



Kathe Shelby, Director - Office for Exceptional Children (August 2010)

Caseload Ratio Project Announcement

In early 2008 as changes were being made to the Operating Standards for Ohio Educational Agencies Serving Children with Disabilities, agreement could not be reached among stakeholders on how to improve section (I) of Ohio Administrative Code (OAC) 3301-51-09 on caseload ratios for the delivery of services. This impasse resulted in the formation of a steering committee whose stakeholder members were given the charge by the Ohio Department of Education (ODE) to:

- Gather information about service provider ratios from research, stakeholders and organizations;
- Analyze data; and
- Recommend rule changes to ODE.

After a year of work the steering committee recommended that districts have the opportunity to investigate various methods of calculating FTEs and service provider ratios. In response to the steering committee's recommendation, the Office for Exceptional Children (OEC) requested the State Board of Education to broaden the scope of determining caseload through an amendment to rule 3301-51-09 (I). The resulting rule change enables local educational agencies (LEAs) to apply for the opportunity to develop and implement a plan for the calculation of service provider ratios, so long as the LEAs continue to comply with caseload ratio parameters set forth in rule 3301-51-09 (I).

A project application is available to City, Local, Exempted Village School Districts, Community Schools and County Boards of Developmental Disabilities for one year of funding from the Ohio Department of Education(ODE)-OEC, to develop a plan to provide for an alternative method in the calculation of service provider ratios. OEC believes that this opportunity will generate a variety of methods for the calculation of appropriate ratios which can be used by other districts within the state.

OEC will also be conducting a formal study to determine best approaches for determining service provider ratios. Awardees are expected to participate in the study as part of their involvement in the Caseload Ratio Project.

Applicants may apply for up to \$35,000. A second year of funding for implementation of the plan will be made available contingent upon successful completion of the year one project, review of the second year application and available/continued IDEA Part-B funds.

The application, requirements and procedures are posted on the ODE Web site at <http://www.education.ohio.gov/GD/Templates/Pages/ODE/ODEDetail.aspx?page=3&TopicRelationID=967&ContentID=89821&Content=89821> or go to [education.ohio.gov](http://www.education.ohio.gov) and keyword search *Caseload Ratio Project*. LEAs are encouraged to submit an application electronically to exceptionalchildren@ode.state.oh.us to propose alternative methods of determining caseload ratios for related service personnel and/or intervention specialists by close of business on **Sept. 30, 2010**.
