

Common Terms and Acronyms

This document serves as a quick reference guide to understanding Acronyms and terminology that are commonly used in our conversations but may be less familiar to those outside of the policy development space.

Acronym/Term	Definition	Notes
<i>The Department/DESE</i>	Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education	As the State Educational Agency, the Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE) has responsibility for general supervision under Part B of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA). DESE provides technical assistance and monitors local education agencies' (LEAs) implementation of IDEA and state special education law. General supervision has eight distinct but interconnected components, creating a cohesive system.
<i>SEPP</i>	Office of Special Education Planning and Policy Development	The SEPP Office is responsible for setting special education policy, reviewing fiscal matters, collecting data to report to OSEP in the SPP/APR, and working with other offices across the Department to ensure positive outcomes for students with disabilities.
<i>USED</i>	United States Education Department	
<i>OSEP</i>	US Office of Special Education Programs	
<i>The Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA)</i>	National law that makes available a free appropriate public education to eligible children with disabilities and ensures special education and related services to those children.	
<i>State Performance Plan/Annual Performance Report (SPP/APR)</i>	Yearly report that evaluates the state's efforts to implement the requirements and purposes of the IDEA and	The SPP provides the baseline data, targets and improvement activities, timelines, and resources

	describes how the state will improve its implementation.	established by the state for each indicator. States must also report annually on their performance on the targets identified in the SPP through an Annual Performance Report (APR). The APR reflects the state's progress toward meeting its goals.
Indicator	The SPP/APRs include indicators that measure child and family outcomes and other indicators that measure compliance with the requirements of the IDEA.	
State Systemic Improvement Plan (SSIP)	Comprehensive, ambitious, yet achievable multi-year plan for improving results for children with disabilities, with stakeholder engagement in all phases. The SSIP is part of the SPP/APR and is a requirement for all states receiving federal funds for IDEA programs.	
Compliance Indicators	Measure compliance with IDEA regulations.	Includes Disproportionality, Child Find, Early Childhood Transition, Secondary Transition Indicators 4B, 9, 10, 11, 12, and 13
Results Indicators	Measure child and family outcomes.	Includes Graduation, Drop Out, Statewide Assessment and other student outcomes, Educational Environments, and Parent Engagement Indicators 1, 2, 3, 4A, 5, 6, 7, 8, 14
Stakeholder(s)	Individuals or groups who have a vested interest in the decisions that federal, state, and local agencies make on behalf of children and youth with disabilities and their families.	Stakeholders include parents and families, educators, advocates,
Target Setting	The state's process for determining ambitious and	

	realistic statistical standards for performance indicators.	
Federal Fiscal Year (FFY)	The federal fiscal year is the accounting period for the federal government which begins on October 1 and ends on September 30.	This is different than a school year, calendar year, or state fiscal year.
Framing Questions	The Framing Questions are overarching questions about the importance and meaning of each Indicator. Each question gives stakeholders a context to better understand the Commonwealth's quality of special education services.	
Local Education Agency (LEA)	A public board of education or other public authority legally constituted within a State for either administrative control or direction of, or to perform a service function for, public elementary schools or secondary schools in a city, county, township, school district, or other political subdivision of a State, or for a combination of school districts or counties as are recognized in a State as an administrative agency for its public elementary schools or secondary schools.	
Office of Public School Monitoring (PSM)	Visits each public school district and charter school in the Commonwealth every three years to monitor compliance with federal and state special education and civil rights regulations.	Areas of review related to special education include student assessments, determination of eligibility, the Individualized Education Program (IEP) Team process, and IEP development and implementation. Areas of review related to civil rights include bullying, student discipline, physical restraint, and equal access to school programs for all students.
Tiered Focused Monitoring (TFM)	Through the Tiered Focused Monitoring (TFM) process,	Reports and corresponding technical assistance are

	<p>The Office of Public School Monitoring assigns each LEA to a specific tier based on level of need. PSM aligns support and resources to the LEA's level of need, focusing more intensely on those requiring the greatest support.</p>	<p>designed to support Local Education Agencies (LEA)s in directing time and resources to activities that will improve student outcomes. Every LEA, in every monitoring tier, receives PSM support. This assistance includes general guidance, regional meetings, and district-specific support.</p>
<p><i>Problem Resolution Systems Office (PRS)</i></p>	<p>Complaints and Oversight</p>	
<p><i>Office of Approved Special Education Schools (OASES)</i></p>	<p>OASES supports collaboratives and approved special education schools to ensure that all students are safe, educated by qualified staff, and receive specialized instruction to meet their individual needs.</p>	
<p><i>Student Assessment Services (SAS)</i></p>	<p>SAS develops and administers the MCAS (Massachusetts Comprehensive Assessment System) and, for students with significant learning challenges, the MCAS Alternate Assessment. As well as administer ACCESS for ELLs (Assessing Comprehension and Communication in English State-to-State for English Language Learners).</p>	
<p><i>Corrective Action Plan (CAP)</i></p>	<p>LEAs in the Corrective Action and Cross-Unit Support & Corrective Action tiers develop a CAP based on the TFM Final Report issued by PSM. Once the report is issued, PSM works with LEAs to develop an appropriate CAP, providing targeted, ongoing technical assistance to support CAP implementation. Both tiers are required to provide written progress reports</p>	

<p><i>Continuous Improvement and Monitoring Plan (CIMP)</i></p>	<p>Outlines an action plan, identifies the success metric, describes the measurement mechanism and provides a completion timeframe to bring those areas into compliance with the controlling statute or regulation. LEAs are expected to incorporate the CIMP actions into their district and school improvement plans, including their professional development plans.</p>	
<p><i>Response To Intervention (RTI)</i></p>	<p>Aims to identify struggling students early on and give them the support they need to thrive in school.</p>	<p>RTI isn't a specific program or type of teaching. It's a proactive approach: RTI measures students' skills and uses this data to decide which interventions to use.</p>