

SPECIAL EDUCATION COMPLIANCE

BEST PRACTICES IN SPECIAL EDUCATION DOCUMENTATION

Consider user-friendly, digital methods to enhance tracking service data and progress monitoring, ensuring compliance.

Special educators and service providers are no stranger to technology - assistive and otherwise - and as the delivery of mandated services becomes more varied and challenging through the COVID-19 pandemic, identifying a documentation system that works best for your special education community is key. Digital reporting systems that work across multiple devices and platforms are an increasingly popular way to monitor progress and track student services, but there are a few key best practices to consider, when reflecting on your current system and considering a new program:

ACCURACY

The most important factor in high-quality documentation of services and progress monitoring is, without a doubt, the accuracy of the information that is being shared about students. Carefully consider which data points are needed not only for compliance, but also for meaningful insights into student successes and challenges.

COMPATIBILITY & EASE OF USE

By the same token, in order to compile accurate, meaningful data, your documentation system cannot create an additional burden on your already taxed teachers and service providers. Be sure your documentation system saves them time, is intuitive and easy to use, with strong training protocols and rock-solid reliability.

VISIBILITY

Service and progress monitoring logs that sit in hard copy binders on bookshelves for most of the school year aren't serving students the way they could. Making student goals and progress accessible and actionable for all educators involved in their services enhances students' learning experiences. Having real-time, accurate information to share with parents is key to their engagement in their students' educational journey. And high-level aggregated data on services and performance is key for school and district strategic decisions about professional development, hiring and compliance.

PRIVACY

Student privacy policies and agreements make the protection of student data paramount in any documentation system. Look for systems with proper encryption and FERPA compliance, as well as basic security measures for system users to protect and reset secure passwords, share data only within the platform or approved reporting, and protect student data across devices.



FUNDING YOUR INITIATIVE

- **TITLE I:** Smart progress monitoring gives service providers the insight they need to target students' greatest areas of instructional need and deliver targeted, high quality intervention to students with the most need.
- **TITLE II:** Greater high-level visibility into student needs and performance equips leaders to better tailor professional development to the specific needs of their students.
- **TITLE IV:** Documentation of services offers critical insights into the ongoing health and safety of many students with disabilities.
- **IDEA:** Service tracking and progress monitoring systems should provide data that assists in identifying programmatic strengths and areas for improvement, allows teachers and service providers to address root causes of poor performance, and helps teachers evaluate student and school progress toward outcomes
- **ESSER:** Accurate data can be vital to determining the scope of learning loss for special education students, one of the hardest-hit groups during the pandemic, and documenting all attempts to serve students in all phases of school closure and reopening.



ATHLOS
SPECIAL EDUCATION
SERVICE LOGS