

Special Education Program Evaluation Template

A District/Building-Level Framework Aligned to SPP/APR Indicators

Purpose: This template helps special education leadership teams conduct a structured, evidence-based annual or multi-year review of program effectiveness. It is organized around the same performance domains used in federal State Performance Plan / Annual Performance Report (SPP/APR) reporting so that local evaluation stays connected to state and federal accountability data.

1. Evaluation Scope

Field	Entry
District/Building	[enter]
Evaluation Period	[school year(s)]
Team Members	[names/roles]
Data Sources Reviewed	[state assessment data, IEP audit sample, discipline data, exit data, family survey, etc.]

2. Compliance Indicators (Process)

Indicator	Metric	Target	Current Result	Gap/Notes
Timely Initial Evaluations	% completed within 60 days/state timeline	100%		
Timely IEPs	% developed within 30 days of eligibility	100%		
LRE (SPP Ind. 5)	% of time in general education, by category	State target		
Discipline (SPP Ind. 4)	Suspension/expulsion rate vs. general population	State target		
Secondary Transition (SPP Ind. 13)	% of IEPs age 16+ with compliant transition plans	100%		
Post-School Outcomes (SPP Ind. 14)	% engaged in education/employment 1 yr post-exit	State target		

3. Outcome Indicators (Results)

Metric	Students with Disabilities	All Students	Gap
Proficiency — Reading (state			

Metric	Students with Disabilities	All Students	Gap
assessment)			
Proficiency — Math (state assessment)			
Graduation Rate (4-year cohort)			
Dropout Rate			
Chronic Absenteeism Rate			

4. IEP Quality Sample Audit

Pull a representative sample (recommended: minimum 10% of active IEPs or 20 files, whichever is greater, stratified across disability categories and grade bands) and score using the IEP Quality Review Guide rubric (see companion resource). Summarize below.

- % of goals meeting all SMART criteria: ____
- % of PLAAMPs with a clear, current data-based baseline: ____
- % of files with services aligned to stated needs: ____
- Most common quality gap identified: ____

5. Equity & Disproportionality Review

- Identification rates by race/ethnicity compared to district enrollment (flag if risk ratio ≥ 2.0 , consistent with IDEA significant disproportionality methodology).
- Discipline rates (suspension/expulsion) by disability category and race/ethnicity.
- Placement/LRE rates by race/ethnicity and disability category.
- Root cause analysis conducted if any flag is identified (see companion Root Cause Analysis Template).

6. Stakeholder Input

- Parent/family survey results (satisfaction, communication, involvement in decision-making).
- Staff survey results (training needs, caseload/workload, access to related services).
- Student voice input, where age-appropriate (self-advocacy, sense of belonging).

7. Findings & Action Plan

Priority Finding	Root Cause (if known)	Action Step	Owner	Timeline

Evidence Base & Sources

- U.S. Department of Education, Office of Special Education Programs — State Performance Plan (SPP) / Annual Performance Report (APR) indicator framework (Indicators 1–17).
- IDEA Data Center / National Technical Assistance Center — SPP/APR technical assistance guidance.
- 34 CFR §300.646–300.647 (Significant disproportionality) and 2016 Equity in IDEA regulations.
- National Center for Systemic Improvement (NCSI) — root cause analysis and program self-assessment protocols.
- Council of Administrators of Special Education (CASE) — program evaluation frameworks for special education leaders.

This resource synthesizes federal statute, regulation, and peer-reviewed / technical-assistance-center guidance current as of publication. It is an instructional tool, not legal advice; consult your district's legal counsel and current state regulations for compliance decisions.