

What is the SSIP, and why do it?

The U.S. Department of Education requires states to create a plan that serves as an opportunity for districts and schools to improve results for students with disabilities. The plan is called a State Systemic Improvement Plans or S-S-I-P for short.

For example, as part of the SSIP process, the state may provide professional development to special and general education teachers with the goal of increasing student learning.

As a part of the stakeholders in the SSIP process, families and community members represent the needs of their children, as well as children across their state.

When families know about their state's SSIP and what its goals are, they can provide feedback to the state to ensure that school systems are accountable for the progress of students with disabilities. Contact your State Special Education Department to learn more about how you can be a stakeholder.

State education agency leaders and their stakeholders work together to:

- Look at data to identify areas that might need improvement. For example, they might look at data from reading tests to learn more about reading proficiency.
- Then, they choose specific areas to focus on and set improvement goals. For example, a state might set a goal of increasing the number of students with disabilities scoring proficient on the state reading test.
- Next, they make changes to reach the goal. For the reading example, evidence-based instructional practices would be put in place to help students and teachers reach the goals in the SSIP.

During the SSIP process, the state periodically shares data with stakeholder groups, which include educators, families, and other community members to determine if the plan is working or whether it needs to be revised.

States, educators, and families must consider many things together, when developing and implementing an improvement plan. Join with others to ensure that your state's SSIP addresses the needs of your community and supports improved results for students with disabilities.



Participants in the National Center on Educational Outcomes' (NCEO) Peer Learning Group on Empowering Families to Understand the Role of Assessments in State Systemic Improvement Plans (SSIPs) made important contributions to this series. They provided information about the issues and implications. The PLG members also reviewed drafts of this product. The final document strives to reflect their valuable comments and suggestions.

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