

Office of Special Education



MDE'S Vision: Support Learners and Learning

Across the Michigan Department of Education (MDE), state leaders are working to support learning and learners. At the Office of Special Education (OSE), staff are supporting learners and learning with high expectations and flexible supports to yield improved outcomes for each eligible student with a disability, through the provision of a Free Appropriate Public Education (FAPE) in the Least Restrictive Environment (LRE).

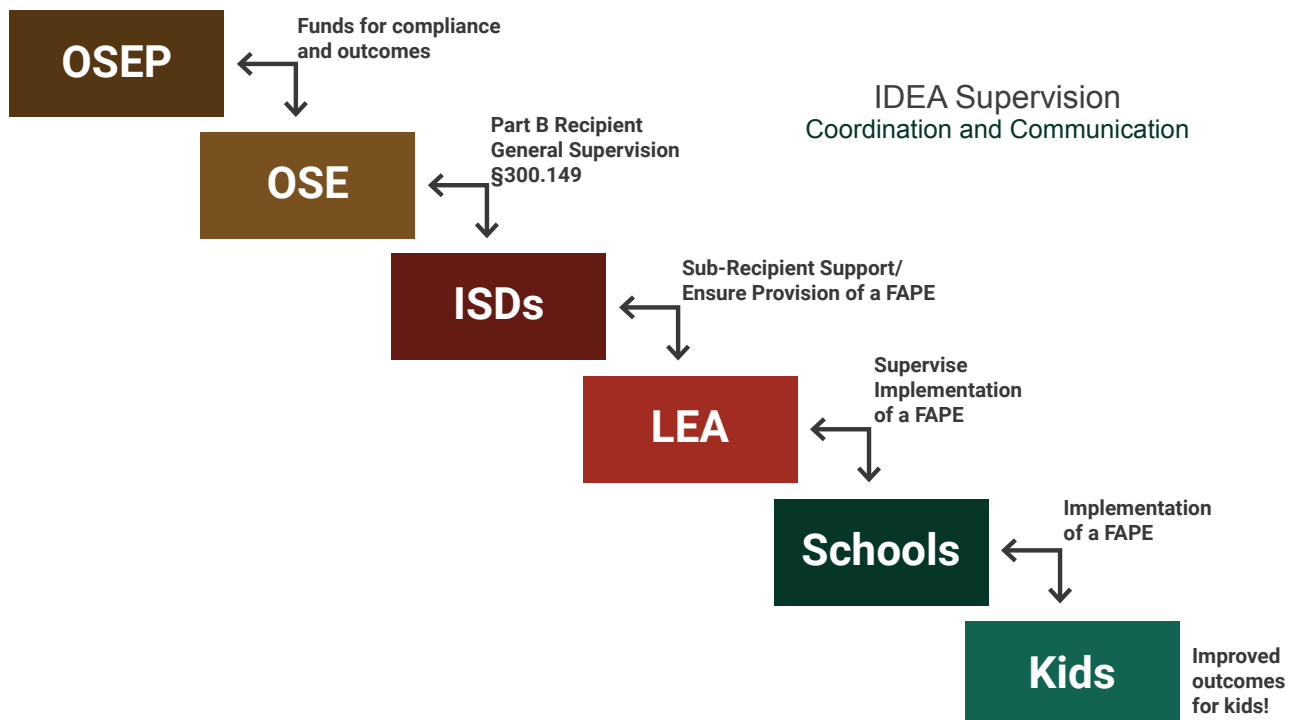
Priorities For The 2017–2018 School Year

1. Clarify Roles and Responsibilities at the State and ISD Levels

In spring 2016, Michigan received a report of findings from the Office of Special Education Programs (OSEP). This federal monitoring report identified noncompliance in how Michigan administers the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) grant. All 56 intermediate school districts (ISDs) receive IDEA grant funds—making them subrecipients. This designation comes with a responsibility to ensure a provision of a FAPE for all eligible students with disabilities at each local district and public school academy (PSA) within its boundaries.

The OSE and ISDs are working together to understand how the state and ISDs can realign roles and responsibilities to comply with federal requirements. This year, the OSE and ISDs will:

- Collaborate to assess and improve ISD systems for support and enforcement
- Develop an onsite review process to better understand the specific work of ISDs as subrecipients of the IDEA grant and their processes for supporting local districts
- Enhance support and enforcement systems at the state and ISDs to align and improve outcomes for students with disabilities



2. Assess Systems and Broaden the Focus

Historically, the OSE has emphasized compliance with the IDEA-required State Performance Plan (SPP) indicators. While these basic requirements are important, compliance with these narrowly defined metrics is not enough to improve outcomes for students with disabilities. Together, the OSE, ISDs, local districts, and PSAs can expand the focus to better understand all of the IDEA requirements and share best practices to improve outcomes for students with disabilities. In 2017–2018 and beyond, the OSE will lead a statewide effort to identify what is working so best practices can be implemented consistently. To start, at each level, leaders must ask these three questions:

What system(s) is in place to:



3. Be Proactive

In assessing the systems related to the three questions above, the OSE determined there are strong systems in place to identify noncompliance and verify correction at the ISD and district levels. However, the state must do more to support all partners in understanding the requirements. In other words, current systems were designed to respond to problems rather than prevent them. The OSE must maintain compliance efforts, and in collaboration with partners across the state, create a system that is intentionally designed to ensure everyone serving students with disabilities understands all IDEA requirements and implements them correctly. This proactive work will include identifying and supporting best practices related to meeting the overall intent of the IDEA and ensuring a FAPE in the LRE.

Ensure a provision of a FAPE



How To Get There

This shared work will take time, and the OSE is committed to working with partners across the state to implement these priorities. The SPP and Annual Performance Report continue to be an annual reporting requirement. The OSE, ISDs, local districts, and PSAs will continue to participate in data collection and compliance requirements.

OSE	ISDs	Local districts and PSAs
<ul style="list-style-type: none">Support ISDs as they assess their systems using the three questionsDevelop systems to answer each questionPartner with ISDs to develop an onsite review process (to implement in 2018–2019)Identify and develop materials to be proactive to ensure IDEA is implemented accurately and consistently	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Assess and develop ISD systems based on the three questionsIdentify questions for the OSE and work in partnership with the office to improve all levels within the systemIdentify questions for OSE and share them at MDE-Ask-OSE@michigan.gov	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Begin discussions about local systems based on the three questionsIdentify questions for OSE and share them at MDE-Ask-OSE@michigan.gov