



Office of the State Superintendent of Education

SY 24-25 SPECIAL EDUCATION NEWSLETTER

January Issue | Jan. 24, 2025

ROLES & RESPONSIBILITIES OF YOUR LEA SPECIAL EDUCATION POINT OF CONTACT (LEA SPED POC)

Dear Colleague Letter for Special Educator Retention and Principal Navigator

On Jan. 13, the U.S. Department of Education (USED) released a [Dear Colleague Letter](#) highlighting the critical importance of retaining special educators in their positions, and the crucial role principals play in retaining special education personnel. In partnership with the [LEAD IDEA](#) and [CEEDAR Centers](#), USED introduced the [Principal Navigator for Special Educator Retention](#), which includes high-leverage practices and actionable steps that can be used immediately by local administrators to improve retention of special education personnel. Please be sure to check out the navigator and its tools and disseminate to your networks.



Prepare for Summer 2025 Extended School Year Services

Preparation for Summer 2025 Extended School Year (ESY) is underway! The deadline for local education agencies (LEAs) to submit Summer 2025 ESY certification data to the Office of the State Superintendent of Education (OSSE) is **Monday, May 5, 2025**. LEA SPED POCs should be planning now to ensure the timely submission of ESY certification data, including completing eligibility determinations for ESY services and ESY-related transportation, identifying ESY service locations, and confirming student addresses. ESY

eligibility and certification data supports LEAs and nonpublic school programs in their efforts to ensure appropriate planning and staffing during the summer months. OSSE also uses ESY certification data to anticipate state-level expenses related to nonpublic ESY services and plan ESY-related transportation services. See below for information on resources to support this work.

Attention: LEAs with Secondary Transition Age Students (For District of Columbia, Ages 14 – 22)

Register for New Professional Development - Secondary Transition Asynchronous Courses

OSSE's Division of Teaching and Learning announced two asynchronous courses on secondary transition programming on the OSSE Learning Management System (LMS) last month. OSSE highly encourages Special Education professionals and Secondary Transition Specialists within your schools to take advantage of this opportunity.

While the District has made steady progress, the US Department of Education (USED) continues to apply specific conditions to the District's Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) Part B grant due to low rates of compliance with secondary transition planning requirements. During the 2024-2025 school year, OSSE is required to report secondary transition compliance for the monitoring period, Oct. 1, 2024 - March 31, 2025.

The following modules will support LEAs to build capacity in the area of Secondary Transition:

- **Student-driven Secondary Transition Planning:** This course consists of five asynchronous foundational courses, each focused on a different aspect of the secondary transition planning process. By the end of this course, educators will gain foundational knowledge and increased capacity in developing and implementing high-quality Individualized Transition Plans (ITPs) with secondary transition-age students. Participants can earn up to 15 professional learning units (PLUs) for completion of all five modules. [Registration link](#)
- **Culturally Sustaining Universal Design for Transition (UDT):** This course, inspired by *Universal Design for Transition: The Educators' Guide for Equity-Focused Transition Planning*, consists of three modules designed to help educators apply Universal Design for Learning (UDL) principles in transition planning. It aims to equip teachers and school staff with the knowledge and skills to integrate culturally sustaining practices into the transition process, promoting equity and inclusivity. Participants can earn up to nine professional learning units (PLUs) for completion of all five modules. [Registration link](#)

For more information, contact Byul Yim, Instructional Systems Specialist (Special Education), at Byul.Yim@dc.gov.

Reminder: February LEA Special Education Points of Contact Webinar

On **Wednesday, Feb. 19, from 10-11 a.m.**, OSSE will host the *quarterly* webinar training for all LEA Special Education Points of Contact (LEA SPED POCs). During this training, OSSE will provide important information relevant to your role as the LEA SPED POC. The agenda will include the following:

- Policy reminders and updates;
- Individuals with Disabilities in Education Act (IDEA) monitoring reminders and updates;
- Teaching and Learning reminders and updates;
- Special programs reminders and updates;
- Nonpublic placement reminders and updates;
- Transportation updates; and
- Reminders and announcements.

All LEA SPED POCs should plan to participate in each scheduled webinar, as well as share the content, updates, and announcements with relevant staff within your LEA. If you have not already signed up for the 2024-25 webinar series, please register [here](#).

If you have any questions about this webinar, please contact LaShonda Wilson Carter at LaShonda.Wilson@dc.gov.



Ask OSSE: February Webinar Call for LEA SPED POC Questions

In an effort to directly address questions, the Office of Special Education is implementing an Ask OSSE session for the February webinar. Please submit any questions you may have ahead of the webinar [here](#).

SPECIAL EDUCATION GUIDANCE

[New! 2025 ESY Preparation Guide](#)

To support LEAs in appropriately preparing for summer 2025 ESY services and submitting required ESY certification data, OSSE issued the [2025 ESY Preparation Guide](#). LEAs are also encouraged to review OSSE's [Policy Bulletin: Extended School Year \(ESY\) Services \(Updated August 2023\)](#) which includes guidance regarding LEA responsibilities and documentation requirements for ESY eligibility determinations and service provision for eligible students with disabilities.

For questions about ESY, required tasks, or data systems, please refer to the points of contact provided in the [2025 ESY Preparation Guide](#).

ACCESSING SPECIAL EDUCATION DATA SYSTEMS

Recent Updates to Special Programs

The following updates were made to Special Programs on Dec. 19, 2024:

- **Special Education Team Profile (New):** This new profile now contains the student's Special Education Team data previously found in the Special Education Part B Profile. Users can view and update a student's Special Education Teacher/

Case Manager and LEA Representative within the new profile. For more information on managing roles within Special Programs, please see the Caseload Management guidance available within the “Help” section of Special Programs.

- **Analysis of Existing Data Document (Updated):**
 - A required field for “date of decision” was added where the user will enter the date on which the LEA decided whether the child should be evaluated to determine eligibility for special education and related services.
 - If the LEA is conducting an initial evaluation for a student under the age of 6 as of the referral date, a draft *Reasonable Efforts to Obtain Parental Consent* document will be automatically created upon finalization of the *Analysis of Existing Data* document when the user selects “The child should be evaluated to determine eligibility for special education and related services” in the Additional Assessments section.
- **Least Restrictive Environment (LRE) Section in the IEP Document (Updated):** An issue was resolved related to service dates that was causing incorrect hour calculations after an individualized education program (IEP) amendment.
- **Reactivating IEP Documents (New):** When a student transfers between LEAs, the receiving LEA is now able to activate the document by clicking on it. This enables the student’s current LEA to document progress reports and service capture on the existing IEP. LEAs should not create a new IEP document for a student that transfers with an existing active IEP, 504 Plan, or Comparable Services plan. For more information on reactivating IEP documents, please see the *Student Transfer Record Activation* guidance available within the “Help” section of Special Programs.
- **Reasonable Efforts to Obtain Consent for Initial Evaluation (Updated):** The document is required for all children under younger than 6 years of age and now automatically generates to accompany an *Analysis of Existing Data* document for a student when the LEA moves forward with conducting an evaluation.
- **First Provision of Specialized Instruction (Updated):** The document is now available for students under younger than the age of 7 that have an IEP Services Part B record with any service type except “Speech Only.”. LEAs should document the first provision of specialized instruction for students who have Speech Only IEPs through service capture.
- **Contact Log (Updated):** The following contact reasons have been added: “Requesting Parental Consent for Initial Provision of Services” and “Requesting Parental Consent for Reevaluation.”

OSSE’S ANNUAL MONITORING ACTIVITIES

Open Reports in DC Corrective Action Tracking System (DCCATS)

OSSE issues and tracks closure of all IDEA findings of noncompliance in DCCATS. The following reports are currently in open status in DCCATS. Please review the timelines for closure and complete corrective actions before the due dates.

Report Name	SY in DCCATS	Date of Notification	Prong 1 Due	Prong 2 Due
Reevaluation Student Noncompliance SY 2023-2024	2023-24	June 25, 2024	Sept. 23, 2024	June 25, 2025
Secondary Transition Student Noncompliance SY 2023-2024	2023-24	June 25, 2024	Sept. 23, 2024	June 25, 2025
LEA Monitoring: Student Noncompliance 2023-24 *	2023-24	June 11, 2024 or June 25, 2024	Sept. 9, 2024 or Sept. 23, 2024	June 11, 2025 or June 25, 2025
Initial Evaluation Student Noncompliance SY 2023-2024	2023-24	Aug. 12, 2024	Nov. 10, 2024	Aug. 12, 2025
C to B Transition Noncompliance (SY 2024)	2023-24	Dec. 18, 2024	Mar. 18, 2025	Dec. 18, 2025

* *Applicable only to LEAs selected for Compliance & Continuous Improvement (CCI) Monitoring during SY 2023-24.*

If you have questions about the status of your LEA's reports in DCCATS or have any other questions about your LEA's monitoring, please reach out to Debra Melville at Debra.Melville@dc.gov.

Reminder: Annual Monitoring Activities for School Year 2024-25

In 2025, OSSE will monitor, report, and issue findings for the following compliance indicators:

Monitoring Activity	Reporting Requirement	Monitoring Begin Date	Timeframe for Data Reviewed
Secondary Transition	US Department of Education (USED) Specific Conditions	April 2025	Oct. 1, 2024 – March 31, 2025
Reevaluation	USED Specific Conditions	April 2025	Oct. 1, 2024 – March 31, 2025

Initial Evaluation	USED Annual Performance Report (APR)	July 2025	July 1, 2024 – June 30, 2025
C to B Transition	USED APR	July 2025	July 1, 2024 – June 30, 2025
Compliance & Continuous Improvement (CCI) Monitoring – Cohort SY 2024-25 Only*	IDEA General Supervision	Spring 2025	SY 2024-25

*OSSE notified LEAs that were selected for this monitoring activity.

UNPACKING YOUR LEA'S SPECIAL EDUCATION PERFORMANCE REPORT (SEPR)

SEPR Office Hours

OSSE encourages LEAs to book office hours using the [SEPR Office Hours Scheduler](#) if they have questions about their SEPR. During these hours, LEAs can learn more about their reports and corresponding data and ask other relevant questions.

To learn more about the OSSE SEPR, please visit [OSSE's SEPR Website](#).

Special Education Technical Assistance and Training

Are you in need of technical assistance or training in any other area? Reference the topics below! Book office hours with one of our OSSE Points of Contact within the Office of Special Education.

Topic	Point of Contact	Email/Phone	Book Office Hours
Policy			
Policy & Guidance	Christie Weaver-Harris, Special Education Policy Team	OSSE.DSEpolicy@dc.gov	Special Education Policy Office Hours
Parent Support & Engagement	Jasmine Fleming, Special Education Policy Team	Jasmine.Fleming@dc.gov	N/A
IDEA Monitoring and Compliance			
IDEA Monitoring & Compliance	Karen Morgan-Donaldson, IDEA Part B Monitoring	Karen.Morgan-Donaldson@dc.gov	Special Education Monitoring &

	and Compliance Team		Compliance Office Hours
Technical Assistance and Training LEA SPED POC Webinar	LaShonda Wilson Carter, IDEA Part B Monitoring and Compliance Team	LaShonda.Wilson@dc.gov	Technical Assistance Office Hours
Part B Correction of Noncompliance	Debra Melville, IDEA Part B Monitoring and Compliance Team	Debra.Melville@dc.gov	Compliance Office Hours
Part C Monitoring and Compliance	Sarah Peisch, IDEA Part B Monitoring and Compliance Team	Sarah.Peisch@dc.gov	Part C to B Monitoring Office Hours
Nonpublic Placement			
Nonpublic Placement	Katie Reda, Placement Oversight Unit	Katie.Red@dc.gov	Special Education Placement Office Hours
Nonpublic Monitoring and Compliance			
Nonpublic Monitoring & Compliance	Sharon Powell, Nonpublic Monitoring and Compliance Team	Sharon.Powell@dc.gov	N/A
State Complaints			
State Complaints	Kirstin Hansen, State Complaints Team	Kirstin.Hansen@dc.gov	State Complaints Office Hours



Questions? [Contact Us](#)



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