</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Staffing would stay the same, BUT their roles and delivery model would change 1:1 Instructional Assistants • Staffing would not be assigned to a student, but to a program to help 	<p>+ complies with state and federal mandates</p> <p>+ reasonable level of funding required</p> <p>+ full continuum of services to meet student needs</p> <p>+ provides early prevention/intervention services</p> <p>Student Transportation</p> <p>+ reduces need for busing</p> <p>All Schools</p> <p>+ staffing, flexibility, support for all students</p> <p>+ supports high needs kids</p> <p>+ early intervention</p> <p>+ additional FTE based on intensity</p> <p>+ good student teacher ratio</p> <p>- too expensive</p> <p>Regional Impact</p> <p>+ as there is less emphasis on regions, would open options like changing the number of high schools</p> <p>Other Considerations</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Title I and ELL would become one service delivery team – this contradicts ELLs regional clustering proposal. • Full-day Kindergarten – Gives us access for early intervention but may take more resources if we're funded for half-days in SpEd. • School size – small schools are difficult to staff for 80-20 services and planning of services. The mid-sized schools might be best for our model. • Technology – increased use would help provide needed services. Good to eliminate the lines on Gen and Sp Ed equipment. Tech guidelines for all students including those with special needs. • School grade configuration – good match with their recommendations • Facilities – need space for kids on the continuum (sensory rooms) • Professional Development – high needs for all models – ongoing • Contractual/JCAC/EEA/OSEA/EA A considerations • Comprehensive core curriculum require dollars for training and materials (General and Special
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<p>support a student. The intent is that not any one person would work with a student needing a 1:1 level of support</p> <p>Building Schedules</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The instructional day will be extended daily by 10 minutes so that ‘teacher only’ days are created throughout the year to provide professional development, collaboration and communication between staff, progress monitoring data review, prep, etc. <p>Building Layout</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All buildings will have a ‘quiet space/sensory room’ for students • All programs will have adequate space to deliver services in an environment that promotes student learning <p>Professional Development</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Professional development will given to SpEd and GenEd staff that: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ meets the needs of staff ○ includes follow up on implementation and support (coaching?) ○ includes ALL staff needs (IAs, cooks, bus drivers, etc.) <p>Expand the current Community Living Program (CLP)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Expand number of 4J students in the program • Reallocate funds for additional staff to support additional 4J students and the greater intensity of needs • Add mental health services • Add additional facilities in current program <p>Expand Transition Connections Program</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Expand number of 4J students in the program • Reallocate funds for additional staff to support additional 4J students and the greater intensity of needs 	<p>Education).</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pre-service training - teacher endorsement, dual endorsement, highly qualified staff issues. • Numbers of high intensity students on the rise will take up more of the 20% of students not spending 80% of their time in the General ed classroom. We are maxed out on CLP – we need more services for these tip of triangle students. • Facilities – more rooms for to accommodate reduced class sizes
<p>Funding Assumption 3: The Quality Education Model is fully funded by the Oregon State Legislature.</p>	<p>Equity + all students access any needed resource</p>

<p>Implementation Option: Schools without Boundaries. Services Go Where Needed.</p> <p>School staff</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 20:1 ratio of certified staff to students. • Integrated Special Education services at each level. • The school would be staffed with the specialists and consultants that meet the needs of the students. To meet diverse needs might require staff who are diagnosticians, case managers, behavior specialists, speech/language specialists, school psychologists, TAG specialists, autism specialists, early intervention team members, skilled in progress monitoring, community coordinators, parent educators, counselors, social workers, music, PE, Art, Library, and Technology specialists and coaches in integration of GenEd and SpEd, differentiation, math and other topics. • 3-4 IAs per teaching team. <p>Program Design</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Parent involvement • Quarterly forums (district) • School visits • Program design review team • Year round school • Learning modules for remediation, and enrichment. • PBS • Continuum of services (access to specialists as needed) • Team teaching • Planning time • Collaboration time (provided by program staffing) • Peer support groups (community circle, mentoring, friendship club) • Intense targeted interventions (academic and social) directed by Intervention Team (SST). <p>Ongoing Professional Development</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Monthly training for all, for specialized groups and for study groups. <p>Curriculum components</p>	<p>regardless of identification</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> + provides ample professional development opportunity - a concentration of needs could overwhelm a school and require redistribution of resources on the district level - this kind of model may not apply to secondary schools - this may be above QEM levels, and may therefore require taking from other programs <p>Open Enrollment, Neighborhood Schools, and Alternative Schools</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - shifting student demographics would make allotment of resources difficult to pin down - might require larger schools with stable enrollments <p>Program Staffing</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> + supportive school staff across all needs. + good teacher/student ratio + lots of collaborative time - lots of money - lots of training and creation of new positions - need to recruit qualified and diverse staff <p>State and Federal Mandates</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> + meets the 80/80 benchmark <p>Student Transportation</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> + should reduce transportation costs + special needs students could stay in neighborhood schools <p>High Schools</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - more of an elementary model, would need to be played out for high schools - no transition piece for post-secondary <p>Middle Schools</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - more of an elementary model, would need to be played out for middle schools <p>Elementary Schools</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> + fewer students on IEPs (would approach the 11% goal) + addresses early intervention + great instruction and supports - may require closing small schools to reach economy of scale? <p>Regional Impact</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> + regional approach not required <p>Other Considerations</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Title I and ELL would become one service delivery team – this contradicts ELLs regional clustering
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<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Core curriculum • Differentiation • Aligned K-8 and 5-12 • Social skill curriculum • ELL • Project based • Student interest centered • Student choice <p>District elements</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ESS/Instruction one department • One more ESS administrator per level • Transition specialist for each level • Site based hiring for ESS positions • Rep council <p>Expand the current Community Living Program (CLP)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Expand number of 4J students in the program • Reallocate funds for additional staff to support additional 4J students and the greater intensity of needs • Add mental health services • Add additional facilities in current program • Add additional CLP program <p>Expand Transition Connections Program</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Expand number of 4J students in the program • Reallocate funds for additional staff to support additional 4J students and the greater intensity of needs 	<p>proposal.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Full-day Kindergarten – Gives us access for early intervention but may take more resources if we're funded for half-days in SpEd. • School size – small schools are difficult to staff for 80-20 services and planning of services. The mid-sized schools might be best for our model. • Technology – increased use would help provide needed services. Good to eliminate the lines on GenEd and SpEd equipment. Tech guidelines for all students including those with special needs. • School grade configuration – good match with their recommendations • Facilities – need space for kids on the continuum (sensory rooms) • Professional Development – high needs for all models – ongoing • Contractual/JCAC/EEA/OSEA/EA A considerations • Comprehensive core curriculum require dollars for training and materials (General and Special Ed). • Pre-service training - teacher endorsement, dual endorsement, highly qualified staff issues. • Numbers of high intensity students on the rise will take up more of the 20% of students not spending 80% of their time in the General ed classroom. We are maxed out on CLP – we need more services for these tip of triangle students. • Facilities – Year round requires more cost and AC. More rooms to accommodate reduced class sizes
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QUESTIONS AND ISSUES TO BE CONSIDERED BY THE SCHOOL BOARD AND UNIVERSITY OPERATED THINK TANK

We have the following questions that we believe the school board and university operated think tank should consider as it synthesizes our work with the work of the other focus groups. We've grouped our questions and issues based on the following value and belief categories:

Integrated and collaborative processes as a team:

- We need to make a big shift to ALL 4J staff being responsible for ALL 4J students.
- Restructuring will be necessary to allow the necessary collaboration possibilities.
- When staffing buildings, consideration must be given to the intensity of the needs of some students. Weighted staffing?
- The timeline for combining General and Special Education should be flexible so that schools can do a good job of implementation rather than doing it under a deadline.
- What kind of timeline will be required to bring GenEd and SpEd into one department? When can the funds be combined and allocated by need?
- We must all be responsible for all kids.

Instructional and social needs of every child should drive instructional practices:

- It is important that the needs of students drive the services.

High standards:

- Access, participation and PROGRESS of ALL students in GenEd classrooms must be a priority. General Ed teachers and SpEd students will need SpEd support.

Climate:

- How can we move to quickly implement changes while recognizing that change takes time and buy-in?
- Look for priorities and strands that could begin now with gradual implementation of change – model schools, for example.
- How do we create a mindset of all students being all of our students?

Professional development:

- Professional development that is ongoing is essential for the successful integration of general and special education on the 80/80 model. A district commitment will be required to make sure changes are not made without.
- We should continue to review existing models and practices outside the district.
- What consideration will be given to using the model of schools that are moving in the direction of integration (Awbrey Park, Gilham, etc.)? Will these schools be encouraged to continue to show the way? Will their representatives be able to participate in the entire Strategic Planning process?
- How do we keep the workload reasonable and not burn out teachers (esp. SpEd) and attract quality new staff?
- Professional Development is the priority (ongoing and including ample time).
- A change to year-round schools should be considered to build in professional development and give more continuity to student instruction. (9 week sessions with half-day grading days each 4.5 weeks and 3 professional development days).
- Can pre-service education adapt to provide staff for integrated services? (For example: dual endorsement in SpEd and a content area.)

Access to grade-level curriculum in the least restrictive environment:

- Please consider the needs of the growing population of students on the autism spectrum.
- A comprehensive core curriculum will be required.

Other districtwide questions:

- How can we, as a district, communicate with ODE about the higher number of high intensity students we serve in 4j in order to increase funding to meet their needs?

- How do we balance the need many teachers and staff have to use their creativity to individualize their programs and buildings with staying within district parameters so that a student can move anywhere in the district and receive a seamless education?
- How do we put the upfront support into early intervention without pulling support away from the upper grades?
- How do we bring differently funded programs together to meet the needs of all students (GenEd, SpEd, Title I, ELL, grants, etc.)?
- How do we maintain staffing and funding as we do a better job of early intervention and prevention? As fewer students are identified, funds would go down in the current model and we would be unable to keep delivering the same level of service.
- I believe this SpEd report reflects our strong feelings and should be considered in its entirety - not each element in isolation.
- The 80/80 federal benchmark (80% of all students get 80% or more of their instruction in GenEd classrooms) will push us to change in this direction anyway. It will be much better to do it in a planned, supported, system-wide manner than in a willy-nilly, patchwork way.
- Can incentives be provided for those willing to pioneer the model?

We also believe that some stakeholder groups in the district may identify additional issues. We have listed what we believe those issues may be.

Staff:

- May not want SpEd students in their classes.
- How to differentiate? How to help them progress?
- How to find the time to plan and collaborate?
- What are the workload implications?
- What will happen to SpEd teachers (redefining roles)?
- What will happen to SpEd IA's?

Students:

- Will need skills to be respectful and inclusive to kids with special needs.
- SpEd kids will also need social and behavioral skills to function successfully and feel comfortable in the GenEd classroom. Earlier inclusion helps.

Parents:

- Not with my child.
- SpEd parents want kids in neighborhood schools.
- Learning disability community has concerns about these students receiving fewer services.
- Parents of SpEd students will question whether their children can continue to make gains outside of the LC/RLC system.

Community:

- Paradigm change difficult.
- Teacher ed program changes may be necessary.
- Expansions of CLPs and transitions will impact the community.
- The community is our consumer.

APPENDIX A

SpEd Focus Group Research Discussion Points

- Collaboration is essential.
- Instruction, not placement, is key.
 - Tiered instruction – core and core plus.
 - Working together (see collaboration).
 - High standards.
 - Find ways to allow students having difficulty with reading skills to learn through their strengths at the same time reading skills are being developed.
 - Differentiation from K (or pre-K) on can instill respect for differences and reduce the idea that some kids are "normal" and others are not. (It is normal to be different.)
 - Since instruction, not place, is the key, base choices of place (classroom? LC?) on what is best for the student.
 - Most effective - Best instruction as early as we can get it (reading, behavior).
- Structures
 - Co-teaching – ability and attitude.
 - Flexibility – what does flexible school structure mean for El, MS, HS?
 - Balance of consistency and flex in the district.
 - Literacy coaches (all teachers teach reading – Sunset High School)
 - Class/caseload size need to be manageable to provide differentiation and collaboration.
 - Standardized SST practices.
 - Offer continuum of services across GenEd and SpEd.
 - Blur the edges of SpEd and GenEd when it makes sense (Brian's biology lab for example.)
 - Staff with heavy loads of high needs students might get smaller classes.
 - What would the supports for general educators look like?
 - What should a SPED teacher's job description be?
 - How can we prevent burnout and dissatisfaction?
 - A creative service delivery model possible?
 - Create rich, diverse regular ed classrooms (with supports).
- Support and resources.
 - Professional Development
 - To teach in differentiated classrooms – for both reg and sped. Reg (how to provide instruction) SPED (how to help reg ed provide instruction).
 - Practical – come away with something to use today.
 - A balance of specialized training and whole staff trainings.
 - Teacher pre-service training that gets teachers ready for
 - Burnout reduction in SPED: seeing their part of the big picture, collaborating, seeing SPED as a valued service in the school, etc.
 - Early intervention practices for primary teachers.
 - Training and support need to be ongoing. One shot won't do it.
 - With the assumption that all gen ed teachers want to be successful with high needs students, training that builds the skills, knowledge and confidence to do so.
 - Part of the training model can be in-building – teacher's sharing "tip of the week", etc.
 - General Ed teachers get access to materials to teach the diverse classroom.

- Curriculum that includes differentiation.
 - Access to SPED expertise.
 - Co-planning
 - Co-teaching
 - Pre-service training that prepare SPED and gen ed teachers for collaboration and differentiation.
 - Coaching and modeling important in pre-service training.
 - Hands on internships and experience.
 - Back up with mentoring programs for new teachers.
- Identification (labels)
 - Early is best
 - Flexible identification – transition students out when ready, make changes when we get it wrong or things change.
 - Should not drive instruction
 - "Owning" their disabilities can help some students.
 - Having our "flock" pay for our program is an invitation to over-identify.
 - How should identification look different than it does now?
- Behavioral and social skills are crucial to success.
 - Cooperative learning in heterogeneous groups is important.
 - Middle school students wanting to fit in so badly make MS an ideal place to teach social skills.
 - Set high standards for behavior and use of appropriate social skills.
 - Well-implemented PBS is a big plus.

Discussion points or ideas for solutions outside the literature:

- SSTs shouldn't be SPED driven.
- Flexibility in 4J allows innovation but without regard to outcomes (suggestion: allow flex within defined parameters).
- Larry: "We have to get the ratios down (from 1:30 for elem to about 1:16)."
- Room for EA/IA positions for those with a level of expertise between certified and classified (perhaps an LCC certification.)
- Are SPED teachers working themselves out of a job? Or are we redefining the role?