

Cyclical Monitoring and the Comprehensive Assessment

An Overview

Purpose of the Webinar

- Provide Local Education Agencies (LEAs) an overview of the cyclical monitoring process regarding timelines, content, and completion of the Comprehensive Assessment of Special Education

Introductions

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Topics

- Section I: Implementation
- Section II: Cohort Placement
- Section III: Process and Timeline
- Section IIII: Comprehensive Assessment
- Section V: Resources

Section I: Cyclical Monitoring Implementation

Why did ISBE implement cyclical monitoring?

- Each LEA cohort is similar to the current Differentiated Monitoring and Support 2.0 (DMS 2.0) monitoring system that the U.S. Department of Education Office of Special Education Programs (OSEP) is utilizing to monitor each state.
- In accordance with IDEA and Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA), ISBE is required to oversee the performance of school districts to assess and ensure the effectiveness of efforts to educate children with disabilities as it carries out its roles of leadership, resource allocation, technical assistance, monitoring, and evaluation
- In July 2023, OSEP issued the State General Supervision Responsibilities under Parts B and C of IDEA: Monitoring, Technical Assistance, and Enforcement guidance document, more commonly known as OSEP QA 23-01.
- To ensure all LEAs are comprehensively monitored, ISBE is implementing a six-year cyclical monitoring system in addition to yearly LEA determinations.

Section II: Placement

How are cohorts determined?

ISBE utilizes a risk assessment to determine LEA cohort placement.

Various risk factors that were chosen are aligned under the general supervision system.

ISBE tried to group LEAs within the same special education cooperative in the same cohort.

Section III: Process and Timeline

Notification & Monitoring Activities

- Each LEA will receive two notifications prior to their cyclical monitoring year
 - Summer
 - Late September
- Each LEA in the monitoring cycle will be required to complete all cyclical monitoring activities including
 - Attending required webinars
 - Completing required IEP file reviews
 - Completing the Comprehensive Assessment of Special Education Policies and Procedures
 - Uploading all completed file reviews and Comprehensive Assessment of Special Education Policies and Procedures to ISBE by Feb. 1

Monitoring Findings and Correction of Noncompliance

- Each LEA in the monitoring cycle will receive a cyclical monitoring letter.
 - LEAs with no findings of noncompliance will have completed the cyclical monitoring process.
 - LEAs with findings will be required to complete corrective action steps as identified in the cyclical monitoring report of findings.
- Each LEA that has been issued a finding of noncompliance must:
 - Correct the noncompliance no later than 1 year from the date of notification
 - Complete a Corrective Action Plan (CAP) outlining the root cause for the noncompliance and identify the staff who will be responsible for ensuring the correction of noncompliance is completed
 - Once ISBE can verify that the correction of noncompliance is complete, the LEA will be issued a closing letter, and the cyclical monitoring process will be complete.

Monitoring Year Activities: Notification

- A letter of notification will be sent to an LEA regarding the cyclical monitoring process and required activities to be completed during the cyclical monitoring year. The letter will be sent to the district superintendent and state-approved director of special education.
- The letter of notification sent to the district will include the following:
 - An overview of the cyclical monitoring requirements
 - The name and contact information of the monitoring team lead
 - The name and contact information of the assigned principal consultant

Responsible: ISBE Department of Special Education

Timeline: July 1, 2026

Monitoring Year Activities: Webinars

- Prior to completing the Comprehensive Assessment of Special Education and Individualized Education Program (IEP) file reviews, districts are required to attend two webinars.
- The purpose of the webinars is to:
 - Provide an overview of the cyclical monitoring process, requirements, and timeline
 - Provide an overview regarding the completion of the Comprehensive Assessment of Special Education
 - Provide an overview regarding the completion of the IEP review form

Responsible: Districts

Timeline:

- Intro to Cyclical Monitoring and Overview of the Comprehensive Assessment (districts must attend one session)
 - Aug. 6, 2026
 - Aug. 25, 2026
- Overview of the IEP File Review Form (districts must attend one session)
 - Sept. 10, 2026
 - Sept. 29, 2026

Monitoring Year Activities: Comprehensive Assessment Completion

- Each district must complete the Comprehensive Assessment of Special Education as part of the monitoring cycle.
- Each district will also complete file reviews utilizing the ISBE IEP File Review Form for the ISBE-assigned students. (Students will be assigned based on school year 2025-26 Child Count data for Cohort 3.)
- The district will submit the completed Comprehensive Assessment of Special Education Policies and Procedures, the completed IEP File Review Forms, and the student IEPs that were required to be reviewed by the district to the assigned monitoring team member for review.

Responsible: Districts

Timeline: Return to ISBE by Feb. 1, 2027

Monitoring Year Activities: Comprehensive Assessment Review

- The ISBE monitoring team will review:
 - Each district's Comprehensive Assessment of Special Education
 - Each district-submitted IEP File Review Form
 - A sample set of selected IEPs from each district (approximately five IEPs for each district)
 - The IEP reviews will serve as a validation of the review completed by each district.
 - If the district identifies noncompliance via its internal review, the assigned ISBE monitor will review the IEP to verify if noncompliance exists.
- The ISBE monitoring team will complete a report regarding the findings of noncompliance identified during the review.

Responsible: ISBE Monitoring Team

Timeline: Completed by May 1, 2027

Monitoring Year Activities: Letter of Findings

- ISBE will issue letters to all districts included in the cohort.
- Districts with no findings of noncompliance will receive a letter indicating that the cyclical monitoring process is complete, and no further action is required.
- Districts with findings of noncompliance will receive a letter indicating that noncompliance has been identified and a report that indicates where the identified noncompliance exists. Corrective action steps also will be included in the report.
- ISBE will provide details of the corrective action steps in the CAP approximately two weeks after the report is sent.

Responsible: ISBE Monitoring Team/District

Timeline: Sent to LEAs by May 15, 2027

Monitoring Year Activities: Corrective Action Plan

Submission of Corrective Action Plan (if there are findings of noncompliance)

- Each district will receive a CAP if findings of noncompliance are identified.
- Districts must identify the root cause of the noncompliance and identify person(s) responsible for completion of required action steps prescribed by ISBE to correct the noncompliance.
- The CAP must be submitted to the assigned monitor and approved prior to implementation.
- The district must implement the CAP after it has been approved.

Responsible: ISBE Monitoring Team/District

Timeline: Submitted by June 15, 2027

Monitoring Year Activities: Correction of Noncompliance

- To verify correction of noncompliance, ISBE may utilize data collections, review corrected policies/procedures, and/or complete additional file reviews, on-site visits, staff interviews, etc.
- Once ISBE verifies correction of noncompliance, a letter will be issued to the district closing out the finding and cyclical monitoring process.
- All findings of noncompliance must be corrected within one year after the LEA was notified of the noncompliance.

Responsible: ISBE Monitoring Team

Timeline: Findings must be closed out prior to May 15, 2028

Section III: Comprehensive Assessment of Special Education Policies and Procedures

Comprehensive Assessment

Each LEA identified for the current cyclical monitoring review, regardless of LEA determination, will be required to:

1. Complete this assessment document
2. Analyze their internal procedures and self-report on areas of potential non-compliance
 - Review, collect, and submit evidence of each category within this self-assessment
3. Identify a variety of relevant staff members to assist in completing the different section of this document

LEA Action Step 1	LEA Action Step 2	LEA Action Step 3	LEA Action Step 4
Review all policies, procedures, practices, and associated documents relevant to the regulation(s) identified in each item	Determine if the policies, documents, and processes meet all requirements of the noted regulation(s)	If all requirements of the regulation(s) are met, the LEA team should mark “Yes.” If any requirement of the regulation(s) is not met, the LEA team should mark “No.” The LEA team should then complete the description of the noncompliance found.	Consult <u>23 Ill. Adm. Code 226</u> as needed for additional information

LEA Action Steps

Comprehensive Assessment Focus Areas

The assessment is organized into six key areas:

- Special Education Personnel
- Child Find
- IEP
- Parentally-Placed Private School Children
- Behavior Interventions and Discipline Procedures
- Procedural Safeguards

The comprehensive assessment components are intended to address areas of special education that are not yet targeted through the IEP file review or indicator data to ensure a thorough review during each LEA's assigned cohort.

Assessment Structure: Focus Area and Regulation

Focus Area

- The section title at the top of each page identifies which of the six components is being evaluated.

Regulation

- Underneath the focus area section title is the regulation associated with each component. This directly states the legal requirement that must be met by each LEA in totality. Each regulation is linked to allow teams to read the regulation in its full context directly on the Illinois General Assembly website.

Assessment Structure: Documents for ISBE Review

- The left and right columns of the assessment list the types of documentation that should be reviewed and submitted for ISBE's verification process.
- The team will need to:
 - Locate the physical or virtual documents that target the LEA's procedures and practices that demonstrate compliance in the target area
 - Review the material, in detail, to ensure that the full scope of the regulation is addressed
- If the LEA has multiple documents that speak to the same topic, all items should be reviewed to guarantee alignment.

Assessment Structure: Evidence Summary

- In this section, teams should provide both a concise narrative of the material that was reviewed and a link to a viewable document section, paragraph, or chapter that demonstrates an LEA's compliance.
- If there is one area of the regulation that is not addressed within the documentation that is reviewed, the team is responsible for identifying this within the designated space. ISBE encourages transparency in identification of potential areas of noncompliance to ensure proactive planning for immediate corrective action.

Assessment Structure: Potential Noncompliance

- If **all** requirements of the regulation are met, the team should mark “Yes.”
- If any requirement of the regulation is not met, the team should mark “No.”
 - The team should then complete the description of the potential noncompliance found. Self-identification of an area of noncompliance does not guarantee that ISBE will be issuing formal noncompliance with the requirement of a corrective action item. ISBE will be conducting an internal review of the materials and narratives provided by each LEA and make the final determination on compliance.

Assessment Structure: Review Team

Review Team Signature Page

- The final page of the comprehensive assessment includes a table to list the names and titles of review team members
- This page requires the superintendent's signature to assure the accuracy of the Comprehensive Assessment

Resources

- [Special Education Cyclical Monitoring webpage](#)
 - [Cyclical Monitoring FAQ](#)
 - [A Year in the Life of the Cyclical Monitoring Process](#)