

Maine’s Continuous Improvement and Monitoring Program (CIMP)

Three Step Process to Achieve Improved Educational Results for Children with Disabilities

The Maine Department of Education (MDOE) Office of Special Services and the Child Development Services (CDS) State Intermediate Educational Unit (IEU) implement a birth through 20 Continuous Improvement and Monitoring Program (CIMP). CIMP interventions focus on improving infant, toddler and school-age student outcomes. CIMP is designed to enhance partnerships among the MDOE Office of Special Services/CDS State IEU, School Administrative Units (SAUs), which include CDS sites, other educational and community agencies, providers and parents in implementing Part C and Part B of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA). These partnerships focus on early intervention and special education services and systems that directly impact results for children, and on the development and implementation of improvement strategies to address identified needs.

The CIMP is an SAU-driven process founded on evidence-based decision-making and aligns with IDEA State Performance Plan (SPP) compliance and performance indicators. This alignment supports a close relationship between special education improvement planning and other SAU or community improvement planning efforts.

The CIMP utilizes an annual three-step process.

- Step 1. Self-Assessment: Data Collection/Data Interpretation;
- Step 2. Improvement/Corrective Action Plan Development; and
- Step 3. Implementation, Monitoring and Evaluation using the SAU Performance Profile.

STEP ONE

1) What is Step 1 of CIMP Performance Review & Improvement?

Step 1 is Self-Assessment: Data Collection/Data Interpretation. During Step 1, the SAUs and MDOE /CDS State IEU work collaboratively to collect, compile, and interpret SPP indicator data specific to each SAU. The collection of data focuses on SPP indicators that reflect standards of compliance with IDEA and with Maine’s educational performance goals from the SPP. All data are available to SAUs through the MDOE/CDS website. The SAUs use the information collected during Step 1 in

the development of the Improvement/Corrective Action Plan during Step 2.

2) What are the activities involved in Step 1?

Step 1 includes the following activities:

1. The SAU designates a local CIMP team;
2. The MDOE State Performance Plan Indicator Response and Improvement Team (**SPPIRIT**) for children 5-20 and the CDS State IEU General Supervision Support Team (**GSST**) for children birth-5 provide training for SAU CIMP teams;
 - a. Based upon the SAU's determination levels, SPPIRIT/GSST conducts a facilitated discussion with the SAU CIMP team that focuses on the SAU's special education procedures;
3. The SAU CIMP team submits to SPPIRIT /GSST data analyzed and interpreted by the SAU in the self-assessment, together with promising practices identified by the SAU for performance and compliance indicators meeting requirements;
4. SPPIRIT/GSST analyzes/interprets data submitted by the CIMP team, including SAU review of student records for procedural compliance and identified key performance indicators;
5. The CIMP team discusses self-assessment with a member of SPPIRIT/GSST in order to summarize all the critical performance indicator data findings that will be transferred to the Improvement/Corrective Action Plan; and
6. SPPIRIT/GSST provides assistance to the SAU's CIMP team as they move to Step 2.

3) How are SAUs selected to begin Step 1?

All SAUs in Maine receiving funds under IDEA 2004 are required to participate in the CIMP. Even for those SAUs that meet requirements, the CIMP helps ensure maintenance of good results and enables the SAUs to share their best practices with other SAUs across the state.

4) What documentation is provided to the SAUs during Step 1?

MDOE Office of Special Services compiles data each year for the SPP Annual Performance Report for each Part B SAU on a set of performance and compliance

measures. For Part C and Part B section 619, CDS State IEU provides reports each year on a set of performance and compliance measures.

5) What resources are available to SAUs during Step 1?

1. Sessions at conferences of professional and community organizations;
2. Training Modules on line; and
3. Templates for the Self-Assessment Plan.

6) Who are the members of the CIMP Team?

All SAUs are responsible for sending a CIMP team to the SPPIRIT/GSST training in order to build capacity to fulfill their obligations under the CIMP.

GSST Part C (B-3) and Part B preschool (3-5)

Includes at a minimum the Site director and Board of Directors chairperson or a designee from the board, and may include appointed case managers responsible for the coordination of such services.

SAU CIMP Part B school age 5-20:

Includes at a minimum three representatives of the SAU, including one certified special education administrator responsible for the supervision of special education, one program building administrator, and the superintendent or a designee of the superintendent. It is also recommended that the team include the person at the SAU responsible for entering data into MEDMS/Infinite Campus.

7) What happens at the SPPIRIT/GSST trainings?

Each year MDOE and CDS State IEU provide statewide trainings to assist SAUs in building local capacity to meet annual procedural compliance requirements and SPP performance indicator targets which are illustrated in the Performance Profile. During the training, SAUs' CIMP teams participate in an overview and an update of the structure and activities involved in CIMP. The training may include in-depth training on:

1. Practices for data submission;
2. Techniques to interpret and report data;
3. Elements in effective Self-Assessment and Improvement/Corrective Action Plans;
4. Monitoring requirements to ensure positive results from

- Improvement/Corrective Action Plans;
5. Audit lists for student record reviews to ensure procedural compliance with IDEA; and
 6. Correction of noncompliance as outlined in the Local Determination Levels Assistance and Enforcement Actions table.

8) How do SAUs conduct the individual student record reviews as part of self-assessment?

The SAUs conduct procedural compliance reviews of individual student/child files using the Pupil Record Audit Form. Individual student/child procedural compliance data is collected by SAUs through review of a select number of student/child files. Student files selected for review are determined by MDOE and CDS State IEU through an electronic formula-based selection process applied to the most recent Special Education Child Count (SECC) for each SAU.

This selection process ensures that file selections are random, cross-section samplings, across disability categories and age groups. Additional files are selected for students with disabilities attending special purpose private schools, correctional institutions, and mental health institutions for which the SAU must provide Early Intervention or a Free Appropriate Public Education (FAPE). The procedural compliance data is collected by SAUs and submitted to MDOE/CDS State IEU electronically.

9) What other data will SAUs analyze and interpret as part of Step 1? The SAUs will have performance indicator data available from the Performance Profile sent to the superintendents and CDS Board Chairs. SAUs are required to review, analyze, and interpret specific indicators in order to develop improvement strategies/activities to be included in the Improvement/Corrective Action Plan (Step Two).

10) What documentation needs to be sent to the Department? When must it be submitted? All SAUs are provided with due dates by which the sections of the Self-Assessment Plan (Data Collection and Comparison, Internal Audit, In-Depth Indicator Self Assessment and Promising Practices) must be submitted to the MDOE./CDS State IEU.

11) How do SAUs know when Step 1 is completed?

An SAU has completed Step 1 activities when it has:

1. Identified the SAU CIMP Team;
2. Attended the SPPIRIT /GSST training;
3. Conducted the required review of selected individual student records;
4. Reviewed, analyzed and interpreted SPP performance indicator data in the

- Performance Profile, including the Pupil Record Audit Forms, and transferred required data into the self-assessment worksheet;
5. For certain SAUs, participated in additional data collection/monitoring activities conducted by SPPIRIT/GSST and SAU CIMP Team as a result of an onsite visit; and
 6. Submitted its Self-Assessment Plan and received notification from SPPIRIT/GSST that it has been approved.

STEP TWO

1) What is Step 2 of CIMP Performance Review & Improvement? Step 2 is the Improvement/Corrective Action Plan development part of the CIMP annual process. During Step 2, each SAU CIMP Team develops an Improvement/Corrective Action Plan based on needs identified during Step 1 of the process.

2) What are the activities involved in Step 2?

Step 2 activities include:

1. SPPIRIT /GSST provides the SAU with notice of additional training opportunities on the development of Improvement/Corrective Action Plans, and timelines for submission;
2. SAU CIMP team reviews its analysis and interpretation of quantitative and qualitative data from Step 1; and
3. SAU CIMP team develops an Improvement/Corrective Action Plan that includes specific strategies to be implemented addressing identified areas of need and resulting in measured evidence of change.

3) What resources are available to SAU during Step 2?

SPPIRIT /GSST works collaboratively with SAU CIMP Teams throughout Step 2.

Other resources available to SAU include:

1. Sessions at conferences of professional and community organizations;
2. Training Modules on line;
3. Topic-specific guidance (e.g. data interpretations);
4. Templates for Improvement/Corrective Action Plans;
5. Promising practices of other SAUs as reported in their self-assessments; and
6. SAU mentors.

4) What should SAUs include in the Improvement/Corrective Action Plan?

Improvement activities and corrective actions the SAUs develop should address areas of procedural noncompliance and SPP indicators that did not meet the State target identified during Step 1. The Improvement/Corrective Action Plan should also include:

1. Evidence-based strategies/activities;
2. Documentation of implementation and impact of strategies/activities;
3. Person(s) responsible;
4. Projected timelines; and
4. Estimated costs and sources of funding.

5) What do MDOE and CDS State IEU do with the Improvement/Corrective Action Plans that are submitted by the SAU?

SPPIRIT/GSST reviews and approves the plans, ensuring that all required content is addressed, makes suggestions as appropriate, and may offer resources to help the SAUs accomplish their goals.

6) How do SAUs know when they have completed Step 2?

An SAU has completed Step 2 activities when it has:

1. Developed an Improvement/Corrective Action Plan;
2. Submitted the Improvement/Corrective Action Plan; and
3. Received SPPIRIT/GSST approval of the Improvement/Corrective Action Plan.

STEP THREE

1) What is Step 3 of the CIMP Performance Review & Improvement? Step 3 is implementation and evaluation, and focuses on implementation activities and ongoing evaluation as described in the Improvement/Corrective Action Plan. Within Step 3 is an analysis of the impact and effectiveness of the Improvement/Corrective Action Plan and any necessary revisions to make the plan successful for students with disabilities and their families.

2) What are the activities involved in Step 3?

During Step 3, the SAUs:

1. Implement the activities identified in the Improvement/Corrective Action Plan;
2. At least annually, review the SAU Performance Profile and other data as appropriate, to determine effectiveness of the Improvement/Corrective Action Plan; and
3. Revise the Improvement/Corrective Action Plan as needed and resubmit to MDOE/CDS State IEU within 30 days of the SAU's receipt of the Performance Profile.

3) What resources are available to SAUs during Step 3? As SAUs implement their Improvement/Corrective Action Plans, SPPIRIT/GSST provides support for

improvement efforts as follows:

1. Provides access to topical specialists (e.g., transition, specific disability areas, etc.);
2. Provides assistance in accessing other state and national resources;
3. Provides assistance in developing interagency and inter-SAU linkages; and
4. Provides information relative to continuous reviews and monitoring of Improvement/Corrective Action Plans.

5) How do SAUs know when they have completed Step 3?

An SAU completes Step 3 activities when it has:

1. Established a system for continuous review and monitoring of the Improvement/Corrective Action Plan;
2. Confirmed that the subsequent Performance Profile demonstrates that the performance and compliance indicators have met the state targets; or
3. Where the Performance Profile fails to demonstrate that the performance and compliance indicators have met the state targets, revised the Improvement/Corrective Action Plan, submitted the revised plan to MDOE/CDS State IEU and received SPPIRIT /GSST approval of the revised plan.

Adapted from the document of the same name authored by Oregon Department of Education, Special Education System Performance Review & Improvement.