

In 2014, VDOE focused its efforts on how best to provide a statewide need for an online IEP system to divisions across Virginia.

Historically, Virginia's 132 public school divisions have employed and managed their own IEP forms and systems to meet their needs. Currently, approximately 95 percent of Virginia school divisions use one of ten different commercially available online IEP systems. Over time, the lack of uniformity in the IEP process and data collection has caused issues in data management, compliance, and the interdivision transfer process. Results of a survey of Virginia's public school divisions revealed that an overwhelming 82 percent would be in favor of a statewide online IEP system.



VDOE Goals for a Streamlined IEP Process in Virginia

Beginning in 2013, the Virginia Department of Education (VDOE), in conjunction with the Center for Innovative Technology, sought to better understand the current Individualized Education Program (IEP) landscape at the state and national level. These efforts included surveys of special education leaders in Virginia's public school divisions, research into best practices in other states and districts currently using statewide IEP systems, as well as meetings with division stakeholders throughout the Commonwealth to gather their feedback.

Overall, divisions across Virginia noted the following problems with their online IEP systems:

- **Interdivision IEP transfers:** transferring IEPs between different online IEP systems is extremely difficult or not possible
- **System cost:** most divisions pay between \$11 - \$30 per student for their online IEP systems
- **Data reporting:** compiling and submitting state reports is time consuming
- **Compliance:** lack of a state-recommended and standardized form makes it harder to develop compliant IEPs

Benefits of a Statewide IEP system

The goal of a statewide online IEP system in Virginia is to address current issues identified by school divisions. Based on best practices research and engagement with school division personnel, a statewide IEP system could result in the following benefits:

- Streamlined interdivision IEP transfer process
- Uniformed online system training and professional development
- Improved data driven decisions
- Increased The Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) compliance

VDOE Plans Moving Forward

Continuing into 2015, the VDOE will resume its efforts to procure a suitable statewide IEP system. This next phase will include more research into common and best practices from other agencies and out-of-state school districts, as well as additional feedback from state and division-level stakeholders around the Commonwealth. By the end of 2015, VDOE hopes to:

- Gather supplementary feedback from Virginia school divisions regarding their specific needs for a statewide online IEP system and a statewide IEP form
- Procure a single vendor-based online IEP system for the Commonwealth's public school divisions
- Identify phase one division participants and beta testers for the statewide online IEP system

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