

ILLINOIS SPECIAL EDUCATION ACCOUNTABILITY AND SUPPORT SYSTEM

Differentiated Monitoring and Tiered Supports

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Table of Contents

Introduction: General Supervision System	3
Section I: State Performance Plan/Annual Performance Report	4
Section II: Implementation of Policies and Procedures	5
Section III: Integrated Monitoring Activities	6
LEA Determinations	6
Cyclical Monitoring	6
Targeted Monitoring	7
Section IV: Fiscal Management	8
Section V: Data	12
SIS	12
I-Star	12
SEMS	13
Section VI: Improvement, Incentives, and Sanctions	14
Tiered Supports	14
Section VII: Dispute Resolution	17
IEP Facilitation	17
Mediation	17
State Complaints	17
Due Process	18
Section VIII: Technical Assistance and Professional Development	19

Introduction: General Supervision System

Each State Education Agency (SEA) is responsible for ensuring the general supervision of all educational programs for children with disabilities in the state. The Illinois State Board of Education (ISBE) Special Education Department is responsible for enforcing the requirements of Part B of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) and ensuring continuous improvement via Local Education Agencies (LEAs). In carrying out its roles of leadership, resource allocation, technical assistance, monitoring, and evaluation, ISBE is required to oversee the performance of school districts to assess and ensure the effectiveness of efforts to educate children with disabilities, in accordance with IDEA and the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA). As stated in Section 616 of the 2004 amendments to the IDEA:

“The primary focus of Federal and State monitoring activities described in paragraph (1) shall be on (A) improving educational results and functional outcomes for all children with disabilities; and (B) ensuring that States meet the program requirements under this part, with a particular emphasis on those requirements that are most closely related to improving educational results for children with disabilities.”

ISBE’s general supervision system is characterized by multiple operational components that are interrelated and function in such a manner to form a comprehensive system. The system is intended to improve educational results and functional outcomes for children with disabilities. It also is designed to identify noncompliance and ensure correction of identified noncompliance in a timely manner. To that end, ISBE began implementing its updated Illinois Special Education Accountability and Support System in September 2020. The system was designed to:

- Maintain a high level of compliance with IDEA federal regulations and Illinois Administrative Rules for special education.
- Support LEAs in the process of self-assessment, root cause analysis, evaluation, and improvement of compliance and results-focused efforts.
- Establish a continuous and meaningful process focused on improving academic results and functional outcomes for students with disabilities by connecting local data to improvement efforts.
- Connect system improvement activities with multi-year planning and supports.

The foundation of the updated system was built on the premise of results-driven accountability (RDA) currently being utilized at the federal level. The U.S. Department of Education (ED) Office of Special Education Programs (OSEP) revised its own accountability system to shift from a system focused primarily on compliance to one that is more balanced and emphasizes improving results and outcomes as well. Like OSEP, the updated Illinois Special Education Accountability and Support System provided differentiated monitoring and support using an RDA framework. It was designed to identify potential LEA risk through the general supervision components and to assist ISBE in effectively utilizing its resources to provide tiered monitoring and support to its LEAs. It focused on monitoring for compliance and results and used that information to provide targeted, evidence-based technical assistance and professional development to LEAs. It addressed district-specific needs in the areas of results, compliance, and funding by differentiating levels and types of monitoring and support based on each LEA’s unique strengths, progress, and challenges identified through the eight general supervision components. The updated system complied with special education general supervision requirements and aligned with other ISBE initiatives to support results-based student outcomes.

Section I: State Performance Plan/Annual Performance Report

In accordance with 20 U.S.C 1416(b)(2)(C)(ii)(II) of IDEA, ISBE is required each February to submit an Annual Performance Report (APR) to OSEP regarding the state's overall performance in relation to the 17 Indicators in the State Performance Plan (SPP).

The SPP is developed as a six-year plan that is composed of compliance indicators, including Suspension/Expulsion, Disproportionality, Child Find, Early Childhood Transition, and Secondary Transition, as well as results indicators, including Graduation, Drop Out, Assessment, and Educational Environments. Each Indicator incorporates a measurable and rigorous target for each year of the SPP cycle, and these targets are used as a basis for analyzing each districts' data for students with disabilities. The SPP functions as an accountability mechanism and the actual plan for systems change. It documents quantifiable indications of performance in the priority areas of a free and appropriate public education (FAPE) in the least restrictive environment (LRE), disproportionality, and effective supervision. Measurable and effective targets exist for each SPP indicator with the intention of leading to improved results and outcomes for children and youth with disabilities. The APR is required to address ISBE's progress toward meeting its targets. Stakeholder involvement remains key in the development and implementation of the SPP.

ISBE has ongoing communication regarding the SPP/APR with its primary stakeholder group, the Advisory Council on the Education of Children with Disabilities, through subcommittee meetings and general meetings throughout the year. The role of the advisory council is to advise the governor, legislature, and ISBE on current issues relating to the education of children and youth with disabilities. The advisory council functions as the main stakeholder group for the ISBE Special Education Department. Its members represent individuals with disabilities, parents of children with disabilities, students with disabilities, teachers of students with disabilities, private providers, public charter schools, special education directors, regional superintendents, district superintendents, higher education personnel, vocational/community/ business organization providers of transition services to students with disabilities, the Illinois Department of Human Services, the Illinois Department of Children and Family Services, the Illinois Department of Corrections/Department of Juvenile Justice, and the general public.

Section II: Implementation of Policies and Procedures

Each SEA is responsible for ensuring the general supervision of all educational programs for children with disabilities in the state. The ISBE Department of Special Education is responsible for enforcing the requirements of Part B of IDEA and ensuring continuous improvement via LEAs. In carrying out its roles, ISBE is required to oversee the performance of district school boards to assess and ensure the effectiveness of efforts to educate children with disabilities, in accordance with the IDEA and ESSA.

Operating Standards – Illinois’ special education administrative rules, [Instruction for Specific Student Populations Rules 226 Special Education](#), establish the requirements for the treatment of children and the provision of special education and related services pursuant to the Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act (IDEA 2004) (20 USC 1400 et seq.); its implementing regulations (34 CFR 300, as amended by 71 Fed. Reg. 46540 (August 14, 2006) and 73 Fed. Reg. 73027 (December 1, 2008), no later amendments or editions included)); and [Article 14 of the School Code](#). These rules were originally adopted on August 12, 1976, and were last amended February 6, 2023. They fulfill the requirements of IDEA and its implementing regulations.

ISBE has advised LEAs that the following statutes and regulations are also applicable to children with disabilities:

- All regulations as specified in the Illinois School Code
- Requirements of Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 (as amended)
- Americans with Disabilities Act
- Grant Accountability and Transparency Act (30 ILCS 708/1 et seq)

Model Forms – The Department of Special Education provides information and optional model forms for LEAs to use in documenting special education processes from referral to eligibility. The informational documents and optional forms include the following areas:

- The **forms** required to complete an Individualized Education Program (IEP), including transition, behavioral, and eligibility forms.
- **Required Notice and Consent Forms**, including guidance documents to complete each form.
- Information on **assessments** for students with disabilities, including instructions and guidelines.

These required forms can be accessed in 14 languages on the [ISBE Required Notice and Consent Forms webpage](#).

Section III: Integrated Monitoring Activities

Integrated monitoring activities include the continuous examination of performance for compliance, program improvement, and results. Multiple data sources and methods are used to monitor all LEAs in Illinois. Data sources include the ISBE Student Information System, the IEP Student Tracking and Reporting (I-Star) System state database, and the Special Education Monitoring System (SEMS). Methods used to monitor LEAs may include examining data from statewide databases; conducting onsite and virtual LEA reviews; reviewing LEA policies, procedures, and practices; reviewing relevant documentation, such as student records and IEPs; interviewing LEA and special education cooperative personnel; interviewing individuals knowledgeable about the issue(s) in question; conducting public forums for parents and community stakeholders; reviewing LEA self-assessments; and conducting data verification/desk audit activities.

LEA Determinations

States are required to make "determinations" under 616(d) on the performance of LEAs regarding the provision of special education and related services as specified in 616(a)(1)(c)(i) and 300.600(a) of IDEA 2004. Each state is required to make such a determination using these categories for every LEA within the state on an annual basis. Each state decides what criteria it will use to identify the status of each LEA within the required categories. In making LEA determinations under the Illinois Special Education Accountability and Support System, ISBE considers the following indicator measures of success:

1. LEA performance on State Performance Plan compliance indicators (Indicators 4B, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13)
2. LEA performance on SPP results indicators (Indicators 1, 5a, 6a)
3. Timely correction of noncompliance
4. IDEA Part B single audit findings
5. Timely and accurate data reporting (to be added in 2024-25)

ISBE utilizes data from indicator measures of success to determine the degree to which an LEA is correctly implementing the requirements of Part B of IDEA. This leads to an overall determination for LEAs in one of the following categories:

- Meets Requirements
- Needs Assistance
- Needs Intervention
- Needs Substantial Intervention.

Cyclical Monitoring

In July 2023, OSEP issued the State General Supervision Responsibilities Under Parts B and C of the IDEA: Monitoring, Technical Assistance and Enforcement guidance document, more commonly known as [QA 23-01](#). The issuance of QA 23-01 prompted ISBE to re-examine its differentiated monitoring processes to ensure that the LEAs that were most at risk for needing supports were being provided the most intensive level of support. This examination process resulted in ISBE deciding to add an additional layer onto its current system.

In addition to yearly LEA determinations, ISBE implemented a cyclical monitoring system to ensure all LEAs are monitored. Much like the current Differentiated Monitoring and Support 2.0 monitoring system that OSEP is utilizing to monitor each state, each LEA has been placed into a cohort group as part of a cyclical

monitoring process. Placement in the cohort groups is based on several risk factors that include components from all aspects of ISBE's general supervision system.

LEAs that are identified for cyclical monitoring must complete the Comprehensive Special Education Assessment during their assigned year. This assessment must be returned for review by assigned staff. Information gathered during the assessment may indicate that further monitoring activities will be required. These activities may include onsite visits, classroom observations, staff interviews, additional files to review, etc.

Targeted Monitoring

ISBE also may initiate targeted monitoring of an LEA due a variety of factors, including a high volume of parent calls, high number of complaints, allegations concerning the denial of the provision of FAPE, allegations concerning IDEA noncompliance, failure to correct noncompliance within one year, fiscal noncompliance, and/or submission of inaccurate data.

Section IV: Fiscal Management

In accordance with 2 CFR § 200.329, ISBE is responsible for oversight of the operation of activities that are supported by federal awards. Under that provision, ISBE must monitor activities under the federal award to ensure compliance with the applicable federal requirements and achievement of performance expectations; state monitoring must cover each program, function, or activity.

ISBE must monitor IDEA Part B fiscal requirements, such as an LEA's compliance with IDEA's Maintenance of Effort (MOE) provisions (34 CFR §§ 300.203 through 300.205), and an LEA's expenditure of a proportionate share of IDEA funds to provide equitable services to children with disabilities placed in private schools by their parents consistent with 34 CFR § 300.133.

Fiscal management of IDEA Part B funds in Illinois involves distributing funds to districts in accordance with federal requirements and directing discretionary funding to support areas in the state that need improvement. Guidance and oversight are provided to ensure districts are eligible to receive funds, the funds are used in accordance with the law, and all other state and federal compliance requirements are met. Input is obtained from stakeholder groups made up of representatives from around the state to identify target areas to be addressed with discretionary funding.

	Relationship of Fiscal to Other General Supervision Components
Data	<p>The I-Star System is a web-based system used by ISBE that allows districts/special education cooperatives to input, manage, and approve special education student data. The student data collected in I-Star serves as the approval process for students with disabilities who are claimed for reimbursement under Sections 14-7.02 (Private Tuition), 14-7.02b (Students with Excess Cost), 14-7.03 (Orphanage), and 14-13.01b (Special Transportation) of the School Code [105 ILCS 5].</p> <p>The ISBE Web Application Security (IWAS) system is utilized for all grant applications and approvals. ISBE's IDEA Part B application contains an MOE Eligibility subtab in which LEAs input state and local per capita expenditures and state and local net expenditures (verified by ISBE) from two years prior. They also enter the state and local amount budgeted for the current year and exceptions if necessary. When the Annual Financial Reports (AFRs) are available in the spring, ISBE pulls the data to determine if the districts met MOE compliance by the state and local combined method and state and local per capita method. Districts that show a negative comparison can submit eligible exceptions or can provide evidence of meeting for two consecutive years by the local only method.</p> <p>ISBE's equity and discipline coordinator and supervisor utilize these sources to collect the data:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • IWAS – During the summer, collects the number of students that received services in the previous year and the number that received services in the two preceding years and went on to get an IEP. Additionally, the application collects the amount reserved.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Allocations – Funding and Disbursements provides in the spring/summer. • LEA Determinations – SPP/APR coordinator provides (summer). • Significant Disproportionality Information – Equity and discipline coordinator collects (January).
SPP/APR	ISBE collects SPP/APR data yearly for all LEAs under its Accountability and Support System. In accordance with IDEA, ISBE collects data to determine LEAs that are identified under Indicators 9 and/or 10 for three or more consecutive years. Those LEAs will be identified under significant disproportionality. These regulations require LEAs that are identified by their states as having significant disproportionality based on race or ethnicity to reserve 15 percent of IDEA Part B Section 611 and Section 619 funds to implement comprehensive Coordinated Early Intervening Services (CEIS). States must identify disproportionality with respect to identification, placement, and/or disciplinary removals.
Integrated Monitoring	Information pertaining to LEAs that have corrective action due to noncompliance identified through LEA determinations is utilized when conducting grant application approvals. The grants team is able to ensure an LEA is utilizing funds to implement steps for correcting any findings of noncompliance that were identified through the LEA determinations. If an LEA has not allocated funds appropriately to address the correction of noncompliance, the grants team will follow up with the LEA to learn how it will be utilizing funds to address areas of noncompliance that were identified.
Implementation of Policies and Procedures	<p>ISBE follows the policies set forth under IDEA when an LEA is required to create and implement a comprehensive CEIS plan due to being identified with significant disproportionality. Requirements when a district is identified with significant disproportionality include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Districts must review and, if appropriate, revise policies, practices, and procedures in the area in which they are identified with significant disproportionality [34 CFR 300.646(c)(1)]. • Districts must publicly report any changes to policies, practices, and procedures consistent with the requirements of the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) and its implementing regulations in 34 CFR Part 99 and Section 618(b)(1) of the IDEA. If no changes are made, it is recommended that districts report to the ISBE that no changes are necessary. • Districts must set aside 15 percent of their IDEA Part B Flow-Through and Preschool funds to provide comprehensive CEIS to address factors contributing to the significant disproportionality [34 CFR 300.646(c) and (d)]. <p>ISBE's fiscal management component of the general supervision system ensures MOE requirements under IDEA are met. Funds provided to an LEA</p>

	<p>under Part B of the Act may not be used to reduce the level of expenditures for the education of children with disabilities made by the LEA from local funds below the level of those expenditures for the preceding fiscal year. However, up to 50 percent of the amount of funds received under Part B of the Act that exceeds the amount received for the previous fiscal year may be used to reduce the level of expenditures otherwise required by 34 CFR 303.203. The LEA must use an amount of local or state and local funds equal to the reduction to carry out activities that could be supported with funds under ESSA. If ISBE determines that an LEA is unable to establish and maintain programs of FAPE that meet the requirements of Section 613 (a) of IDEA 2004, the agency must prohibit the LEA from reducing the level of expenditures under this provision. Any district that elects to use a voluntary MOE reduction must complete an ISBE form that is available under the FY25 Maintenance of Effort (MOE) dropdown on the ISBE IDEA Part B Grant Program webpage and submit it to ISBE by a specified date. The use of the IDEA MOE reduction requires the district to expend an equal amount of local freed-up funds on Elementary and Secondary Education Act activities.</p>
Sustaining Compliance and Improvement	<p>Periodic performance reporting is required for IDEA Flow-Through and Preschool grants. LEAs must provide monthly or quarterly updates to the items included in the IDEA grant. These reports are used to verify that deliverables are on track and to ensure changes aren't needed. These changes could include IDEA proportionate share and CEIS funds expended in a Flow-Through grant. The grant team reviews and approves these reports to ensure compliance and improvement efforts are continued as outlined in the original grant application.</p> <p>LEAs are fiscally monitored to ensure grant allocation compliance and that all IDEA funds are utilized to support students with disabilities. If an LEA is not compliant with the rules and regulations set forth under IDEA and/or Office of Management and Budget Uniform Guidance, it could be subject to corrective action and additional integrated monitoring activities to ensure FAPE.</p> <p>For more information, see Program Information and eGrant Application Instructions for Preschool, Flow-Through and Discretionary Grants.</p>
Technical Assistance/Professional Development	<p>ISBE's fiscal management component of the general supervision system provides oversight regarding technical assistance and professional development projects that are awarded through IDEA discretionary grant funding. ISBE's technical assistance system addresses both the timely correction of noncompliance and improved results for students with disabilities via an array of modalities and graduated levels of intensity, from consultation to ongoing coaching and support from ISBE staff and technical assistance providers. Technical assistance centers around a coaching and support network model that is focused on systems change, which supports sustainable implementation of evidence-based practices and employs data collection and analysis for ongoing progress monitoring</p>

	and data-based decision-making. Evidence of correction of noncompliance and evidence of change results in compliance, improved outcomes, and improved capacity and sustainability at the LEA level. Technical assistance can be targeted and provided to identified districts based on data that is gathered. ISBE's fiscal management consultants provide technical assistance and training for LEAs regarding IDEA Part B Grant completion as well as information regarding CEIS, MOUs, and significant disproportionality. Additional resources can be found on the ISBE Fiscal Management web. These resources contain a collection of national and state level guidance documents, rubrics, webinars, and PowerPoint presentations.
Dispute Resolution	Information regarding LEAs that have corrective action due to decisions pertaining to dispute resolution processes is provided to the fiscal team and utilized when conducting grant application approvals. The grants team is able to ensure an LEA is utilizing funds to implement steps for correcting any findings of noncompliance that were identified through the dispute resolution process. If an LEA has not allocated funds appropriately to address the correction of noncompliance, the grants team will follow up with the LEA to identify how it will be utilizing funds to address areas of noncompliance that were identified.

Section V: Data

The collection, verification, examination, analysis, reporting, status determination, and improvement of data is encompassed under this general supervision component. Timeliness and accuracy of data are emphasized. Data is used to identify patterns or trends, evaluate the performance of LEAs, select LEAs for onsite monitoring activities, determine the status of each LEA, improve programs, measure progress, design technical assistance activities, and to ensure the sustainment of compliance is achieved. In compliance with Section 618 of IDEA, ISBE is responsible for collecting and submitting data about infants and toddlers who received early intervention services under Part C of IDEA and children with disabilities who receive special education and related services under Part B of IDEA.

SIS

The Every Student Succeeds Act increased accountability and reporting requirements regarding student academic achievement. ISBE and the IBM Corp. developed a state-level Student Information System (SIS) to fulfill these and other federal and state reporting requirements. Students are assigned a unique identification number. All data to and from the state will use that unique identifier. The use of individual student records:

- Increases the state's capacity to follow a student's progress over time,
- Provides better quality data to drive more enlightened policy decisions resulting in enhanced educational opportunities for all children,
- Reduces data collection burden on schools and districts, and
- Enhances the use and relevance of state data by districts and schools.

Data related the following special education data collection categories is collected in SISL

- Assessment (Indicator 3)
- Discipline (Indicator 4)
- Early Childhood Transition (Indicator 12)
- Early Childhood Outcomes (Indicator 7)
- Exit Enrollment (Indicators 1 and 2)

I-Star

The IEP-Student Tracking and Reporting (I-Star) System is the agency's web-based system for collection of all special education students and personnel approvals and claims for reimbursement. Many data elements are collected to comply with IDEA Section 611 Part B Flow-Through grants for students ages 3-21 and Section 619 Preschool grants for students ages 3-5. The I-Star System also includes an electronic IEP module. Data can be entered and edited using online screens or submitted via batch file processing.

I-Star validates all student entries via coordination and alignment with SIS. A required SIS identification allows student demographics to automatically be populated, eliminating duplicate entry for school districts. The SIS enrollment also will be used to control access to a student's record.

I-Star validates all personnel entries via coordination and alignment with the Employment Information System, which collects and analyzes employee-related information directly from districts. In addition, personnel entries for proper licensure and endorsements are verified against the Educator Licensure Information System, which allows all ISBE associate roles, such as educators, administrators, district employees, licensure officers, and Regional Offices of Education, to operate in one system. Educators

may apply and maintain their credentials online; districts may view information on their educators, upload educator evaluation information, and authorize approvals.

SEMS

The Special Education Monitoring System (SEMS) is a web-based application that serves as the official database for all master copies of ISBE communication and documentation between ISBE and Illinois school districts and cooperatives. This system provides functionality to track critical timelines in accordance with state and federal regulations and provides official data and records for general supervision reporting to OSEP and/or for auditing purposes.

Within SEMS there are separate modules for each area of Special Education General Supervision (Monitoring, Due Process, Complaints, Mediation, and IEP Facilitation). Each module in SEMS has different rules and regulations to adhere to. SEMS incorporated functionality to enable these modules to work as separate entities while still sharing common attributes. Some of these common attributes include districts, students, and potential concerns. A comprehensive database enables ISBE to have an overall view of any general supervision issue that may be a systemic concern or performance area need for improved student outcomes with a school district or cooperative in Illinois.

Section VI: Improvement, Incentives, and Sanctions

ISBE's Special Education Department is committed to supporting districts to improve compliance practices and student achievement for students with disabilities. Supporting improvement and enforcing regulations, policies, and procedures is addressed under this general supervision component.

ISBE determines the status of each LEA on an annual basis and addresses corrective action planning and follow-up tracking of correction and improvement. Ensuring correction of noncompliance and meeting state targets via incentives and sanctions also is part of this component. ISBE uses a tiered supports model to provide an appropriate level of assistance for LEAs. Each LEA is assigned a level of support on an annual basis. Specific activities are required of an LEA that are intended to both ensure compliance and assist districts with improved results. The procedures under the Illinois Special Education Accountability and Support System facilitate ISBE's efforts in:

- Fulfilling its responsibility to provide appropriate general supervision to LEAs.
- Differentiating levels of support for LEAs.
- Allocating resources to address specific need(s) of LEAs.

Tiered Supports

The Illinois Special Education Accountability and Support System model consists of three levels, or tiers, of support to bring about improved student outcomes and assist LEAs with any identified noncompliance. Technical assistance and supports are offered within each tier, and all LEAs will have an opportunity to access some level of resources.

- **Tier 1 – Universal:** Addresses common areas and needs.
- **Tier 2 – Targeted:** Addresses concentrated areas and needs.
- **Tier 3 – Intensive:** Addresses complex areas and needs.

TIER 1 – UNIVERSAL (<i>Support Available</i>)	
Description	Illinois districts that Meet Requirements, Need Assistance, or Need Intervention on their annual LEA Determination.
Activities	Districts with open findings of noncompliance (and corresponding scores of zero on the Illinois Special Education Accountability and Support System Risk Assessment Scoring Rubric) must complete the Corrective Action Plan (CAP) process for the identified indicator(s).
Supports	Universal supports include information and technical assistance resources that are made available to all districts for their optional use. <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Self-assessment (Critical Components Tool for Special Education Programs)• Online catalog of supports/resources (e.g., support projects, webinars, FAQ, Q&A, and other guidance documents)
TIER 2 – TARGETED (<i>Guidance Needed</i>)	
Description	Illinois districts that Need Assistance for Two or More Consecutive Years (NA2) or Need Intervention for Two or More Consecutive Years (NI2) on their annual LEA

	Determination. These districts may benefit from formal action planning to improve outcomes for students with disabilities.
Activities	<p>Districts with open findings of noncompliance (and corresponding scores of zero on the Illinois Special Education Accountability and Support System Risk Assessment Scoring Rubric) must complete the CAP process for the identified indicator(s).</p> <p>Targeted level districts must:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Assemble and convene a district accountability team. • Review data related to those compliance indicators and results elements for which the LEA received a score of zero. • Access state and/or national technical assistance resources and develop appropriate action steps to address the scores of zero. • Submit the appropriate plan template to the ISBE SPP coordinator regarding the technical assistance sources from which the district received support and the actions the district took as a result.
Supports	<p>Targeted supports include a series of options that are available to LEAs that may assist with implementation of any objective(s) to enhance policies, programs, services, and/or systems.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Individual or small group support • CAP technical assistance • Virtual conferencing support • Online state and national technical assistance resources • Self-assessment (Critical Components Tool for Special Education Programs) • Online catalog of supports/resources (e.g., support projects, webinars, FAQ, Q&A, and other guidance documents)
TIER 3 – INTENSIVE (<i>Coaching and Direction Required</i>)	
Description	Illinois districts that Need Intervention for Three or More Consecutive Years (NI3) or Need Substantial Intervention (NSI) on their annual LEA determination. These districts require ISBE direction and coaching to improve outcomes for students with disabilities.
Activities	<p>Districts with open findings of noncompliance (and corresponding scores of zero on the Illinois Special Education Accountability and Support System Risk Assessment Scoring Rubric) must complete the CAP process for the identified indicator(s).</p> <p>Intensive level districts must:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Assemble and convene a district accountability team. • Review data related to those compliance indicators and results elements for which the LEA received a score of zero or one and conduct a root cause analysis to address identified need(s). • Access intensive support resources and develop appropriate action steps. • Submit a combined Corrective Action Plan and Improvement Plan to the assigned ISBE special education consultant (due October 16, 2024) that addresses both compliance-based issues and results-based issues and identifies what actions the district will implement as a result of the finding(s) of noncompliance and low performance scores.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • LEAs will be required to work with the <u>Illinois Elevating Special Educators Network</u> as part of the technical assistant component requirement under the Needs Intervention process. • Complete two formal progress report reviews and submit them to the assigned ISBE special education consultant to verify district plan implementation. (Due February 28, 2025, and May 31, 2025.) • Build sustainability and continued improvement capacity.
Supports	<p>Intensive supports are administered with the intent to provide appropriate resources for LEAs to comply and implement IDEA requirements for students with disabilities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Required for a small number of districts • Sustained district engagement • Individual district coaching required • Small group support, as applicable (e.g., Community of Practice) • Comprehensive onsite/virtual review and support • Assistance with data review and analysis • CAP technical assistance – compliance indicators • Improvement planning support – results indicators • Virtual conferencing support • Online state and national technical assistance resources • Self-assessment (Critical Components Tool for Special Education Programs) • Online catalog of supports/resources (e.g., support projects, webinars, FAQ, Q&A, and other guidance documents) • Refer the matter for appropriate enforcement action to another ISBE department, special conditions on funding, redirect funding, and/or withhold funding (in whole or in part) (NSI ONLY)

Section VII: Dispute Resolution

ISBEs dispute resolution processes fulfill the requirements of IDEA and includes addressing timely resolution, tracking issues for patterns and trends, and evaluating effectiveness and sustainability. Dispute resolution options include:

IEP Facilitation

This process helps foster effective communication between parents and districts as they develop a mutually acceptable Individualized Education Program. It may be used as a preventative measure in which a trained facilitator promotes whole team participation, acknowledging and addressing differing opinions in a respectful and neutral manner. IEP facilitation can improve relationships between school districts and parents to effectively plan services to meet the needs of the student.

- State-sponsored IEP facilitation is a free service offered to districts and parents of students with disabilities. There is no cost for this service, and ISBE will not pay for any costs of the parties associated with the facilitated IEP meeting (e.g., mileage, meals, wage loss, advocate fees, attorney fees, etc.).
- The IEP facilitation process is intended to promote effective communication and prevent conflicts. Therefore, a conflict does not need to exist to make a request. However, if a conflict is likely or occurring, a request is still appropriate.
- Both parties will need to agree that it would be valuable to have a neutral facilitator present at the IEP meeting to assist with the development of the IEP before a facilitator will be assigned to the case.

Mediation

Illinois' mediation service is administered and supervised by the Illinois State Board of Education and is provided at no cost to the parties. Mediation can be requested by both parties without filing for due process hearing or can be requested after a due process request has been filed. Mediation is:

- Designed as a means of resolving disagreements regarding special education services, placement, and related services to children enrolled in Illinois public schools; and
- Provided when both parties in a dispute voluntarily agree to participate in the mediation process.

In mediation, neither party is asked to abandon basic beliefs about the student's ability but rather the parties are asked to consider alternatives which could be incorporated into the student's program, to be aware of the concerns and problems expressed by the other party, and to be realistic about both the student's capabilities and the local district's obligations and resources.

State complaints

The State Special Education Complaint investigation process is a procedure that is established under both federal and state special education laws and rules. In a state complaint, a person who has knowledge of the educational issues concerning the child may file a written, signed complaint. The complaint must identify the child (or in some cases children), the facts that have led to the dispute, and the suggestions for how the situation needs to be fixed.

- Within 60 days after a valid complaint is filed, ISBE will carry out an independent investigation to gather information and an onsite visit will be conducted, if necessary. An extension of time to complete the investigation shall be allowed if exceptional circumstances exist, or if the parent and school district agree to extend the timeline to engage in mediation or other alternate means of dispute resolution (e.g., local resolution, IEP facilitation, etc.).
- The individual filing the complaint has the opportunity to submit additional information about the allegations of the complaint, either orally or in writing.
- The public agency has an opportunity to respond to the complaint, including a proposal to resolve the complaint and an opportunity for the parent who has filed a complaint and the public agency to voluntarily engage in mediation.
- ISBE will review all relevant information and make an independent determination whether the public agency is violating a requirement of federal or state special education regulations.
- ISBE will issue a written decision to the individual filing the complaint that addresses each allegation and contains (a) findings of fact and conclusions, (b) the reasons for its decision, and (c) orders for any actions necessary to bring the public agency into compliance with federal or state requirements. If the local school district or the special education cooperative does not verify compliance with ISBE, additional enforcement proceedings may occur.

Due process

Due process is a formal hearing that occurs if a parent (or occasionally a district) files a due process “complaint” requesting a due process hearing. The hearing may involve attorneys and advocates for each side and will result in a legally binding, written decision that can be appealed to a court of law.

Data collected through effective dispute resolution processes may trigger targeted monitoring of districts due to specific findings of noncompliance.

	Relationship of Dispute Resolution to Other General Supervision Components
Data	<p>The Special Education Monitoring System is the Department of Special Education’s web-based system for tracking the required dispute resolution data under Section 618 of IDEA Part B Dispute Resolution Survey. The data collected includes the percentage of hearing requests that went to resolution sessions that were resolved through resolution session settlement agreements and the percentage of mediations held that resulted in mediation agreements.</p> <p>Data also is tracked and analyzed to identify which dispute resolution options are utilized most frequently. This information can be helpful when identifying which dispute resolution process is requested and/or utilized most as well any dispute resolution process that may need to be promoted more. For example, if the number of state complaints is on the rise and the number of IEP facilitation cases is falling, this could indicate that more attention needs to be given to providing information about all the areas of dispute resolution that are available.</p> <p>Data regarding which dispute resolution processes are being requested from which regions also are analyzed. This data is important to drive how information regarding these processes is shared. It also could indicate the need for more training and support for parents/guardians as well as collaboration with our state Parent Training and Information Centers.</p>

SPP/APR	Indicator 15 (Resolution Sessions) and Indicator 16 (Mediation) relate directly to dispute resolution. Section 618 of IDEA Part B specifies that each state is required to collect and submit data that provides information on the dispute resolution processes.
Integrated Monitoring	<p>Communication between the dispute resolution team and the monitoring team is ongoing to ensure correction and compliance is completed within LEAs designated as either NA2, NI2 and NI3. Communication begins once designations are assigned. A cross referencing process of those districts assigned an NA2 and/or NI designation is completed between the dispute resolution team and the monitoring team. Information shared is utilized during the entire NA2 and NI monitoring process. Additionally, if new state complaints and/or due process cases are filed for districts currently under monitoring, that information will be shared with the assigned monitor for that LEA.</p> <p>Systemic issues identified during complaint investigations also could trigger targeted monitoring activities to commence. These activities could include onsite visits, expanded file reviews, interviews with staff and/or review of current procedures and policies related to special education.</p>
Implementation of Policies and Procedures	State complaint investigations help to identify if a violation did occur in regard to correctly implementing rules and regulations found under IDEA. These investigations are conducted, and a decision is provided. If an LEA is found to have an IDEA violation due to the implementation of the policies and procedures, corrective action steps will be assigned and monitored to ensure that the correction of the noncompliance is completed in a timely fashion.
Sustaining Compliance and Improvement	State complaint and due process findings that require corrective action are monitored to ensure verification of correction of noncompliance has occurred in a timely fashion. Information about noncompliance that is not corrected within the one-year time frame as required is shared and included as a component of the LEA's annual determination.
TA/PD	ISBE's technical assistance system addresses both the timely correction of noncompliance and improved results for students with disabilities through an array of modalities and graduated levels of intensity, from consultation to ongoing coaching and support from ISBE staff and technical assistance providers. Technical assistance centers around a coaching and support network model that is focused on systems change, which supports sustainable implementation of evidence-based practices and employs data collection and analysis for ongoing progress monitoring and data-based decision-making. Evidence of correction of noncompliance and evidence of change results in compliance, improved outcomes, and improved capacity and sustainability at the LEA level. Technical assistance can be targeted and provided to identified districts based on dispute resolution data.
Fiscal	Information regarding LEAs that have corrective action pending due to decisions pertaining to dispute resolution processes is provided to the fiscal team and is utilized when conducting grant application approvals. The grants team is able to ensure an LEA is utilizing funds to implement steps for correcting any findings of noncompliance that was identified through the dispute resolution process. If an LEA has not allocated funds appropriately to address the correction of

	noncompliance, the grants team will follow up with the LEA to identify how it will be utilizing funds to address areas of noncompliance that were identified.
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Section VIII: Technical Assistance and Professional Development

ISBE's technical assistance system addresses both the timely correction of noncompliance and improved results for students with disabilities through an array of modalities and graduated levels of intensity, from consultation to ongoing coaching and support from ISBE staff and technical assistance providers. Technical assistance centers around a coaching and support network model that is focused on systems change, which supports sustainable implementation of evidence-based practices and employs data collection and analysis for ongoing progress monitoring and data-based decision-making. Evidence of correction of noncompliance and evidence of change results in compliance, improved outcomes, and improved capacity and sustainability at the LEA level.

IESE

ISBE's technical assistance system includes the Illinois State Personnel Development Grant, which is called "Illinois Elevating Special Educators," or IESE. The IESE Network is a statewide system of professional learning that uses a comprehensive regional delivery system to serve all districts through differentiated, research-based professional learning and supportive services. The IESE Network provides training, technical assistance, mentoring, and coaching to staff who support students with disabilities with the goal of building seamless, sustainable delivery systems for specialized populations of learners and improving outcomes for students with disabilities. IESE also focuses on engaging families as partners in the educational process and decision-making. The IESE Network partners with Illinois institutions of higher education, Parent Training and Information Centers, the Illinois Alliance of Administrators of Special Education, the Illinois Association of Regional Superintendents of Schools, and the Special Education Leadership Academy to meet its objectives. The IESE Network provides a multi-tiered delivery approach to LEAs based upon multiple measures, including the SPP indicators, special education vacancies, and survey data. LEAs designated as Needs Intervention are required to work with IESE as part of their required technical assistance components. Additional information regarding the IESE Network can be found on the [IESE Network website](#).

Harrisburg Project

Technical assistance is also provided by the Harrisburg Project, a contract funded by IDEA Part B discretionary funds to support technical assistance for special education data collection, including the accurate and timely submission of indicator data. The Harrisburg Project maintains a website that provides live webinar events, recorded training webinars, help snippet videos, user guides, handouts, and the dissemination of ISBE guidance to districts and special education cooperatives. The Harrisburg Project provides training and support on LEA determinations, SPP Indicators and possible indicator findings, and other special education data included in the state's data collection system, which is called I-Star. See additional information about the [Harrisburg Project](#).

In addition, ISBE funds technical assistance projects related to autism, assistive technology, behavior, students who are deaf or hard of hearing, students with deafblindness, specific learning disabilities, transition, early childhood, and collaborative family and community partnerships. ISBE staff also provide technical assistance to the field in all areas of general supervision. ISBE's technical assistance systems

provide professional guidance and targeted consulting to assist school personnel in making use of available tools to build the capacity of their school districts to improve compliance and outcomes. Additional information can be found on the [Special Education Technical Assistance and Professional Development webpage](#).

ISBE staff provide technical assistance related to the SPP indicators through online resources, webinars, and in-person trainings. ISBE's professional development system is implemented primarily through its funded technical assistance and training projects.

These various technical assistance and training projects, combined with professional development, resources, and support by ISBE staff, provide a comprehensive professional development system to ensure service providers have the skills to effectively provide services that improve results for students with disabilities. ISBE's professional development system ensures that training opportunities meet educator and administrator needs, range from early childhood through secondary transition, cover multiple special populations, provide support related to areas such as assistive technology, and focus on academic as well as the behavioral needs of students with disabilities.