



# New Local Education Agency Special Education Point of Contact Orientation

*Summer 2023 Start of School Webinar Series*

OSSE Division of Systems and Supports, K-12 (K12SS)

OSSE Division of the Chief Information Officer (CIO)

OSSE Office Division of Teaching the Chief Information Officer and Learning (TAL)

# Agenda

<b>Time</b>	<b>Topic</b>
<b>10:00-10:15 a.m.</b>	The Role of the Local Education Agency Special Education Point of Contact (LEA SPED POC)
<b>10:15-10:30 a.m.</b>	Special Education Requirements & Guidance
<b>10:30-10:45 a.m.</b>	Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) Monitoring Activities
<b>10:45-10:55 a.m.</b>	Break for Q&A
<b>10:55-11:15 a.m.</b>	Nonpublic Placement & Monitoring
<b>11:15-11:30 a.m.</b>	Final Q&A



# The Role of the Local Education Agency Special Education Point of Contact

# The Role of the Local Education Agency Special Education Point of Contact (LEA SPED POC)

- Each LEA is required to have a Local Education Agency Special Education Point of Contact (LEA SPED POC) who serves as OSSE's main point of contact with LEAs for the purpose of special education.
- LEA SPED POC responsibilities remain largely the same from year to year, with some modifications according to LEA-level or state-level needs.
- Monthly LEA SPED POC webinars will highlight any new responsibilities that may arise over the course of the school year.

# The Role of the LEA SPED POC

## Policy and Guidance

- Act as the LEA's liaison with OSSE for special education policy and guidance updates and clarifications.
- Identifies key areas of need for technical assistance and professional development.

## Monitoring and Compliance

- Act as the LEA's liaison with the OSSE IDEA Part B Monitoring and Non-Public Team.
- Ensures implementation of dispute resolution correction of noncompliance.

## Evidence-Based Practice

- Support LEA staff in leveraging OSSE resources on evidence-based practices in serving students with disabilities.
- Share training opportunities with staff.

## Data Apps and Systems

- Serve as the Special Programs administrator and trainer on behalf of all LEA staff.
- Access and leverage student-level data from multiple OSSE systems.

# The Role of the LEA SPED POC

- LEA leaders may assign one or multiple staff members to serve in this role, and may divide duties as they see fit to best meet the needs of the LEA.
- Must be listed in the [eSchoolPLUS contact list](#) in the LEA SE POC role in order to receive official OSSE communications intended for LEA SE POCs. (LEA Data Manager [controls this list.](#))

# LEA SPED POCs collaborate with the following LEA POCs:

## LEA Assessment POC

- Work together to ensure students with disabilities receive appropriate assessment accommodations, as documented in their Individualized Education Programs (IEPs).
- Work together to determine alternate assessment eligibility for students with cognitive disabilities.

## LEA Transportation POC

- Keep up to date on all transportation policies, guidance and eligibility criteria.
- Support the LEA Transportation POC to ensure timely submission of all Transportation Request Forms (TRFs).

## Pre-K Special Education POC

- Work together to serve 3 to 5 year old students with disabilities.
- Support Pre-K SE POC in Child Outcomes Summary data collection, as needed.

## LEA Data Manager

- Ensure accurate enrollment data to allow transfer of records in Special Programs for students with disabilities.
- Access and leverage student-level data from multiple OSSE systems.

# LEA SPED POCs collaborate with the following LEA POCs:

## Early Childhood Transition Coordinator

- Coordinate a smooth C to B Transition for newly enrolled 3 or 4 year old children coming from DC Early Intervention Program (Strong Start).
- Coordinate child find duties for young children.

## LEA English Learner Coordinator

- Work together to serve students who are dually identified as English learners and students with disabilities, including appropriate assessment accommodations, evaluations and service provision in other languages, family engagement and communication, etc.





# Special Education Requirements and Guidance

# Special Education Authorities

## Special Education Law

- Federal: Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA)
- Local: [DC Official Code, Title 38: Educational Institutions](#)

## Special Education Regulations

- Federal: Code of Federal Regulations – IDEA 34 CFR § 300 et. seq.
- Local: [District of Columbia Municipal Regulations \(DCMR\) Title 5-A, Chapter 30 “Special Education”](#)

## [Special Education Policies](#)

- Establish state-level procedures

## **OSSE Non-Regulatory Guidance on Special Education** (Policy Bulletins, FAQs, etc.)

- *Coming Soon:* Special Education Process Handbook
- Provides additional clarification to assist LEAs in implementing requirements

# Policy Topic Focus: C-to-B Transition

Under IDEA, LEAs shall ensure a smooth and effective transition of children from IDEA Part C early intervention services to IDEA Part B preschool special education and related services, including ensuring that:

1. The LEA participates in transition planning conferences, as appropriate;
2. The LEA develops an IEP by the child's third birthday; and
3. The LEA implements the IEP by the child's third birthday.

Additional information and guidance, including [Early Childhood Transition: Frequently Asked Questions \(FAQ\)](#), are available on the [OSSE website](#).

# Tracking the First Provision of Specialized Instruction

For the 2023-24 school year, LEAs continue to be required to **document the first provision of specialized instruction for students under the age of six** who have specialized instruction prescribed on the IEP but for whom specialized instruction has not been previously documented, including the following students:

- Students at/around the age of 3 transitioning from Part C;
- Students at/around the age of 4 transitioning from an Extended Individualized Family Service Plan (IFSP);
- Students younger than age 6 newly determined eligible for special education, including children transferring from out of state; and
- Students younger than age 6 with specialized instruction added to their IEP for the first time.

For guidance on documenting the first provision of specialized instruction in Special Programs, please see OSSE's step-by-step guide (coming soon!).

# Special Education Policy Resources

- [Local Special Education Law and Regulations](#)
- [OSSE Special Education Policies](#)
- [OSSE Special Education Guidance](#)
- [Chapter 30 Resources](#)
- [OSSE Child Find, Initial Evaluation, and Early Childhood Transition Resources](#)
- [LEA Special Education Point of Contact \(LEA SPED POC\) Webinar Series](#)

## Policy Team Points of Contact

- Christie Weaver-Harris, Policy Manager ([Christie.Weaver-Harris@dc.gov](mailto:Christie.Weaver-Harris@dc.gov))
- OSSE Special Education Policy Team ([OSSE.DSEPolicy@dc.gov](mailto:OSSE.DSEPolicy@dc.gov))



# Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) Monitoring Activities

# Need to Know: Monitoring Activities

- An IDEA monitor is assigned to each LEA to provide support and technical assistance throughout the school year and quarterly monitoring activities
- The goal of OSSE's Monitoring and Compliance System is to ensure that LEAs are meeting the requirements of both federal and local regulations
- Monitoring activities may include:
  - database reviews
  - coordinated on-site compliance monitoring
  - record reviews
  - LEA self-assessments

# IDEA Part B Regulations

- IDEA section 616 requires each state education agency (SEA) to implement a General Supervision System that monitors the implementation of the IDEA Part B and its accompanying regulations.
- As the SEA for the District of Columbia, OSSE is responsible for the implementation of the General Supervision System for the District, which includes but is not limited to state complaint processes and due process adjudication in addition to LEA monitoring.
- The IDEA Part B regulations at 34 CFR §300.600 require that the SEA monitor the implementation of IDEA Part B:
  - make annual determinations about the performance of each LEA;
  - enforce compliance with IDEA Part B; and
  - report annually on the performance of the SEA and each LEA.
- The primary focus of the SEA's monitoring activities is on improving educational results and functional outcomes for all children with disabilities and ensuring that LEAs meet the program requirements of IDEA Part B.



# Special Education Monitoring Activities

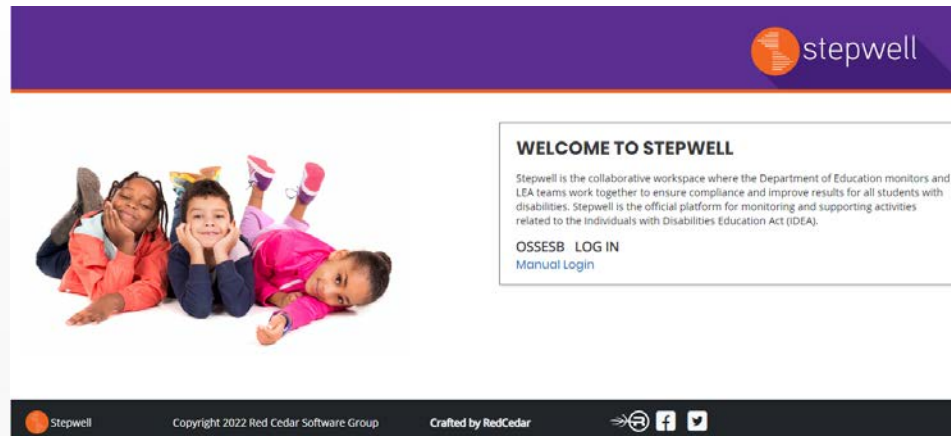
The goal of OSSE's monitoring and compliance system is to ensure that LEAs are meeting the requirements of both federal and local special education regulations.

OSSE annually monitors and issues findings of noncompliance in the following areas:

- Timeliness for:
  - Initial evaluation
  - Reevaluation
  - C to B transition
- Equity requirements:
  - Significant discrepancy (suspension/expulsion)
  - Disproportionate representation (identification in special education and specific disability categories)
- Secondary transition requirements (if applicable)

# New Monitoring and Compliance Tracking System

- This fall, OSSE will transition from District of Columbia Corrective Action Tracking System (DCCATS) to a new tracking system called **Stepwell**.
- This system will track findings of noncompliance issued by OSSE and will communicate directly with Special Programs.
- Stay tuned for more information regarding the roll out of Stepwell.





**Break for Q & A**



# Nonpublic Placement and Monitoring

# The Placement Oversight Process

- If an LEA/IEP team believes a student may require a more restrictive nonpublic school placement, it must seek a change in placement (CIP) review from OSSE. To initiate a review, an LEA must submit to OSSE a CIP request along with a justification for removal statement.
- OSSE conducts a CIP review by assessing information related to the steps taken by the LEA/IEP team to support the student, looking at the student's response to interventions based on current behavior and performance and listening to staff, the parent and as appropriate, the student.
- Once a review is completed, OSSE provides a recommendation as to whether or not a placement at a nonpublic school is warranted. Ultimately, placement is the team's decision- OSSE serves in an advisory role.
- A student placed into a nonpublic setting remains the responsibility of the LEA. OSSE implements the District's policy and procedures on the nonpublic placement of students with disabilities with the goal of ensuring that students with disabilities are educated in the least restrictive environment that can appropriately meet the student's needs.

# What to Expect as an LEA

Once a CIP request is submitted...

- A change in placement coordinator will be assigned to complete the 30 day review.
- The coordinator will acknowledge receipt of the case. In the acknowledgment email, the coordinator will request specific student documentation and propose meeting dates to review the request- an initial phone call and a CIP meeting date.
- Initial phone call: On this phone conference, the coordinator will review the case with the LEA and provide initial training and technical assistance. At their discretion, the coordinator may speak with the parent and may conduct a student observation.
- CIP meeting: At the conclusion of the review, the coordinator will attend a CIP meeting and issue a state recommendation warranting a more restrictive setting for the student.

If the team moves forward, the service location process begins.

- OSSE will notify the parent and LEA which nonpublic school has been referred for service location. OSSE will additionally send notification to the parent, LEA and nonpublic school with the request to hold the IEP meeting so a notice of service location can be issued.
- The LEA is then responsible for scheduling and holding the meeting with parent and nonpublic school. Once the meeting is held, the LEA will forward OSSE the Prior Written Notice (PWN).

# Change in Location

Should a student require a change in location from one nonpublic school to another nonpublic school, the LEA should submit a request to OSSE for a change in location.

- A change in placement coordinator will be assigned to complete the review.
- The coordinator will acknowledge receipt of the case. In the acknowledgment email, the coordinator will request specific student documentation and propose meeting dates to review the request- an OSSE/LEA check-in and a change in location meeting date.
- OSSE/LEA check-in: On this phone conference, the coordinator will discuss the service location change request and provide technical assistance as appropriate. At their discretion, the coordinator, may speak with the parent and may conduct a student observation.
- Change in location meeting: On this phone conference with the parent, LEA and nonpublic school, the coordinator will discuss the need to change the student's service location, and the team will determine if a new service location is needed

If the team moves forward, the service location process begins.

# Preparing for Success: Key Reminders

LEAs must:

- Ensure students with disabilities receive a free appropriate public education (FAPE) in their least restrictive environment (LRE).
- Have a continuum of educational placements to meet the needs of students with disabilities.

Special education is not a place; it is a set of services and supports.

For questions or more information about the placement process, please visit: [osse.dc.gov/node/1310436](https://osse.dc.gov/node/1310436) or contact Katie Reda, special education placement manager at [Katie.Red@dc.gov](mailto:Katie.Red@dc.gov).



# Serving Students Placed in Nonpublic Special Education Schools

- IDEA requires LEAs to provide FAPE in the LRE.
- In some cases, the IEP teams determines a student's LRE is a nonpublic special education program or school.
- Students remain enrolled in the LEA while attending the nonpublic school.
- LEAs remain responsible for ensuring students receive FAPE while attending the nonpublic school.
- OSSE holds LEAs accountable for this ongoing responsibility through:
  - Monitoring in key special education areas (i.e., reevaluation, secondary transition)
  - Periodic review of student files, identification and correction of noncompliance
  - Issuance of annual IDEA Part B determination of compliance with IDEA

# Basic Roles and Responsibilities

## LEAs

- Monitor student progress and safety;
- Review attendance data, service delivery documentation, quarterly progress reports, and incident reports;
- Participate in IEP team meetings;
- Ensure Functional Behavior Assessments (FBAs) and Behavior Intervention Plans (BIPs) are up-to-date and being implemented with fidelity as appropriate;
- Coordinate statewide assessments with the nonpublic school and OSSE;
- Ensure nonpublic school has access to all DC information systems;
- Report child abuse and neglect, complaints or allegations;
- Consider the appropriateness of the student's placement in the more restrictive environment at least annually.

## Nonpublic Schools

- Deliver specialized instructions and related services in accordance with IEP;
- Adhere to reporting and notification requirements;
- Participate in IEP team meetings;
- Ensure FBAs and BIPs are up-to-date and being implemented with fidelity as appropriate;
- Coordinate statewide assessments with the LEA and OSSE
- Gain and maintain access to DC information systems;
- Report all cases of suspected child abuse and neglect, complaints and allegation;
- File a complaint with OSSE in cases where the LEA did not engage in consultation that was meaningful and timely;
- Consider the appropriateness of the student's placement in the more restrictive environment at least annually.

# Reminders and Tips

## Reminders

- *TOGETHER NOT APART*
- *PROTECTING VULNERABLE POPULATIONS*

## Tips for strengthening collaboration between LEAs and nonpublic special education schools

- Identify point(s) of contact and set up regularly occurring, monthly or quarterly, meetings
- Create a Memorandum of Understanding that outlines all required actions/activities and the party who is responsible for completing them

# Nonpublic Support and Oversight Team

## Who We Are

- Sharon Powell, Supervisory Education Program Specialist
- Cristal Hayes, Nonpublic Program Monitor
- Shannon Sterling-Hunter, Nonpublic Program Monitor

## What We Do

Oversee the nonpublic special education schools through:

- Onsite monitoring visits of schools that hold a Certificate of Approval from OSSE
- Manage Certificate of Approvals for Nonpublic Special Education Schools and Programs
- Enforce local law requirements related to Certificates of Approval

# New Nonpublic School SPED POC Webinar Series

## When?

- June 2023 – December 2024

## What?

- June 2023 – January 2024: OSSE Special Programs Data System Transition Focus
- March – December 2024: Nonpublic School Sessions

## Who Should Attend?

- Nonpublic School Points of Contact

Help us spread the word, share with your Nonpublic School POCs that this new resource is available and refer them to [Sharon.Powell@dc.gov](mailto:Sharon.Powell@dc.gov) for information on how to register!



# Final Q & A



**Thank You!**