

Department of Special Education: *Information and Resources to Support New Educators*

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Purpose

To provide educators an overview of the roles and responsibilities of the ISBE Special Education Department.

To provide educators with ISBE Special Education Department resources.

To provide educators with technical assistance opportunities to support improving outcomes of students with disabilities

Department of Special Education: *Role and Responsibilities*

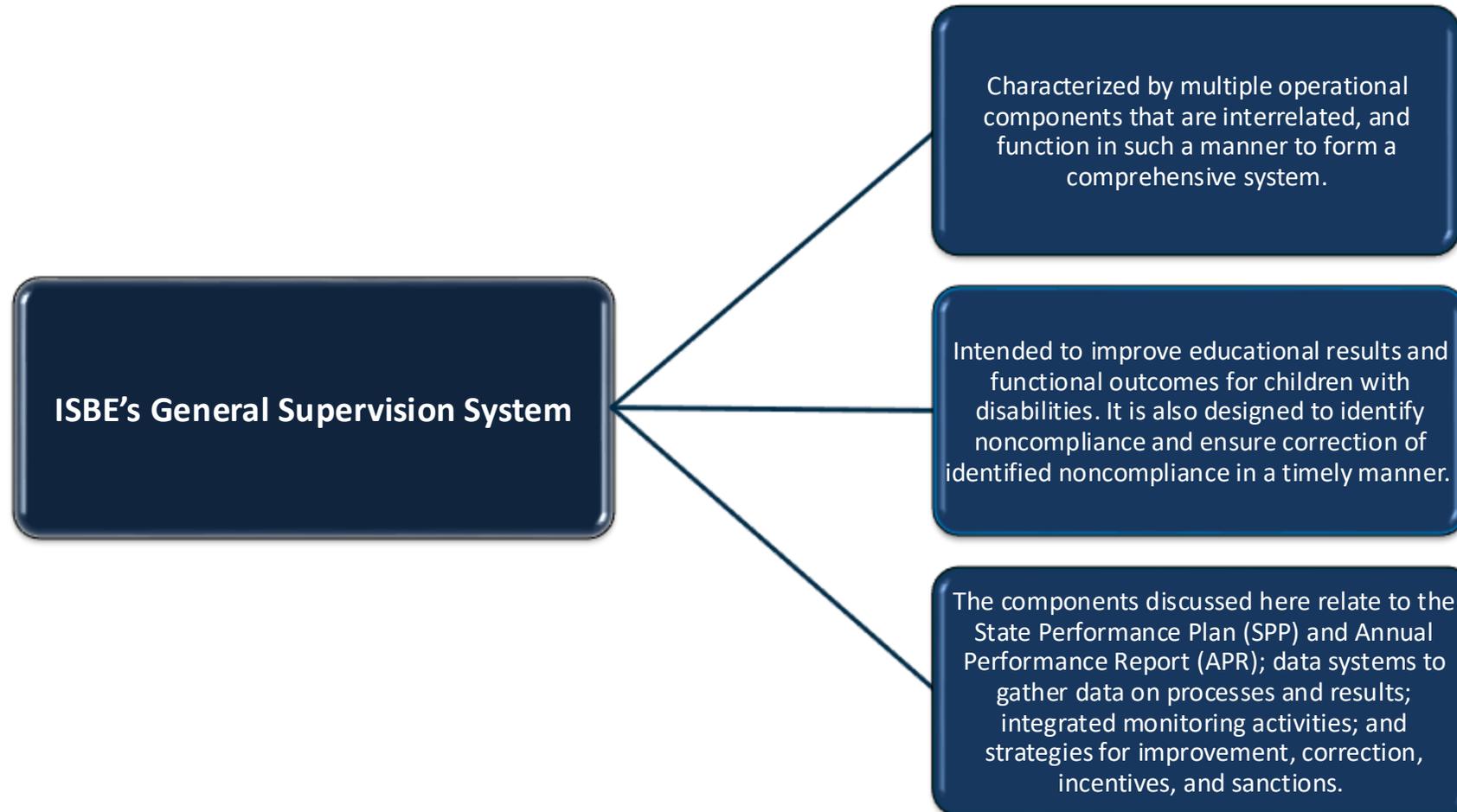
State Education Agency Responsibilities

As the State Education Agency, the Illinois State Board of Education (ISBE) Special Education Services 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).

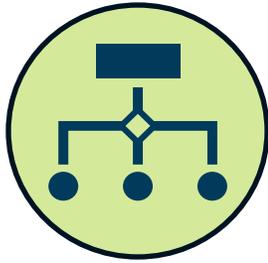


In carrying out its roles, ISBE is required to oversee the performance of district school boards to assess and ensure the effectiveness of efforts to educate children with disabilities, in accordance with the IDEA and Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA).

General Supervision System



Department of Special Education: *Teams and Oversight*



Data

Reviews and approves LEA related data reports from DSA.

Completes and submits the State Performance Plan (SPP)/Annual Performance Report (APR) to ED each February.

Issues findings of noncompliance related to LEA Determinations.

Provides support to LEAs regarding SPP Indicators, Fund Codes, Personnel Reporting and Child Count.



Dispute Resolution

The Dispute Resolution Team supports resolution processes including IEP Facilitation, Mediation, State Complaints and Due Process.



Grants & Fiscal Management

The Grants Team works in conjunction with State & Federal Monitoring and Funding & Disbursements to support districts with completion of and compliance with utilizing IDEA Part B funds.

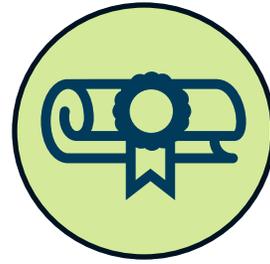
The Fiscal Management Team provides oversight regarding IDEA Discretionary Funded Technical Assistance Projects that support LEAs in Illinois.



Monitoring

The Monitoring Team supports districts through the cyclical monitoring process.

The Indicator Teams support districts with corrective action requirements related to findings of noncompliance through LEA Determinations.



Specialized Placements

The Specialized Placements Team provides support regarding various educational placements, including non-public special education programs, private/parochial programs, residential placements, separate public day school programs, and special education cooperatives.



Specialized Supports

The Specialized Supports Team provides:

- oversight for the ISBE Funded Technical Assistance Projects,
- support to LEAs identified for Significant Disproportionality,
- support to LEAs and parents regarding Specific Learning Disabilities, Autism, Emotional Disorders and low incidence populations.

Department of Special Education: *Resources*

Special Education Department Webpage

Home > Special Education

SPECIAL EDUCATION

Each State Education Agency (SEA) is responsible for ensuring the general supervision of all educational programs for children with disabilities in the state. In Illinois, the Illinois State Board of Education (ISBE) Special Education Services 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, 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 the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA). 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 is also designed to identify noncompliance and ensure correction of identified noncompliance in a timely manner. The general supervision components discussed here relate to the State Performance Plan (SPP) and Annual Performance Report (APR); data systems to gather data on processes and results; integrated monitoring activities; and strategies for improvement, correction, incentives, and sanctions.



Grants & Fiscal Management



Technical Assistance & Professional Development



Data on Processes and Results



Policies, Procedures & Implementation



Integrated Monitoring



State Performance Plan & Annual Performance Report



Effective Dispute Resolution



Specialized Placements



Individualized Education Programs



Parents/Guardians Information



Alternate Assessment 1% Threshold



Significant Disproportionality

Individualized Education Programs (IEPs)



IEP Forms

The [ISBE 34-54 recommended template forms](#) are intended for district use and include all required regulatory components.

- [IEP Form Instructions \(Updated October 2025\)](#)

Required Notices and Consents

The forms and procedures incorporate various requirements of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) and 23 Illinois Administrative Code (IAC) 226. When completed according to the instructions, these forms provide consistency and assist school districts in providing parent(s)/guardian(s) proper notification and required explanations of proposed actions including written explanation of parent rights.

- [Required Notice and Consent Instructions \(Updated October 2025\)](#)
- [ISBE Responses to Questions Regarding 34- 54 and 34-57 Form Updates \(January 2026\)](#)

Parents/Guardians Webpage



Parent's Guide to Special Education

While this document is aimed to support parents/guardians of students with disabilities, this guide is an excellent resource for new educators as well.

- Appendices include:
 - quick references,
 - a glossary of terms, and
 - sample letters.
- Available in English and Spanish via the links below:
 - [English](#)
 - [Spanish](#)

Policies, Procedures and Implementation



Laws, Regulation, and Guidance

Laws and Regulations

- [IDEA Statute and Regulations](#)
- [23 Illinois Administrative Code 226](#)

ISBE Guidance

- [Behavioral Intervention In Schools: Guidelines for the Development of District Policies for Students with Disabilities](#)
- [The Dyslexia Handbook: A Handbook for Parents, Educators and Students](#)

OSEP Guidance

- [Questions and Answers: Addressing the Needs of Children with Disabilities and IDEA's Discipline Provisions](#)
- [OSERS and OESE's Using Functional Behavioral Assessments to Create Supportive Learning Environments - Guidance DocumentPDF Document](#)
- [OSEP Guidance: Myths and Facts Surrounding Assistive Technology Devices](#)

Technical Assistance and Professional Development



[Assistive Technology](#)

- [Illinois Assistive Technology Guidance Manual](#)
- [Illinois Assistive Technology Guidance Manual FAQ](#)
- [Learning Ally](#)

[Catalog of Resources and Supports](#)

The Catalog of Supports and Resources was created in order to provide information regarding resources available to support the diverse needs of students with disabilities. The resources below cover the areas of academics, accommodations, assessment, behavior, early childhood, inclusive practices, multilingual learners, transition and transportation.

Technical Assistance and Professional Development

ISBE Funded TA Projects

The Special Education Department provides comprehensive technical assistance through a variety of statewide projects. These initiatives are designed to:

- **Deliver expert guidance** on promising practices for educating students with disabilities.
- **Operate statewide training and technical assistance programs** to support educators and administrators.
- **Administer comprehensive systems of personnel development** for special education professionals.
- **Manage grant programs** that enhance special education service delivery in schools.

Our mission is to ensure that schools and educators have the resources, knowledge, and support needed to provide high-quality, evidence-based, inclusive education for all students with disabilities.

Visitors can also access the [professional development webpage](#) which houses professional development opportunities from all the ISBE Funded TA Projects.

US Department of Education: *TA Resources*

The Progress Center

The Center provides information, resources, tools, and technical assistance services to support local educators and leaders (kindergarten through transition age) in developing and implementing high-quality instructional programming that ensures students with disabilities have access to free appropriate public education (FAPE) that allows them to make progress and meet challenging goals, consistent with the U.S. Supreme Court's decision in *Endrew F. v. Douglas County School District* (2017).

Resources:

[IEP Tip Sheets](#)

[Disability Tip Sheets](#)

[Online Learning Courses](#)

[Webinars](#)

The IRIS Center

The IRIS Center is a national center dedicated to improving education outcomes for all children, especially those with disabilities birth through age twenty-one, through the use of effective evidence-based practices and interventions.

Resources:

[IRIS Resource Locator](#)

- Search for resources by topic and type
 - **Types of resources include:**
 - Modules
 - Information Briefs
 - Case Studies

[High Leverage Practices Interactive Alignment Tool](#)

[High Leverage Practices for Student with Disabilities Guide](#)



Questions?