

BRIGHT IDEAS

For Implementing the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act Procedural Change

In July 2018, the Illinois State Board of Education (ISBE) announced a procedural change in how Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) Part B flow-through and preschool grant funds would be distributed in Illinois. These federal funds flow from the federal government to states (recipients) and then to subrecipients within the states. Previously, ISBE allocated funds to subrecipients that included state-authorized charter schools, special education cooperatives and school districts that are not a part of cooperatives. Then these funds were then further sub-granted from special education cooperatives to their member school districts. The July 2018 announcement from ISBE informed subrecipients that according to the U.S. Department of Special Education (OSEP), subrecipients cannot further subgrant IDEA grant funds. With this procedural change, IDEA flow-through and preschool funds would no longer flow through special education cooperatives and would flow directly to school districts. Cooperatives and their member districts were given the option to implement the procedural change beginning with either the FY20 or FY21 school year.

Read on to learn about some of the procedural changes that were implemented during the transition in FY20, additional changes that will take place going into FY21 as well as some tips, best practices and important timelines. Additionally, new initiatives from ISBE funded by IDEA will be highlighted.

FY20 IDEA Procedural Changes

Several changes took place for stand-alone districts and districts that were part of a cooperative that implemented the IDEA procedural change during the 2019-2020 school year. These changes included:

- Districts implementing the procedural change began to receive allocations directly from the state.
- At the end of the fiscal year prior to the implementation of the change, cooperatives submitted a final expenditure report and any carryover funds with the cooperative were allocated to the cooperative's member districts.
- District began using the streamlined ISBE Consolidated Application that combined applications for the IDEA Part B grant, Preschool grant and Coordinated Early Intervening Services (CEIS) into one application in the ISBE Web Application Security (IWAS) system.
- Districts required to or choosing to use funds for Coordinated Early Intervening Services (CEIS) must transfer funds in the ISBE Consolidated Application from IDEA Part B into CEIS on a separated budget page.
- Districts began to submit expenditure reports directly to ISBE.
- Districts completed a new Consolidated District Plan in IWAS that streamlined a district's grant application process by allowing grantees to answer one set of questions to meet the requirements for 12 federal formula grants.

Upcoming FY21 Changes and Updates

Districts from cooperatives that chose the one-year extension, will be implementing the procedural change in the upcoming FY21 school year. There are a few additional changes that will take place prior to the FY21 grant year. Some of these changes include:

- The Timely and Meaningful Consultation (TMC) section in the new Consolidated District Plan will be removed and will be a part of the IDEA Part B Consolidated Application in IWAS. This change will eliminate the potential of other grants in the Consolidated District Plan being held up while waiting for the TMC to take place.
- ISBE will be enhancing communication efforts between ISBE, state-approved directors and local directors by adding a place to input and maintain contact information on the Applicant Information Tab. This will allow for communication to both if applicable. Local school districts may continue to utilize cooperatives, including the provision of a state-approved director.

Best Practices

Strong relationships between cooperatives and districts are essential in supporting districts in the transition to the new IDEA procedural change. It is important for cooperatives and districts to keep up to date on any future updates on IDEA and reference the IDEA Listserve on ISBE's website on a regular basis. Some best practices for districts to keep in mind include:

- In the spring, resolve any Maintenance of Effort (MOE) Issues. Approval of IDEA Grant is contingent on MOE approval.
- Districts are required to expand IDEA funds for professional development. It is recommended a minimum of five percent of the total IDEA flow-through allocation be budgeted.
- Prior approval from ISBE is required for all out-of-state travel. The travel information should be included the budget detail of the grant application. The request must be in writing using the ISBE Out-of-State Travel form at least one week prior to traveling to your district ISBE grant coordinator.

- Timely and Meaningful Consultation should be completed by May 31.
- Funds may not be obligated prior to the receipt of an application by ISBE.
- Project activities must be completed, and expenses incurred by June 30.

Transition Tips

- Any remaining IDEA carryover dollars will need to be reported to ISBE by district at the end of the FY20 grant period.
- At the end of the grant year, if a district has any unused commitment funds, the dollars will be returned to the state for allocation if unspent.
- Cooperatives should amend their Articles of Agreement if it currently conflicts with provisions in the new IDEA procedural changes.
- Districts may be required to allocate fifteenth percent of IDEA funds to be spent on Comprehensive Coordinated Early Intervening Services (CCEIS) if they are identified as exhibiting significant disproportionality; however, districts can also voluntarily allocate up to fifteenth percent of IDEA funds to be allocated for Coordinated Early Intervening Services (CEIS) for services for at risk students.
- The IDEA Procedural Change may trigger a single audit for a school district if the district now expends \$750,000 or more in federal grant funds during the fiscal year.
- Function Code 2210 should be used for district professional development costs paid directly for speakers, staff travel, registration, working lunches, etc
- Function/Object Code 4000/300 should be used for:
 - » Purchased services from a cooperative such as OT, SL, etc.
 - » Professional development services purchased from a cooperative
 - » Joint purchase for a coop between member districts
- Function/Object Code 4000/600 should be used for tuition paid to special education cooperatives.



ISBE New Initiatives

Preliminary allocations indicate almost \$15 million additional IDEA dollars will be flowing from the federal government to the State of Illinois with over \$14 million flowing through to school districts. Some new initiatives coming out from ISBE for the FY21 school year include:

- **Center for Transition – University of Illinois**

This project will provide special educators, related service personnel and administrators with training and support needed to prepare students for employment. Additionally, this project will create a state-wide training and technical assistance center that specifically focuses on transition from school to work for students with significant disabilities (e.g., intellectual disabilities, multiple disabilities). Activities will include:

- (a) conducting an annual needs assessment
- (b) offering a variety of training activities, including a statewide conference, face-to-face workshops, monthly webcasts, research briefs, a digital resource library and case studies of high performing high schools in Illinois
- (c) providing targeted assistance to schools to increase work-based learning experiences
- (d) enhancing statewide interagency coordination, including regional transition boards
- (e) maintaining a database of transition personnel.

- **Autism Learning and Supports Project – Illinois State University**

This project will provide intensive face-to-face professional learning workshops for teachers and parents of students with autism in three locations across Illinois. Attendees of the workshop will be provided the systemic support through coaching and problem solving.

- **Specific Learning Disability Support Project (sealed proposals)**

This proposed project will offer training and resources to meet the educational needs of students with specific learning disabilities, support teachers and increase special education staff retention in the field. Additionally, this project will expand upon the development of previous training materials to address “specifically designed instruction” for students with all types of specific learning disabilities, including but not limited to dyslexia. Activities include:

- (a) an annual statewide conference on specially designed instruction for specific learning disabilities
- (b) regional face-to-face workshops for special education teachers
- (c) district trainings to schools identified through the special education differentiated monitoring system
- (d) webcasts that address best practices and current

IDEA Timeline

May 31 NPPS – Timely and Meaningful Consultations	Sept 30 MOE Reduction for eligible districts opting to take a reduction	Oct 20 Q1 – First Quarterly Expenditure Report due	Nov 15 AFR due to ISBE	Jan 20 Q2 – Second Quarterly Expenditure Report due
July 1 Earliest start date for IDEA Grants	Oct 15 AFR due to Regional Office of Ed	Oct 30 Q1 – Periodic Grant Report due	Dec 1 Ensure all students are entered into I-Star in preparation for the Dec. 1 Child Count	Jan 30 Q2 – Periodic Report due

IDEA

issues related to education students with specific learning disabilities
(e) providing a Dyslexia Toolkit.

- **Behavior Assessment Training Project (sealed proposals)**

This project will address the need for:

- (a) professional development for special education personnel on conducting functional behavior assessments (FBAs) and developing behavior intervention plans (BIPs)
- (b) providing appropriately licensed personnel for district to utilize for conducting FBAs when external source is warranted
- (c) providing coaching to special education teachers on addressing student behavior needs.

- **Language Interpreters Training and Registry Project**

This project will provide online professional development modules for training language interpreters and translators about IEP processes and terminology, recruit language interpreters around the state willing to be included in an online registry for districts to have a resource for selecting interpreters for IEP meetings.

- **Illinois Department of Juvenile Justice Transition to Public School Project**

This project will employ educational liaisons to provide support and promote successful reintegration from the IDJJ setting to the public-school setting for youth with disabilities.

IDEA Grant Resources

ISBE Website – IDEA Part B Grant Program Information

- <https://www.isbe.net/Pages/IDEA-Part-B-Grant-Program-Information.aspx>

IDEA Consultant Listing by District

- <https://www.isbe.net/Documents/IDEA-Grant-Coord-Assign.pdf>



Jan 31

Excess Cost Worksheet
(due the last working
day of January)

April 30

Q3 – Periodic
Report due

June 30

End date for
IDEA grants

July 30

Q4 – Periodic
Report due

Aug 31

End date for IDEA
grants with an
approved extension

April 20

Q3 – Third Quarterly
Expenditure Report due

May 30

Last date to submit
an amendment for
the regular IDEA
grant period

July 20

Q4 – Fourth Quarterly
Expenditure Report due

Aug 1

Last date to submit an
amendment for grants
with an approved
extension

Sept 30

Final Expenditure
Report due