

Improve IEP Project



MASSACHUSETTS DEPARTMENT OF
ELEMENTARY AND SECONDARY
EDUCATION



Presentation Goals

- ★ Provide context for the Improve IEP Project
- ★ Update on project goals and successes
- ★ Present the timeline of planned project activities



Massachusetts IEP Improvement Project



Why now?

- ★ Current Individualized Education Program (IEP) form first introduced in 2000.
- ★ Stakeholders requested improvement in process and form.
"There is more to an IEP than simply filling out a form."
- ★ Achievement gaps persist for students with disabilities.
- ★ Online technology offers a strategic opportunity to support IEP Teams in:
 - ★ Making individualized service decisions, and
 - ★ Implementing IEPs effectively.



Achievement Gaps – ESE Requested a Series of Studies

Focused on:

- ★ State student-level data and **extensive statistical analyses** to examine district-level practices and policies.
- ★ Understanding better the variation in **identification, placement, and performance** of the Commonwealth's students with disabilities.
- ★ **Exploring policies and practices** that will ensure **effective and high quality services and instruction** for students with disabilities while addressing cost containment and management of available resources.

<http://www.doe.mass.edu/sped/hehir/>



Research Findings and Recommendations for Action

Ensure Access of students with disabilities to the general curriculum and to high quality instruction; and placement of students with disabilities in the **least restrictive environment** (i.e., in classrooms with students without disabilities as much as possible.)

The studies:

- ★ Show that school **districts in Massachusetts differ widely** in their ability to offer effective inclusive options for children with disabilities.
- ★ Document that **students who are included, on average, earn higher scores on the MCAS and are more likely to graduate** than similar students who are segregated.
- ★ Demonstrate that access to engaging high school options, such as regional career and technical education programs, **corresponds with higher rates of on-time graduation** for students with disabilities.
- ★ Identified problems concerning access to **high-quality secondary options** which appear to be statewide.
- ★ Raise concerns that **students with certain types of disabilities** may not have equal access to voc/tech schools and programs.
- ★ Indicate that **low-income students** have unequal access to out-of-district programs.






The IEP Improvement Project is intended to support the use of best practices in IEP development and ensure that students with disabilities are able to access and participate in the general curriculum and in *all* aspects of the school.



Broad and Deep Stakeholder Input

<http://www.doe.mass.edu/sped/improveiep.html>



Essential to a successful
process and outcome

*Thank you for continuing to spread the word to
educators, families and other interested parties!*



Based on Stakeholder Input the ESE plans to:

1. Develop an optional “one stop” online IEP system
2. Ensure confidentiality through role-based security
3. Provide classroom and district-level tools to support teaching and learning
4. Eliminate duplicative data entry
5. Offer the new system at no cost to districts
6. Provide statewide professional development



Based on Stakeholder preferences, the online system will:

- ★ Tailor the IEP process, using student data through SIF
 - Early childhood – ages 3-5
 - Elementary/Middle – ages 5-14
 - Secondary/Transition – ages 14-22
- ★ Support parent engagement
- ★ Display and facilitate case management flow
- ★ Streamline IEP development through individualized menus and customized pathways
- ★ Assist continuous improvement through analytics for classroom teachers and administrators
- ★ Print IEPs and related forms
- ★ Provide *all educators* tools for daily and long term planning



Timeline:

Phase I: Research

- We heard from more than 500 educators, families, and other interested parties.

Phase II: Feedback/Revision Cycle

- Create representative models of eIEP process & form
- Convene working groups with key stakeholders to elicit feedback on models
- Post models on the improveIEP web page for stakeholder review and provide opportunity for feedback via email. Create additional drafts as needed.
- Determine final process & form based on synthesis of focus group findings and email comments

Phase III: Initial Rollout

- Provide statewide PD for improved IEP development process
- Migration to improved IEP development process
- Soft-release of no cost online system
- Voluntary system participation and feedback (5-10 students/district)
- Technical assistance

Phase IV: Full Implementation

- Statewide implementation of new IEP form
- District adoption of online eIEP system (optional)
- Continue PD
- Continue technical assistance



School Year

2014

2015

2016

Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education

