

Recommendation for Statewide Electronic Special Education Documentation System

Recommendation Overview

What We Aim to Achieve

Develop and deploy an electronic system that manages all special education documentation needs, including:

- REED (Review of Existing Evaluation Data)
- MET (Multidisciplinary Evaluation Team reports)
- IEPs (Individualized Education Programs)
- Progress reports
- Supplemental aids and services
- Service tracking
- Medicaid documentation
- The system will centralize all necessary documentation for special education, encompassing REEDs (Review of Existing Evaluation Data), MET reports, IEPs (Individualized Education Programs), progress reports, service tracking, Medicaid documentation, and more. This centralized approach will not only ensure compliance with state and federal regulations but also foster consistency and ease of use across Michigan's districts and counties.

Why This Matters

A statewide system offers multiple benefits:

- **Compliance and Efficiency:** By automating processes and reducing paperwork, the system ensures timely compliance while saving educators valuable time.
 - **Consistency Across Districts:** A single platform reduces redundancy and creates a uniform process for handling special education documentation.
 - **Improved Communication:** Seamless data sharing minimizes service disruptions during student transfers.
 - **Ease of Training:** New and existing staff will find it easier to adapt to a streamlined system supported by consistent training.
 - **Data Integration:** The system's ability to coordinate and aggregate data enables better care, akin to patient portals in healthcare settings.
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Plan of Action

To implement this system effectively, this team recommends a phased approach consisting of exploration, funding allocation, installation, and continuous improvement.

Exploration Stage: Laying the Groundwork

The first step is to understand the needs and requirements for a statewide system. This involves forming a stakeholder group composed of representatives from Part B and Part C programs, legal experts, compliance monitors, and data system administrators. Together, this team will define system requirements and identify key functions.

Key activities in this stage include:

- 1. Determine a lead agency:** A lead agency will take ownership of moving the process forward; this agency will not necessarily be the agency to “house” a statewide system.
- 2. Stakeholder Engagement:** Establish a representative group to guide the development process.
- 3. Communication Plan:** Develop a strategy to gather input and share progress with stakeholders.
- 4. Learning from Others:** Review similar systems in other states to benchmark best practices.
- 5. Identifying Non-Negotiables:** Define essential system features to ensure compliance with MARSE and IDEA.
- 6. Determining Statewide Support:** Assess interest and commitment from ISDs to implement the system. This step involves identifying the minimum number of ISDs needed to move forward and creating a phased plan to expand participation over time.

This exploration phase is expected to take six months to a year, culminating in a detailed set of recommendations for the system’s design.

Objectives:

- Lead agency determined
- Identify requirements for the system.
- Gather stakeholder input.
- Benchmark against models from other states.

Actions & Deliverables:

Action	Deadline	Success Criteria	Responsible Parties
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Form stakeholder group (Part B & C reps, legal, QA)	1 month	Group established	Lead agency and identified personnel
Develop communication plan	1 month	Plan finalized	Lead agency and stakeholders
Define non-negotiables from MARSE/IDEA	6 months - 1 year	Agreed list ready for development team	Stakeholders, legal, ISD CoP
Benchmark other state models	6 months - 1 year	Completed exploration	Lead agency and stakeholder group
Prepare recommendations for development	1 year+	Presentable recommendations finalized	Stakeholder group

Stage 2: Allocation of Funds

Once requirements are clear, the next step involves securing funding and selecting a vendor to develop the system. A Request for Proposal (RFP) will outline essential features, such as seamless integration with existing state reporting systems and robust data tracking capabilities.

Stakeholders will prioritize functionality needs based on feedback from educators, administrators, and other users. This stage ensures that the selected vendor can deliver a system that aligns with Michigan's goals.

Objectives:

- Secure funding for the system's development and implementation.
- Identify and select the right vendor for system design.

Actions & Deliverables:

Action	Deadline	Success Criteria	Responsible Parties
Create survey for functionality needs	6 months	Feedback gathered from all user roles	Stakeholders
Develop an RFP and select vendor	1 year	Vendor chosen based on rigorous evaluation	Stakeholders, legal
Secure pilot program participants	1 year+	Pilot group established	Stakeholders, Lead Agency

Stage 3: Installation

Installation: Building and Testing the System

After selecting a vendor, the system's design and development will begin. This stage includes:

- Defining the system's structure and priorities based on stakeholder feedback.
- Conducting pilot testing to identify and address potential issues.
- Adjusting the implementation plan to incorporate user feedback.

A pilot program will help ensure the system meets user needs and complies with state and federal requirements before statewide rollout.

Objectives:

- Develop and install the system statewide.
- Pilot the program to ensure functionality and address feedback.

Actions & Deliverables:

Action	Deadline	Success Criteria	Responsible Parties
Define system requirements with stakeholders	2 months post-RFP	Priority list (Essentials, HP, Preferred) created	Stakeholders
Pilot testing	6+ months post-dev	Feedback incorporated	Pilot group, vendor
Adjust implementation plan	Ongoing	Plan aligns with user and compliance needs	Stakeholders, vendor

Stage 4: Implementation and Continuous Improvement

The final phase focuses on sustainability. A dedicated governance team will oversee updates, maintenance, and training to ensure the system remains effective and compliant. Ongoing communication and training protocols will equip staff to adapt to updates seamlessly.

Objectives:

- Ensure system sustainability.
- Maintain alignment with IDEA/MARSE and evolving needs.

Actions & Deliverables:

Action	Deadline	Success Criteria	Responsible Parties
Establish ongoing governance group	Post-installation	Defined team for updates and maintenance	Lead Agency and stakeholder group
Develop training protocols for updates	Ongoing	Staff are prepared and confident	Training leads
Implement communication protocols	Ongoing	Transparent communication about changes	Lead Agency

Expected Outcomes

The implementation of a Statewide Electronic Special Education Documentation System will:

- Reduce administrative workload by at least 20%.
 - Enhance consistency across districts, ensuring seamless communication and data sharing.
 - Improve compliance with IDEA and MARSE.
 - Foster user satisfaction through intuitive design and effective training.
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Conclusion

This proposal for a statewide electronic documentation system presents a transformative opportunity for Michigan’s special education programs. By streamlining processes, reducing redundancy, and enhancing communication, the system will empower educators and administrators to focus on what matters most: supporting students.

The journey from exploration to implementation requires collaboration and commitment, but the rewards—a more efficient, consistent, and student-centered special education framework—are well worth the

Success Metrics

- Reduction in administrative workload.
- Decrease in district-level documentation errors.
- Improved user satisfaction (measured through surveys).
- Faster transitions and less disruption in student services.

By aligning all special education documentation processes under a single, efficient electronic system, Michigan can significantly optimize compliance, training, and service delivery across the state. This approach ensures a future-proof, user-friendly system that supports educators, administrators, and students.