6 Ways to Spend Less Time on IEP Compliance

A special education teacher's job can be complex—working with a diverse set of students and their **unique needs, communication** with parents, and **collaboration** with general education teachers. And it all revolves around compliance of Individualized Education Plans (IEPs), which can consume a teacher's day. With so much to handle, the technical management of student data should be the least of a special education teacher's worries.

Here are 6 common barriers to IEP compliance and some solutions that work to make your job easier.

	Barriers		Solutions	
1	Individualized Education Plans (IEPs) can be difficult to access	• IEP documentation kept is in binders, stored under lock and key • Time consuming to locate, review, and refile IEPs	Build and store IEPs in a secure, electronic, online format	• Use a **permissions-based solution** to ensure appropriate staff have access • Choose an electronic tool that works to **prevent teachers from violating FERPA** and **HIPAA regulations**
2	IEPs often don't move the needle for special needs students	• Goals are loosely tied to learning outcomes specified in grade level standards • Lack of recommendations for the instructional practices to meet the student needs	Align goals directly to the general curriculum and provide state standards on the page where teachers create goals	• Provide **ongoing training** for writing individualized, specific, appropriate, and attainable goals and objectives • Ensure that co-teaching pairs **attend training together**
3	Compliance paperwork and deadlines consumes valuable time for teacher planning	• Difficult to collect/enter accurate data from multiple sources • Extra steps added when complying with FERPA and HIPAA security requirements	Streamline processes to complete timely compliance reports	• Use an **electronic calendar** for reminders and alerts for all compliance deadlines and required documentation • Find a system that **integrates with your student information, learning,** and **assessment systems** to avoid manual data entry
4	General education teachers have limited access to student IEPs and can't fully support special needs in the classroom	• School schedule does not provide time for consistent communication between all teachers • Lessons, assignments, and assessments are rarely exchanged, or they are shared too late to inform teaching	Empower collaboration between all teachers as partners in all student success	• Use technology tools that **support document sharing/revisions** for lesson and assessment planning • Select a system that **allows multiple stakeholders to access student learning data** and discuss student results
5	Progress monitoring of IEP goals and objectives is fragmented	• Inadequate formative assessment tools make it difficult to document student progress • Outside of scheduled meetings, teachers often do not have the time to discuss student progress regularly	Formatively assess student progress toward goals and objectives	• **Frequently assess students** to understand if instruction is working • Use a formative assessment platform that allows for **online tests with accommodations** • Create online formative assessments that are **aligned to state-specific standards** and skills
6	General education teachers lack an understanding of all that is needed and struggle to provide accommodations to students with disabilities while also instructing others in their classroom[8]	• **Students identified as gifted** need rigorous learning opportunities beyond the general curriculum • **Students with 504 plans** need additional support for physical, emotional, or behavioral conditions • **English language learners** need intensive support in language and literacy	Choose a special education technology solution that is adaptable and can also be used for non-IEP individualized learning plans	• Provide all teachers with the **same tool** to help students with learning needs that they use for managing students with IEPs • Use an **IEP compliance system** to monitor and track all students with learning needs

Special Education by the Numbers

A typical Special Ed teacher is case manager for 15 students, spending about 36 minutes per week, per student on paperwork and administrative duties.

MON
TUE
WED
THU
FRI

Add it up and that's **9 hours per week** wasted on paperwork—time that could be better spent with the actual child.[1]

6.7 million kids with disabilities are in public K-12 schools.[2]

13.2% of all students have disabilities.[2]

63% of school-age children with disabilities spend at least **80%** of their day in general education classrooms.[2]

See One District's Story
Learn how Dillingham City School District has improved IEP access, accuracy, and collaboration.
TAKE A PEEK

Check out the eBook
Discover nine special education administrative tech challenges and the keys to finding the right solution.
READ MORE

PowerSchool
powerschool.com

[1] Klein, S. (2004, September). Reducing Special Education Paperwork. Principal, 84, 58-60. http://www.naesp.org/resources/2/Principal/2004/S-Op58.pdf
[2] Heasley, Shaun. "Special Education Enrollment Trends Upward," Disability Scoop, June 5, 2018 https://www.disabilityscoop.com/2018/06/05/special-ed-enrollment-upward/25150/

FI-fl-002-082618