

Cluster Area IV – Free Appropriate Public Education in the Least Restrictive Environment (FAPE)

Question																		
Do all children with disabilities receive a free appropriate public education in the least restrictive environment that promotes a high quality education and prepares them for employment and independent living?																		
Goals *																		
1. All children with disabilities receive a free appropriate public education in the least restrictive environment that promotes a high quality education and prepares them for employment and independent living																		
Probe: BF. I																		
Probes (2002-03)	Performance Indicators (2002-03)																	
<p>BF. I Is the percentage of children with disabilities receiving special education, by race/ethnicity, significantly disproportionate to the percentage of children, by race/ethnicity, in the State's general student enrollment? For each particular disability category, is the percentage of children, by race/ethnicity, significantly disproportionate to the percentage of children, by race/ethnicity, in the State's general student enrollment? For each particular educational setting, is the percentage of children, by race/ethnicity, significantly disproportionate to the percentage of children, by race/ethnicity, in the State's general student enrollment?"</p>	<p>A. Monitoring through Coordinated Program Reviews' (CPR) Methods of Administration 4 (MOA) indicates that LEAs have appropriate policies and procedures to address issues of disproportionality in their district.</p> <p>B. According to state data collected through the Student Information Management System (SIMS), the percentage of children with disabilities, by race/ethnicity, receiving special education is proportionate to the percentage of children, by race/ethnicity, in the general population and their educational environments.</p>																	
Performance Indicator A																		
Baseline/Trend Data (2002-03)	Targets (2002-03)	Explanation of Progress or Slippage (2002-03)																
<p>A. <u>DISPROPORTIONALITY</u> There was no baseline data for disproportionality since MASSDE spent school year 2002-03 piloting a procedure to identify methods of determining disproportionality. The following data is the available data, but does not represent Massachusetts's baseline.</p> <p><i>CPR RESULTS MOA 4: FY01 to FY03</i> Data on Disproportionality – PILOT (Source =MOA 2002-03)</p> <p><i>MOA 4 Placement of linguistic and racial minority, disabled, and female/male students</i></p> <table border="1" style="margin-left: auto; margin-right: auto; border-collapse: collapse; text-align: center;"> <thead> <tr> <th></th> <th>FY01</th> <th>FY02</th> <th>FY03</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>Commendable/Implemented</td> <td>69%</td> <td>85%</td> <td>82%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Partially Implimented/ Not Implemented</td> <td>38%</td> <td>15%</td> <td>18%</td> </tr> <tr> <td><i>Total sites</i></td> <td><i>54</i></td> <td><i>48</i></td> <td><i>49</i></td> </tr> </tbody> </table> <p>The identification of "Commendable/Implemented" districts refers to compliance in disproportionality as well as with other reviewed areas (Title 1, Career & Tech, etc.).</p>		FY01	FY02	FY03	Commendable/Implemented	69%	85%	82%	Partially Implimented/ Not Implemented	38%	15%	18%	<i>Total sites</i>	<i>54</i>	<i>48</i>	<i>49</i>	<p style="text-align: center;">*</p> <p>A. <u>DISPROPORTIONALITY</u> Pilot MASSDE's procedures for identifying disproportionality and determining corrective action plans.</p> <p>Finalize Pilot procedures.</p>	<p>A. <u>DISPROPORTIONALITY</u> In school year 2002-03, MASSDE piloted a structured, collaborative process to assist education agencies in monitoring and addressing disproportionality. The Methods of Administration 4 (MOA) is a framework that is designed as a guide for identifying, monitoring, and addressing racial, linguistic, gender, and disability status disproportionality. It defines the critical issues and questions, the data needed to answer the questions, the sources of these data, and the standard to be used in analysis. Space is provided in the framework for entering the analysis conducted by MASSDE teams, which forms the foundation for corrective action planning.</p> <p>Refer to Appendix A.4 Civil Rights – Methods of Administration (MOA) for a comprehensive description of the procedures used in piloting.</p>
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<p>In school year 2001-02, there were no formal mechanisms available to assess district compliance with the disproportionality requirement. There was no data analysis per se. Observation, interviews, and policy documentation were sources of information.</p> <p>In school year 2002-03, the year of the first pilot and first year of student-level data (since reviews utilized the prior year's data), the data had minimal value since additional clarifications of the requirements were being worked through by the MASSDE and with stakeholders.</p>		<p>MASSDE has worked over the past three years to identify an appropriate tool for measuring disproportionality. As a method of evaluating the MOA 4 and not to determine baseline or trend data, the data collected and its analysis have been provided. No longitudinal analysis can be conducted since the collection tools were different each year.</p>
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Projected Targets, Activities, Timelines, and Resources (2003-04)

FOCUS AREA 1

Projected Targets

School districts will have appropriate procedures and policies in place to address disproportionality as measured by compliance levels above 90% on MOA4.

Projected Activities, Timelines, and Resources

MASSDE, through Program Quality Assurance, Data Collections and Reporting, and Special Education Planning and Policy staff time, will implement a six phase pilot program of Focused Monitoring (refer to [Appendix A.6 Special Education Focused Monitoring: Pilot Procedures](#)) for school year 2003-04. MASSDE will impress upon districts the importance of the data they submit and expose MASSDE liaisons to making decisions regarding next steps based on data. MASSDE is continually in the process of improving the "tools" and procedures in assessing disproportionality in districts and will refine MOA4 for this purpose. The development coupled with the comprehensive data analysis, established primarily with DATA staff time, and data exchange will be able to provide and *should* produce significantly more accurate results for school year 2004-05.

Performance Indicator B

Baseline/Trend Data (2002-03)	Targets (2002-03)	Explanation of Progress or Slippage (2002-03)
<p>B. ATTACHMENT 2 See Attachment 2 - <i>Disproportionality Baseline/Trend Data</i></p>	<p>B. ATTACHMENT 2 Obtain baseline data on disproportionality compliance and determine reasonable compliance levels for the State.</p>	<p>B. ATTACHMENT 2 OSEP AREA (regarding verification visit) In an effort to clarify definitions of requested data, including placement categories, disability categories, etc., there were efforts to increase technical assistance, to provide statewide training sessions, and to design web-based reporting guidelines. Also, validations for data submission to decrease invalid coding sequences and communication with State stakeholders increased validity of data.</p> <p>For a detailed explanation of Attachment 2, refer to the Explanation of Progress or Slippage document attached to Attachment 2.</p>

Projected Targets, Activities, Timelines, and Resources (2003-04)

FOCUS AREA 1

Projected Targets

Maintain target.

Projected Activities, Timelines, and Resources

In school year 2003-04, MASSDE, through Program Quality Assurance, Data Collections and Reporting, and Special Education Planning and Policy staff time, will implement validations, statewide training sessions, and web-based reporting guidelines; and will improve web design to facilitate access to materials (web design to be completed and implemented by February 2004). Refer to <http://www.doe.mass.edu/infoservices/data/sims/fall03> for web-based training materials.

MASSDE will work to create standard reports coinciding with each submission period for public review that identify disproportionality according to the decided calculation.

MASSDE has redefined the placement categories to reflect national definitions. This will allow for comparative analysis among different states as well as to the nation as a whole. Implementation of the design will begin in the first 2003-04 student-level collection (October 2003).

Probe: BF. II	
Probes (2002-03)	Performance Indicators (2002-03)
BF.II Are high school graduation rates, and dropout rates, for children with disabilities comparable to graduation rates and dropout rates for nondisabled children?	C. High school dropout rates for children with disabilities are comparable to dropout rates for nondisabled children as indicated through the Student Information Management System (SIMS).
	D. Graduation rates for children with disabilities are comparable to graduation rates for nondisabled children as indicated through the Student Information Management System (SIMS).

Performance Indicator C

Baseline/Trend Data (2002-03)	Targets (2002-03)	Explanation of Progress or Slippage (2002-03)																													
<p>C. <u>DROPPED OUT</u> <i>Figure 1: Children with Disabilities Who Have Dropped Out (sources: Table 4 Exit Report School Year 2002-03 and Dec 1, 2002 Child Count)</i></p> <table border="1" style="margin-left: auto; margin-right: auto;"> <thead> <tr> <th></th> <th style="text-align: center;"># Drop Out</th> <th style="text-align: center;">Total Students</th> </tr> <tr> <th></th> <th style="text-align: center;">Ages 14-21</th> <th style="text-align: center;">Ages 14-21</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>Sped</td> <td style="text-align: center;">2,326</td> <td style="text-align: center;">52,497</td> </tr> </tbody> </table> <p><i>Figure 2: INITIAL BASELINE Dropout Rates for Children with Disabilities and Non-disabled Students, Grades 9-12: School Year 2002-03 (source: Student Information Management System)</i></p> <p>DOES NOT INCLUDE OUT-OF-DISTRICT STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES (see Explanations of Progress or Slippage)</p> <table border="1" style="margin-left: auto; margin-right: auto;"> <thead> <tr> <th></th> <th style="text-align: center;"># Drop Out</th> <th style="text-align: center;">Total Students</th> <th style="text-align: center;">Dropout</th> </tr> <tr> <th></th> <th style="text-align: center;">Grades 9-12</th> <th style="text-align: center;">Grade 9-12</th> <th style="text-align: center;">Rate</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>Sped</td> <td style="text-align: center;">1,838</td> <td style="text-align: center;">39,850</td> <td style="text-align: center;">4.6%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Nondisabled</td> <td style="text-align: center;">7,551</td> <td style="text-align: center;">242,089</td> <td style="text-align: center;">3.1%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>All Students</td> <td style="text-align: center;">9,389</td> <td style="text-align: center;">281,939</td> <td style="text-align: center;">3.3%</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>		# Drop Out	Total Students		Ages 14-21	Ages 14-21	Sped	2,326	52,497		# Drop Out	Total Students	Dropout		Grades 9-12	Grade 9-12	Rate	Sped	1,838	39,850	4.6%	Nondisabled	7,551	242,089	3.1%	All Students	9,389	281,939	3.3%	<p style="color: red; text-align: center;">*</p> <p>C. <u>DROPPED OUT</u> Special Education drop out rates are no higher than nondisabled students.</p>	<p>C. <u>DROPPED OUT</u> <i>Figure 1</i> shows the number of students with disabilities (in-district and out-of-district, except students in public institutional placements), ages 14-21, who dropped out as reported to OSEP in Table 4 Exiting Report for school year 2002-03. These data were collected through the Massachusetts Special Education Exit Data Report (aggregate collection of students with disabilities only).</p> <p>While <i>Figure 1</i> indicates the number of students who dropped out between July 1, 2002 and June 30, 2003 and the total number of students with disabilities for the respective ages, the data is limited in the following facets:</p> <p><i>Limitation 1</i> – Districts were required to submit an aggregate collection of students with disabilities that reflected OSEP’s guidelines but that did not include students sent out of district to public residential facilities. The Total Students (with disabilities) was generated from the December 1 Child Count and <i>did</i> include students sent to public residential facilities. Since the two data sets did not account for all of the same students, a rate calculation could not be accurately computed using this data set.</p> <p><i>Limitation 2</i> – A dropout comparison of students with disabilities to nondisabled students could not be conducted since the collection tools were different. The exit status for students with disabilities, as mentioned above, was collected through an aggregate collection whereas the status for nondisabled students was collected through the Student Information Management System (SIMS).</p> <p><i>Limitation 3</i> – In an aggregate collection, ensuring reliability and validity is difficult since there are minimal methods of validation. By converting to a SIMS submission, multiple validations can be applied that eliminate duplication, eradicate underreporting and over reporting, account for summer exits, etc.</p> <p>In school year 2002-03, there was an effort to begin to transition districts to report special education dropout data consistent with general education drop out data via SIMS. In an attempt to provide a preliminary baseline comparison utilizing SIMS data, <i>Figure 2</i> details the data for school year 2002-03 collected on both students with disabilities (piloted) and nondisabled students through SIMS. Although not limited to this</p>
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ASSOCIATED COMPLIANCE DATA

[Appendix B.1 Continuous Improvement Plan \(CIP\) Final Report](#)

CIP 2.3 – Availability of Extended Year

CPR RESULTS FOR SE21#2 and SE21#5: FY01 and FY02

SE21#2: The Team routinely considers the need for an educational program that is less than or more than the regular school day or school year, including extended day, or year, and/or residential services and indicates on the IEP why the shorter or longer program is necessary.

	FY01	FY02
Commendable/Implemented	93%	92%
Partially Implimented/ Not Implemented	7%	8%
<i>Total sites</i>	56	83

SE21#5: An extended day or year program is identified if the student has demonstrated or is likely to demonstrate substantial regression in his or her learning skills and/or substantial difficulty in relearning skills if an extended program is not provided.

	FY01	FY02
Commendable/Implemented	93%	92%
Partially Implimented/ Not Implemented	7%	8%
<i>Total sites</i>	56	83

particular method of identifying drop outs, the SIMS comparison identifies drop outs as students (not including students with disabilities sent out-of-district) in grades nine through twelve who left school prior to graduation for reasons other than to transfer to another school. The dropout measure, coinciding with the drop out measure developed by the U.S. Department of Education that students who dropped out during the school year but who returned to school by October 1 of the following year, were not counted as dropouts. These students were referred to as *returned dropouts*. The dropout rate reflects the number of students who dropped out over a one-year period, from July 1 to June 30, minus the number of returned dropouts, divided by the October 1 enrollment (does not include students sent out of district) for the school year being reported.

According to the preliminary analysis, there were similar rates reported for students with disabilities and students without disabilities who dropped out of in-district education during the school year 2002-03.

ASSOCIATED COMPLIANCE DATA

CIP 2.3 – Availability of Extended Year

Compliance for this area has been at or above 90% for two consecutive years and therefore was deemed systematically compliant and will not be continued as a CIP area in subsequent years.

DATA GAPS IDENTIFIED

In an effort to make the calculation method of dropouts for students with disabilities identical to the calculation method of dropouts for students without disabilities, MASSDE chose to utilize the rate calculation recommended by the US DOE, which only included students who are in grades 9 through 12. There are several downfalls to streamlining the methods of calculating dropout figures in this manner including:

Limitation 1 - The method utilized does not account for those students with disabilities who continued their education beyond grade 12 (under FAPE) and who then dropped out without receiving a diploma or certificate of attainment. MASSDE must determine a method through SIMS of accounting for all students with disabilities 14-21 years of age (as indicated in the federal Exit Report) while still coordinating with the measurement developed by the US DOE.

Limitation 2 – The calculation method for determining the INITIAL BASELINE drop out rates (and graduation rates) collected through SIMS does not include out-of-district students with disabilities, including but not limited to students in private day and residential facilities, correctional facilities and Public Residential Institutions. MASSDE must consider a method of incorporating all students with disabilities into the calculation method, not just those in-district students, without compromising the drop out measurement developed by the U.S. Department of Education.

Projected Targets, Activities, Timelines, and Resources (2003-04)

FOCUS AREA 1

Projected Targets

Maintain target.

Projected Activities, Timelines, and Resources

MASSDE, through Data Collections and Reporting staff time, will design a calculation method through SIMS to contain all of the OSEP required exit fields, will refine the reporting system to address other data gaps identified, and will eliminate the aggregate report for students with disabilities. The Table 4 Exit Report 2003-04 will be generated solely from SIMS and consequently will be comparable to nondisabled students. Reporting exit status via SIMS will (1) allow for more accurate reporting, (2) allow for comparison to general education population, and (3) increases ability to meet federal reporting timelines. Implementation of SIMS reporting exit status to begin October 2003.

MASSDE, through Program Quality Assurance, Data Collections, and Special Education Planning and Policy staff time, will aim toward determining methods of closing the rate of dropout gap completely between students with disabilities and their nondisabled peers.

MASSDE, through Data Collection staff time, will obtain baseline data on dropout rates using SIMS in a consistent manner for students with disabilities and students without disabilities.

Performance Indicator D

Baseline/Trend Data (2002-03)	Targets (2002-03)	Explanation of Progress or Slippage (2002-03)																
<p>D. <u>GRADUATE</u></p> <p><u>COMPETENCY DETERMINATION RATE</u> <i>Figure 3: BASELINE Competency Determination (CD) Rates for Children with Disabilities and Non-disabled Students</i> Grades 9-12: School Year 2002-03 (source: MCAS Data)</p> <p><i>Figure 3: Competency Determination (CD) Rate</i></p> <table border="1" style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse; margin-top: 10px;"> <thead> <tr> <th></th> <th style="text-align: center;">Students earning a CD</th> <th style="text-align: center;">Total Students in graduating class</th> <th style="text-align: center;">CD Rate</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>Sped</td> <td style="text-align: center;">5,118</td> <td style="text-align: center;">6,089</td> <td style="text-align: center;">84.7%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Nondisabled</td> <td style="text-align: center;">51,188</td> <td style="text-align: center;">52,955</td> <td style="text-align: center;">96.7%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>All Students</td> <td style="text-align: center;">56,306</td> <td style="text-align: center;">58,994</td> <td style="text-align: center;">95.4%</td> </tr> </tbody> </table> <p>See Appendix F.1 Competency Determination Rate Charts 1 and 2 estimates for <i>Percentage of Students with Disabilities with a Competency Determination: Classes of 2003, 2004, and 2005</i> and <i>Difference in Competency Determination Rates Between Students with Disabilities and Nondisabled Students: Classes of 2003, 2004, and 2005</i>.</p>		Students earning a CD	Total Students in graduating class	CD Rate	Sped	5,118	6,089	84.7%	Nondisabled	51,188	52,955	96.7%	All Students	56,306	58,994	95.4%	<p>*</p> <p>D. <u>GRADUATE</u> Close the gap between special education graduation rates and graduation rates for students without disabilities.</p>	<p>D. <u>GRADUATE</u> <u>NEW MCAS GRADUATION REQUIREMENT</u> Prior to 2002-03, diplomas were granted based solely on local criteria and certificates were not used in Massachusetts. The 2002-03 school year was the first year that a specific requirement for a diploma included passing a statewide assessment called the Massachusetts Comprehensive Statewide Assessment (MCAS). MASSDE now requires that all students at grade-levels being tested participate in MCAS including students in charter schools, in institutional school programs, in educational collaborative programs, in private schools receiving publicly funded special education, students with disabilities who either have an Individualized Education Program (IEP) or receive Section 504 instructional accommodations, and students with limited English proficiency (unless they have been enrolled in United States schools for three or fewer years AND who are ineligible for the Spanish-language version of MCAS).</p> <p><u>COMPETENCY DETERMINATION RATE</u> Massachusetts does not currently report graduation rates for any student groups. At its December 2002 meeting, the Massachusetts Board of Education approved modifying the Massachusetts School and District Accountability System to include graduation rates as an additional performance indicator for high schools. The Department will begin reporting graduation rates using the NCLB definition in the 2005-06 school year, using Student Information Management System (SIMS) data.</p> <p>MASSDE will utilize the competency determination (CD) rate in the interim to identify a graduation rate. CD rate is the rate of students in the graduating class of 2003 who met or exceeded the Needs Improvement threshold on both the English Language Arts and Mathematics MCAS grade 10 tests in order to satisfy the requirements of the CD. A student who receives a CD is then eligible to receive a diploma upon completion of local requirements. <i>Figure 3</i> reflects the first year that a CD was a requirement for graduation and therefore represents baseline data.</p> <p>As indicated in <i>Figure 3</i>, the CD rate for students with disabilities in the graduating class of 2003 is below that of non-disabled students. However, Appendix F.1 Competency Determination Rate Charts 1 and 2 estimates that students with disabilities will earn CDs at higher rates in future years and will make significant progress toward the goal of graduating at rates comparable to those of students without disabilities. The <i>Chart 1</i> in Appendix F.1 Competency Determination Rate Charts 1 and 2 estimates shows the percentage of students with disabilities who earned a CD on their first attempt, and the cumulative percent of students with disabilities who earned a CD over the six retest opportunities. As evidenced by this graph, the CD rate for students with disabilities is improving in</p>
	Students earning a CD	Total Students in graduating class	CD Rate															
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FIGURE 4: AGGREGATE COLLECTION

Figure 4: Children with Disabilities Who Have Graduated (or received a certificate of attainment) (source: Table 4, Section B, Exit Report Submitted to OSEP for School Year 2002-03 and Table 1 Dec 1, 2002 Child Count)

Figure 4: Count of Students

	# Graduated/Certificate Ages 14-21	Total Students Ages 14-21
Sped	5,690	52,497

The data from Figure 4 represents an aggregate district-level collection that was reported to OSEP in Table 4 Exit Data for school year 2002-03. Data collected in the aggregate form may include duplicates and additional mis-reported students since there were few validations in place to correct the data. Therefore, the aggregate data collected and displayed in *Figure 4* can not be considered baseline or trend data.

each graduating class. As students in these classes who have not yet earned a CD take the available retest opportunities, the CD rates should continue to improve.

The *Chart 2* in [Appendix F.1 Competency Determination Rate Charts 1 and 2](#) estimates shows the difference between the percent of students with disabilities earning a CD and the percent of non-disabled students earning a CD at each testing point for the classes of 2003, 2004, and 2005. As indicated in the graph, the cumulative CD rate "gap" between students with disabilities and non-disabled students decreases at each re-testing opportunity, and also decreases over each year. This indicates that students with disabilities are moving toward the goal of graduating at a rate comparable to that of non-disabled students.

FIGURE 4: AGGREGATE COLLECTION

Figure 4 shows the number of students with disabilities, ages 14-21, who have graduated or received a certificate of attainment as reported to OSEP in Table 4 for school year 2002-03. These data were collected through the Massachusetts Special Education Exit Data Report (aggregate collection of students with disabilities only). This collection tool was unable to collect the change in graduation criteria described above, therefore the data for graduation from the Table 4 Exit Report includes students who received a certificate of attainment, representing students who met local graduation criteria but did not pass the statewide assessment. In the future, the latter group of students will be reported under the category indicating receipt of a "certificate" rather than under the diploma category.

In addition, *Figure 4* is limited in that a graduation comparison of students with disabilities to nondisabled students could not be conducted since the collection tools were different. The exit status for students with disabilities (as described above) was collected through an aggregate collection and includes students who received a certificate of attainment whereas the status for nondisabled students was collected through the Student Information Management System (SIMS) (SIMS statistic did not include students sent out-of-district for services).

STATE ACTIVITIES

In school year 2002-03, there was an effort to begin to transition districts to report special education graduation data consistently with general education graduation data via SIMS to ensure reliability and validity of reported data. MASSDE began to convert districts to a pilot student-level reporting of exit status (SIMS). Although the SIMS data collection system is a more effective method of collecting exit status, the collection for this year can not be determined as baseline data. School year 2002-03 SIMS collection only reflected limited special education exit statuses. In an attempt to provide a preliminary comparison utilizing SIMS data, *Figure 5* below details the data for school year 2002-03 collected on both students with disabilities (piloted) and nondisabled students through SIMS. In this comparison, graduates were defined as students who meet all local requirements and who passed MCAS testing.

*Figure 5: Graduation Rates for Children with Disabilities and Non-disabled Students
Grades 9-12: School Year 2002-03
(source: Student Information Management System)*

Figure 5: Count of Students: DOES NOT INCLUDE OUT-OF-DISTRICT STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES

	# Graduated Grades 9-12	# Received a Certificate	Total Students Grade 9-12
Sped	5,246	562	39,850
Nodisabled	50,741	887	254,089
All Students	55,987	1,449	281,939

FOCUS AREA 1

Projected Targets

Maintain target.

Projected Activities, Timelines, and Resources

MASSDE, through Data Collection staff time, will design SIMS so that it will incorporate all of the OSEP required exit fields, will refine the reporting system to address data gaps identified, and will eliminate the aggregate report for students with disabilities. The Table 4 Exit Report 2003-04 will be generated solely from SIMS and consequently will be comparable to nondisabled students. Reporting exit status via SIMS will (1) allow for more accurate reporting, (2) allow for comparison to general education population, and (3) increases ability to meet federal reporting timelines. Implementation of SIMS reporting exit status to begin October 2003.

MASSDE will disseminate information as it becomes available regarding methods of closing the rate of dropout gap completely between students with disabilities and their nondisabled peers. MASSDE does not currently and will not report graduation rates for any student groups in school year 2003-04. At its December 2002 meeting, the Massachusetts Board of Education approved modifying the Massachusetts School and District Accountability System to include graduation rates as an additional performance indicator for high schools. The Department will begin reporting graduation rates using the NCLB definition in the 2005-06 school year, using Student Information Management System (SIMS) data. In the interim, the competency determination (CD) rate for graduation will be utilized.

The graduation rate for Class of 2006 will be calculated as:

Graduates (with regular diploma who completed high school in four years **DIVIDED BY** [# Graduates (same as above) + # of 9th grade dropouts/retentions + # 10th grade dropouts/retentions + # 11th grade dropout/retentions + # 12th grade dropouts/retentions + # students who completed 12th grade without a regular diploma.

The data for each class will be tracked going forward from 9th grade. Students who are retained in grade, and thus leave their original class, will not count toward the number of graduates, but will be included in the denominator as members of the original class.

Probe: BF. III

Probes (2002-03)

Performance Indicators (2002-03)

BF.III Are suspension and expulsion rates for children with disabilities comparable among local educational agencies within the State, or to the rates for nondisabled children within the agencies?

E. As indicated by the student suspension/exclusion data, suspension and expulsion rates for children with disabilities are comparable among school districts within the State and to the rates for nondisabled children within the school districts.

Performance Indicator E

Baseline/Trend Data (2002-03)

Targets (2002-03)

Explanation of Progress or Slippage (2002-03)

E. SUSPENSION/EXPULSION

Figure 6

Children with Disabilities Suspended or Expelled More Than 10 Days and # Single Suspensions > 10 days (source: Table 5 Discipline Report Submitted to OSEP for School Year 2002-03)

	Unduplicated Count of Children (3A)	# Single Susp/Exc >10 days
Susp/Exc>10 Days	1,410	388

Figure 7

Total Students Enrolled: Total in-district students ages 3-21 enrolled as of October 1, 2002 (source: Student Exclusion

*
E. **SUSPENSION/EXPULSION**
The state will determine an appropriate method to collect suspension and expulsion rates for children with disabilities in order to compare such information with non-disabled students.

E. SUSPENSION/EXPULSION

The discipline data were collected through the aggregate Discipline Report and reported to OSEP in Table 5 for school year 2002-03. Considering that this was only the third year of collecting discipline data in the State, there were many limitations when collecting and analyzing this discipline data.

Limitation 1 – When reporting, districts were unsure of the terminology “unduplicated count” as it related to columns 1A and 3A and often included the students that were reported in Column 1A also in 3A (since the students met both the criteria). They believed the unduplicated count was specific to Section 1 and Section 3 as independent data sections.

Limitation 2 – Districts mis-interpreted the category related to “hearing officer removal” as inclusive of removals by the Individual Education Program (IEP) team or other members of the school district, and, therefore, there was over-reporting in this area. MA uses the state Bureau of Special Education Appeals (BSEA) hearing officers and clarification has been provided to the districts to correct this misinterpretation.

Form data collection, as of March 5, 2004)

	# Single > 10 Days	Total Students Enrolled	Rate per 1,000
Sped	510	140,401	3.6
Nondisabled	1,445	842,912	1.7
All Students	1,955	983,313	2.0

ASSOCIATED COMPLIANCE DATA

[Appendix B.1 Continuous Improvement Plan \(CIP\) Final Report](#)

CIP 2.2: Psychological Counseling

CPR RESULTS FOR SE48#4: FY01 and FY02

SE48#4: All students receiving special education, regardless of placement, shall have an equal opportunity to participate in and, if appropriate, receive credit for the vocational, supportive, or remedial services that may be available as part of the general education program as well as the non-academic and extracurricular programs of the school. Program, services and activities include, but are not limited to counseling services.

	FY01	FY02
Commendable/Implemented	96%	99%
Partially Implimented/ Not Implemented	4%	1%
Total sites	56	83

Limitation 3 – In the past, MASSDE attempted to interpret the collection titles for districts and created a state form to report discipline data. That didn't work as well as we hoped. Therefore, in school year 2002-03, MASSDE utilized a format identical to that of the OSEP Table 5 Report. With any change in collection tools, districts require much clarification.

Figure 6 shows the number of children and number of incidents for children with disabilities (does not include students sent out-of-district) who have been suspended or expelled for more than 10 days. There were 1,410 students reported to be suspended/expelled > 10 days and 388 single suspensions > 10 days.

In school year 2002-03, there was an effort to transition districts to report suspension/expulsion data consistent with general education discipline data via the *Student Exclusion Form*. *Figure 7*, which presents comparison data for suspensions/exclusions between students with disabilities and students without disabilities, details the rate of the "number of single suspension/exclusions > 10 days" for students with disabilities (3.5 per thousand) was greater than that of students without disabilities (1.7 per thousand).

It should be noted that *Figure 7* represents a student-level collection and therefore is more likely to represent the actual baseline counts of students in the selected categories than the previously used, aggregate collection. Consequently, the number of single suspensions/expulsions > 10 days reported in the student-level collection represents 132 more students than the aggregate collection.

Since this was the first year of available comparison data, MASSDE cannot yet accurately draw conclusions regarding discrepancies in suspension/exclusion rates between students with disabilities and nondisabled students but rather can use school year 2002-03 as baseline data for future student-level discipline comparisons.

ASSOCIATED COMPLIANCE DATA

CIP 2.2: Psychological Counseling

Compliance in this area has consistently been 96% or better. As a result, this area will no longer be part of MASSDE's CIP. However, mental health and appropriate services for students with serious emotional disturbance continues to be a priority are for state activity.

FOCUS AREA

Projected Targets

Obtain baseline data and determine reasonable compliance levels for the State on suspension/expulsion rates using the new exclusion/suspension student-level collection in a consistent manner for students with disabilities and students without disabilities.

Projected Activities, Timelines, and Resources

Through Data Collection time, MASSDE will revise suspension/expulsion student-level collection to consolidate multiple federally required reports. For school year 2003-04, the aggregated collection of suspension and expulsion data for students with disabilities will be eliminated. The data required will be incorporated into a newly developed student-level electronic submission with two tiers called *Violence or Drug-Related Incidents* ([Appendix E.1 Violence or Drug-Related Incidents](#)) and *Student Discipline Records* ([Appendix E.2 Student Discipline Report](#)). This progressive change will allow MASSDE to compare various aspects of the suspension/expulsion of both students with disabilities and general education students utilizing the same data source. In addition, MASSDE will be able to link the data to SIMS and verify data more effectively whereas the aggregate collection could not be validated to ensure validity. In addition, the districts will be able to submit discipline data throughout the year (availability beginning in February). The deadline for districts will be at the end of the school year rather than the August deadline of the old aggregate report, consequently increasing the opportunity for the State to meet federal reporting timelines. Therefore, reporting discipline status utilizing the two new electronic submissions will (1) allow for more accurate reporting, (2) allow for comparison to general education population, and (3) increases ability to meet federal reporting timelines. Implementation of student-level suspension/exclusion collection to begin February 2004.

Systematic correspondence between DATA and PQA will be created beginning in school year 2003-04 in order to include district-level suspension/exclusion data in the Coordinated Program Reviews and Focused Monitoring program (refer to [Appendix A.4 Civil Rights – Methods of Administration \(MOA\)](#) and [Appendix A.6 Special Education Focus Monitoring: Pilot Procedures](#) for additional details).

Probe: BF. IV

Probes (2002-03)

Performance Indicators (2002-03)

BF.IV Do performance results for children with disabilities on large-scale assessments improve at a rate that decreases any gap between children with disabilities and their nondisabled peers?

F. Using results from the Massachusetts Comprehensive Assessment System (MCAS), students with disabilities in school districts will close the performance gap and achieve at a similar level as students without disabilities in tested academic areas.

Performance Indicator F

Baseline/Trend Data (2002-03)

Targets (2002-03)

F.
See [Attachment 3](#) for Assessment Analysis

PARTICIPATION

Figure 8: 2003 Mid-Cycle Report: English/Language Arts

	Participation		Performance		Improvement		Attendance		Made AYP
	%	Met Target	CPI	Met Target	CPI Change	Met Target	%	Met Target	2003
Sped	99	Yes	63.2	No	4.1	Yes	92.5	Yes	Yes
All Students	99	Yes	83.1	Yes	2.7	Yes	94.0	Yes	Yes

ADEQUATE YEARLY PROGRESS (AYP)

Figure 9: 2003 Mid-Cycle Report: Mathematics

	Participation		Performance		Improvement		Attendance		Made AYP
	%	Met Target	CPI	Met Target	CPI Change	Met Target	%	Met Target	2003
Sped	99	Yes	45.9	No	4.0	No	92.5	Yes	No
All Students	99	Yes	69.3	Yes	4.1	Yes	94.0	Yes	Yes

*

F.

PARTICIPATION

At least 95 percent of students with disabilities will participate in MCAS or Alternate Assessments.

ADEQUATE YEARLY PROGRESS (AYP)

Baseline data will be obtained on the performance of students with disabilities in making Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) in the 2003 Mid-cycle AYP reports in both English/Language Arts and Mathematics.

See [Appendix F.2 School Leaders' Guide to the 2003](#)

[Mid-Cycle AYP Reports](#) for details on the AYP determination process.

ASSOCIATED COMPLIANCE DATA

[Appendix B.1 Continuous Improvement Plan \(CIP\) Final Report](#)

CIP 2.1 – Special Education and Related Services are Provided in Accordance with Identified Needs

CPR RESULTS FOR SE18(A)#1, SE22#4: FY01 and FY02

SE18#1 (2000-01) SE18A#1 (2001-02)

Upon determining that the student is eligible for special education, the Team, including the parent(s), develops an IEP using the evaluation data to guide development of measurable, annual goals and objectives/benchmarks for the student. If the district chooses to draft any element(s) of the IEP for discussion, the Team Chairperson ensures that those elements are genuinely considered prior to adoption at the Team meeting. All ideas and needs of the child as expressed by all Team members, especially the parents, are genuinely considered by the district prior to proposing the IEP.

	FY01	FY02
Commendable/Implemented	88%	74%
Partially Implimented/ Not Implemented	12%	26%
Total sites	56	87

SE22#4: The school district does not delay implementation of the IEP due to lack of classroom space or personnel, provides as many of the services on the accepted IEP as possible, and immediately informs parents in writing of any delayed services, reasons for delay, actions that the school district is taking to address the lack of space or personnel and offers alternative methods to meet the goals of the accepted IEP. Upon agreement of the parents, the school district implements alternative methods immediately until the lack of space or personnel issues are resolved.

	FY01	FY02
Commendable/Implemented	86%	93%
Partially Implimented/ Not Implemented	14%	7%
Total sites	56	83

CIP 2.5 – Opportunity to Progress in the General Curriculum

CPR RESULTS: FY01 and FY02

SE1#2d: In interpreting evaluation data and making decisions, the district includes information related to enabling the student to be involved in and progress in the general curriculum

	FY01	FY02
Commendable/Implemented	91%	92%
Partially Implimented/ Not Implemented	9%	8%
Total sites	56	83

SE9#1f: Within forty-five school working days after receipt of the parent’s written consent to an initial evaluation, unscheduled evaluation, or re-evaluation, the school district determines if the student requires special education and/or related services and/or accommodations in order to make effective progress or that the student requires related services in order to access the general curriculum.

	FY01	FY02
Commendable/Implemented	96%	85%
Partially Implimented/ Not Implemented	4%	15%
Total sites	56	83

SE18#2: (2000-01) The IEP includes specially designed instruction to meet the needs of the individual student and related services as necessary to allow the student to benefit from the specially designed instruction or to access the general curriculum, consistent with federal and state requirements -- Revised in 2001-2 to: The IEP includes specially

designed instruction to meet the needs of the individual student and related services that are necessary to allow the student to benefit from the specially designed instruction, or consists solely of related services that are necessary to allow the student to access the general curriculum, consistent with federal and state requirements

	FY01	FY02
Commendable/Implemented	80%	84%
Partially Implimented/ Not Implemented	20%	16%
Total sites	56	83

SE33: Involvement in the general curriculum

1. District personnel reflect a full understanding of the connection between the Massachusetts Curriculum Frameworks and the expectations of the state for student performance as well as the rights of students with disabilities to be full participants in the general curriculum.
2. The district has either aligned its district curriculum with the Frameworks or has taken steps to provide students (including all students with disabilities) with essential learning opportunities that prepare the students to reach the state graduation standards.
3. At least one member of all IEP Teams is familiar with the general curriculum and is able to discuss an eligible student's appropriate access to the general curriculum.
4. In the IEP the district documents the student's participation in the general curriculum.

	FY01	FY02
Commendable/Implemented	88%	90%
Partially Implimented/ Not Implemented	12%	10%
Total sites	56	83

SE49: Related Services -For each student with special education needs found to require related services, the school district provides or arranges for the provision of transportation and such developmental, corrective, and other supportive services as are required to assist a student to benefit from special education or to access the general curriculum, and includes psychological services.

	FY01	FY02
Commendable/Implemented	82%	83%
Partially Implimented/ Not Implemented	18%	17%
Total sites	56	83

Explanation of Progress or Slippage (2002-03)

F.

PARTICIPATION

Beginning in school year 2002-03, MASSDE requires that all publicly funded students, including those students with disabilities, participate in the grade level Massachusetts Comprehensive Assessment System (MCAS) test. Although the participation requirement is the same for general education students, students with disabilities can participate in either the standard MCAS or, the MCAS Alternate Assessment (MCAS-Alt), depending on the nature and complexity of their disability. The MCAS-Alt is a portfolio-based assessment that measures a student's knowledge of the key concepts and skills outlined in the learning standards of the Massachusetts *Curriculum Frameworks*.

To assist teachers in providing students with significant disabilities access to the general curriculum and to ensure that the MCAS-Alt process is conducted effectively, MASSDE made available multiple technical assistance documents and provided many training sessions throughout the school year.

In accordance with the mandates of the federal No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB), MASSDE has set biennial performance targets for all schools and the federally mandated subgroups. These targets help ensure that schools and subgroups are on track to meet the federal goal of all students achieving proficiency by the year 2014. In school year 2002-03, a 95 percent minimum participation rate in the state assessment program was required. Massachusetts exceeded the state and federal goal of participation with ninety-nine percent of all students with disabilities participating in the MCAS or MCAS-Alt. However, in the calculation of AYP (Target 2 below), 41 individual schools did not make AYP for students with disabilities because they did not meet the participation requirement.

ADEQUATE YEARLY PROGRESS (AYP)

In addition to requiring all students to participate in MCAS or MCAS-Alt, MASSDE requires that each district receive a positive Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) determination each year. In school year 2002-03, AYP was designed by MASSDE to monitor the progress of the public schools toward meeting the goal of high achievement for all students. AYP measures elements of participation, performance, improvement, and attendance to determine the yearly target that aligns with the overarching goal of all students being

proficient by school year 2014.

The targets for all student subgroups are the same in Massachusetts in that each subgroup is held to the same level of expectation and the same participation and achievement standards. In order to achieve AYP in school year 2002-03, a student subgroup must have first met a student participation requirement of 95 percent or greater. Next, the subgroup had to either meet the State's Cycle III performance target, a Composite Performance Index (CPI) score of 75.6 for English/Language Arts (ELA) or 60.8 for Math, or the subgroup had to meet their Cycle III improvement target plus an attendance target (see [Appendix F.2 School Leaders' Guide to the 2003 Mid-Cycle AYP Reports](#) for details on the AYP determination process).

As detailed in *Figure 8*, students with disabilities made AYP in school year 2002-03 in English Language Arts (ELA) by meeting or exceeding the targets in participation, improvement and attendance. With a CPI of 63.2, the performance of students with disabilities was below the state target of 75.6 in ELA. By comparison, the state's aggregate results for all students (which includes students with disabilities and non-disabled students) showed that AYP was achieved and the targets were met in each of the four target areas. Despite not meeting the performance criteria for their subgroup, students with disabilities still made AYP because participation was over 95 percent and they exceeded their improvement goals and performed well on the other AYP indicators.

In addition, *Figure 9* indicates that students with disabilities did not make AYP in school year 2002-03 in Mathematics. Although this subgroup met the AYP targets in participation and attendance, performance and improvement were both below the state target.

In order to meet the goal of students with disabilities achieving proficiency, Massachusetts works with districts and schools to analyze student assessment data and implement effective improvement plans. In addition, best practices from schools winning the Compass awards are disseminated and shared with all low performing districts. Each district and school in MA was provided with their Mid-cycle AYP results detailing outcomes for each subgroup and assistance was provided by MASSDE to assist districts in determining areas of needed improvement and how that improvement could be achieved. In addition to the AYP results, districts and schools also received detailed MCAS item-analysis charts to facilitate in determining patterns, identify weakness and relevant relationships across student subgroups, performance levels, and subject areas and inform staff professional development.

District performance for students with disabilities yielded the following information:

In English Language Arts: 85 districts and 353 individual schools did not make AYP for students with disabilities, of those, 57 districts, and 228 schools did not make AYP because they did not meet the performance target nor the improvement target.

In Mathematics: 90 districts and 275 individual schools did not make AYP in math for students with disabilities due to not making the performance target and insufficient progress from their own baseline.

ASSOCIATED COMPLIANCE DATA

CIP 2.1 – Special Education and Related Services are Provided in Accordance with Identified Needs

CIP 2.5 – Opportunity to Progress in the General Curriculum

Both of these Continuous Improvement areas continue to be part of MASSDE's activities and review of data each year. However, the focus of the data review will be shifted to outcome information related to performance of students with disabilities in different placements and across disability areas.

Projected Targets, Activities, Timelines, and Resources (2003-04)

FOCUS AREA 1

Projected Targets

The same targets will be in place for 2003-04.

Projected Activities, Timelines, and Resources

MASSDE, through assessment & accountability and targeted assistance staff time, will continue in school year 2003-04 toward the overall target of 100 percent proficiency for all students by 2014.

MASSDE will continue to evaluate schools and districts utilizing the AYP determination system (See [Appendix F.2 School Leaders' Guide to the 2003 Mid-Cycle AYP Reports](#) for details on the AYP determination process). MASSDE will consistently identify under-performing schools, conduct fact-finding reviews to determine under-performing causes, and assist schools in developing school improvement plans.

MASSDE will continue to work in CIP areas.

Probe: BF. V

<i>Probes (2002-03)</i>	<i>Performance Indicators (2002-03)</i>
BF.V Are children with disabilities educated with nondisabled peers to the maximum extent appropriate, including preschool?	H. Through placement information obtained from SIMS data and monitoring, children with disabilities are educated with nondisabled peers to the maximum extent appropriate, including preschool.
	I. There is increased integration opportunity for children with disabilities placed in separate educational environments, including preschool. (CIP 2.4)

Performance Indicator H

<i>Baseline/Trend Data (2002-03)</i>	<i>Targets (2002-03)</i>	<i>Explanation of Progress or Slippage (2002-03)</i>
<p>H. PLACEMENT See Appendix G Longitudinal Placement Data – Special Education Data FY89 to FY04 for longitudinal data on placement: school year 1988-89 to school year 2003-04 (preliminary).</p>	<p>H. PLACEMENT There is a higher percent of students with disabilities in less restrictive settings.</p>	<p>H. PLACEMENT As identified through the OSEP’s rankings for LRE (Table 5.2), and noted in OSEP’s Data Verification Letter (10/04), Massachusetts’s performance in the least restrictive environment for school year 2002-03 was not accurate because Massachusetts utilized definitions that varied from federal definitions of educational environment/placement. In school year 2002-03, MASSDE evaluated the current collection of placement information and determined appropriate categories and definitions to be implemented in school year 2003-04.</p> <p>See Cluster IV Probe: BF. I Performance Indicator B Explanation of Progress and Slippage (2002-03) for a detailed explanation of the changes to the placement category to coincide with federal definitions.</p> <p>Prior to school years 2001-02 and 2002-03 which were the first student-level collections (SIMS), placement data was collected in the aggregate and therefore may have included duplicates and other reporting errors. MASSDE has developed validations around the student-level reporting that would ensure unduplicated counts as well as would limit additional reporting errors.</p> <p>STATE IMPROVEMENT GRANT/PROJECT FOCUS:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The Quality Full Day Kindergarten Grant program provided state funds to enhance the educational experience of children in full day kindergarten classrooms by improving the quality of curriculum and the continuity of curriculum across preschool, kindergarten and grade one. The program prioritized the enhancement of quality, inclusive full day kindergartens that met the needs of all children, including children with disabilities and/or diverse cultural and linguistic backgrounds.

Projected Targets, Activities, Timelines, and Resources (2003-04)

FOCUS AREA 1
Projected Targets
 Target will remain the same.

Projected Activities, Timelines, and Resources
 See Cluster IV Probe: BF. I Performance Indicator B Projected Targets, Activities, Timelines, and Resources (2003-04) for a detailed explanation of the changes to the placement category to coincide with federal definitions. MASSDE, through Data Collections and Reporting and Special Education Planning and Policy staff time, will review district placement patterns against state patterns and identify benchmarks for each placement type in school year 2003-04 and 2004-05.

Performance Indicator I

Baseline/Trend Data (2002-03)	Targets (2002-03)	Explanation of Progress or Slippage (2002-03)																								
<p>I. CIP AREA 2.4 Coordinated Program Review and Problem Resolution System (complaint management system) Appendix B.1 Continuous Improvement Plan (CIP) Final Report</p> <p><i>CPR RESULTS FOR SE1#2c, SE20: FY01 and FY02</i> <i>SE1#2c: In interpreting evaluation data and making decisions, the district ensures that the placement decision conforms with placement in the least restrictive environment</i></p> <table border="1" data-bbox="136 406 756 527"> <thead> <tr> <th></th> <th>FY01</th> <th>FY02</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>Commendable/Implemented</td> <td>89%</td> <td>91%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Partially Implimented/ Not Implemented</td> <td>11%</td> <td>9%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Total sites</td> <td>56</td> <td>83</td> </tr> </tbody> </table> <p><i>SE20: Least restrictive program selected</i></p> <table border="1" data-bbox="136 600 756 722"> <thead> <tr> <th></th> <th>FY01</th> <th>FY02</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>Commendable/Implemented</td> <td>80%</td> <td>73%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Partially Implimented/ Not Implemented</td> <td>20%</td> <td>27%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Total sites</td> <td>56</td> <td>83</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>		FY01	FY02	Commendable/Implemented	89%	91%	Partially Implimented/ Not Implemented	11%	9%	Total sites	56	83		FY01	FY02	Commendable/Implemented	80%	73%	Partially Implimented/ Not Implemented	20%	27%	Total sites	56	83	<p>I. CIP AREA 2.4 There are integration opportunities for children with disabilities placed in separate educational environments, including preschool.</p> <p>Compliance data for area should be 93% or better compliance rate for two consecutive years.</p>	<p>I. CIP AREA 2.4 Each year, MASSDE reviews and revises a Continuous Improvement Plan (CIP). The CIP, first developed in FY01 as a response to findings by the U.S. Office of Special Education Programs (OSEP), has become a tool used by stakeholders and the Department of Education to focus on key areas of needed improvement and to develop, implement, and evaluate strategic plans that are geared towards improving the State's activities and procedures related to students with disabilities.</p> <p>The data identified for review suggests that the legal requirements related to LRE are substantially compliant.</p> <p>The MASSDE Steering Committee determined that a comparison of placement data by disability and performance is a critical next step for this CIP area.</p>
	FY01	FY02																								
Commendable/Implemented	89%	91%																								
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Projected Targets, Activities, Timelines, and Resources (2003-04)

FOCUS AREA 1
Projected Targets
Targets remain the same.

Projected Activities, Timelines, and Resources
MASSDE, through Program Quality Assurance staff time, will continue procedural compliance activity through ongoing CPR schedule. With the availability of disability data and the ability to examine performance information by student and placement, the Steering Committee will compare placement data by disability and performance in school year 2003-04.

MASSDE, through Steering Committee, Program Quality Assurance, Data Collections and Reporting, and Special Education Planning and Policy staff time, will work to develop a BEST PRACTICES DOCUMENT based on the recommendations of the working groups and intend to seek comment and disseminate upon completion. The areas of interest will include (1) develop parent training to educate parents on the benefits of LRE and the regulations on LRE, (2) provide support and training to general education educators (especially secondary) in order to increase appropriate setting understandings, (3) improve paraprofessional training to be more effective in the inclusion setting, (4) train administrators about their responsibilities (requirements) to include students removed from the general education environment in extra-curricular activities, (5) increase 'social skills training' including for general education students, and (6) offer professional development of staff around appropriate inclusion opportunities for students with more significant challenges.

Probe: BF. VI

Probes (2002-03)	Performance Indicators (2002-03)
<p>BF.VI Are the early language/communication, pre-reading, and social-emotional skills, of preschool children with disabilities receiving special education and related services, improving?</p>	<p>J. The majority of Massachusetts inclusive public school preschool classrooms will meet or exceed the good benchmark for quality on the Early Childhood Environmental Rating Scale (ECERS). By supporting high quality, inclusive educational environments the Department of Education will support the language, communication, pre-reading and social-emotional skills of preschool children with disabilities.</p>

Performance Indicator J		
Baseline/Trend Data (2002-03)	Targets (2002-03)	Explanation of Progress or Slippage (2002-03)
<p>J. <u>EARLY CHILDHOOD ENVIRONMENTAL RATING SCALE</u> The Department of Education in Massachusetts contracted with Wellesley College Center for Research on Women and ABT Associates to study the quality of public school preschool programs in Massachusetts. Most public school preschool classrooms are inclusive, typically serving 15 children with up to 7 of the children having an IEP. The study randomly sampled preschool classrooms across the Commonwealth and 90% of the sample were inclusive.</p> <p>The study, Appendix H Early Care and Education in Massachusetts Public School Preschool Classrooms (2002), found that 70% of the public school preschool classrooms rated as good overall on the Early Childhood Environmental Rating Scale (ECERS). The ECERS is a nationally recognized measure of the quality of early childhood classrooms. A further analysis of subscales of the ECERS indicates that 74% of the classroom rated highly in the area of language and reasoning and 87% positively supported children's social emotional development.</p>	<p>J. <u>EARLY CHILDHOOD ENVIRONMENTAL RATING SCALE</u> The high quality of Massachusetts public school preschool classrooms will be maintained with 70% of the classrooms meeting or exceeding the good benchmark for quality on the Early Childhood Environmental Rating Scale (ECERS). Massachusetts public school preschool classrooms will also maintain over 70% of the programs meeting or exceeding the quality benchmarks for language and reasoning and interactions subscales of the ECERS.</p>	<p>J. <u>EARLY CHILDHOOD ENVIRONMENTAL RATING SCALE</u> This 2002 study was the first formal evaluation of the quality of Massachusetts's public school preschool classrooms. While we do not have comparative data at the state level, data from a national study conducted by the National Center for Early Development and Learning found that only 10% of the preschool classrooms studied met the benchmark for quality using the ECERS. The national study differed from the Massachusetts study in that one half of the classrooms were in child care centers and one half were in public school preschool programs.</p> <p>Given the much lower ratings found in the national study Massachusetts feels it is an appropriate goal to maintain a benchmark of 70% of the classrooms meeting or exceeding the quality benchmark.</p> <p>The Wellesley and Abt 2001 report, Early Care and Education in Massachusetts Public School Preschool Classrooms is attached.</p>
Projected Targets, Activities, Timelines, and Resources (2003-04)		
<p>FOCUS AREA 1 Projected Targets The high quality of Massachusetts public school preschool classrooms will be maintained with 70% of the classrooms meeting or exceeding the good benchmark for quality on the Early Childhood Environmental Rating Scale (ECERS). Massachusetts public school preschool classrooms will also maintain over 70% of the programs meeting or exceeding the quality benchmarks for language and reasoning and interactions subscales of the ECERS.</p> <p>Projected Activities, Timelines, and Resources Massachusetts is currently part of the Multi-State Study of Pre-Kindergarten being conducted by the National Center for Early Development & Learning. This study will assess classroom practices in 100 preschool classrooms and collect data on four children in each classroom that is being evaluated. A second assessment will be conducted on each of the children initially assessed in the spring of 2005, when the children are in kindergarten.</p> <p>During school year 2003-04, Early Learning will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support teachers in implementing the Guidelines for Preschool Learning Experiences approved by the Board of Education in April 2003, through a training of trainers project that makes training available across the Commonwealth • Fund local school systems to work with other early childhood programs in their community to use the Guidelines for Preschool Learning Experiences to plan IEP goals • Fund local school systems to work with other early childhood program in their community to fund mental health study groups to develop plans to support children social-emotional development. 		