

August 16, 2010



Dear ARISE Coalition Supporters,

The New York State Education Department (NYSED) is proposing to amend some state regulations that relate to special education for students with Disabilities in New York. They are looking to:

(1) Repeal the minimum service delivery requirements for speech and language.

Currently every student receiving speech and language must get at least two 30-minute sessions each week (totaling one hour a week) when those services are identified as related services only. If their Individualized Education Program (IEP) calls for more, they can, and must, get more hours. Repeal of the minimum hours would mean that some students may receive less than an hour of speech and language services each week.

(2) Authorize school districts to add two more students to integrated co-teaching (formerly known as Collaborative Team-Teaching or CTT) classes.

In NYC CTT/ICT classes have as many of 40% of their students with IEPs. That is a local decision, not statewide, but this change could increase the numbers of students with IEPs in a CTT/ICT classroom.

(3) Eliminate the requirement that students with autism get instructional services to meet their individual language needs at least 30 minutes each day in groups of one or two students, or 60 minutes each day in groups of up to 6 students.

NYSED suggests that their proposals will not significantly impact the quality of special education supports and services available to students with disabilities. However, the department has offered nothing to support that point. No studies, for example, have been offered to show whether the ratios and class size limits we have now for CTT/ICT are even effective and whether students with disabilities in those settings are making sufficient educational progress. As such, the ARISE Coalition is concerned.

Public hearings are scheduled on the NYSED proposals on September 16th for New York City and the Department will be receiving written comments on the proposals into early October. The ARISE Coalition is considering offering testimony at one of these hearings and submitting comments as well. Before we do so, we would like to hear from parents, educators, service providers, and advocates whether and how you think the changes, if they were put into place, will actually affect students with disabilities. Honest explanations of how the changes will impact individual students need to be considered as NYSED moves forward. If you have concerns, we would like to bring them to NYSED through any testimony we present.

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We also urge you to consider testifying or submitting comments yourself. Your words and individual stories and concerns carry a lot of weight. You can see the NYSED announcement [here](#) if you're interested in attending one the City hearing or one of 2 other hearings scheduled.

We are, as always, looking forward to hearing from you with your thoughts and concerns.

Sincerely,

Maggie Moroff
Coordinator of the [ARISE Coalition](#)



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