

# Special Education Updates and Insights

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October 2025



# Agenda

- NECounts and Annual Determinations
- Overview of the Focused Monitoring Process
- Priority Areas
- Focused Monitoring Framework
- Monitoring Timeline
- Top 10 Areas of Noncompliance for 2024-2025
- TIP
- SPED Communications Page
- Q and A

# NECounts and District Annual Determinations

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# Understanding NECounts Risk Analysis

## **Purpose:**

To ensure federal special education funds are used effectively and that districts meet requirements under IDEA.

- **How It Works:**

- **Data Review**

- NDE reviews multiple data sources (e.g., graduation, dropout, assessments, early childhood, compliance, fiscal).
- Each category shows how well a district supports students with disabilities.

- **Scoring System**

- Each area gets a **Risk Score**:
  - **0 = No Risk**
  - **1 = Low Risk**
  - **2 = Medium Risk**
  - **3 = High Risk**
- Higher scores = greater chance that funds aren't achieving intended outcomes.

- **Weighting**

- Some areas matter more (e.g., compliance, data accuracy, improvement plans).
- Scores are multiplied by their **weight (1–3)** to emphasize priority areas.

- **Overall Risk Percentage**

- All weighted scores are added together and divided by total possible points.
- This creates a **district risk percentage**.
- The percentage determines the level of support or monitoring needed.



# NECounts (cont.)

## Levels of Determination

Level	Risk %	What It Means
<b>Meets Requirements</b>	0–40%	District on track; routine monitoring only
<b>Needs Assistance</b>	40–60%	Targeted support & improvement planning
<b>Needs Intervention</b>	>60%	Intensive monitoring & corrective action
<b>Needs Substantial Intervention</b>	Multiple years in intervention	Possible funding or accreditation impact

The process combines **data quality**, **student outcomes**, and **fiscal compliance** into one system.

It helps NDE identify where to focus **technical assistance and resources** to improve outcomes for students with disabilities.

# District Focused Monitoring



# Overview of the Focused Monitoring Process

- Federal regulations require states to monitor the implementation of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act - IDEA
- Primary Focus – Improving the educational outcomes for children with disabilities by ensuring school districts meet the requirements of IDEA that most closely impact student outcomes
- School districts are monitored annually by the Office of Special Education through a weighted risk analysis of all submitted special education data
- Through the analysis districts receive focused or differentiated monitoring in 4 priority areas



# Priority Areas

- 1) Provision of a free appropriate public education (FAPE) in the least restrictive environment (LRE) including compliance with the requirements of the individualized education plan (IEP)
- 2) Procedural safeguards
- 3) General supervision including
  - 1) child find evaluation and identification of children and youth with disabilities
  - 2) Transition
- 4) Disproportionate representation of racial and ethnic groups in special education and related services

# *Focused Monitoring Framework*

- 1) District Monitoring  
Questionnaire
- 2) Focused file review
- 3) Clarification  
meeting

# Monitoring Timeline

Monitoring Planning Steps	NDE/Persons Responsible	Timeline	Monitoring Planning Steps	NDE/Persons Responsible	Timeline
<b>Step 1</b> Notification of Special Education Monitoring and Review of Existing Data	Office of Special Education	Second Friday in September	<b>Step 5</b> Clarification Meetings	Monitoring Team and Districts	March - April
<b>Step 2</b> Introductory Webinar	Office of Special Education Districts	Viewed by the second Friday in November	<b>Step 6</b> Letter of Findings or Closeout Letter Sent to Districts	Monitoring Leads	Sent the second Friday in April
<b>Step 3</b> District Monitoring Questionnaire	Districts	Questionnaire due by the second Friday in October	<b>Step 7</b> Submission of CAP and approval	Submission by Districts Approval by NDE	Submitted by the last Tuesday in May
<b>Step 4</b> Comprehensive Review	NDE Data Team/Monitoring Team	November - February			

[Monitoring Protocol for Districts](#)

# Top 10 Areas of Noncompliance in 2024-2025

- 10.** Assistive Technology Consideration (no documentation of this being discussed)
- 9.** Goal aligned to grade level standards
- 8.** Beginning dates for services (start dates were before the IEP was held)
- 7.** IEPs were not revised annually
- 6.** Evidence of how the child's disability affects their involvement and progress in the general education curriculum
- 5.** Excusals – permission not provided before meeting (required IEP member not in attendance)
- 4.** Goals were not aligned to the PLAAFP
- 3.** Alignment of the IEP (FAPE)
- 2.** Accommodations and/or modifications for assessments (not supporting being used in daily instruction; none listed at all)
- 1.** Services provided did not include frequency, specific location, and duration (must be included for each service and support provided to student)

# Targeted Improvement Plan

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Make sure that  
your TIP and  
CIP align  
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# Targeted Improvement Plan (TIP)

TIP – Due to NDE on May 1, 2026

TIP Workshops scheduled in 2026

TIP Webinars:

**Winter TIP Webinar**

**Wednesday, December 10, 2025, at 12:00 p.m. CST**

Meeting ID: 945 9402 4632

PASSCODE: 2426

**Spring TIP Webinar**

**Wednesday, March 4, 2026, at 12:00 p.m. CST**

Meeting ID: 910 0010 6275

PASSCODE: 2426

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# TIP Workshops

**January**

Wednesday	1/7	ESU 2 (Fremont)	Region 2
Thursday	1/8	ESU 3(Omaha)	Region 2
Monday	1/12	ESU 10 (Kearney)	Region 4
Wednesday	1/14	ESU 16 (North Platte)	Region 5
Wednesday	1/21	ESU 5 (Beatrice)	Region 1
Thursday	1/29	ESU 9 (Hastings)	Region 4

**February**

Monday	2/2	ESU 17 (Ainsworth)	Region 4
Wednesday	2/4	ESU 16 (Ogallala)	Region 5
Friday	2/6	ESU 6 (Milford)	Region 1
Monday	2/9	ESU 13 (Scottsbluff)	Region 5
Wednesday	2/11	ESU 8 (Neligh)	Region 3
Tuesday	2/24	ESU 11 (Holdrege)	Region 4
Thursday	2/26	ESU 15 (Trenton)	Region 5

**March**

Monday	3/2	ESU 7 (Columbus)	Region 3
Wednesday	3/11	ESU 1 (Wakefield)	Region 3
Wednesday	3/18	ESU 4 (Auburn)	Region 1

# Resources And Supports





# *Office of Special Education Communications*

## SPED Communications Tab

- SPED Calendar
- Office of Special Education Programs (OSEP) Information
- NDE Office of Special Education Information
- Statewide SPED Webinars
- Friday News Blast
- Bobbing for Answers (Guidance)



# Questions?



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**SPED**

SPECIAL EDUCATION