

Special Education in Michigan Continuous Improvement & Monitoring System - CIMS

Office of Special Education and Early Intervention Services

The **Continuous Improvement & Monitoring System (CIMS)** broadens the state's monitoring emphasis from mainly a compliance orientation to a focus on improving educational results for students with disabilities. This design effort was facilitated by the work of a stakeholder group established by the Office of Special Education and Early Intervention Services (OSE/EIS) in fall, 2003. The group's members represented Intermediate School District (ISD) administrators and monitors, parents, school administrators, OSE/EIS Quality Assurance and Early On staff, and others. The result of that work moves required monitoring from a cyclical closed-ended system into one of continuous improvement.

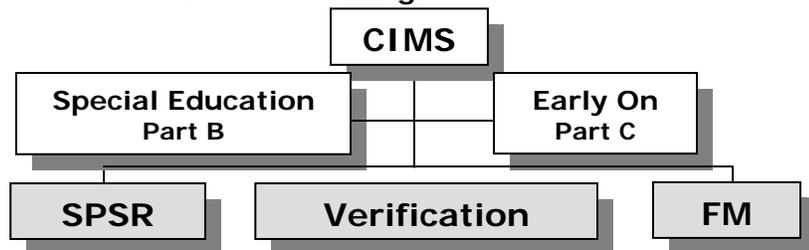
The Continuous Improvement & Monitoring System (CIMS) will be used by local educational agencies (LEA), public school academies (PSA), state schools (e.g. the Michigan Schools for the Deaf and Blind), state agencies (e.g. Department of Human Services, Department of Community Health, and Department of Corrections), and Early On (Early Intervention) service areas.

The goal of the CIMS is to assist districts and agencies to better understand the operation and effectiveness of programs for students with disabilities and develop plans for targeted use of their resources.

The CIMS supports service providers in assessing and improving service design and delivery and ultimately, performance and outcomes for infants, toddlers and students with disabilities and their families. At a time when high stakes testing is emphasized for ALL students, use of these tools enables the system to align resources to those components within the system which are proven to be effective in improving performance of children with disabilities as measured by state assessments and individual goals.

The CIMS has three distinct processes:

- **Service Provider Self-Review**
- **Verification, and**
- **Focused Monitoring.**



Self-Review and Focused Monitoring require oversight of a local steering team comprised of parents, staff and administrators. This oversight includes the responsibility of using Service Provider Agency data, planning, analyzing and synthesizing findings. Ensuring integrity of the system is critical; accountability is bolstered by the oversight and involvement of stakeholder groups.

From IDEA 2004:

SEC. 616. MONITORING, TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE, AND ENFORCEMENT

(2) FOCUSED MONITORING- 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.

(3) MONITORING PRIORITIES- The Secretary shall monitor the States, and shall require each State to monitor the local educational agencies located in the State (except the State exercise of general supervisory responsibility), using quantifiable indicators in each of the following priority areas, and using such qualitative indicators as are needed to adequately measure performance in the following priority areas:

(A) Provision of a free appropriate public education in the least restrictive environment.

(B) State exercise of general supervisory authority, including child find, effective monitoring, the use of resolution sessions, mediation, voluntary binding arbitration, and a system of transition services as defined in sections 602(34) and 637(a)(9).

(C) Disproportionate representation of racial and ethnic groups in special education and related services, to the extent the representation is the result of inappropriate identification.

The **Service Provider Self-Review (SPSR)** process addresses how well the Service Provider (Local School Agencies, Public School Academies, Early On Service Areas and ISD run programs) meets the needs of infants, toddlers, and students with disabilities and their families and establishes a baseline for measurement of progress. In addition, the SPSR reflects how well the Service Provider meets federal and state requirements and provides a Free Appropriate Public Education (FAPE) in the Least Restrictive Environment (LRE) or Early Intervention Services (EIS) in Natural Environments (NE) for infants, toddlers, and students with disabilities. The SPSR promotes collaborative efforts among stakeholders and provides an opportunity for ongoing comprehensive planning and data-based decision making. Effective schools and services are supported by research that continuously addresses education for ALL students. Based on this knowledge, the results of a Service Provider Self-Review provide understanding of both general and special education expectations, articulation and implementation of improvement strategies. Alignment of ongoing Service Provider initiatives is necessary to assist in integration of efforts that impact outcomes and performance for all children.

The **Verification Review** is a comprehensive process that ensures the validity and reliability of the SPSR implementation within a Service Provider Agency. The MDE conducts a review of SPSR implementation by examination of SPSR rating decisions, corrective action plans, improvement plans and evidence of change.

Focused Monitoring is a process that “purposefully selects priority areas to examine for compliance and results, while not specifically examining other areas, to maximize resources, emphasize important variables, and increase the probability of improved results” (National Center for Special Education Monitoring and Accountability). Using annually identified priorities, the MDE ranks, identifies and selects Service Provider Agencies that will be targeted for focused monitoring.

Implementation of CIMS

All Service Provider Agencies will complete the SPSR process in one of the next three school years. The self-review for Early On will begin in the fall of 2006.

The first year of SPSR process focuses on the completion of the Key Performance Indicators (KPIs). This analysis leads to improvement planning and any necessary corrective actions. During year two the improvement plan is implemented. A review of measurable progress on the improvement plan occurs annually. Based on this review, the plan is continued, refined or

revised. This review process is repeated for one additional year. The Service Provider Agency conducts a total review of its system through completion of the current KPIs in year four.

