Vision

Ohio students are prepared for success in the real world.

Mission

The Ohio Department of Education and Workforce supports Ohio's students, families, and educators to ensure every student gains the knowledge and life skills needed for the future.

Education priorities

Literacy: Building a foundation for lifelong success by ensuring every student is reading at or above grade level.

Accelerating Learning: Advancing academic achievement for all students through statewide implementation of high-quality instruction, assessments, and supports.

Student Wellness: Fostering safe and supportive environments where students feel engaged and equipped to reach their full potential.

Workforce Readiness: Preparing students for success in life and careers through real-world knowledge, skills, and experiences.
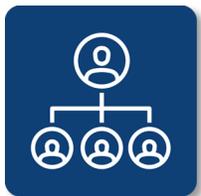
Organizational Effectiveness: Delivering high-quality services and resources to strengthen Ohio's education community.

SPECIAL EDUCATION DESK REVIEW

PHASE 1

SEPTEMBER 4TH, 2025

Pilot Year

During the 2025-2026 school year, the Supports and Monitoring team will be piloting the Desk Review process, one LEA per SST Region.

During this pilot year we will be asking the educational agencies for feedback through surveys during each phase of the process.

The desk review process includes four phases:

➥ **Phase 1: Team Development (September-November)**

Now

- o Establish Cross-Functional Team and Internal Monitoring Team
- o Distribute Perception Surveys
- o Complete Required Trainings
- o Develop Internal Monitoring Team Process
- o Create onboarding procedures for new staff

➥ **Phase 2: Collect and Analyze Data (November-March)**

November 6th

- o Review Integrated Monitoring Report
- o Collect and review data from Perception Surveys
- o Collect and review results from Internal Monitoring Process
- o Complete the Special Education Assessment Report identifying special education priority areas

➥ **Phase 3: ED STEPS One Plan Submission (March-April)**

March 5th

- o Develop One Plan SMART Goals, strategies, or action steps to address the special education priority areas of concern identified.

➥ **Phase 4: ED STEPS One Plan Implementation (June-April cohort years)**

May 7th

- o Educational Agency implements the goals and strategies identified in its One Plan
- o Educational Agency continues to review and analyze its data to revise and update the One Plan as needed

INTENT

The INTENT of the Special Education Desk Review is to assist educational agencies in ***building the foundation*** to ensure compliance and continuous improvement within the educational agency's special education program and services.

IDEA

During the desk review process, educational agencies are asked to make data-based determinations of their effectiveness in meeting the requirements of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA).

PROCESS

The educational agency will review its special education policies, procedures, and practices, three-year special education data trends, student performance outcomes, and special education records to identify priority areas of concern and root causes.

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GUIDE

This will then guide the educational agency to develop goals and strategies that will be integrated into the educational agency's ED STEPS One Plan.

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PHASE 1: TEAM DEVELOPMENT
September - November

Select individuals for a Cross-Functional Team

Who

- **Administration** (Superintendent, Special Education Director/Coordinator and Curriculum Supervisor/Coordinator, EMIS Coordinator, Treasurer)
- **Representative from each building** (Principal/Assistant Principal, Intervention Specialist, and General Education teacher)
- **Related Service Provider(s)**
- **School Psychologist(s)**
- **One Plan Facilitator**
- **Community School Sponsor/Management Company** (if applicable)
- **Representative from Associate Schools** (for CTC, DD, ESC)

Responsibilities

- Disseminating the Perception Surveys
- Completing the Special Education Assessment Report
- Completing the ED STEPS One Plan
- Creating or revising onboarding procedures for new staff

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Example of Perception Surveys

Teacher Survey   School: _____

Your participation in this survey is part of the Department's review process and your responses will help guide efforts to improve services and results for students and families.

	Yes	No	NA	Don't Know
1. Does your educational agency have written special education policies, procedures, and practices?	☐	☐	☐	☐
2. Have you been trained on the special education policies and procedures?	☐	☐	☐	☐
3. Do you feel the policies and procedures are being implemented throughout your educational agency with fidelity?	☐	☐	☐	☐
4. Are building practices for identification, placement, and discipline of students with disabilities free of cultural and/or racial bias?	☐	☐	☐	☐
5. When students are removed from instructional time, do you provide them with information and instruction on what has been missed (while out for services, discipline, or medical needs)?	☐	☐	☐	☐
6. Does the educational agency provide sufficient opportunities to engage and collaborate with other instructional staff (e.g., other teachers, related service professionals, aides) in order to provide the services listed in IEPs?	☐	☐	☐	☐
7. Does the educational agency provide professional development and training addressing the diverse needs of all students, including students with disabilities?	☐	☐	☐	☐
8. Is the specially designed instruction provided to a student with a disability in your classroom based upon that student's individual needs and is it different from what other students receive in the general education setting?	☐	☐	☐	☐
9. Are the required components for post-secondary goals, age-appropriate transition assessments and secondary transition services clear to you? (Respond N/A if the building's student population is younger than 14 years old).	☐	☐	☐	☐
10. Do all staff members involved in implementing a child's IEP have access to and understand the requirements in the IEP?	☐	☐	☐	☐
11. During ETR meetings, does the educational agency use current data (classroom, intervention, record review, parental input) in the evaluation process?	☐	☐	☐	☐
12. During IEP team meetings, is an educational agency representative with the authority to authorize the resources necessary to implement the IEP always present?	☐	☐	☐	☐
13. When determining the least restrictive environment for students with disabilities, does the team consider all settings, including placement in the general education classroom, regardless of the student's disability category?	☐	☐	☐	☐
15. Does your educational agency determine workload requirements for a particular service provider, and then make sure that the service provider has enough time to provide specially designed instruction or direct related service to all assigned children?	☐	☐	☐	☐
16. If a provider cannot perform all workload duties and meet the direct service/specially designed instruction needs for their assigned children, does your educational agency attempt to reduce the caseload or workload? (Service Provider Ratio and Workload Clarification OEC Memo 2016-2).	☐	☐	☐	☐

Questions center around Special Education

Administration
33 Questions

Teachers
32 Questions

Parents
11 Questions

Students with Disabilities
9 Questions

Example of a Special Education Assessment Report

College and Career Readiness

Early Warning System

1. How many students identified as at risk for dropping out have been determined eligible under the following disability categories? Options: Multiple Disabilities (other than Deaf-Blind); Deaf-Blindness; Deafness; Visual Impairments; Speech and Language Impairments; Orthopedic Impairments; Emotional Disturbance; Intellectual Disability; Specific Learning Disabilities; Autism; Traumatic Brain Injury (TBI); Other Health Impaired (Major); and Other Health Impaired (Minor).
2. What programs and services are available for students at risk of dropping out? How are students targeted to participate?

Graduation

1. How are students with disabilities monitored to determine if they are not on track to graduate? What programs and services are available for students at risk of not graduating? How are students targeted to participate in these programs and services?
2. What barriers limit students with disabilities' access to all graduation pathways?

Postsecondary

1. What do data indicate about post-graduation outcomes (military, college/trade school, employment, Opportunities for Ohioans with Disabilities) for students with disabilities?

Career Connections

1. What are your career advising supports for all students, including students with disabilities?

Community and Family Engagement

Engagement

1. What methods are used to seek parent input and participation, including parent participation in the evaluation process, as well as helping parents understand procedural safeguards? How do you know that these methods are effective?

Curriculum, Instruction, and Assessment - Content Areas

Literacy

1. How does the educational agency track progress for students with disabilities in reading proficiency to ensure that specially designed instruction and accommodations support student needs? What is the educational agency's process for reviewing IEPs for students who scored below proficient on reading assessments?

Special Education Assessment Report

District/School: _____   IRN: _____   Date Submitted to the Department: _____

Overarching Questions
1. What are the current data?
2. What do the data reveal about the trends and patterns over time? What is the impact of these trends and patterns?
3. Is this an area identified as a concern? If yes, what is the potential influence? What is the priority for this area of concern overall?
4. What current initiatives are in place to address identified concerns?
5. In what additional area(s) should we collect data?

Priority Improvement Area: College Career Readiness

Priority Need: Early Warning System		Area of Concern? (Yes or No) ----	Priority (1 = highest priority) --
Current Data	Summary of Analysis	Potential Influence (Root Cause): Identified Area of Concern (include additional improvement areas to address root cause)	

Priority Need: Graduation		Area of Concern? (Yes or No) ----	Priority (1 = highest priority) --
Current Data	Summary of Analysis	Potential Influence (Root Cause): Identified Area of Concern (include additional improvement areas to address root cause)	

Priority Need: Postsecondary		Area of Concern? (Yes or No) ----	Priority (1 = highest priority) --
Current Data	Summary of Analysis	Potential Influence (Root Cause): Identified Area of Concern (include additional improvement areas to address root cause)	

Priority Need: Career Connections		Area of Concern? (Yes or No) ----	Priority (1 = highest priority) --
Current Data	Summary of Analysis	Potential Influence (Root Cause): Identified Area of Concern (include additional improvement areas to address root cause)	

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PHASE 1: TEAM DEVELOPMENT
September - November

Select individuals for the Internal Monitoring Team

Who
- **Special Education Director/Coordinator**
- **Intervention Specialists** (lead intervention specialists based on building and grade assignments)
- **Related Service Provider(s)**
- **School Psychologist(s)**
- **General Education Teachers (Co-teacher)**
- **Transition Coordinator**

Responsibilities
- Completing the **Internal Monitoring Process module** in the Special Education Essentials LMS
- Develop Internal Monitoring and Review Process
  - ✓ Determine roles and responsibilities for each team member
  - ✓ Schedule internal monitoring team meetings
  - ✓ Determine number of special education records to be reviewed
  - ✓ Establish timelines for correction of records with noncompliance findings
  - ✓ Describe how new staff members will be trained in the process

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Example of Internal Monitoring Process

Membership and Roles: (*Chair/Facilitator, Recorder, IEP Verifiers, Timekeeper, etc.*)

Name	Position/Role on Team	Responsibilities on the Team (*specific to this person/role*)

Process/Function: (*Goals and Objectives*)

Goal/Step	Goal Description and Objectives	Date/Timeline
1	**Record Review and Corrections**	
1.1	Review (**Add #**) records each school year. The Internal Monitoring Team will meet (**ADD #**) times each school year and review a minimum of (**Add #**) records at each meeting. (Select a few from each disability category and at least (**Add #**) with transition plans)	
1.2	Records will be given to team members. Teachers will not be given their own records to review.	
1.3	The team will use the OEC Record Review Questions and Indicator 13 Checklist to review student records. Team member recommendations for any changes needed will also be reviewed at the Internal Monitoring meetings.	
1.4	Record corrections and trends will be communicated to the IEP team, using the Record Review Comment Form. Timeline for corrections (**ADD timeline, 45 days, 60 days**)	
2	**Ongoing Quality Improvement**	
2.1	The Internal Monitoring Team will gather data for findings by record review item, by student, by disability category, and by building.	
2.2	Data will be kept on the Record Review Tally Spreadsheet.	
2.3	The team will assess the data for the current review trends and patterns.	
2.4	Identified patterns will be shared on the Record Review Comment Form with the educational agency's cross-functional team.	
2.5	The educational agency will create an internal plan of correction to address any trends and patterns identified. The internal plan will communicate any professional development needs.	
2.6	The Internal Monitoring Team will compare current data with previous review data.	

Goal/Step	Goal Description and Objectives	Date/Timeline
2.7	The team will identify areas of improvement and areas of continued focus.	
2.8	For focus areas that are identified across the Internal Monitoring Process Reviews, the educational agency will seek assistance from the State Support Team (SST) and identify professional development needs for the educational agency.	
2.9	The Internal Monitoring Team will create a resource binder that is accessible to all staff. The binder will include training documents from PD and other tools determined necessary for the process.	

Constituency and Reporting: (*Communication Protocols*)
Record corrections will be communicated to the IEP team using the Record Review Comment Form.
- When record corrections have been identified
- After record corrections have been addressed and corrections have been accepted
- Trends and patterns in data results will be shared with the appropriate educational agency staff/stakeholders

Frequency and Location of Meetings:
The internal monitoring team will meet [**monthly, quarterly**] to review ETRs and IEPs. **If there is more than one internal monitoring team, plan to have all teams meet at the beginning and at the end of the school year to discuss record review data, procedures, etc.**

Meeting	Date	Time	Location	Notes
1				
2				
3				
4				
5				
6				
7				
8				
9				

Team Non-Negotiables:
-
-
-

Responsibilities of the Team:
-
-
-

Deliverables:
-
-
-

Resources available to the team:
- OEC Record Review tools (listed under Resources and Tools)
- Ohio's Learning Management System

Decision-Making Process:
-
-
-

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PHASE 1: TEAM DEVELOPMENT
September - November

Complete Required Training

Who: (Staff who are not serving on the Internal Monitoring Team)

o Staff serving as district representative in ETR and IEP meetings
o Intervention specialists
o Related service providers
o General education teachers who co-teach or have special education students in their classes
o Paraprofessionals/aides who work with students with disabilities
o Contracted related service providers and ESC special education staff working in your educational agency
o Others who directly work with students with disabilities as designated by the educational agency

Modules

What:

o **Evaluation Team Report**
o **Individualized Education Program**
o **Secondary Transition**

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Required Trainings

The Learning Management System (LMS) can be found in the OH|ID portal.
- You must have an OH|ID portal account in order to access the LMS modules.
- Modules can be completed at the staff member's convenience.
- Each module is followed by a quiz that, when passed with 80% or better, will generate a certificate of completion noting affiliated clock hours. It is recommended participants print the scripts before taking the quizzes.

Special Education Essentials Course LMS Course	Approximate Time
All educational agency staff who work with students with disabilities (who are **not** part of the Internal Monitoring Team) will complete the following 3 modules:	
➥ **Module 1: Evaluation Team Report (ETR)** provides a detailed overview of the Evaluation Team Report (ETR) process for school age children.	45 minutes 25 questions
➥ **Module 2: Individualized Education Program (IEP)** focuses on the development, writing and implementation of the Individualized Education Program (IEP).	36 minutes 26 questions
➥ **Module 3: Secondary Transition Plan** provides an overview of the requirements for secondary transition plans.	28 minutes 23 questions
The Internal Monitoring Team will complete Module 4: Internal Monitoring Process: ➥ **Module 4: Internal Monitoring Process** provides an overview on establishing an Internal Monitoring Process and how to use OEC's record review tools to look at specific record review items for compliance. ▪ Part 1 – Establishing an Internal Monitoring Team and Process ▪ Part 2 – Internal Monitoring Process for ETR Review ▪ Part 3 – Internal Monitoring Process for Transition Plan Review ▪ Part 4 – Internal Monitoring Process for IEP Review	14 minutes 21 minutes 14 minutes 44 minutes 31 questions
Reminder: Certificates of Completion for the Internal Monitoring Team will need to be collected and submitted to the Department.	

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PHASE 1: TEAM DEVELOPMENT

REQUESTED DOCUMENTS/REQUIRED ACTIONS (on or before November 14, 2025)

The educational agency will **UPLOAD** the following documents in the Monitoring App:

- A list of all staff who work directly with students with disabilities
- LMS Certificates of Completion for all Internal Monitoring Team members
- The Learning Management System Module Completion Verification Form
- Draft of written Internal Monitoring Process
- Onboarding procedures for new staff

Please Email your Supports and Monitoring Lead once you have uploaded all documents into the Special Education Desk Review Monitoring App

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Documents to Upload

LMS Module Completion Form

Internal Monitoring Certificate

Staff List

Phase 2: Collect and Analyze Data

- **Review Integrated Monitoring Report**
- **Collect and Review data from the Perception Surveys**
- **Collect and review the results of the Internal Monitoring Process**
- **Complete the Special Education Report**

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PHASE 2: COLLECT AND ANALYZE DATA
November-March

The Cross-Functional Team will:

o REVIEW INTEGRATED MONITORING REPORT provided by the Supports and Monitoring staff
o REVIEW DATA FROM PERCEPTION SURVEYS
o COLLECT AND REVIEW RESULTS FROM INTERNAL MONITORING PROCESS
o COMPLETE SPECIAL EDUCATION ASSESSMENT REPORT

Then........

o The cross-functional team will complete the Special Education Assessment Report using the special education assessment questions within the guide to identify 1-2 special education priority areas to be addressed in the ED STEPS One Plan.

o Complete the Special Education Assessment Report to identify special education priority areas and submit to the Department through the Monitoring App.

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PHASE 3: ED STEPS ONE PLAN SUBMISSION
March - April

Who: The Educational Agency

What:

- The educational agency will research evidence-based strategies to **address the root causes** of the special education priority areas of concern identified in the Special Education Assessment Report.
- The educational agency will then **develop goals, strategies, or action steps** within its One Plan through ED STEPS to address the identified areas of concern.
- The educational agency will be required to include its **internal monitoring process** within its One Plan.

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Phase 4: ED STEPS One Plan Implementation June-April Cohort Years

Who:	The Educational Agency

What:

- Office for Exceptional Children will approve the educational agency's One Plan.
- Educational agency will sign and upload the One Plan Implementation Assurance Form, signed by the Superintendent.
- Once received, OEC will send out a closure letter to the Educational Agency.
- Educational Agency will begin the implementation of the goals and strategies identified in its One Plan.
- Educational Agency will continue to review and analyze its data to revise and update the One Plan as needed.

Progressive Sanctions

The Department will work with the educational agency to determine the necessary steps to meet requirements.

But

Failing to meet all required steps of the Desk Review along with timelines will ***affect the educational agency's special education rating*** and may include ***progressive sanctions*** that could affect special education funding.

Ohio Department of Education & Workforce

Phase 1
Requested Documents/Required Actions

The educational agency will upload the following documents in the Monitoring App:

- A list of all staff who work directly with students with disabilities. The staff list should include each staff member's name and position. The list will also indicate staff who will be on the Cross-Functional team and staff who will be on the Internal Monitoring Team. Click here to access the staff list template.

- LMS Certificates of Completion for all internal monitoring team members.

- The Learning Management System Module Completion Verification Form, signed by the superintendent and the special education director, verifying that all required staff have completed the LMS Special Education Essentials modules.

- The educational agency's written Internal Monitoring and Review Process.

- Onboarding procedures for new staff.

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