Part B Massachusetts Annual Performance Report (MA APR) for FFY 2009
Revised April 11, 2011

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April 19, 2011
(original report submitted February 1, 2011)

U.S. Department of Education
Office of Special Education Programs
Potomac Center Plaza
Mail Stop 2600, Room 4129
550 12th Street S.W.
Washington, DC 20202

Re: Massachusetts Part B Annual Performance Report (MA APR) for FFY 2009

Dear Sir or Madam:

On behalf of the Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (MASSDE), I have enclosed the revised Massachusetts Annual Performance Report (MA APR) for FFY 2009. The MA APR responds directly to the indicators identified by the Office of Special Education Programs (OSEP) in Information Collection 1820-0624, Part B State Performance Plan (Part B-SPP) and Annual Performance Report (Part B-APR), and described in the OSEP Memorandum 11-4, submitted to state on November 29, 2010. The MA APR contains individual reports for Indicators 1, 2, 3, 4A, 5, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13 (not required but submitted voluntarily in response to OSEP’s instruction), 15, 16, 17, 18, 19, and 20. The APR also contains information responsive to the areas identified in the Massachusetts Part B FFY 2008 SPP/APR Letter and Response Table, and the Massachusetts Part B FFY 2009 SPP/APR Status Table received on April 11, 2011. Baseline data, targets, and improvement activities for Indicators 4B, 13, and 14 are included in the revised Massachusetts State Performance Plan (MA SPP), submitted with this report. Other reports in the MA SPP are updated to include new targets and activities for the extended reporting period, FFY 2011 and FFY 2012.

In FFY 2009 and since the date of the last report to OSEP, MASSDE has continued to work with stakeholders including the Statewide Special Education Steering Committee, the Statewide Advisory Council, statewide advocacy groups and parent organizations, and other state and local agencies that share MASSDE’s priority for improving our work on behalf of children with disabilities, their families, and their educators. New and updated inter- and intra-agency initiatives have refined MASSDE’s data collection methods, technical assistance available to and resources provided for local education agencies (LEAs, or districts), and methods for verifying correction noncompliance, among other things. The positive effects of these initiatives are demonstrated in the improvement shown in the MA APR’s indicator areas, particularly in the area of verification of correction of noncompliance with regard to Indicators 12, 13, 15, and 16, which was a key issue in Massachusetts’ determination in the last three years.

Consistent with prior years’ public reporting efforts, the completed MA APR will be made widely available for public review and discussion. MASSDE will share this with the various interest groups referred to above, at the Statewide Advisory Council meeting(s), and other conferences and meetings throughout the year. Also, MASSDE makes this report and the underlying data available on the agency’s website at http://www.doe.mass.edu/sped/spp/ and distributes hard copies of the report to key constituencies and the media. Districts’ indicator data are publicly reported at http://profiles.doe.mass.edu/special_ed.aspx; this information is being updated currently for FFY 2009.

With this clarification submission, MASSDE made edits to correct non-substantive typographical errors (e.g., punctuation, capitalization, word choice, spelling, typographical errors, obsolete references, inactive hyperlinks, and acronyms) in each indicator report and in Appendix A originally submitted on February 1 of this year.

MASSDE also made several substantive changes to the APR, as requested by OSEP in the Massachusetts Part B FFY 2009 SPP/APR Status Table received on April 11, 2011, or as identified by MASSDE following the February 1 submission. These changes are summarized below:

1) Indicator 3: The report now includes the number of students with IEPs in regular assessments who were provided accommodations (that did not result in an invalid score) in order to participate in the assessments, and the proficiency rates of those students who received accommodations (that did not result in an invalid score). MASSDE also included additional links to publicly
reported assessment information regarding the regular assessment and the alternative assessment.

2) Indicator 4A: MASSDE amended the report to reflect the percentage of districts with a finding of significant discrepancy as 0.57%. Also, the report includes the number of districts that did not meet the state-established minimum "n" size requirement of more than 30 students in special education. Finally, language in Indicator 4A was revised to clearly reflect the comparison of FFY 2009 target with 2008-2009 data. Other terminology in the report was changed to reflect the data source, rather than the report year, as appropriate. Changes to Indicator 4B are included in the revised MA State Performance Plan, submitted on April 19, 2011.

3) Indicator 5: The report now includes the actual numbers used in the calculation. Also, MASSDE changed the term "out-of-district" to "separate schools, residential facilities, or homebound/hospital placements" throughout the report.

4) Indicator 7: Marked changes reflect updated data received from participating districts following the February 1, 2011 submission.

5) Indicator 8: In the report, MASSDE reiterates the reason that no district level cohort data is reported in FFY 2009 is because Massachusetts was not required to report district level data this year; In the prior reporting cycle, MASSDE had fulfilled OSEP’s requirement to report data from each district once in the SPP reporting cycle, and used the FFY 2009 period to review statewide data results and improvement activities. MASSDE received written approval for OSEP for these actions (see enclosed correspondence). For this reason, MASSDE has revised the Indicator 20 data table and amended the APR Score Calculation and Base to reflect the adjusted total points (Appendix F) to reflect that data reporting for Indicator 8 was not applicable to MASSDE’s Indicator 20 score.

6) Indicator 12: The report amends the actual data to incorporate additional data received from participating districts following the February 1, 2011 submission, and corrects data errors identified in the Massachusetts Part B FFY 2009 SPP/APR Status Table. MASSDE also includes new text addressing the delay between data submissions, findings of noncompliance, and verification of correction activities.

7) Indicator 17: MASSDE updated links to electronic resources cited in the report.


9) Indicator 20: MASSDE reviewed and updated the figures in the report and the APR Table (Appendix F) to reflect accurately submission by MASSDE of valid and reliable data, and correct calculations for indicator reports that OSEP identified in the Part B SPP/APR Status Table. Also, because MASSDE was not required to submit data for Indicator 8 during this reporting period, MASSDE amended the APR Score Calculation and Base to reflect the adjusted total points. See the Indicator 8 APR for more information.

Please contact me at 781.338.3388 or mmmittnacht@doe.mass.edu, if you have any questions or if you need additional information.

Sincerely,

Marcia Mittnacht
State Director of Special Education
Special Education Planning and Policy Development Office
Massachusetts Department of Education

Enclosure

C: Mitchell D. Chester, Ed.D., Commissioner, Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education
Overview of the Annual Performance Report Development:

Monitoring Priority: FAPE in the LRE

Indicator 1: Percent of youth with IEPs graduating from high school with a regular diploma. (20 U.S.C. 1416 (a)(3)(A))

Measurement: States must report using the graduation rate calculation and timeline established by the Department under the ESEA.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>FFY</th>
<th>Measurable and Rigorous Target</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2009</td>
<td>70.0%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Actual Target Data for FFY 2009 (data and target from FFY 2008 as per instructions from OSEP regarding a one year data lag):

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th># of Students in 2008-2009 cohort</th>
<th># of Students in 2008-2009 cohort who graduated in four years or less</th>
<th>2008-2009 Graduation Rate</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Students with IEPs</td>
<td>14,845</td>
<td>9,631</td>
<td>64.9%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Discussion of Improvement Activities Completed and Explanation of Progress or Slippage that occurred for FFY 2009 (2008-2009 data):

Explanation of Progress or Slippage

For this reporting year, 64.9% of students with IEPs in the 2008-2009 cohort graduated from high school in four years or less. This represents an increase of 0.8 percentage points over the reported graduation rate in the FFY 2008 MA Annual Performance Report (MA APR). While MASSDE did not meet its measurable and rigorous target of 70.0% for this period, the current data shows continuous improvement since FFY 2005, the first reporting year. This trend is illustrated in the graph below.

Although MASSDE is not required to use a five-year graduation rate, MASSDE regularly calculates this rate because a significant number of students with disabilities require more than four years to meet graduation standards. The FFY 2009 five-year graduation rate for students with IEPs is 69.6%, a 1.3% increase from the previous year, and very close to the FFY 2009 target. MASSDE will continue to calculate and publicly report the five-year rate for subsequent cohorts as an additional measure of year-to-year progress for students with and without IEPs.

States’ reports are subject to a one year data lag, which requires reporting of actual target data for FFY 2008 against the FFY 2008 measurable and rigorous target. Therefore, this report uses the graduation data for students with IEPs using FFY 2008 (school year 2008-2009) graduation rate data for students with IEPs, and uses revised graduation rate targets approved by MASSDE in December 2009. The Massachusetts Board of Elementary and Secondary Education adopted the targets of 95% percent for the statewide four-year graduation rate and 100% for the statewide five-year graduation rate for all students, to be achieved by 2018.
To receive a diploma from a Massachusetts public high school, a student must earn a Competency Determination (i.e., achieving a specified level of proficiency on the Grade 10 English Language Arts and Mathematics statewide assessments administered through the Massachusetts Comprehensive Assessment System (MCAS), or on the MCAS-Alt), and meet local graduation requirements. Students who receive a diploma in four years or less are counted as graduates for purposes of reporting these data in the Massachusetts State Performance Plan (SPP) and Annual Performance Report (APR).

Graduation Rate: Students with IEPs from Reporting Years FFY2005 - FFY2009

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Graduation Rate</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>FFY 2005</td>
<td>61.10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FFY 2006</td>
<td>62.80%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FFY 2007*</td>
<td>64.10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FFY 2008*</td>
<td>64.10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FFY 2009</td>
<td>64.90%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* As required by data lag instructions, the reported graduation rate for FFY 2007 and FFY 2008 is based on the 2007-2008 school year. This FFY 2009 APR is reporting a graduation rate based on the 2008-2009 school year.

From FFY 2005 to FFY 2009, the graduation rate for students with disabilities in Massachusetts increased from 61.1% to 64.9%. While MASSDE did not meet the measurable and rigorous target of 70% in FFY 2009 (data from 2008-2009 school year), the 3.8% improvement in the graduation rates for students with IEPs in the SPP period to date shows continued progress.

**Improvement Activities**

The progress illustrated above is attributable in part to a number of improvement activities that were completed in FFY 2009, including the further development of public reporting of special education data, a variety of professional development initiatives for educators, and initiatives and programs described in Appendix A and below. During the current reporting year, MASSDE continued to focus on previously identified improvement activities, and increased the number and intensity of improvement activities that directly affect students’ graduation rates. In addition, MASSDE was recently awarded funding for a five year High School Graduation Initiative (HSGI) that will engage targeted districts in the process of identifying their at-risk students and assisting them by implementing high quality interventions through technical assistance, training, and promising practices. These projects are also described below.

In FFY 2009, MASSDE, through its Student Support, Career, and Education Services unit (SSCE); the Special Education Planning and Policy Development Office (SEPP); and the Center for School and District Accountability, has engaged in the following improvement activities that have a direct effect on high school completion for students with IEPs:
American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA) – IDEA – Activities funded through the ARRA-IDEA grant were to be designed to help ensure that students with disabilities have access to a free and appropriate education (FAPE), to meet each student's unique needs, and to prepare each student for further education, employment, and independent living. Funds were to be used for 1) recovery purposes - to sustain and support existing special education programming; and 2) investment purposes - to improve educator quality and effectiveness; to support schools and districts; to improve assessment and data; and to promote college and career readiness.

Several districts directed their ARRA allocations to new and/or expanded programs designed to insure students with disabilities remained in school and obtained a high school diploma or certificate of completion. Some examples included: hiring consultants to evaluate their programs and practices and provide technical assistance for designing systemic changes to improve them; collaborating with other districts to develop and implement programs, including credit recovery programs, virtual and other alternative high schools for students who have already dropped out or are at high-risk for doing so; creating systemic change through implementation of tiered instruction and/or positive behavioral support systems; and hiring support staff such as guidance counselors, school social workers, school adjustment counselors, with particular therapeutic and counseling skills for this population.

The American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA) Title II-D Technology Competitive Grant Program: Online Courses and Modules Grant for At-Risk High School Students – This grant will fund projects that work collaboratively with MASSDE to create, implement, and evaluate online courses/modules for underserved high school students in alternative education, credit recovery, or credit acceleration programs. Grant recipients may adapt an online course/module or partner with an organization to design and develop the online courses/modules that align with the Massachusetts Curriculum Frameworks or the Massachusetts High School Program of Studies (MassCore).

MASSDE is providing funding to a high-need district, or collaborating districts with at least one high-need district, to pilot one or more online courses that serve high school students in alternative education programs or schools (including education collaboratives) or students participating in credit recovery or credit acceleration options (see below for definitions). During the first round of this grant, two awardees were special education collaborative programs.

Massachusetts Task Force on Behavioral Health and Public Schools is an interagency initiative of the Commonwealth’s Executive Office of Health and Human Services whose mission is to strengthen, expand, and integrate Massachusetts state services into a comprehensive, community-based system of care, to ensure that families and their children with significant behavioral, emotional, and mental health needs obtain the services necessary for success in home, schools, and community. These wraparound services will provide substantial and specific supports to students who are at high risk for dropping out of school, and to students who have already dropped out and need assistance in returning to schools.

Graduation and Dropout Prevention and Recovery Commission Activities - The Graduation and Dropout Prevention and Recovery Commission Report – Making the Connection was charged with examining current statewide policies and making recommendations on how to retain at-risk students. The Commission’s final report, Making the Connection, was released in October 2009.

The Dropout Prevention and Recovery Work Group’s (SSCE) focus is to support district team action planning and to facilitate the sharing of promising practices in order to prevent student dropouts and consequently improve graduation rates. The group’s work was expanded to 77 urban districts with at least one high school that exceeded the state’s dropout rate. There were 133 high schools in the state that met this criterion. This year, three of the districts hosted face-to-face meetings and demonstrated their promising programs, policies, and practices regarding attendance, discipline, homework, and related activities that were showing progress in retaining students with disabilities. The Dropout Prevention, Intervention, and Recovery Website
(SSCE) includes an extensive collection of graduation and dropout prevention related news and trainings, articles/reports, and websites for students, parents, and educators.

- **Massachusetts FOCUS Academy (MFA)** (SEPP) provides online, graduate level coursework to middle and high school educators across the state. The course offerings have significant impact on supporting and retaining all students but especially students with disabilities. The courses enable educators to gain a better understanding of how disabilities affect student learning and behavior, and provide educators the opportunity to improve their skills in the areas of curriculum design, instruction, evaluation, and technology. Improved educator skills translate into improved student outcomes, which will lead to improved graduation rates. The course offerings include: Creating and Sustaining Positive Learning Environments, Differentiated Instruction, Universal Design for Learning, and Collaborative Co-Teaching. In addition there are six Transition courses to improve post-secondary placements for graduates and two additional courses focused on family engagement and designed to help educators partner with parents and families to increase student success.

- **National Association of State Directors of Special Education (NASDSE) Professional Development Series** (SEPP) – The National Association of State Directors of Special Education (NASDSE), with support from the Pennsylvania Department of Education and the Pennsylvania Training and Technical Assistance Network (PaTTAN), provides the NASDSE Satellite Series. These telecasts bring nationally recognized experts to the Commonwealth via technology, providing an affordable means of quality personnel development for a variety of stakeholders.

- **Secondary Transition- TransitionWorks: Innovative Strategies for Transitioning Youth with Disabilities from School to Work** – The TransitionWorks Project is an interagency partnership developed to create and deliver innovative and non-traditional career development, job placement and career advancement activities for over 750 transition age students with significant disabilities in the cities of Boston, Springfield, and Worcester. The Massachusetts Rehabilitation Commission (MRC), in partnership with MASSDE, the Federation for Children with Special Needs (FCSN), Urban Pride, the Massachusetts workforce development system, the Commonwealth Corporation, and the Institute for Community Inclusion (ICI), is addressing the unmet transition, career development, and employment needs of young adults with significant disabilities aged 16-26.

- **Trauma Sensitive Schools Initiative** (SSCE) – Through this initiative, MASSDE is working to bring “trauma sensitive” practices to schools across the Commonwealth. These efforts include annual trainings and technical assistance regarding safe and supportive student learning environments for reducing barriers that may affect classroom behavior, relationships, and academic performance, thereby creating a climate that encourages students to stay in school.

- **Educational Proficiency Plans (EPP)** (SSCE) - The purpose of the EPP is to increase the support students need to stay in school to meet graduation standards, and have the requisite skills needed for post-secondary success.

- **Worked-Based Learning Plans (WBLP) for Students with Disabilities** (SSCE) – Through work-based learning experiences, students have an opportunity to learn about various career areas and try different work styles, find out what type of work they enjoy, find out how they learn best in a workplace setting, and find out what natural supports are available. By providing students with the opportunity to explore a variety of career areas and discover what type of work they enjoy in the context of their academic environment, the WBLP assists students with disabilities staying in school.

- **Early Warning Indicator Index** – The FFY2009-2010 Early Warning Indicator Index is the continuation of work begun by MASSDE in cooperation with districts and other partners in May 2008. The Commonwealth's Early Warning Indicator Index uses statewide data from the most recent graduating cohort as the starting point for helping local school districts identify students who may be at risk of not graduating on time from high school.
District and School Assistance Centers (DSACs) – MASSDE has opened six regionally-based DSACs to help identified districts and their schools access and use professional development and targeted assistance to improve instruction and raise achievement for all students. MFA courses (see above), including Universal Design for Learning, Creating Positive Classroom Environments, Differentiated Instruction, the Collaborative Co-Teaching Model, and Transition Planning, have been integrated into the menu of professional development options available to districts. Districts are encouraged to focus on a particular course and have educators in the district participate as teams to improve instruction and learning district-wide. The planning for this work began in FFY 2009 - FFY 2010. District/cohort-based teams are presently participating in the above listed courses.

MASSDE has combined efforts within the agency and in cooperation with stakeholders to develop a series of initiatives targeted toward at-risk youth and the communities in which they reside. The following activities include those that are underway as well as projects planned for the future that will increase the graduation rate for students with disabilities. Each of the initiatives allows for inter/intra-agency collaboration, program development for students with disabilities, and/or professional development for practitioners working with students with disabilities:

- Collaboration with Stakeholders
- Curriculum, Instruction, and Assessment Summit
- Secondary School Reading Grant
- Special Education Professional Development Institutes

For detailed information about all improvement activities, please see Appendix A.

Revisions, with Justification, to Proposed Targets / Improvement Activities / Timelines / Resources for FFY 2009 (2009-2010):

Targets, improvement activities, timelines, and resources for Indicator 1 have been amended in the Massachusetts Part B State Performance Plan (MA SPP). They include targets for FFY 2011 and FFY 2012, and a revised target for FFY 2010. The targets were developed in consultation with the Massachusetts Statewide Special Education Steering Committee. Please see the Indicator 1 MA SPP for more information.
Overview of the Annual Performance Report Development:

Monitoring Priority: FAPE in the LRE

Indicator 2: Percent of youth with IEPs dropping out of high school.

(20 U.S.C. 1416 (a)(3)(A))

Measurement: States must report using the dropout data used in the ESEA graduation rate calculation and follow the timeline established by the Department under the ESEA.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>FFY</th>
<th>Measurable and Rigorous Target</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2008</td>
<td>Students with IEPs Dropout Rate of 5.1%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Actual Target Data for FFY 2008 (as reported in the FFY 2009 Annual Performance Report (MA APR) based on the instructions for a one year data lag):

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>FFY 2008</th>
<th># of Students Enrolled (Grades 9-12)</th>
<th># of Dropouts (Grades 9-12)</th>
<th>FFY 2008 Dropout Rate</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Students with IEPs</td>
<td>44,693</td>
<td>2,246</td>
<td>5.0%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Discussion of Improvement Activities Completed and Explanation of Progress or Slippage that occurred for FFY 2008 (2008-2009):

Explanation of Progress or Slippage

MASSDE is pleased that it has exceeded its measurable and rigorous target of 5.1% by 0.1 percentage points. Consistent with the requirement to report data source and measurement aligned with Title I of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA), this report uses the dropout data used in the ESEA graduation rate calculation and follows the timeline established by the Department under the ESEA. In this FFY 2009 reporting year, MASSDE is required to describe the results of its examination of data for the year before the reporting year, and compare the results to that measurable and rigorous target (i.e., to use a “data lag”). Therefore, this report reflects data collected during the 2008-2009 school year. In addition, this report only addresses dropout data for students with Individualized Education Programs (IEPs). Prior to the FFY 2008 report, MASSDE was required to compare the data for youth with disabilities to that of all students.

In Massachusetts, a dropout (regardless of disability status) is defined as a student in grades 9-12 in a public school who leaves school prior to graduation for reasons other than a transfer to another public school, and who does not re-enroll before the following October 1. MASSDE amends dropout data used to calculate this rate, obtained through the Student Information Management System (SIMS), after districts submit their enrollment reports on October 1, and omits from the final count students identified as enrolled on October 1 who earned a General Educational Development (GED) credential. MASSDE also identifies “summer dropouts” and adds their total into the count. Additional information is included in the overview of Indicator 2 in the Massachusetts Part B State Performance Plan (SPP) for FFY 2005-2012.

As reported in FFY 2008 data collection, the dropout rate for students with IEPs was 5.0%, which represents a significant decrease from the FFY 2007 dropout rate of 5.5%. Moreover, this decrease in the number of students with IEPs dropping out of school (2,246, compared to 2,429 in the last reporting year) occurred at the same time that the total number of students with IEPs in schools has increased.
(44,693, compared to 44,448 in the last reporting year). MASSDE is encouraged by this rate, not only because it represents a second year of decline in the dropout rate of students with IEPs, but also because the rate falls below the target set at 5.1% for FFY 2008.

As illustrated in the graph below, there has been fluctuation in dropout rates for students with IEPs since MASSDE reported baseline data for FFY 2004. Over time, MASSDE has revised its methods of collecting and verifying collected data. As described in previous reports on Indicator 2, the use of new codes leading to better identification of dropouts may have contributed to a noted increase in dropout rates between FFY 2005 and FFY 2006. This system of identification is now standard and has resulted in the collection of more accurate data. Since the 2006-2007 academic year, MASSDE notes that there has been a steady decrease each year in the dropout rate for students with IEPs. This trend, which is also noted in the statewide dropout rate for all students (see the report High School Dropouts 2008-09, Massachusetts Public Schools for more information), demonstrates that the statewide and targeted dropout prevention initiatives have had a direct effect on reducing the number of students in Massachusetts that leave school prior to graduation.

Massachusetts and its partners will continue to focus on improvement activities targeted to maintaining the decline in the dropout rate for students with IEPs. We look forward to reporting continued improvement in the FFY 2010 reporting period.

Improvement Activities

During FFY 2009, MASSDE engaged in the following improvement activities targeted for dropout prevention or reduction for students with IEPs through the Special Education Planning and Policy Development Office (SEPP), the Student Support, Career and Education Services Unit (SSCE) and the Center for School and District Accountability:

- **American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA) - IDEA** - Activities funded through the ARRA-IDEA grant were to be designed to ensure that students with disabilities have access to a free and appropriate education (FAPE), by providing services and programs that met students’ unique needs and prepared them for further education, employment, and independent living. Funds were to be used for 1) recovery purposes (to sustain and support existing special education programming), and 2) investment purposes (to improve educator quality and effectiveness; support schools, districts, and students; for assessment and data; and to promote college and career readiness).
Many of the districts directed their ARRA allocations to new and/or expanded programs designed to improve school climates and create alternative strategies to suspension and expulsion of students with IEPs. They also allocated funds for credit recovery programs for students returning to school. Some examples include:

- hiring consultants to evaluate their programs and practices regarding suspensions and expulsions and provide technical assistance for designing systemic changes to improve their programs and practices;
- collaborating with other districts to develop and implement programs, including credit recovery programs, virtual and other alternative high schools for students with behavior and/or emotional problems who have high rates of suspension and expulsions; and
- hiring support staff such as guidance counselors, school social workers, school adjustment counselors, with particular therapeutic and counseling skills for this population.

**The American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA) Title II-D Technology Competitive Grant Program: Online Courses and Modules Grant for At-Risk High School Students.** This grant funded projects that work collaboratively with MASSDE to create, implement, and evaluate online courses/modules for underserved high school students in alternative education, credit recovery, or credit acceleration programs. Grant recipients may adapt an online course/module or partner with an organization to design and develop the online courses/modules that align with the Massachusetts Curriculum Frameworks or the Massachusetts High School Program of Studies (MassCore).

MASSDE is providing funding to high-need districts or collaborating districts with at least one high-need district to pilot one or more online courses that serve high school students in alternative education programs or schools (including education collaboratives) or students participating in credit recovery or credit acceleration options. This student population includes students who have dropped out and are returning to school, while at the same time, offering supports to students at risk for dropping out. During the first round of this grant two awardees were special education collaboratives, each of which serviced students from several school districts.

**Massachusetts Task Force on Behavioral Health and Public Schools** is an interagency initiative of the Commonwealth’s Executive Office of Health and Human Services whose mission is to strengthen, expand and integrate Massachusetts state services into a comprehensive, community-based system of care, to ensure that families and their children with significant behavioral, emotional and mental health needs obtain the services necessary for success in home, schools and community. These wraparound services provide substantial and specific supports to students who are at high risk for dropping out of school, and to students who have already dropped out and need assistance in returning to school.

The following improvement activities started in FFY 2008 or before, and continued in FFY 2009:

- In partnership with the **Central Massachusetts Communities of Care (CCMC) Positive Behavioral Interventions (PBIS) Grant** (SEPP), MASSDE provided grant funds to support districts in Worcester County with the development and implementation of Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports (PBIS) and with developing “wrap-around” mental health services and supports, for which students at risk for dropping out or those returning to school would be eligible. The participating districts receive professional development as well as onsite assistance in the development and implementation of the principles of PBIS. In the first year of the program, four districts totaling six schools and over 50 school personnel (including teachers, administrators, related service providers, paraprofessional, parents, and students) participated. In the second year, this first cohort of districts moved from the planning stage to implementation, and the second cohort of six districts entered the first stage. In the third year of the grant, the second cohort completed the implementation stage and a third cohort of four districts and six schools began the initial, planning stage. Now, in the fourth year, these districts are in their implementation stage.
Graduation and Dropout Prevention and Recovery Commission Activities

- **The Graduation and Dropout Prevention and Recovery Commission** was charged with examining current statewide policies and making recommendations on how to retain at-risk students. The Commission's final report, *Making the Connection*, was released in October, 2009 and several of its recommendations have been incorporated into the work of the Dropout Prevention and Recovery Work Group.

- **The Dropout Prevention and Recovery Work Group's** (SSCE) focus is to support district team action planning and to facilitate the sharing of promising practices in order to prevent student dropouts. In FFY 2009, the group's work was expanded to all 77 urban districts that had at least one high school that exceeded the state's dropout rate. This accounts for over half of the State's students who drop out. There were 133 high schools in the state that met this criterion. This year's activities included encouraging districts that wished to demonstrate their promising programs, policies and practices regarding attendance, discipline, homework, and related activities that were showing progress in reducing the dropout rate for students with IEPs to host the groups' face-to-face meetings. Three districts volunteered to do so.

- **The Dropout Prevention, Intervention, and Recovery Website** (SSCE) includes an extensive collection of graduation and dropout prevention related news and trainings, articles/reports, and websites for students, parents, and educators.

- **Massachusetts FOCUS Academy (MFA)** (SEPP) provides online, graduate level coursework to middle and high school educators across the state. Two content areas, *Universal Design for Learning (UDL)* and *Differentiated Instruction*, have significant impacts on supporting all students, but especially those with disabilities. The courses enable educators to gain a better understanding of how disabilities affect student learning and behavior, and provide educators with improved skills in the areas of curriculum design, instruction, evaluation, and technology. These skills translate into improved student outcomes, which will lead to decreased dropout rates. Additional MFA courses that positively affect student success and promote decreased dropout rates include Positive Behavioral Supports, Collaborative Teaching, Family Engagement, and Post-Secondary Transition.

- **National Association of State Directors of Special Education (NASDSE) Professional Development Series** (SEPP) - The National Association of State Directors of Special Education (NASDSE), with support from the Pennsylvania Department of Education and the Pennsylvania Training and Technical Assistance Network (PaTTAN), provides the NASDSE Professional Development Series. These telecasts bring nationally recognized experts to the Commonwealth using technology, providing an affordable means of quality personnel development for a variety of stakeholders. In FFY 2009, 106 entities participated in the series and the topics were: *Seclusion and Restraint the Impact of Federal and State Policy in the Classroom*; *Healthy, Physically Fit and Ready for Action: Addressing Physical Education and Activity Needs of Individuals with Disabilities*; and *Connecting Educational Standards to Student Learning Plans and Policy to the Classroom*.

- **Secondary Transition- TransitionWorks: Innovative Strategies for Transitioning Youth with Disabilities from School to Work** – The *TransitionWorks* project is an interagency partnership developed to create and deliver innovative and non-traditional career development, job placement and career advancement activities for over 750 transition age students with significant disabilities in the cities of Boston, Springfield and Worcester. Helping students plan for the future is a major factor in maintaining their interest and purpose for staying in school. The Massachusetts Rehabilitation Commission (MRC), in partnership with MASSDE, the Federation for Children with Special Needs (FCSN), Urban Pride, the Massachusetts Workforce Development System, the Commonwealth Corporation, and the Institute for Community Inclusion (ICI) is addressing the unmet transition, career development and employment needs of young adults with significant disabilities aged 16-26.

- **Trauma Sensitive Schools Initiative** (SSCE) – Through this initiative MASSDE is working to bring “trauma sensitive” practices to schools across the Commonwealth. These efforts include annual trainings and technical assistance around safe and supportive student learning.
environments for reducing barriers that affect classroom behavior, relationships, and academic performance thereby creating a climate that encourages students to stay in school. The research shows that a high percentage of students who drop out of school have experienced or witnessed trauma in their lives.

- **Educational Proficiency Plans (EPP) (SSCE)** - The purpose of the EPP is to increase the support and services students need in order to stay in school and meet graduation standards, as well as gained the requisite skills needed for post-secondary success. Districts are required to develop an EPP for any student who does not meet the minimum criteria on the English language arts and Mathematics tests of the Massachusetts Comprehensive assessment system.

- **Work-Based Learning Plans (WBLP) for Students with Disabilities (SSCE)** - Through work-based learning experiences, students have an opportunity to learn about various career areas and try different work styles, find out what type of work they enjoy, find out how they learn best in a workplace setting, and find out what natural supports are available. By providing the opportunity to explore a variety of career areas and discover what type of work they enjoy in the context of their academic environment, the WBLP promotes students with disabilities staying in school.

- **Early Warning Indicator Index (EWII)** - The FFY 2009-FFY 2010 Index is the continuation of work begun by the Department in cooperation with districts and other partners in May 2008, designed to identify ninth grade students who are at risk of not graduating in four years. Based on statewide-data from the seventh and eighth grades, MASSDE sorts students into five levels of at-risk categories and distributes their names to the appropriate district for them to design targeted student-centered interventions. Students at risk for not graduating on time are also at risk for dropping out of school. By providing individualized supports and services as early as possible, dropout rates should decline.

- **District and School Assistance Centers (DSACs)** – MASSDE has opened six regionally-based DSACs to help identified districts and their schools access and use professional development and targeted assistance to improve instruction and raise achievement for students with and without disabilities. MFA courses (see above), including *Universal Design for Learning, Creating Positive Classroom Environments, Differentiated Instruction, the Collaborative Co-Teaching Model, and Transition Planning* have been integrated into the menu of professional development options available to districts. These courses are designed to help teachers reach all students, especially by identifying and supporting students at risk for failure and dropping out of school. The planning for this work began in FFY 2009-FFY 2010. District/cohort-based teams are presently participating in the above courses.

Many of the factors that contribute to student dropout are consistent for students with IEPs as well as their peers without IEPs. Therefore, MASSDE has combined efforts within the agency and in cooperation with stakeholders to develop a series of dropout prevention initiatives targeted toward at-risk youth and the communities in which they reside. The following activities include those that are underway as well as projects planned for the future. Each of the initiatives allows for inter/intra-agency collaboration, program development for students with IEPs, as well as professional development.

- Collaboration with Stakeholders
- **Curriculum, Instruction, and Assessment Summit**
- **Secondary School Reading Grant**
- **Special Education Professional Development Institutes**

For detailed information about these activities, please see Appendix A.


MASSDE will continue to focus its efforts on decreasing the dropout rate for students with IEPs, and looks forward to reporting the results of these efforts in the FFY 2010 APR.
Revisions, with Justification, to Proposed Targets / Improvement Activities / Timelines / Resources for FFY 2009 (2009-2010):

Targets, improvement activities, timelines, and resources for Indicator 2 have been amended in the Massachusetts Part B State Performance Plan (MA SPP). They include targets for FFY 2011 and FFY 2012. These targets were developed in consultation with the Massachusetts Statewide Special Education Steering Committee. Please see the Indicator 2 MA SPP for more information.
Overview of the Annual Performance Report Development:

**Monitoring Priority: FAPE in the LRE**

**Indicator 3:** Participation and performance of children with IEPs on statewide assessments:

A. Percent of districts with a disability subgroup that meets the State’s minimum “n” size that meets the State’s Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) targets for the disability subgroup.

B. Participation rate for children with IEPs.

C. Proficiency rate for children with IEPs against grade level, modified¹ and alternate academic achievement standards.

(20 U.S.C. 1416 (a)(3)(A))

**Measurement:**

A. AYP Percent = [(# of districts with a disability subgroup that meets the State’s minimum “n” size that meet the State’s AYP targets for the disability subgroup) divided by the (total # of districts that have a disability subgroup that meets the State’s minimum “n” size)] times 100.

B. Participation rate = [(# of children with IEPs participating in the assessment) divided by the (total # of children with IEPs enrolled during the testing window, calculated separately for reading and math)]. The participation rate is based on all children with IEPs, including both children with IEPs enrolled for a full academic year and those not enrolled for a full academic year.

C. Proficiency rate = [(# of children with IEPs enrolled for a full academic year scoring at or above proficient) divided by the (total # of children with IEPs enrolled for a full academic year, calculated separately for reading and math)].

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Measurable and Rigorous Targets</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>FFY 2009 (2009-2010)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ELA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Targets</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Actual Data</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


¹ Please note that Massachusetts does not have modified academic achievement standards for students with disabilities.
Discussion of Improvement Activities Completed and Explanation of Progress or Slippage that occurred for FFY 2009 (2009-2010):

**Explanation for Progress or Slippage for 3A – AYP**

To receive a positive AYP determination in FFY 2009, schools and districts must meet a state-established student participation requirement, a student attendance or graduation requirement, and either the State’s FFY 2009 performance target for that subject or the district, school, or subgroup’s own FFY 2009 improvement target. MASSDE calculates the AYP determination as described in Table 1 below.

**Table 1 – Calculation of AYP Determinations**

\[ A + (B \text{ or } C) + D = \text{Affirmative AYP Determination} \]

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>A</th>
<th>MCAS Participation Rate</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>95% or greater participation in Massachusetts Comprehensive Assessment System (MCAS) and MCAS-Alternate Assessment (MCAS-Alt) tests</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>B</th>
<th>MCAS Performance</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>90.2 or greater Composite Performance Index (CPI) in English language arts (ELA); 84.3 or greater CPI in Mathematics</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>OR</th>
<th>MCAS Improvement*</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Meet or exceed 2010 improvement target (Specific to schools, districts and student groups)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>D</th>
<th>Additional Indicator</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>*NOTE: A group can also make AYP for improvement by reducing the percentage of non-proficient students by 10% from 2009 to 2010 (NCLB’s safe harbor provision).</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The actual data and calculation for the determination of the number of districts with a disability subgroup that met AYP targets for the subgroup in FFY 2009 are as follows.

**Districts Meeting AYP for Disability Subgroup**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Number of districts with disability subgroup</th>
<th>Number of districts with disability subgroup meeting AYP</th>
<th>Percent of districts with disability subgroup meeting AYP</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ELA</td>
<td>Math</td>
<td>ELA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>283</td>
<td>124</td>
<td>43.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Math</td>
<td>96</td>
<td>33.7%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In FFY 2009, there were 283 districts with a disability subgroup for English Language Arts (ELA) and 285 districts with a disability subgroup for Mathematics in Massachusetts for whom MASSDE made AYP determinations. MASSDE calculated AYP determinations for the disability subgroup if the group consisted of:
There were some changes to the calculation in FFY 2009, based on new federal requirements. In accordance with the October 2008 federal requirement that all states set a single graduation rate goal and annual targets, MASSDE adopted a single, statewide graduation rate goal of 95 percent (four-year rate) by the 2018-2019 school year, and annual targets toward that goal beginning with the 2009-2010 school year (FFY 2009). Starting in FFY 2009, for positive AYP determinations, Massachusetts public high schools and districts at the grade 9-12 grade span must also meet at least one of the following criteria:

- A four-year graduation rate of 70 percent applied to the 2009 graduation cohort;
- A two percentage point increase in the four-year graduation rate from the 2008 cohort to 2009 cohort; or
- A five-year graduation rate of 75 percent applied to the 2008 graduation cohort.

Additional changes occurred in Composite Performance Index (CPI) Calculations for Certain MCAS Alternate Assessment (MCAS-Alt) Results. Between 2005 and 2009, the U.S. Department of Education (USED) granted certain states flexibility in their treatment of the special education student population for accountability purposes. Specifically, the USED allowed Massachusetts to treat up to three percent of students taking the MCAS-Alt "as if proficient" by assigning 100 CPI points for scores in the Progressing range. However, this flexibility expired at the end of the 2009-2010 school year and therefore is not applicable to the current calculation. USED now allows only one percent (1%) of the students assessed to receive 100 CPI points "as if proficient." To meet this requirement, MASSDE has implemented the following policy changes:

1. Beginning with the FFY 2009 reporting period, MASSDE assigns 100 CPI points only to students scoring Progressing on the MCAS-Alt who have been identified through the Student Information Management System (SIMS) as having the following primary disability types: Intellectual, Sensory/Deaf and Blind, Multiple Disabilities, Autism, and Developmental Delay. These are the students most likely to have significant cognitive disabilities, whose performance is measured appropriately by alternate achievement standards. If necessary, MASSDE further prioritizes among these students based on reported level of need for special education services and/or their level of complexity scores on the MCAS-Alt, in order to maintain a cap of one percent on the percentage of students treated "as if proficient."

2. MASSDE assigns 75 CPI points to all other students scoring at the Progressing level on the MCAS-Alt.

3. All other students with disabilities assessed using the MCAS-Alt who do not score at the Progressing level continue to be assigned CPI points in accordance with prior year procedures (http://www.doe.mass.edu/SDA/ayp/2010/schleadersguide.pdf). Students scoring at the Emerging level receive 75 CPI points, Awareness 50 CPI points, and Portfolio Incomplete 25 CPI points.

Using the above criteria, of the school districts with a disability subgroup for ELA, 43.8% (or 124) received a positive AYP determination. Of the school districts with a disability subgroup for Mathematics, 33.7% (or 96) received a positive AYP determination. The measurable and rigorous targets for Indicator 3A in FFY 2009 increased by two percentage points above the FFY 2008 target for ELA (from 50% to 52%), and Mathematics (from 40% to 42%). MASSDE reports a decrease in the percentage of districts that made AYP for students with disabilities in both ELA and Mathematics from FFY 2008 (68.3% for ELA and 51.4% for Mathematics) to FFY 2009 (43.8% for ELA and 33.7% for Math) using this methodology for calculating AYP and with increased targets to meet each year. MASSDE will continue to work to identify the performance gaps in our schools and districts, and to provide them with appropriate resources so that the performance of Massachusetts’ students with disabilities continues to improve. Targets for FFY 2011 and FFY 2012 have been set based on recommendations from the Special Education Steering Committee. The Steering Committee considered statewide targets for students without disabilities when
recommending targets for the percentage of districts meeting AYP with the disability subgroup. Please see the MA SPP for Indicator 3 for more information.

In addition to the expiration of the 2% flexibility for students taking the MCAS-Alt, the performance targets have increased over time while actual performance rates, as measured by CPI, have not. This, coupled with consistent performance scores for the disability subgroup, contributed to slippage in the number of districts making AYP for the disability subgroup in this FFY.

The chart below illustrates the actual data from FFY 2005 to FFY 2009 for this indicator, and compares the data across these fiscal years to the target for FFY 2009. Although the aggregate increase from FFY 2005 to FFY 2009 is 18.8 and 14.7 percentage points in ELA and Mathematics, respectively, the changes over time to the calculations as well as the changing AYP targets demonstrate no clear pattern. Therefore, the longitudinal data (FFY 2005 - FFY 2009), as they relate to Indicator 3A, should be interpreted with caution.

**Explanation for Progress or Slippage for 3B – Participation rate for children with IEPs**

The participation rate for students with IEPs for FFY 2009 is determined by calculating the number of students included in the disability subgroup who participated in MCAS and MCAS-Alt tests divided by the number of students included in the disability subgroup enrolled in the tested grades on the date the tests were administered. A student who was absent during testing, including a student with a medical excuse, is counted in school and district participation rate as a non-participant. A student was considered neither a participant nor a non-participant (i.e., was excluded from both the numerator and the denominator in participation rate calculations) if all of the following statements were true: (1) the student transferred during the testing window (between the first day of ELA testing and the last day of testing for Mathematics or science); (2) the student missed at least one entire session of the test in question; and (3) the student was not medically excused or absent for the test in question. For further information, see page 10 of the School Leader’s Guide “How is participation calculated?” which can be found at: [http://www.doe.mass.edu/sda/ayp/2010/schleadersguide.pdf](http://www.doe.mass.edu/sda/ayp/2010/schleadersguide.pdf).
Following is the actual data and calculation for the determination of the FFY 2009 participation rate for students with IEPs in the ELA and Mathematics tests.

### FFY 2009 Participation Count

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Graded</th>
<th>ELA</th>
<th>Math</th>
<th>ELA</th>
<th>Math</th>
<th>ELA</th>
<th>Math</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Grades 3-5</td>
<td>39,248</td>
<td>39,180</td>
<td>34,874</td>
<td>34,804</td>
<td>4,035</td>
<td>4,068</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grades 6-8</td>
<td>40,384</td>
<td>40,420</td>
<td>36,103</td>
<td>35,883</td>
<td>3,648</td>
<td>3,874</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grade 10</td>
<td>12,233</td>
<td>12,216</td>
<td>10,579</td>
<td>10,608</td>
<td>897</td>
<td>901</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>State Total</td>
<td>91,865</td>
<td>91,816</td>
<td>81,556</td>
<td>81,295</td>
<td>8,580</td>
<td>8,843</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Note: The data presented above are presented by the grade spans used for making AYP determinations (as described in Indicator 3A). The difference in the number of students with IEPs in grades assessed in Mathematics (91,816) and ELA (91,865) may have included cases in which students were repeating a grade who previously took MCAS, students who were removed from the calculation on appeal (e.g., students with medically-documented absences whose non-participation caused a school as a whole not to make AYP), and students transferred in or out of the district during the testing period and therefore not completing testing in FFY 2009.

The number of students with IEPs who participated in regular assessment with accommodations (that did not result in an invalid score) was 71,614 for ELA, and 71,618 for Mathematics. The number of students who participated without accommodations was 9,942 for ELA, and 9,677 for Mathematics. Because Massachusetts does not have assessments based on modified academic achievement standards, the participation rates reported for (d) and (e) above reflect only the number of students with IEPs in alternate assessments against grade level academic achievement standards and alternate academic achievement standards.

Appendix B (at pages 16-17) in the 2010 MCAS Alternate Assessment (MCAS-Alt): State Summary of Participation and Performance Report, available at [http://www.doe.mass.edu/mcas/alt/10statesum.doc](http://www.doe.mass.edu/mcas/alt/10statesum.doc), includes additional information regarding the number of students with IEPs in alternative assessments based on grade-level and alternative achievement standards. In addition, Appendix C (at page 18) includes information about the rates and methods of participation of students with disabilities.
ELA and Math – Participation Rate

Overall percent = [(b + c + d + e) divided by (a) X 100].

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>(b) &amp; (c)</th>
<th>(d) &amp; (e)</th>
<th>(a)</th>
<th>Overall Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ELA</td>
<td>81,556</td>
<td>8,580</td>
<td>91,865</td>
<td>98.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MATH</td>
<td>81,295</td>
<td>8,843</td>
<td>91,816</td>
<td>98.2%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In FFY 2009, of the 91,865 students with IEPs enrolled in all grades assessed for ELA, 81,556 participated in the regular assessment and 8,580 participated in an alternate assessment. The total participation rate for ELA was 98.1%. The participation rate from FFY 2008 to FFY 2009 stayed the same, and was slightly below the target of 99%. Similarly, the participation rate for Mathematics was slightly below the target of 99% in FFY 2009. Of the 91,816 students with IEPs enrolled in all grades assessed, 81,295 participated in the regular assessment and 8,843 participated in an alternate assessment. The total participation rate for Mathematics was 98.2%. This is a decrease of 0.1 percentage points from the participation rate reported in FFY 2008.

Given the 99% participation rate of our baseline year, MASSDE’s ability to meet subsequent targets is highly challenged. MASSDE recommends that the OSEP consider allowing a target range for this Indicator subsection in the future. Even though MASSDE did not meet the target for Indicator 3B, the state continues to report a very high participation rate for students with disabilities throughout the SPP period. This high rate represents nearly full participation. The following graph illustrates the participation rates of students with disabilities in statewide assessments from FFY 2005 to FFY 2009. At no time has participation been less than 97.6%.
Explanation for Progress or Slippage for 3C – Proficiency rate for children with IEPs against grade level standards and alternate academic achievement standards.

To calculate proficiency rate, MASSDE uses the CPI, a 100-point index that assigns 100, 75, 50, 25, or 0 points to each student participating in the Massachusetts Comprehensive Assessment System (MCAS) and MCAS Alternate Assessment (MCAS-Alt) tests based on their performance. The total points assigned to each student are added together and the sum is divided by the total number of students assessed. The result is a number between 0 and 100, which constitutes a district, school, or subgroup’s CPI for that subject and student group. CPIs are generated separately for ELA and Mathematics, and at all levels – state, district, school, and student subgroup. For additional details on the CPI, please see the School Leaders’ Guide to the 2010 AYP Reports (http://www.doe.mass.edu/sda/ayp/2010/default.html).

Following are the data and calculation for the FFY 2009 proficiency rate for children with IEPs.

### Proficiency Count and Rate

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>ELA</th>
<th>Math</th>
<th>ELA</th>
<th>Math</th>
<th>ELA</th>
<th>Math</th>
<th>ELA</th>
<th>Math</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Number of students with IEPs in grades assessed</strong>&lt;br&gt;<strong>(a)</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grades 3-5</td>
<td>38,909</td>
<td>38,872</td>
<td>8,237</td>
<td>8,321</td>
<td>21.2%</td>
<td>21.4%</td>
<td>63.4</td>
<td>59.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grades 6-8</td>
<td>39,751</td>
<td>39,757</td>
<td>12,425</td>
<td>6,244</td>
<td>31.3%</td>
<td>15.7%</td>
<td>68.7</td>
<td>51.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grade 10</td>
<td>11,476</td>
<td>11,509</td>
<td>4,373</td>
<td>4,183</td>
<td>38.1%</td>
<td>36.3%</td>
<td>75.7</td>
<td>69.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>State Total</strong></td>
<td>90,136</td>
<td>90,138</td>
<td>25,035</td>
<td>18,748</td>
<td>27.8%</td>
<td>20.8%</td>
<td>67.3</td>
<td>57.5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The number of students with IEPs who are proficient or above, as measured by the regular assessment, with accommodations (that did not result in an invalid score) was 21,125 for ELA, and 14,768 for Mathematics. The number of students with IEPs who are proficient or above, as measured by the regular assessment, without accommodation was 4,909 for ELA, and 3,979 for Mathematics.

For additional information, see Tables 35-51 for statewide performance level results disaggregated by subgroup, available at [http://www.doe.mass.edu/mcas/2010/results/summary.pdf](http://www.doe.mass.edu/mcas/2010/results/summary.pdf). Performance results of children with disabilities on regular assessments, alternate assessments based on grade-level standards and alternate assessments based on alternate academic achievement standards compared with the

For FFY 2009, 90,136 students with IEPs in all grades were assessed for ELA, and of those students, 25,035 students scored proficient or above as measured by the regular and alternate assessment. The percent of students with IEPs scoring proficient or above on the ELA statewide assessment was 27.8%, and the Composite Performance Index (CPI) for students with disabilities was **67.3**.

In Mathematics, 90,138 students with IEPs in all grades were assessed, and of those students, 18,748 scored proficient or above as measured by the regular and alternate assessment. The percent of students with IEPs scoring proficient or above on the Mathematics statewide assessment was 20.8%, and the CPI for students with disabilities was **57.5**.

MASSDE has continued to set targets for students with IEPs that are the same as the targets for all students. In FFY 2009, the target CPI for all students was 90.2 in ELA, and 84.3 in Mathematics. Actual FFY 2009 data show that the CPI for students with disabilities (67.3 in ELA and 57.5 in Mathematics) fell short of these targets. Nonetheless, there has been steady progress for the disability subgroup this year in Mathematics, an increase of 0.6%. The FFY 2009 data reflect a decrease of 0.6 points over FFY 2008 totals in ELA. Additionally, since FFY 2004, the CPI for this subgroup has increased 8.0 points in Mathematics and 2.3 points in ELA. These increases are reported in the graphs below. MASSDE will continue to work to improve results for students with disabilities in this area in FFY 2010.

![](MCAS_Proficiency_Rates_CPI.png)

It is important to note that while there was slippage in Indicator 3A (Districts Making AYP) actual student performance data show an increase of 0.6% in Mathematics from FFY 2008 to FFY 2009 and slippage of only 0.6% in ELA as the graphs below illustrate. The increase in Mathematics and nominal slippage in ELA does not appear to be a causal factor for the decrease in the number of districts making AYP for the disability subgroup. More likely, the changes in the way AYP was calculated, as previously described (i.e., the expiration of the flexibility to treat up to three percent of students taking the MCAS-Alt "as if..."
proficient”), was the main contributing factor for the slippage. (Link to MASSDE website for detailed information regarding calculation changes: http://www.doe.mass.edu/sda/AYP/2010/schleadersguide.pdf.)

**MCAS CPI Comparison**

**ELA FFY 2008-2009**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade Level</th>
<th>CPI 2008</th>
<th>CPI 2009</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Grade 3-5</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>65</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grade 6-9</td>
<td>70</td>
<td>75</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grade 9-12</td>
<td>80</td>
<td>85</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Improvement Activities**

In FFY 2009, MASSDE engaged in intra-agency activities and initiatives intended to improve outcomes for all students. The Special Education Policy and Planning (SEPP) unit’s presence in the planning and implementation stages of these activities has ensured that the needs of students with disabilities are addressed. SEPP staff is participating in discussions and program development in cooperation with the following units in MASSDE (see Appendix A for specific activities):

- School and District Accountability and Assistance
- Curriculum and Instruction
- Secondary School Services
- Elementary School Services
In FFY 2009, MASSDE also engaged in a number of improvement activities to promote student achievement and to improve results for students with disabilities on statewide assessment. The following activities directly affected Indicator 3:

- **ARRA Entitlement Grants**, which provide professional development, updated technology, and instructional materials to promote increased numbers of students with disabilities reaching proficiency on statewide assessments, were awarded.

- MASSDE has a long standing relationship with the **Federation for Children with Special Needs (FCSN)**, the Parent Training and Information Center federally funded to provide free information, support, technical assistance, and workshops to Massachusetts’ families who have children with disabilities. FCSN provides training and technical assistance to families throughout Massachusetts on behalf of MASSDE. In FFY 2009, training topics included *Parent’s Rights, IEPs, Understanding My Child’s Learning Style, and The Massachusetts Comprehensive Assessment System (MCAS)*. These courses have a positive effect on instruction for students with disabilities.

- **Collaboration between MASSDE Curriculum and Instruction Mathematics Office and Special Education Planning and Policy Development Office (SEPP)** - With input and guidance from the urban superintendents, the MA Urban Math Liaisons network (Mathematics directors who provide guidance and support around Mathematics in Massachusetts public schools) identified the need to improve support for students with disabilities as a critical priority in urban districts. In response to this need, meetings will be dedicated to developing a district level collaboration between special educators and Mathematics specialists. This will support the performance of students on statewide Mathematics assessments.

- **Collaboration with Stakeholders** has included providing statewide assessment data to the statewide Special Education Advisory Council, the Special Education Steering Committee, and interest groups to discuss targets and current data for students with disabilities on statewide assessments.

- MASSDE holds an annual **Curriculum, Instruction, and Assessment Summit**, the purpose of which is to share MASSDE resources for strengthening curriculum, instruction, and assessment; identify needs for future development of curriculum resources and technical assistance; and build capacity of MASSDE, districts, and schools through regional partnerships. In FFY 2009, the topics from the Summit that related to statewide assessment were: *Starting Out Right: Preventing and Closing the Achievement Gap; Curriculum Alignment; Online Courses and Resources for Standards-Based Teaching and Learning; Narrowing Achievement Gaps in Reading and Writing; Addressing the Achievement Gap: Parents as Teachers and Partners; Effective Math Instruction for English Language Learners; The Integration of Science and Literacy; Tiered Instructional Models; The Role of the Arts in Raising Academic Achievement; Tools for Differentiated Curriculum and Instruction; Implementing a Balanced Assessment System; Supporting Student Achievement in Science and Technology/Engineering; and Math Learning Communities in Practice.*

- **District and School Assistance Centers (DSACs)** - MASSDE has opened six regionally-based DSACs to help identified districts and their schools to access and use professional development and targeted assistance to improve instruction and raise achievement for all students. MFA courses (see below), including UDL, Creating Positive Classroom Environments, and Transition Planning have been integrated into the menu of professional development options available to districts through the DSACs. These courses have a positive effect on instruction for and performance of students with disabilities.

- **Educational Proficiency Plans (EPPs)** – Beginning with students in the class of 2010, school districts must develop an EPP for any student who does not score at 240 or above on the grade
10 ELA and Mathematics MCAS tests. The EPP must identify the student's strengths and weaknesses, based on MCAS and other assessment results, coursework, grades, and teacher, student, and counselor input. The purpose of the requirement is to increase the likelihood that students will meet state and local standards to graduate from high school, including achieving success on the MCAS tests, and will have the requisite skills needed for post-secondary success.

- **The Secondary School Reading grant** is a grant program that selects middle schools, high schools, and vocational schools with poor MCAS performance or with unusually large special education populations to receive four years of funding to develop and implement school-wide approaches to improving reading achievement across content areas, including: involvement of and training for all professional and paraprofessional staff; reading across content areas; multiple targeted intervention programs for struggling readers; adequate time for reading instruction; assessment that drives instruction; flexible grouping patterns; and leadership structures that provide ongoing support and guidance for all students. These efforts have a direct effect on student participation in and performance on the ELA MCAS tests.

- **Special Education Professional Development Summer Institutes** offered professional development opportunities to educators in FFY 2009 in a variety of areas to allow educators to improve their capacity to provide differentiated, responsive classroom instruction, which in turn will lead to improved academic outcomes for students with disabilities. Some of the topics related to statewide assessment included *Building World Knowledge through Reading and Writing Informational Texts; Language Essentials for Teachers of Reading and Spelling; The Massachusetts New Literacies Institute; Teaching Advanced Mathematical Decision Making; Reasoning and Problem Solving: Number Sense, Algebra, and Measurement; Middle and High School Mathematics: The Bird’s View and the Frog’s View; Fractions for Elementary School Teachers; Improving Spoken and Written Language: From Research to Practice; Managing Behavior in the Inclusive Classroom; Meeting the Academic and Non-Academic Needs of Students with Asperger Syndrome; Strategies for Students with Sensory Processing Disorders in Inclusive School Settings; Technology for Children with Visual Impairments and Multiple Disabilities; Mathematics and Science Content Vocabulary for Educators of the Deaf;* and *Promoting Access to Learning.*

- **Massachusetts FOCUS Academy (MFA)** provides online, graduate level coursework to middle and high school educators across the state. Courses include: *Differentiated Instruction, Universal Design for Learning, Positive Behavior Supports, and Collaborative Teaching.* The courses help educators gain a better understanding of how a disability affects student learning, and provide educators with improved skills in the areas of curriculum design, instruction, and technology. These skills translate into improved student outcomes.

- MASSDE participated in and supported professional development opportunities provided through the **National Association of State Directors of Special Education (NASDSE)** whereby national experts provide information via telecast on a variety of high-interest topics, including *Connecting Educational Standards to Student Learning Plans and Policy to the Classroom,* which have a positive effect on student achievement on statewide assessments.

Also in FFY 2009, MASSDE began planning the following improvement activity which will have an effect on Indicator 3 in future reporting years:

- **Early Warning Indicator Index (EWII)** - Using a statistical regression model, MASSDE has developed a predictive tool to identify students at risk for not achieving graduation in four years or less of high school. Based on middle school data (grade 7 and 8), ninth graders from several urban districts are grouped according to five at-risk categories designate by degrees of risk. The findings are distributed to the appropriate districts for them to design targeted, student centered interventions which will help improve performance scores, as measured by CPI for students with disabilities on statewide assessments.
Numerous activities focused on student assessment contributed to the state’s continued success in meeting its targets for Indicator 3. The MASSDE Special Education Planning and Policy Development Office (SEPP) works to ensure the needs of students with disabilities are addressed by the following improvement activities:

- Closing the Achievement Gaps Legislation
- Secondary Transition- TransitionWorks: Innovative Strategies for Transitioning Youth with Disabilities from School to Work
- Sign Language Video Resource Library
- Special Education Leadership Academies and Seminars
- Special Education Program Improvement Grants – Fund Code 249
- Special Education Website
- Revision of “Ten Step Guide for Comprehensive Education Assessment of Students with Visual Impairments”

For detailed information about the activities listed above, please see Appendix A.

In addition to these improvement activities, MASSDE maintained web-based resources for professionals including MCAS-Alt Newsletters, resource guides, and educators’ manuals, and updated the document entitled Requirements for the Participation of Students with Disabilities in MCAS guide. The purpose of the latter document is to provide guidelines for the participation of students with disabilities in statewide tests and to familiarize educators, and parents and guardians, with available test accommodations. MASSDE’s Student Assessment Services unit holds annual sessions for school personnel about conducting the MCAS-Alt tests for students.

MASSDE continues to report publicly assessment data for students with disabilities. This revised report, which includes the number of children with disabilities in regular assessments, and the number of those children who were provided accommodations to participate in these assessments, is available at http://www.doe.mass.edu/sped/spp/maspp.html. Additional assessment data is available at http://profiles.doe.mass.edu/state_report/special_ed.aspx and http://www.doe.mass.edu/mcas/2010/results/summary.pdf, and http://www.doe.mass.edu/mcas/alt/10statesum.doc. MASSDE will continue to focus its efforts on improving outcomes for students with IEPs, and looks forward to reporting the results of these efforts in the FFY 2010 APR for Indicator 3.

Revisions, with Justification, to Proposed Targets / Improvement Activities / Timelines / Resources for FFY 2009 (2009-2010):

Targets, improvement activities, timelines, and resources for Indicator 3 have been amended in the Massachusetts Part B State Performance Plan (MA SPP). They include targets for FFY 2011 and FFY 2012. These targets were developed in consultation with the Massachusetts Statewide Special Education Steering Committee. Please see the Indicator 3 MA SPP for more information.
Overview of the Annual Performance Report Development:

Monitoring Priority: FAPE in the LRE

Indicator 4: Rates of suspension and expulsion:

A. Percent of districts that have a significant discrepancy in the rate of suspensions and expulsions greater than 10 days in a school year for children with IEPs; and

B. Percent of districts that have: (a) a significant discrepancy, by race or ethnicity, in the rate of suspensions and expulsions greater than 10 days in a school year for children with IEPs; and (b) policies, procedures or practices that contribute to the significant discrepancy and do not comply with requirements relating to the development and implementation of IEPs, the use of positive behavioral interventions and supports, and procedural safeguards.

(20 U.S.C. 1416(a)(3)(A); 1412(a)(22))

Measurement:

A. Percent = [(# of districts that have a significant discrepancy in the rates of suspensions and expulsions for greater than 10 days in a school year of children with IEPs) divided by the (# of districts in the State)] times 100.

Massachusetts’ definition of “significant discrepancy” is a suspension/expulsion rate of five times the state rate for two consecutive years.

B. Percent = [(# of districts that have: (a) a significant discrepancy, by race or ethnicity, in the rates of suspensions and expulsions, of greater than 10 days in a school year for children with IEPs; and (b) policies, procedures or practices that contribute to the significant discrepancy and do not comply with requirements relating to the development and implementation of IEPs, the use of positive behavioral interventions and supports, and procedural safeguards) divided by the (# of districts in the State)] times 100.

Massachusetts’ definition of “significant discrepancy”, by race or ethnicity, in the rate of suspensions and expulsions, is a suspension/expulsion risk ratio of 3.0 or greater for three consecutive years.

Indicator 4A – Percent of districts that have a significant discrepancy in the rate of suspensions and expulsions of greater than 10 days in a school year for children with IEPs.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>FFY</th>
<th>Measurable and Rigorous Target</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2009 (data lag)</td>
<td>The % of districts with a significant discrepancy finding will be 0%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Actual Target Data for FFY 2009 (using 2008-2009 data):

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>2008-2009 Special Education Enrollment</th>
<th>2008-2009 State Suspension/Expulsion Rate</th>
<th>% of districts with suspension/expulsion rate of five times State Rate* **</th>
<th>% of districts with a finding of significant discrepancy* **</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>166,037</td>
<td>1.2%</td>
<td>1.1% (4 districts)</td>
<td>0.57% (2 districts)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Thirty-nine districts with fewer than 30 students in special education were removed from this part of the calculation. The total number of districts included in the calculation was 352. Districts with fewer than 30 students in special education were individually considered in the analysis.

**The calculation is (2/352) x 100.

Discussion of Improvement Activities Completed and Explanation of Progress or Slippage that occurred for FFY 2009 (based on 2008-2009 data reflecting one year data lag):

Explanation of Progress or Slippage:

The data presented in the table above related to Indicator 4A are based on the state’s definition of “significant discrepancy” as a district having a suspension/expulsion rate of five times the state rate for two consecutive years. Two districts (0.57% of all districts) met the threshold of exceeding the state rate by five times for two years in a row, and therefore were determined by MASSDE to have a “significant discrepancy” in their rates of suspensions and expulsions of students with IEPs for greater than 10 days in a school year.

For the two districts found to be significantly discrepant, MASSDE reviewed the districts’ policies, procedures, and practices related to the development and implementation of IEPs, the use of positive behavior interventions and supports, procedural safeguards, and data collection practices. MASSDE required the districts to revise their policies, practices, and procedures as appropriate. MASSDE also reviewed the actual numbers of students suspended or expelled in these districts in comparison to the rates of expulsion and suspensions for students without IEPs. MASSDE determined through this review that the districts had remedied their noncompliance.

In the four years prior to the current one, the state suspension and expulsion rate for students with IEPs showed slight increases (less than half of one percent) that remained greater than the rigorous target of 0.0%. The 2004-2005 rate was 0.514%, the 2005-2006 rate was 0.916%, the 2006-2007 rate was 1.0%, and the 2007-2008 rate was 1.2%. In 2008-2009, the rate for suspension and expulsions of students with IEPs has remained the same as the 2007-2008 rate, as illustrated in the chart below.

![State Suspension Rate 2004-2005 to 2008-2009](chart)

Although MASSDE has yet to reach its target of a 0.0%, or no districts with a significant discrepancy rate of suspension/expulsion for students with IEPs, MASSDE is encouraged by the leveling of the state rate.
of suspension and expulsion this year. This has occurred at the same time that there is a reduction in the number of districts that were found to have a suspension or expulsion rate greater than five times the state rate (from five in 2007-2008 to four in 2008-2009 data).

The state rate of suspensions and expulsions has not increased, which represents a change in the trajectory of rates from the past five years. Moreover, there were no new districts reporting suspension/expulsion rates five times the state rate in this reporting year, a year in which there was an increase in the total number of students with IEPs in schools across the Commonwealth. Of note, one of the five districts in the single year category last year reduced its suspension/expulsion rate by almost 12%, and thereby fell below the criteria of a rate of five times the state rate. This is an urban, charter school district that in the same reporting period increased the number of students with IEPs enrolled in its program by 25%.

Any district with suspension and expulsion rates that exceed five times the state rate for any two years during the SPP period (FFY 2005 to FFY 2012), regardless of whether these years are consecutive, will receive review by and assistance from MASSDE. Depending on the identified factors that have led to significant discrepancies, assistance may include consultation and technical assistance on relevant topics such as districts’ self assessments of policies, procedures, and practices; more extensive and individualized analyses of school-based data; resources for creating and sustaining positive learning environments, differentiating instruction, creating a balance between student support services, and discipline; and networking with other districts with similar profiles.

Review of the data of the last five data years shows that the number of districts identified with a suspension/expulsion rate that is five times greater than the state rate in a given year has been relatively consistent, ranging from four to six districts: six districts in 2004-2005, four districts in 2005-2006, four districts in 2006-2007, five districts in 2007-2008, and four districts in 2008-2009. Once more, MASSDE considers a major factor in this variation in data to be a result of inconsistent definitions, policies, and procedures at the local level. In response, MASSDE has increased its efforts to ensure that the data are appropriately identified and reported (see description of improvement activities below) and that districts have an improved understanding of alternatives to suspension. MASSDE feels that these efforts should be designed to benefit all students - those with or without IEPs - and definitions, policies, procedures and intervention activities should be consistent for all students. Additional activities to meet the needs of students with IEPs and/or regulatory compliance must be designed within this context.

Indicator 4B - Percent of districts that have: (a) a significant discrepancy, by race or ethnicity, in the rate of suspensions and expulsions of greater than 10 days in a school year for children with IEPs; and (b) policies, procedures, or practices that contribute to the significant discrepancy and do not comply with requirements relating to the development and implementation of IEPs, the use of positive behavioral interventions and supports, and procedural safeguards.

Please see the MA State Performance Plan for Indicator 4 for a discussion of baseline data for Indicator 4B. MASSDE is not required to report actual target data in the FFY 2009 MA APR.

Improvement Activities

The majority of MASSDE’s improvement activities for Indicator 4 in FFY 2009 were focused on (1) designing materials and activities for use by the at-risk and significantly discrepant districts to improve their policies, procedures and practices relevant to the evaluation and reporting of suspensions and expulsions; (2) determining a State definition of significant discrepancy and baseline data for Indicator 4B [the percent of districts that have: (a) a significant discrepancy, by race or ethnicity, in the rate of suspensions and expulsions of greater than 10 days in a school year for children with IEPs and (b) policies, procedures, or practices that contribute to the significant discrepancy and do not comply with requirements relating to the development and implementation of IEPs, the use of positive behavioral interventions and supports, and procedural safeguards]; and (3) ensuring that districts identified as significantly discrepant or at-risk for significant discrepancy were in compliance as required by 34 CFR § 300.170(b).

During FFY 2009, MASSDE engaged in the following improvement activities targeted to reduce the rates of suspensions and expulsions of students with IEPs. Many of these activities were coordinated through
American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA) – IDEA – Activities funded through the ARRA-IDEA grant were to be designed to ensure that students with disabilities have access to a free and appropriate education (FAPE), by providing services and programs that met students’ unique needs and prepared them for further education, employment, and independent living. Funds were to be used for 1) recovery purposes (to sustain and support existing special education programming), and 2) investment purposes (to improve educator quality and effectiveness; support schools, districts, and students; for assessment and data; and to promote college and career readiness).

Many of the districts directed their ARRA allocations to new and/or expanded programs designed to improve school climates and create alternative strategies to suspension and expulsion of students with IEPs. They also allocated funds for credit recovery programs for students returning to school. Some examples include:

1. hiring consultants to evaluate their programs and practices regarding suspensions and expulsions and provide technical assistance for designing systemic changes to improve their programs and practices;
2. collaborating with other districts to develop and implement programs, including credit recovery programs, virtual and other alternative high schools for students with behavior and/or emotional problems who have high rates of suspension and expulsions; and
3. hiring support staff such as guidance counselors, school social workers, school adjustment counselors, with particular therapeutic and counseling skills for this population.

The American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA) Title II-D Technology Competitive Grant Program: Online Courses and Modules Grant for At-Risk High School Students – This grant funded projects that work collaboratively with MASSDE to create, implement, and evaluate online courses/modules for underserved high school students in alternative education, credit recovery, or credit acceleration programs. Students with IEPs who have been suspended or expelled often return to alternative education programs. Grant recipients may adapt an online course/module or partner with an organization to design and develop the online courses/modules that align with the Massachusetts Curriculum Frameworks or the Massachusetts High School Program of Studies (MassCore).

MASSDE is providing funding to a high-need district or collaborating districts with at least one high-need district to pilot one or more online courses that serve high school students in alternative education programs or schools (including education collaboratives) or students participating in credit recovery or credit acceleration options. Many of the students have high rates of suspension and expulsions. During the first round of this grant two awardees were special education collaboratives, each of which serviced students from several school districts.

The Massachusetts Task Force on Behavioral Health and Public Schools is an interagency initiative of the Commonwealth’s Executive Office of Health and Human Services whose mission is to strengthen, expand, and integrate Massachusetts state services into a comprehensive, community-based system of care, to ensure that families and their children with significant behavioral, emotional and mental health needs obtain the services necessary for success in home, schools, and community. These wraparound services provide substantial and specific supports to students who already exhibit or are at high risk of exhibiting behaviors that result in suspension or expulsion.

The following improvement activities began in FFY 2008 or before, and continued in FFY 2009:

1. Data Collection and Practices Improvement Self Assessment (SEPP) – MASSDE is creating an advisory document on data collection and program improvement self assessment for districts to use to assist them in developing and implementing practices consistent with federal and state regulations regarding the reporting of student discipline. The results of these efforts will allow...
Massachusetts districts to more accurately report data regarding the removal of a student with an IEP from his/her classroom(s), and will help districts determine whether such removal(s) constitutes an in-school suspension. Now in its final version, the advisory has added a third part that includes school-wide resources for meeting the instructional and behavior needs of students and thereby reduce the number of removals. The first two parts remain the same: guidelines for determining whether a removal of a student with an IEP constitutes an in-school suspension, and assistance in developing data collection practices for in-school suspensions and reporting them to MASSDE through the School Safety and Discipline Report (SSDR) and the Student Information Management System (SIMS). It is expected that the districts’ use of the Data Collection and Practices Improvement Self Assessment will result in a reduction of their use of suspensions and expulsions by increasing their awareness of current, district-specific suspension programs, alternatives to suspension, and the impacts of suspension data.

- **Suspension/Expulsion Technical Assistance Seminar (SEPP)** – In its final planning stage, the seminar has been expanded to include staff from districts with a suspension/expulsion rate, by race or ethnicity, of greater than 10 days in the school year for students with IEPs, in addition to the significantly discrepant districts identified in 2006-2007, 2007-2008, and 2008-2009 data collections, and districts identified as having a rate that is five times the state rate for a single year. The objectives of the seminar are to clarify appropriate definitions of in-school suspension, increase awareness of current district data collection systems through use of the Data Collection and Program Improvement Self Assessment tool, analyze disaggregated data provided by MASSDE to identify trends within each district, and identify services that may be provided rather than having a student experience in-school suspension. Resources for improving school-wide programs and services that create positive learning environments and meet the needs of all students will be reviewed.

- In partnership with the **Central Massachusetts Communities of Care (CCMC) Positive Behavioral Interventions (PBIS) Grant (SEPP)**, MASSDE provided grant funds to support districts in Worcester County for the development and implementation of Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports (PBIS) and for developing “wrap-around” mental health services and supports. The participating districts received professional development as well as onsite assistance in the development and implementation of the principles of PBIS. In the first year of the program, four districts totaling six schools and over 50 school personnel (including teachers, administrators, related service providers, paraprofessional, parents, and students) participated. In the second year, this first cohort of districts moved from the planning stage to implementation, and the second cohort of six districts entered the first stage. In the third year of the grant, the second cohort completed the implementation stage and a third cohort of four districts and six schools began the initial, planning stage. Now, in the fourth year, these districts are in the implementation stage.

- The **Graduation and Dropout Prevention and Recovery Work Group**’s (SSCE) focus is to support district team action planning and to facilitate the sharing of promising practices in order to prevent student dropout and improve graduation rates. Through their work, the work group members determined that there was a strong predictive correlation between rates of suspension and dropout, and that implementing practices that reduce the numbers of suspensions and expulsions will also reduce the number of students who drop out. In FFY 2009, the group’s work was expanded to 77 urban districts that had at least one high school that exceeded the state’s dropout rate. This accounts for over half of the State’s students who drop out. There were 133 high schools in the state that met this criterion. This year’s activities included encouraging districts that wished to demonstrate their promising programs, policies and practices regarding attendance, discipline, homework, and related activities that were showing progress in improving outcomes for students with IEPs to host the groups’ face-to-face meetings. Three districts volunteered to do so.

- The **Dropout Prevention, Intervention, and Recovery Website** (SSCE) includes an extensive collection of graduation dropout prevention, and discipline related news and trainings, articles/reports, and websites for students, parents, and educators.
Massachusetts FOCUS Academy (MFA) (SEPP) provides online, graduate level coursework to educators and related service providers across the state. Three content areas, Creating Positive Learning Environments, Universal Design for Learning (UDL) and Differentiated Instruction, have significant impacts on supporting all students, but especially those with disabilities. The courses enable educators to gain a better understanding of how disabilities affect student learning and behavior, and provide educators with improved skills in the areas of curriculum design, instruction, evaluation, technology, and discipline. Additional MFA courses that positively affect student success and promote decreased suspension and expulsion rates include Collaborative Teaching, Family Engagement, and Post-Secondary Transition.

National Association of State Directors of Special Education (NASDSE) Professional Development Series (SEPP) - The National Association of State Directors of Special Education (NASDSE), with support from the Pennsylvania Department of Education and the Pennsylvania Training and Technical Assistance Network (PaTTAN), provides the NASDSE Professional Development Series. These telecasts bring nationally recognized experts to the Commonwealth using technology, providing an affordable means of quality personnel development for a variety of stakeholders. In FY 2009, 106 entities participated in the series and the topics were: Seclusion and Restraint; The Impact of Federal and State Policy in the Classroom; Healthy, Physically Fit and Ready for Action: Addressing Physical Education and Activity Needs of Individuals with Disabilities; and Connecting Educational Standards to Student Learning Plans and Policy to the Classroom.

Secondary Transition- TransitionWorks: Innovative Strategies for Transitioning Youth with Disabilities from School to Work – The Transition Works project is an interagency partnership developed to create and deliver innovative and non-traditional career development, job placement and career advancement activities for over 750 transition age students with significant disabilities in the cities of Boston, Springfield, and Worcester. Helping students plan for the future is a major factor in maintaining their interest and purpose for staying in school, and for motivating them to change behaviors that are likely to result in suspension and/or expulsion. The Massachusetts Rehabilitation Commission (MRC), in partnership with MASSDE, the Federation for Children with Special Needs (FCSN), Urban Pride, the Massachusetts Workforce Development System, the Commonwealth Corporation, and the Institute for Community Inclusion (ICI) is addressing the unmet transition, career development and employment needs of young adults with significant disabilities aged 16-26.

Special Education Professional Development Summer Institutes (SEPP) offered professional development opportunities to educators in FFY 2009 in a variety of areas to allow educators to improve their capacity to provide differentiated, responsive classroom instruction which, in turn, will lead to improved academic outcomes for students with disabilities. Specifically related to suspension/expulsion was the course titled Managing Behavior in an Inclusive Classroom.

SEPP has collaborated with the Program Quality Assurance/Comprehensive Program Review (PQA) unit of MASSDE, specifically around analyzing policies and procedures regarding in-school suspensions. Because PQA personnel are in school districts on a routine basis, they are afforded an “insider’s” view of district policies and how they are implemented at the local level. PQA’s experience in reviewing districts’ practices has underscored MASSDE’s understanding that the accuracy of the data reported to MASSDE is affected by misinterpretations of the definitions regarding classroom removals, as well as lack of identified personnel to report the data.

Trauma Sensitive Schools Initiative (SSCE) – Through this initiative MASSDE is working to bring “trauma sensitive” practices to schools across the Commonwealth. These efforts include annual trainings and technical assistance around safe and supportive student learning environments for reducing barriers that affect classroom behavior, relationships, and academic performance thereby creating a climate that encourages students to stay in school. The research shows that a high percentage of students who drop out or are expelled from school have experienced or witnessed trauma in their lives.
Educational Proficiency Plans (EPPs) (SSCE) – The purpose of the EPP is to increase the supports and services students need in order to stay in school and meet graduation standards, as well as to gain the requisite skills needed for post-secondary success. Districts are required to develop an EPP for any student who does not meet the minimum criteria on the English Language Arts and Mathematics Tests of the Massachusetts Comprehensive Assessment System including those students who have been suspended or expelled.

Work-Based Learning Plans (WBLP) for Students with Disabilities (SSCE) – Work-based learning experiences offer students an opportunity to learn about various career areas and try different work styles, find out what type of work they enjoy, find out how they learn best in a workplace setting, and find out what natural supports are available. By providing the opportunity to explore a variety of career areas and discover what types of work they enjoy in the context of their academic environment, the WBLP encourages students with disabilities to improve their behaviors and stay in school.

District and School Assistance Centers (DSACs) – MASSDE has opened six regionally-based DSACs to help identified districts and schools access and use professional development and targeted assistance to improve instruction and raise achievement for students with and without disabilities. MFA courses (see above), including Universal Design for Learning, Creating Positive Classroom Environments, Differentiated Instruction, the Collaborative Co-Teaching Model, and Transition Planning have been integrated into the menu of professional development options available to districts through the DSACs. The planning for this work began in FFY 2009. District/cohort-based teams are presently participating in the above courses.

Early Warning Indicator Index (EWII) – The Early Warning Indicator Index is the continuation of work begun by MASSDE in cooperation with districts and other partners in May 2008. It is a predictive tool developed to identify students in grade nine who are at risk for not graduating in four years or less. Based on data from seventh and eighth grades, MASSDE sorts students into five levels of at-risk categories and distributes their names to the appropriate districts for them to design targeted, student-centered interventions. This tool was originally designed for use in select urban districts but will be available to all districts during FFY 2010. By identifying students at risk for not graduating on time, the districts will also be identifying students with behaviors that result in suspensions and expulsions and will be able to design individualized supports and services as early as possible, as well as implement systemic, school-wide changes including creating positive learning environments.

Many of the factors that contribute to suspension and expulsion are consistent for students with IEPs as well as their peers without IEPs. Therefore, MASSDE has combined efforts within the agency and in cooperation with stakeholders to develop suspension and expulsion initiatives targeted toward at-risk youth and the communities in which they reside. The following activities include those that are underway as well as projects planned for the future. Each of the initiatives allows for inter/intra-agency collaboration, program development for students with IEPs, as well as professional development for general and special educators and related service providers.

- Collaboration with Stakeholders
- Curriculum, Instruction, and Assessment Summit
- Secondary School Reading Grant
- Special Education Professional Development Institutes

For detailed information about these activities, please see Appendix A.

MASSDE has continued to report suspension/expulsion data publicly, and data for Indicator 4 are reported through tables available at http://profiles.doe.mass.edu/state_report/special_ed.aspx. From this table, viewers can select a specific district to access more detailed data.
Revisions, with Justification, to Proposed Targets / Improvement Activities / Timelines / Resources for FFY 2009 (2009-2010):

States are not required to report on Indicator 4B in the Part B Annual Performance Report for FFY 2009 because baseline, data, and improvement activities for this indicator are reflected in the Massachusetts State Performance Plan (MA SPP) for Indicator 4B.

Targets, improvement activities, timelines, and resources for Indicator 4 have been amended in the Massachusetts Part B State Performance Plan (MA SPP). They include targets for FFY 2011 and FFY 2012. These targets were developed in consultation with the Massachusetts Statewide Special Education Steering Committee. Please see the Indicator 4 MA SPP for more information.
Overview of the Annual Performance Report Development:

Monitoring Priority: FAPE in the LRE

**Indicator 5:** Percent of children with IEPs aged 6 through 21 served:

- A. Inside the regular class 80% or more of the day;
- B. Inside the regular class less than 40% of the day; and
- C. In separate schools, residential facilities, or homebound/hospital placements.

(20 U.S.C. 1416(a)(3)(A))

**Measurement:**

A. Percent = \[(\# of children with IEPs served inside the regular class 80% or more of the day) divided by (the total \# of students aged 6 through 21 with IEPs)] times 100.

B. Percent = \[(\# of children with IEPs served inside the regular class less than 40% of the day) divided by (the total \# of students aged 6 through 21 with IEPs)] times 100.

C. Percent = \[(\# of children with IEPs served in separate schools, residential facilities, or homebound/hospital placements) divided by (the total \# of students aged 6 through 21 with IEPs)] times 100.

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>FFY</th>
<th>Measurable and Rigorous Target</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Indicator 5A</strong></td>
<td>% of children with IEPs aged 6 through 21 served inside the regular class 80% or more of the day (full inclusion)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Indicator 5B</strong></td>
<td>% of children with IEPs aged 6 through 21 served inside the regular class less than 40% of the day (substantially separate placements)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Indicator 5C</strong></td>
<td>% of children with IEPs aged 6 through 21 served in separate schools, residential facilities, or homebound/hospital placements</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2009 (2009-2010)</td>
<td>56.8%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Actual Target Data for FFY 2009 (2009-2010):

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Indicator 5A</th>
<th>Indicator 5B</th>
<th>Indicator 5C</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>% of children with IEPs aged 6 through 21 served inside the regular class 80% or more of the day (full inclusion)</td>
<td>% of children with IEPs aged 6 through 21 served inside the regular class less than 40% of the day (substantially separate placements)</td>
<td>% of children with IEPs aged 6 through 21 served in separate schools, residential facilities, or homebound/hospital placements</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Actual Data</td>
<td>57.0%</td>
<td>15.4%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

A – Full Inclusion: \[
\frac{85,551}{150,107} \times 100 = 57\%
\]

B – Substantially Separate Placements: \[
\frac{23,069}{150,107} \times 100 = 15.4\%
\]

C – Separate Schools, Residential Facilities, or Homebound/Hospital Placements: \[
\frac{10,087}{150,107} \times 100 = 6.7\%
\]

### Discussion of Improvement Activities Completed and Explanation of Progress or Slippage that occurred for FFY 2009 (2009-2010):

**5A – Full Inclusion**

The total number of students with IEPs aged 6 through 21 in Massachusetts in the FFY 2009 reporting period was 150,107. Of those students, **57.0%** (or 85,551) were served in the general education classroom 80% or more of the day (full inclusion). This exceeds the measurable and rigorous target of 56.8%, and is an increase of 0.2 percentage points over FFY 2008 (56.8%). MASSDE met its target for Indicator 5A in FFY 2009, and continues to demonstrate progress in this area. Improvement can be attributed to the fact that districts are implementing practices that promote full inclusion of all students.

**5B – Substantially Separate Placements**

In FFY 2009, **15.4%** of students (or 23,069) with IEPs aged 6 through 21 were served inside the general education class less than 40% of the day (substantially separate placements). This is greater than the rigorous target of 14.7%, and equal to the percentage of students with IEPs aged 6 through 21 who were served inside the general education class less than 40% of the day (substantially separate placements) in FFY 2008.

These data have not conformed with MASSDE’s expectation that many students in substantially separate placements would move to a less restrictive setting as MASSDE pursued a least restrictive environment (LRE) initiative. Data analysis over time shows that the majority of students who are moving to full inclusion are coming from the partial inclusion subgroup. The percentage of students in substantially separate placements has remained consistent over time, as represented in the *State Trends in Educational Environments FFY 2005 - FFY 2009* chart below.

**5C – Separate Schools, Residential Facilities, or Homebound/Hospital Placements**

The percentage of children with IEPs aged 6 through 21 served in separate schools, residential facilities, or homebound/hospital placements in FFY 2009 was **6.7** (or 10,087). While MASSDE did not meet the measurable and rigorous target of 5.9% for this indicator, this represents stability of the data over time; MASSDE continues to report a relatively consistent rate of placement in separate schools, residential facilities, or homebound/hospital placements from FFY 2005 (6.7%) to FFY 2009 (6.7%).

In calculating the rate of placement in separate schools, residential facilities, or homebound/hospital placements, MASSDE includes public and private separate schools, private residential schools and public residential institutional facilities, and homebound/ hospitals. MASSDE does not include in the calculation...
the number of parentally-placed private school children with disabilities; this method is consistent with the calculation method that MASSDE used in the calculation for the previous two reporting years. Also, the number of parentally-placed private school children with disabilities was not included in the denominator for the calculation of the percentages of students in full inclusion; substantially separate placements; or placement in separate schools, residential facilities, or homebound/hospital placements. Any difference that may exist between the data reported in the State’s 618 data reported in Table 3 for Indicator 5C and the data reported here is the result of this calculation method.

In order to understand better these data over time, MASSDE has produced the following charts and tables demonstrating trends in educational settings for the reporting periods FFY 2005 to FFY 2009. The chart below illustrates the trends in educational environments to date, and demonstrates an increase over time in full inclusion environments, with a commensurate decrease in partial inclusion and relative stability of placement in separate environments.

Further analysis of the data by disability category from FFY 2005 through FFY 2009 indicates that rates of full inclusion have increased for all disability categories over this time period, while the rates of partial inclusion have decreased in all disability categories. The graph below shows the actual percentage point changes for full inclusion in all disabilities categories for the period FFY 2005 to FFY 2009. During this period, there has been an increase in full inclusion across all disability groups.
The highest changes in percentage of full inclusion from FFY 2005 to FFY 2009 were in the categories of specific learning disabilities (9.9 percentage point increase), physical disabilities (8.9 percentage point increase), health disabilities (7.8 percentage point increase), and emotional disabilities (7.7 percentage point increase).

In this same period, there was an increase in full inclusion and a decrease in all other placement categories (partial inclusion; substantially separate; and placement in separate schools, residential facilities, or homebound/hospital placements) in five disability categories, as illustrated in the table below:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Disability Category</th>
<th>Percentage Point Change FFY 2005 – FFY 2009</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Sensory Hard of Hearing</td>
<td>Full Inclusion: 5.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Emotional</td>
<td>7.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Health</td>
<td>7.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Specific Learning Disabilities</td>
<td>9.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sensory Deafblind</td>
<td>6.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Full Inclusion</td>
<td>- 1.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Emotional</td>
<td>- 1.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Health</td>
<td>- 7.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Specific Learning Disabilities</td>
<td>- 9.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sensory Deafblind</td>
<td>- 3.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Substantially Separate</td>
<td>Full Inclusion: - 3.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Emotional</td>
<td>- 2.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Health</td>
<td>- 0.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Specific Learning Disabilities</td>
<td>- 0.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sensory Deafblind</td>
<td>- 2.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Separate Schools, Residential Facilities, or Homebound/Hospital</td>
<td>Full Inclusion: - 1.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Emotional</td>
<td>- 3.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Health</td>
<td>- 0.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Specific Learning Disabilities</td>
<td>0.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sensory Deafblind</td>
<td>- 1.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The following chart illustrates the change in percentage points in separate schools, residential facilities, or homebound/hospital placements for all disability categories from FFY 2005 through FFY 2009:
Changes in Separate Schools, Residential Facilities, or Homebound/Hospital Placements
FFY 2005 - FFY 2009

The disability categories with the largest percentage point decreases in separate schools, residential facilities, or homebound/hospital placements from FFY 2005 to FFY 2009 were emotional (3.8 percentage point decrease), sensory/hard-of-hearing, and sensory/deafblind (both with a 1.0 percentage point decrease). The categories with the largest percentage point increases in placement in separate schools, residential facilities, or homebound/hospital placements in this same period were multiple disabilities (1.9 percentage point increase) and intellectual (1.2 percentage point increase).

Improvement Activities

In FFY 2009, many of MASSDE’s activities focused on issues pertaining to educational environment. The effect of these activities is demonstrated by the continued and sustained increase in the rate of full inclusion for students with disabilities. Coordination of efforts and initiatives by the MASSDE Special Education Planning and Policy Development Office (SEPP) to meet the needs of students with disabilities and their educators has had a positive effect on MASSDE’s progress in meeting targets in Indicator 5 and other indicator areas.

Among other initiatives, SEPP staff is participating in discussions and intra-agency program development in cooperation with the following offices in MASSDE (see Appendix A for description of specific activities):

- School and District Accountability and Assistance
- Literacy
- Curriculum and Instruction
- Learning Support Services
- Student Support, Career, and Education Services
- Student Assessment
- English Language Acquisition and Academic Achievement
- Program Quality Assurance
Massachusetts

- Educator Policy, Preparation, and Licensure

MASSDE also encouraged schools to celebrate Inclusive Schools Week™, an initiative that highlights and celebrates the progress our schools have made in providing a supportive and quality education to all students, particularly those who have disabilities and those from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds. This initiative provides an important opportunity for educators, students, and parents to discuss ways to ensure that their schools continue to improve their ability to educate successfully all students and youth. To promote awareness of this initiative, MASSDE encourages districts to highlight the accomplishments of students, families, school personnel, and community members in promoting inclusive education for all students.

The following FFY 2009 improvement activities directly affect LRE and other indicator areas (see Appendix A for more information):

- Through the Comprehensive System of Personnel Development (CSPD) Training Project, MASSDE offers online training modules and face-to-face training to Massachusetts educators in a variety of topics. There are three training modules that provide content designed to provide resources to help educators and IEP Teams make appropriate placement decisions and to facilitate student inclusion: The Massachusetts IEP Process, A Principal's Role and Special Education in Massachusetts, Is Special Education the Right Service?, and The Massachusetts Transition Planning Chart and Effective Transition Planning.

- The Massachusetts FOCUS Academy (MFA) provides online, graduate level coursework to middle and high school educators across the state. Of the content areas offered in FFY 2009, universal design in learning (UDL), Positive Behavioral Supports, Differentiated Instruction, and Collaborative Teaching Model will have the greatest impact on Indicator 5. The courses help educators gain a better understanding of how disability affects student learning and provides them with improved skills in the areas of curriculum design, instruction, and assistive technology. This knowledge and skill-base better enable educators to address individual student needs in the LRE.

- In partnership with the Central Massachusetts Communities of Care (CMCC) Positive Behavioral Interventions (PBIS) Grant, MASSDE provided grant funds to support districts in Worcester County with developing and implementing Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports (PBIS), and with developing “wrap-around” mental health services and supports. One of the priorities of the school district-CMCC partnership is to provide professional development and onsite assistance for PBIS. By increasing the use of PBIS, students with behavioral and/or mental health concerns are more likely to receive the supports needed to participate in less restrictive environments.

- Special Education Professional Development Summer Institutes were sponsored by the MASSDE in partnership with school districts, educational collaboratives, institutions of higher education, and professional associations. The Institutes that directly affect Indicator 5 are designed to support districts’ efforts to ensure students are educated in the most appropriate, least restrictive environment for their educational needs. Courses included in the FFY 2009 Summer Institutes were: Managing Behavior in an Inclusive Classroom; Occupational Therapy Services in Educational Settings; Strategies for Students with Sensory Processing Disorders in Inclusive School Settings; Improving Spoken and Written Language: From Research to Practice; Meeting the Academic and Non-Academic Needs of Students with Asperger Syndrome; Mathematics and Science Content Vocabulary for Educators of the Deaf; and Promoting Access to Learning.

- The Special Education Leadership Academies and Seminars for special education administrators offered activities focused on instructional program design and improvement and access to the general education curriculum based on the Massachusetts Curriculum Frameworks.
In order to facilitate access of students with disabilities to the general education curriculum in the LRE, MASSDE funded the **Secondary School Reading Grant**. Approaches in the grant program include involvement and training for all professional and paraprofessional staff, reading across content areas, multiple targeted intervention programs for struggling readers, adequate time for reading instruction, assessment that drives instruction, a variety of flexible grouping patterns, and leadership structures that provide ongoing support and guidance. Topics discussed included: *Creating a School-wide Approach to Improving Reading*; *Assessing Literacy Needs*; *Vocabulary Development*; *Improving Comprehension*; *Motivation*; *Helping the Struggling Adolescent Reader*; *Content Area Literacy*; and *Effective Writing Instruction*.

**Collaboration between MASSDE Curriculum and Instruction Mathematics Office and Special Education Planning and Policy Development Office (SEPP)** was initiated in FFY 2008 and continued into FFY 2009. The MA Urban Math Liaisons network (Mathematics directors who provide guidance and support around Mathematics in Massachusetts public schools) identified the need to better support students with disabilities in Mathematics as a critical priority in the urban districts. In response to this need, the Math Specialist Support meetings were dedicated to developing a district level collaboration between special educators and Mathematics specialists. This will directly affect the participation of students with disabilities in the LRE.

MASSDE has a longstanding **Collaboration with Federation for Children with Special Needs (FCSN)**, which is the Parent Training and Information Center that is federally funded to provide free information, support, technical assistance, and workshops to Massachusetts families who have children with disabilities. This year topics that relate to LRE included: *Parent’s Rights*; *IEPs*; and *Understanding My Child’s Learning Style*.

The **Community/Residential Education Project** was developed through an interagency agreement between MASSDE and the Massachusetts Department of Developmental Services (MDDS). This project supports less restrictive, more cost effective residential options, special education services, and community based supports.

The **District and School Accountability and Assistance Office** within the MASSDE’s Center for School and District Accountability reviews districts, with emphasis on how district systems and practices affect each of four groups of students: students with disabilities, English language learners, low-income students, and students who are members of racial minorities.

**District and School Assistance Centers (DSACs)** – MASSDE has opened six regionally-based DSACs to help identified districts and their schools access and use professional development and targeted assistance to improve instruction and raise achievement for all students. MFA courses (see above) have been integrated into the menu of professional development options available to districts.

The **Inclusive Concurrent Enrollment Partnership Programs for Students with Disabilities (ICE)** provides funding to establish and sustain partnerships between Massachusetts public high schools and public institutions of higher education to support students with severe disabilities, aged 18-22, who have not been able to earn a competency determination and do not have typical high school prerequisites, to enroll in post-secondary credit and non-credit classes with their non-disabled peers.

The revision of the “**Ten Step Guide for Comprehensive Educational Assessment of Students with Visual Impairments**” is continuing. This resource will include a new section describing the “hidden” characteristics of a vision loss that affect academic and social factors. Understanding these characteristics will enable non-vision specialists to facilitate meaningful inclusion and participation of students with visual impairments throughout the school day.

The purpose of the **Sign Language Video Resource Library** project is to develop Mathematics and science/technology vocabulary reference tools that educational interpreters and teachers of
students who are deaf or hard-of-hearing may incorporate into their instruction. This will support
the education of students in the LRE.

- The **Special Education Program Improvement Grants - Fund Code 249** offers funding to
  approved private special education schools for professional development activities that help
  improve the capacity of educators to meet the diverse needs of students with disabilities. Topics
  for professional development under the three priority areas for the FFY 2009 grant included 1) Educator Quality and Effectiveness: Induction, Mentoring, and Retention; 2) Supporting Schools and Students: Curriculum Development, Instructional Practices, and Classroom Assessment; and 3) College and Career Readiness: Secondary Transition Planning. The three priorities will enable educators to provide quality instruction and responsive learning environments, thus allowing students with disabilities to access more inclusive environments.

- **Preschool to Grade 3 Curriculum, Instruction, and Assessment Alignment Project (Fund Code 264)** provided funding to increase districts’ capacities to improve the quality of education and inclusion of children with disabilities through the alignment and coordination of curriculum, instruction, and assessment from preschool to grade 3. Planning grantees researched, discussed, and documented their strategies, training, and progress within and/or across the age span with a focus on how students with disabilities access the general curriculum. Participating districts explored the alignment of curriculum, instruction, and assessment in inclusive classrooms; identified best practices to support all students along the preschool to grade 3 continuum; and prioritized areas of strength and needed improvement.

The following activities included a focus on promoting inclusive practices and contributed to the state’s continued success for Indicator 5:

- American Recovery and Reinvestment Act: Saving and Creating Jobs and Reforming Education (ARRA) – IDEA
- Collaboration with Stakeholders
- National Association of State Directors of Special Education (NASDSE) Satellite Series
- Special Education Website
- Massachusetts Task Force on Behavioral Health and Public Schools
- Federal School Turnaround Grants
- Closing the Achievement Gap Legislation

More information about these initiatives is available in Appendix A.

MASSDE has continued to report school age LRE data publicly. This information, which is currently
being updated, is available at [http://profiles.doe.mass.edu/state_report/special_ed.aspx](http://profiles.doe.mass.edu/state_report/special_ed.aspx)

MASSDE will continue to focus its efforts on improving outcomes for students with IEPs, and looks
forward to reporting the results of these efforts in the FFY 2010 APR.

**Revisions, with Justification, to Proposed Targets / Improvement Activities / Timelines / Resources for FFY 2009 (2009-2010):**

Targets, improvement activities, timelines, and resources for Indicator 5 have been amended in the
Massachusetts Part B State Performance Plan (MA SPP). They include targets for FFY 2011 and FFY
2012 that were developed in consultation with the Massachusetts Statewide Special Education Steering Committee. Please see the Indicator 5 MA SPP for more information.
Overview of the Annual Performance Report Development:

Monitoring Priority: FAPE in the LRE

Indicator 6: Percent of children aged 3 through 5 with IEPs attending a:

A. Regular early childhood program and receiving the majority of special education and related services in the regular early childhood program; and
B. Separate special education class, separate school or residential facility.

(20 U.S.C. 1416(a)(3)(A))

Measurement:

A. Percent = \[\frac{(# \text{ of children aged 3 through 5 with IEPs attending a regular early childhood program and receiving the majority of special education and related services in the regular early childhood program})}{(total \ # \text{ of children aged 3 through 5 with IEPs})}\] times 100.
B. Percent = \[\frac{(# \text{ of children aged 3 through 5 with IEPs attending a separate special education class, separate school or residential facility})}{(total \ # \text{ of children aged 3 through 5 with IEPs})}\] times 100.

Note: States are not required to report on Indicator 6 in the Part B Annual Performance Report for FFY 2009.

As required by the Office of Special Education Programs (OSEP), in the FFY 2010 submission, due February 1, 2012, MASSDE will establish a new baseline, targets, and, as needed, improvement activities for Indicator 6 using 2011 data. Please note that MASSDE is unable to use 2010-2011 data as necessary data system changes will not be in place until September 2011. However, MASSDE will have data and information gathered in October 2011 to use for the FFY 2010 submission, due February 1, 2012.
Overview of the Annual Performance Report Development:

Monitoring Priority: FAPE in the LRE

Indicator 7: Percent of preschool children aged 3 through 5 with IEPs who demonstrate improved:

A. Positive social-emotional skills (including social relationships);
B. Acquisition and use of knowledge and skills (including early language/communication and early literacy); and
C. Use of appropriate behaviors to meet their needs.

(20 U.S.C. 1416 (a)(3)(A))

Measurement:
Outcomes:
A. Positive social-emotional skills (including social relationships);
B. Acquisition and use of knowledge and skills (including early language/communication and early literacy); and
C. Use of appropriate behaviors to meet their needs.

Progress categories for A, B and C:

a. Percent of preschool children who did not improve functioning = [(# of preschool children who did not improve functioning) divided by (# of preschool children with IEPs assessed)] times 100.

b. Percent of preschool children who improved functioning but not sufficient to move nearer to functioning comparable to same-aged peers = [(# of preschool children who improved functioning but not sufficient to move nearer to functioning comparable to same-aged peers) divided by (# of preschool children with IEPs assessed)] times 100.

c. Percent of preschool children who improved functioning to a level nearer to same-aged peers but did not reach it = [(# of preschool children who improved functioning to a level nearer to same-aged peers but did not reach it) divided by (# of preschool children with IEPs assessed)] times 100.

d. Percent of preschool children who improved functioning to reach a level comparable to same-aged peers = [(# of preschool children who improved functioning to reach a level comparable to same-aged peers) divided by (# of preschool children with IEPs assessed)] times 100.

e. Percent of preschool children who maintained functioning at a level comparable to same-aged peers = [(# of preschool children who maintained functioning at a level comparable to same-aged peers) divided by (# of preschool children with IEPs assessed)] times 100.

Summary Statements for Each of the Three Outcomes (use for FFY 2008-2009 reporting):

Summary Statement 1: Of those preschool children who entered the preschool program below age expectations in each Outcome, the percent who substantially increased their rate of growth by the time they turned 6 years of age or exited the program.

Measurement for Summary Statement 1: Percent = # of preschool children reported in progress category (c) plus # of preschool children reported in category (d) divided by [# of preschool children reported in progress category (a) plus # of preschool children reported in progress category (b) plus # of preschool children reported in progress category (c) plus # of preschool children reported in progress category (d)] times 100.

Summary Statement 2: The percent of preschool children who were functioning within age expectations in each Outcome by the time they turned 6 years of age or exited the program.

Measurement for Summary Statement 2: Percent = # of preschool children reported in progress category (d) plus [# of preschool children reported in progress category (e)] divided by the total # of preschool children reported in progress categories (a) + (b) + (c) + (d) + (e]) times 100.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>FFY</th>
<th>Measurable and Rigorous Target</th>
<th>Outcome A</th>
<th>Outcome B</th>
<th>Outcome C</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2009 (2009-2010)</td>
<td></td>
<td>Summary Statement 1 67%</td>
<td>Summary Statement 1 65.5%</td>
<td>Summary Statement 1 68.25%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Summary Statement 2 51.5%</td>
<td>Summary Statement 2 53.5%</td>
<td>Summary Statement 2 62.25%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Actual data FFY 2009</td>
<td></td>
<td>Summary Statement 1 81.6%</td>
<td>Summary Statement 1 82.4%</td>
<td>Summary Statement 1 82.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Summary Statement 2 52.2%</td>
<td>Summary Statement 2 55.3%</td>
<td>Summary Statement 2 64.8%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Actual Target Data for FFY 2009:**

**Outcome A – Positive social-emotional skills: Progress categories**

(a): preschool children who did not improve functioning – 23 (1.4%)
(b): preschool children who improved functioning but not sufficient to move nearer to functioning comparable to same-aged peers – 231 (13.8%)
(c): preschool children who improved functioning to a level nearer to same-aged peers but did not reach it – 544 (32.6%)
(d): preschool children who improved functioning to reach a level comparable to same-aged peers – 582 (34.8%)
(e): preschool children who maintained functioning at a level comparable to same-aged peers – 291 (17.4%)

Summary Statement 1: \[
\frac{544+582}{23+231+544+582} \times 100 = 81.6\%
\]

Summary Statement 2: \[
\frac{582+291}{23+231+544+582+291} \times 100 = 52.2\%
\]

**Outcome B – Acquisition and use of knowledge and skills: Progress categories**

(a): preschool children who did not improve functioning – 20 (1.2%)
(b): preschool children who improved functioning but not sufficient to move nearer to functioning comparable to same-aged peers – 215 (12.9%)
(c): preschool children who improved functioning to a level nearer to same-aged peers but did not reach it – 513 (30.7%)
(d): preschool children who improved functioning to reach a level comparable to same-aged peers – 586 (35.0%)
(e): preschool children who maintained functioning at a level comparable to same-aged peers – 338 (20.2%)

Summary Statement 1: \[
\frac{513+586}{20+215+513+586} \times 100 = 82.4\%
\]

Summary Statement 2: \[
\frac{586+338}{20+215+513+586+338} \times 100 = 55.3\%
\]

**Outcome C – Use of appropriate behaviors to meet their needs: Progress categories**

(a): preschool children who did not improve functioning – 18 (1.1%)
(b): preschool children who improved functioning but not sufficient to move nearer to functioning comparable to same-aged peers – 188 (11.3%)
(c): preschool children who improved functioning to a level nearer to same-aged peers but did not reach it – 380 (22.8%)
(d): preschool children who improved functioning to reach a level comparable to same-aged peers – 611 (36.7%)
(e): preschool children who maintained functioning at a level comparable to same-aged peers – 470 (28.2%)

Summary Statement 1: \[
\frac{380+611}{18+188+380+611} \times 100 = 82.8\%
\]

Summary Statement 2: \[
\frac{611+470}{18+188+380+611+470} \times 100 = 64.8\%
\]
In interpreting the results of the progress categories and the summary statements, MASSDE defines “comparable to same aged peers” as meeting a 6 or a 7 on the Child Outcomes Summary Form (COSF). MASSDE provided resources to districts related to child development and what is age appropriate for a 3, 4, or 5 year within these three developmental domains in an effort to ensure that ratings given on the COSF were valid.

**Discussion of Improvement Activities Completed and Explanation of Progress or Slippage that occurred for FFY 2009 (2009-2010):**

**Explanation of Progress or Slippage**

In FFY 2009, Massachusetts improved performance and exceeded targets set through FFY 2010 in the FFY 2008 APR for Indicator 7 in the each of the six measurement areas. Massachusetts experienced significant progress in Summary Statement 1 for each of the three outcome areas measuring the percentage of children who began early childhood special education below age expectations in the developmental domain and who, at exit from early childhood special education, demonstrated substantial progress in development of skills and behaviors that are comparable to their same age peers. The FFY 2009 results for Summary Statement 1 were 14.6 percentage points over the baseline for Outcome A; 16.9 percentage points over baseline for Outcome B; and 14.55 percentage points over baseline for Outcome C. In addition, the percentage of children exiting early childhood special education demonstrating age appropriate skills and behaviors (Summary Statement 2) exceeded original targets set for FFY 2010.

MASSDE attributes this progress, in part, to the cohort model and the specific circumstances of the children who exited early childhood special education in FFY 2009. Different from previous years, the exiting FFY 2009 cohort included a greater percentage of children with a longer period of time between entry and exit assessments. This allowed MASSDE to track their progress for two to three years, rather than one to two years in earlier cohorts. The results underscore the significant development that occurs in young children over an extended period of time.

As a result of exceeding FFY 2010 targets in the FFY 2009 reporting year, MASSDE has revised its FFY 2010 targets, and set rigorous targets for the extended reporting period, FFY 2011 and FFY 2012. Please see the Indicator 7 MA SPP for more information.

**Improvement Activities**

MASSDE, in collaboration with the Massachusetts Department of Early Education and Care (MEEC), completed several improvement activities during FFY 2009 to support the work of Indicator 7.

- **Professional development on the Child Outcomes Summary Form and Indicator 7 data collection activities** – All districts in Cycle II FFY 2010 cohort were trained on Indicator 7. Training includes a review of the data collection activities as well as how to use the Child Outcomes Summary Form (COSF). Resources related to child development, including the Early Child Outcomes Center website, were shared with the districts for use in implementing their local systems of data collection for Indicator 7.

- **Ongoing technical assistance and support** – Districts are provided with ongoing technical assistance and support in the collection of entry data and the collection of progress/exit data, and uses of those data.

- **Indicator 7 data analysis** – MASSDE is working with staff from our Office of Special Projects, Research and Evaluation (OSPRE) to conduct a more in-depth analysis of Indicator 7 data. The analysis includes a review of the length of time between entry and exit assessments correlated to their progress, and an analysis of the extent to which children make progress as measured against various demographic variables, including but not limited to: disability code, LRE setting, intensity of need, ethnicity, language, and gender.
Massachusetts

- **Early Childhood Special Education Training Series on Behavioral Health and Children with Disabilities and on Including Young Children on the Autism Spectrum** – MASSDE and MEEC co-sponsored two training series in FFY 2009 for public preschool and kindergarten staff and other early childhood professionals working in programs that serve young students with disabilities. Districts were encouraged to send teams of both public school and community-based representatives. Each series offered training to strengthen the knowledge and skills of administrators, teachers and paraprofessionals. Teams from 31 school districts (120 staff members) participated in the first session that focused on issues of including young children with a diagnosis along the Autism Spectrum. The second focused on issues related to behavioral health in order to create meaningful inclusive opportunities for children with disabilities; 102 participants from 24 districts attended.

The training series addressed issues regarding assessment of young children with disabilities, including information and strategies on how to use assessment data to support instructional modifications and delivery of the curriculum. The programs focused on ways to maximize the progress children make in developing of age appropriate skills and behaviors across developmental domains by providing children with high quality early childhood environments and instruction.

- **Preschool to Grade 3 Curriculum, Instruction, and Assessment Alignment Project** - The purpose of this three–year grant program from MASSDE is to identify and support strategies and resources that increase the capacity of districts to improve the quality of education and inclusion of children with disabilities by aligning and coordinating curriculum, instruction, and assessment from preschool to grade 3. As grantees, school district teams will be able to research, discuss, and document their strategies, training, and progress within and/or across the age span with a special focus on how students with disabilities access the general curriculum. The teams bring together early childhood educators, elementary school staff, special education professionals, administrators, and parents to explore the alignment of curriculum, instruction, and assessment in inclusive classrooms; identify best practices to support all students along the preschool to grade 3 continuum; and prioritize areas of strength and needed improvement.

In FFY 2009, 52% of participating grantees implemented activities to improve the percent of preschool children aged 3-5 who demonstrate positive social-emotional skills, use of knowledge or skills and use of appropriate behavior to meet their needs. In addition, in terms of assessment, 11 of the 44 districts indentified assessment as one of their top three priorities. In terms of instructional practices (e.g., tiered instruction, differentiated instruction), 21 of the districts addressed this as a priority. MASSDE believes the work of the Project has had a direct effect on the progress made in Indicator 7, and will continue to do so. The improvement of assessment practices, the ability to look at the quality of instruction for children with disabilities, and the opportunity to address alignment across the age span maximizes children’s growth and learning.

- **Closing the Early Literacy Gap for Students with Disabilities** - The purpose of this competitive grant opportunity from MASSDE is to support the development of strategic literacy action plans to enhance and better align educational systems, curriculum, and instructional practices across public preschool and/or kindergarten programs, Head Start, and community-based early childhood education programs. Implementation of these strategic action plans will help to ensure that all programs serving students with disabilities, aged 3-5, are effective, engaging, developmentally appropriate, and designed to create seamless transitions across environments and into the next phase of the student’s education. District study teams assess current language and literacy strategies and practices, literacy intervention and differentiated strategies, and ways to use information from students’ Individualized Education Programs to support language and literacy across the curriculum and into the life of the school.

Similar to the preschool to grade 3 project and the professional development series, this project was designed with the goal of improving the progress that children with disabilities make in developing their early literacy skills. This has a specific connection to Outcome 2 of Indicator 7. In FFY 2009, 93% of grantees implemented activities to improve the percent of preschool children
aged 3 to 5 who demonstrate positive social-emotional skills, use of knowledge or skills and use of appropriate behavior to meet their needs.

Revisions, with Justification, to Proposed Targets / Improvement Activities / Timelines / Resources for FFY 2009 (2009-2010):

Based on its review of the FFY 2009 data, MASSDE revised targets for FFY 2010 in the MA SPP, and set aggressive targets for the extended SPP period (FFY 2011 and FFY 2012) in consultation with the Massachusetts Statewide Special Education Steering Committee. MASSDE also updated improvement activities, timelines, and resources for this period. Please see the MA SPP for Indicator 7 for more information.
Overview of the Annual Performance Report Development:

**Monitoring Priority: FAPE in the LRE**

**Indicator 8:** Percent of parents with a child receiving special education services who report that schools facilitated parent involvement as a means of improving services and results for children with disabilities.

(20 U.S.C. 1416(a)(3)(A))

**Measurement:** Percent = [(# of respondent parents who report schools facilitated parent involvement as a means of improving services and results for children with disabilities) divided by the (total # of respondent parents of children with disabilities)] times 100.

During an earlier reporting period, MASSDE contacted OSEP for clarification about the requirement that every district report at least once during the SPP period for Indicator 8. MASSDE received approval from OSEP via written correspondence dated July 8, 2008, to focus its efforts on improvement once MASSDE had satisfied this district reporting requirement during the SPP cycle. Therefore, in FFY 2009 MASSDE used this opportunity to redesign the Indicator 8 survey instrument to improve the quality and validity of Indicator 8 data in subsequent reporting years. In this report, MASSDE reviews the state data collection activities and results for the previous four years, and describes the intensive improvement activities that occurred during FFY 2009 to improve statewide performance on Indicator 8.

Following careful analysis of data collected from all districts in the Commonwealth between FFY 2005 and FFY 2008, MASSDE directed its efforts in FFY 2009 on activities designed to improve the utility of information collected in the parent survey, and revision of data collection procedures and survey instruments. During this year, MASSDE developed an improved online survey that will be used for data collection from FFY 2010 through FFY 2012.

Following is a review of the results of data collection from each district in the Commonwealth, and a description of FFY 2009 activities.

### Table 1 – Actual Target Data for FFY 2005 - 2008

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>FFY</th>
<th># of Surveys Issued</th>
<th># of Surveys Returned</th>
<th>% of Surveys Returned</th>
<th># of Surveys Meeting Standard*</th>
<th>% of Surveys Meeting Standard</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2005</td>
<td>37,086</td>
<td>6,076</td>
<td>16.9%</td>
<td>4,618</td>
<td>76.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2006</td>
<td>40,476</td>
<td>6,872</td>
<td>17.0%</td>
<td>5,282</td>
<td>77.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2007</td>
<td>40,307</td>
<td>6,360</td>
<td>15.8%</td>
<td>4,926</td>
<td>77.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2008</td>
<td>41,192</td>
<td>7,190</td>
<td>17.5%</td>
<td>5,555</td>
<td>77.3%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*The standard adopted to demonstrate “that schools facilitated parent involvement as a means of improving services and results for students with disabilities” requires the survey respondent to agree, strongly agree, or very strongly agree on at least 50% of the survey items (13 of 25).

**Discussion of Improvement Activities Completed and Explanation of Progress or Slippage that occurred for FFY 2009 (2009-2010):**

In order to collect data for this indicator, MASSDE used the “School's Efforts to Partner with Parents” scale from the Part B survey instrument developed by the National Center for Special Education Accountability Monitoring (NCSEAM). In FFY 2005 – FFY 2008, this 25-item survey was mailed to every parent of a student with an IEP in grades kindergarten and above in a cohort of districts across Massachusetts. Over the four year data collection period, parents in all districts in the Commonwealth were surveyed. More information on the MASSDE cohort model approved by OSEP is available at: [http://www.doe.mass.edu/sped/spp/datacollection.html](http://www.doe.mass.edu/sped/spp/datacollection.html). See Appendix B for a copy of the Massachusetts Parent Involvement Survey used in FFY 2005 - FFY 2008. MASSDE’s additional review of the respondent data by geography, race/ethnicity, and disability category determined that these data were representative of the state as a whole.

Since FFY 2005, MASSDE has consistently exceeded its measurable and rigorous targets for Indicator 8, The percent of parents that reported schools facilitate their involvement as a means of improving services and results for students with disabilities has remained relatively stable for this period, increasing less than a percentage point each year, from 76% in FFY 2005, to 77.3% in FFY 2008, with a high of 77.5% in FFY 2007. See Table 1 above.

Of the total surveys issued in three languages – English, Spanish, and Portuguese – the overall return rates for this period were relatively stable, also, as shown in Table 2 below.

**Table 2 – Return Rates for Surveys Issued by Language**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>English</td>
<td>17.1%</td>
<td>17.7%</td>
<td>16.6%</td>
<td>17.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spanish</td>
<td>5.2%</td>
<td>8.1%</td>
<td>7.7%</td>
<td>5.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Portuguese</td>
<td>4.5%</td>
<td>4.0%</td>
<td>6.4%</td>
<td>4.5%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

While 17.1% overall is considered statistically representative for the state, such a return rate at the local level rarely yielded sufficient numbers of parents responding to allow the results to be readily usable by districts to improve district partnership activities. Over the four year reporting period, district response rates ranged from less than 10% to a high of 39%, with an average response rate of 18.1%. The survey results raised more question for local districts and parents than provided answers and direction about
parent involvement activities, and did not provide them with clear direction in identifying ways to improve partnerships with parents on the local level. The MASSDE Indicator 8 interest group was unanimous in wanting to consider survey re-design rather than continue to survey in the same manner as had been done for the past four years.

**Improvement Activities**

**Data Analysis and Development of a Survey Instrument and Data Collection Activities**

In FFY 2009, MASSDE took the opportunity, with approval from OSEP, to improve its work in Indicator 8 based on our review of the longitudinal statewide results.

MASSDE also requested and received feedback from districts about the data collection process for Indicator 8 that revealed additional challenges with Indicator 8. Districts reported that their ability to use the data to improve parent involvement and student outcomes was limited by MASSDE’s data collection and analysis activities. During the collection period, MASSDE contracted with an outside vendor for survey distribution and analysis in an effort to reduce the administrative burden of data collection on the districts. As a result, however, districts reported that they felt little connection or “buy-in” to the parent survey and its results because of their lack of involvement in data collection and analysis.

Additionally, MASSDE reviewed feedback from parents who participated in the survey. Parents perceived that the intent of the survey was to measure a school district’s compliance with special education regulations and/or the parent’s satisfaction with the district. Although a written notice and instructions explained the survey’s purpose and intent, the language of several questions was equivocal, and resulted in parents having the impression that the survey was a tool for measuring their satisfaction with the district’s practice. For example, one item read: *At the IEP meeting, we discussed how my child would participate in statewide assessments,* and another registered parental feedback on the statement *My child’s evaluation is written in terms I understand.* These statements are indicative of activities that are required to occur during IEP meetings and the evaluation process rather than those activities that schools engage in to facilitate parent involvement as a means of improving services and results for students with disabilities, the focus of Indicator 8.

Given the concerns with the survey instrument and the need to support use of the results to improve parental involvement, in early 2010 MASSDE contracted with ICF/Macro to rewrite the survey instrument and to develop an online survey tool to increase the reliability of data and the district response rates. As part of this process, MASSDE is working to increase direct participation by districts in data collection by having districts provide support and encouragement to parents to respond to the survey online.

MASSDE’s newly developed survey will continue to use items from the NCSEAM item bank for 3-21 year olds, but will expand the focus of the survey to parental engagement generally, while maintaining a special focus on issues affecting students with disabilities. This will greatly improve the ability of MASSDE and districts to use the information collected to improve parental engagement. MASSDE will invite all parents in the district to participate in the survey, and will continue to make the survey available in the three most prevalent languages in the state - English, Spanish, and Portuguese. To access the survey online, parents will receive a confidential password, and will complete one survey for each child in their family. The initial survey items focus on demographic information, e.g., school of attendance, grade level, race/ethnicity (aligned with the federal race/ethnicity categories), and primary language spoken in the home. Other items are rated according to a six-point likert scale, ranging from "Very Strongly Agree" to "Very Strongly Disagree." Some items are appropriate for parents of students with and without disabilities, and focus on schools’ efforts regarding parent participation, and teacher and administrator interaction with parents. Parents of students with disabilities whose children receive services through an IEP are directed to another part of the survey that focuses on issues such as transition practices, and family training and engagement practices. Other questions are designed to focus on issues relevant to different age groups. For example, parents of children in preschool and elementary school are directed to questions about Early Childhood transitions, including from Part C to B, preschool to kindergarten, and questions related to training and services offered to families of students with disabilities. Additional questions about post-secondary transition practices and preparation, and questions about trainings and services for families, are directed to parents of students in middle school and high school.
Data collected in a statewide database will be disaggregated in multiple ways. This will allow for more direct data analysis based on factors such as grade level and disability category, and will allow MASSDE and districts to refine and target improvement activities focused on engaging parents as a means for improving outcomes for students with disabilities.

This redesign and refocus on the participation of all parents allows for whole school and district participation, thereby strengthening the districts’ connection to the survey and its results. Also, the new survey content aligns with several MASSDE initiatives related to family engagement, and promotes additional inter-agency collaboration to improve districts efforts to facilitate parent involvement as a means of improving outcomes for students. Because input will be sought from all parents, MASSDE anticipates that districts will have an increased connection to the survey and its results. All of these efforts should result in an increased response rate, and more valid and reliable data for use in statewide and local programming.

Survey development has been an inter-agency and intra-agency initiative within MASSDE. Staff from the Special Education Planning and Policy (SEPP) office within MASSDE has met and collaborated with external stakeholders and internal offices, including the Office of Student Support Services, the Office of English Language Acquisition and Academic Achievement, Title 1, and Learning Support Services, to discuss potential barriers for various populations in accessing the survey and plans to help facilitate districts working with community partners to create access to computer terminals where parents can access the survey. Additionally, because the survey results will be applicable to various populations, in creating the survey instrument the contractor triangulated the NCSEAM questions for use with questions from the Teaching, Learning and Leading Survey (TeLS) from the New Teacher Center at the University of California at Santa Cruz, and with the Tripod Project Survey at Harvard University. The survey will be reviewed by MASSDE’s Office of Strategic Planning, Research, and Evaluation before being disseminated. MASSDE anticipates that it will be made available to districts for use in the spring of 2011.

As an incentive for district participation, MASSDE will offer a grant program to districts with a high return rate. Funds may be used to support districts in using the survey data to implement and/or expand parent engagement activities. Details about the grant program will be reported in the FFY 2010 APR for Indicator 8.

Additional Activities

MASSDE engaged in several other improvement activities in FFY 2009 that were designed to enable educators to facilitate parent involvement. These activities addressed multiple indicator areas. Please note that only the components that directly relate to Indicator 8 are included below. For more information about these activities, please see Appendix A.

- MASSDE provides a variety of online resources for parents and educators. The “Parent’s Rights in Special Education” online module (http://www.doe.mass.edu/sped/training.html) gives districts and Parent Advisory Councils materials to use in leading annual workshops on the state and federal special education laws and regulations. In addition, the “Parent Information” section of the MASSDE special education website (http://www.doe.mass.edu/sped/parents.html) offers a variety of resources for parents and educators, including the “Parent’s Guide to Special Education.” This technical assistance document, which was written in collaboration with the Federation for Children with Special Needs, the Massachusetts Parent Training and Information Center (PTI), continues to be used by parents and district personnel to provide information on the special education process to parents and schools.

- Through MASSDE’s federal State Personnel Development Grant, Massachusetts FOCUS Academy (MFA), two online courses in the area of family involvement were developed during FFY 2008. These courses are designed to equip educators with the knowledge and skills required to develop and strengthen collaborative partnerships with families of middle and high school students with disabilities, to assist students to successfully transition to adult life. The first course was offered in the fall of 2008 and the second course was offered in the spring of 2009. In
MASSDE has a long-standing Collaboration with the Federation for Children with Special Needs (FCSN), the federally-funded Parent Training and Information Center. This year’s jointly sponsored workshops for parents included sessions on Transition from Early Intervention to Special Education, Parent’s Rights, IEPs, The Massachusetts Comprehensive Assessment System (MCAS), Transition 101, and Understanding My Child’s Learning Style.

The purpose of the competitive grant opportunity titled Closing the Early Literacy Gap for Students with Disabilities (Fund Code 297) is to support the development of strategic literacy action plans to enhance and better align educational systems, curriculum, and instructional practices across public preschool and/or kindergarten programs, Head Start, and community-based early childhood education programs. The implementation of the strategic action plans will help to ensure that all programs serving students with disabilities, aged 3-5, are effective, engaging, developmentally appropriate, and designed to create seamless transitions across environments and into the next phase of the student’s education. Nearly half of the twenty-eight districts across the state that were awarded grants designed plans to implement activities to facilitate parent involvement as a way to improve results for students with disabilities. In the fall 2010, these districts had the opportunity to apply for further funding to assist in implementing their plans. MASSDE looks forward to reporting on the outcomes of this in the FFY 2010 SPP/APR.

Early Childhood Special Education Professional Development Series -- MASSDE and the Massachusetts Department of Early Education and Care (MEEC) co-sponsored two training series in FFY 2009 for public preschool and kindergarten staff as well as other early childhood professionals working in programs that serve young students with disabilities. Districts were encouraged to send teams of both public school and community-based representatives. The first series addressed issues of including young children with a diagnosis along the Autism Spectrum for 31 teams (120 participants). The second training series focused on issues related to behavioral health and addressing challenging behaviors in order to create more meaningful inclusive opportunities for children with disabilities. There were 102 participants from 24 district teams in attendance. Both series had a component that focused on facilitating parent involvement.

Preschool to Grade 3 Curriculum, Instruction, and Assessment Alignment Project (Fund Code 264) – The purpose of this three-year grant program is to identify and support strategies and resources that increase districts’ capacities to improve the quality of education and inclusion of children with disabilities through the alignment and coordination of curriculum, instruction, and assessment from preschool to grade 3. Planning grants were awarded for 26 districts Massachusetts placed in Level III and Level IV determinations that were not involved in FFY 2008. Four more districts awarded grants represented different geographic areas and had shown promising practices in the areas of interest. Implementation grants were made available to the 16 districts that did planning in FFY 2008, and represented districts with Level III and IV determinations as well as districts from different geographic areas that had demonstrated promising practices in the areas of interest. FFY 2010 will involve a final year of funding for Fund Code 264-B and reporting of best practices and outcomes to be disseminated statewide. In FFY 2009, 20% of districts awarded these funds implemented activities to facilitate parent involvement as a way to improve results for children with disabilities.

Numerous intra-agency activities focused on parent involvement contributed to the state’s continued success in meeting its target for Indicator 8. The MASSDE Special Education Planning and Policy Development Office (SEPP) works to ensure students with disabilities and their parents receive positive results from the following improvement activities:

- American Recovery and Reinvestment Act: Saving and Creating Jobs and Reforming Education (ARRA) – IDEA
- Curriculum, Instruction, and Assessment Summit
- Special Education Leadership Academies and Seminars
- Special Education Professional Development Institutes

For detailed information about the activities listed above, please see Appendix A.

MASSDE will continue to focus its efforts on improving parent involvement for students with IEPs, and looks forward to reporting on the results of these efforts in the FFY 2010 APR.

**Revisions, with Justification, to Proposed Targets / Improvement Activities / Timelines / Resources for FFY 2009 (2009-2010):**

Targets, improvement activities, timelines, and resources for Indicator 8 have been amended in the Massachusetts Part B State Performance Plan (MA SPP). They include targets for the extended SPP period, FFY 2011 and FFY 2012. These targets were developed in consultation with the Massachusetts Statewide Special Education Steering Committee. Please see the Indicator 8 MA SPP for more information.
Overview of the Annual Performance Report Development:

**Monitoring Priority: Disproportionality**

**Indicator 9:** Percent of districts with disproportionate representation of racial and ethnic groups in special education and related services that is the result of inappropriate identification.

(20 U.S.C. 1416(a)(3)(C))

**Measurement:**

\[
\text{Percent} = \frac{\text{(number of districts with disproportionate representation of racial and ethnic groups in special education and related services that is the result of inappropriate identification)}}{\text{(number of districts in the State)}} \times 100.
\]

**State’s definition of “disproportionate representation”:**

Massachusetts defines “disproportionate representation” using a calculation of weighted or alternate risk ratio and a review of the appropriateness of a district’s policies and procedures for identifying students as disabled.


The state uses a minimum cell size of 20 for each race/ethnic group in every district. In FFY 2009, 1 out of 392 districts were excluded from the numerator as a result of this requirement. All 392 districts were included in the denominator.

All districts identified by way of this quantitative analysis are then subject to a review of the appropriateness of their policies, practices, and procedures (PPPs) for special education eligibility determination and disability identification.

**Description of determination that disproportionate representation is due to inappropriate identification:**

A district identified using the measurement techniques described above submits its current PPPs to MASSDE where they are reviewed by a single analyst. If the committee concluded that the PPPs were inappropriate or otherwise inconsistent with federal and state regulations, and concludes that the PPPs likely caused the disproportionate representation at least to some degree, then a district is identified as having disproportionate representation due to inappropriate identification.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>FFY</th>
<th>Measurable and Rigorous Target</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2009 (2009-2010)</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Actual Target Data for FFY 2009 (2009-2010):
Districts with Disproportionate Representation of Racial and Ethnic Groups
That Was the Result of Inappropriate Identification

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Total Number of Districts</th>
<th>Number of Districts with Disproportionate Representation</th>
<th>Number of Districts with Disproportionate Representation of Racial and Ethnic Groups that was the Result of Inappropriate Identification</th>
<th>Percent of Districts</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>FFY 2009 (2009-2010)</td>
<td>392</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.0%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Discussion of Improvement Activities Completed and Explanation of Progress or Slippage that occurred for FFY 2009 (2009-2010):

Explanation of Progress or Slippage

Massachusetts used the October 1, 2009 enrollment and child count data to calculate disproportionality for the FFY 2009 Annual Performance Report (MA APR) submission for Indicator 9. Using the measurement criteria described above, MASSDE determined that 1 out of 392 districts met the data threshold for disproportionate over-representation of racial and ethnic groups in special education and related services and 0 out of 392 districts met the data threshold for disproportionate under-representation. Upon additional review of policies, practices, and procedures using the process described above, MASSDE determined that 0.0% of the districts had disproportionate representation of racial and ethnic groups that was due to inappropriate identification. In FFY 2009, MASSDE met its measurable and rigorous target for Indicator 9.

Improvement Activities

Over this past year, MASSDE sought technical assistance from the Northeast Regional Resource Center (NERRC) to engage in a process for refining the formula for calculating disproportionality. MASSDE submitted a proposal to OSEP that incorporated into the disproportionality calculation special consideration for the number of students who were initially evaluated and found eligible for special education services in a district other than the one in which they are currently enrolled. The proposal was not approved by OSEP prior to submitting this report, and therefore was not applied to this analysis.

In support of efforts to strengthen districts’ knowledge about disproportionality, MASSDE has complied relevant articles and research about disproportionality to be included in the forthcoming Massachusetts Online Resource Library. Available resources will include MASSDE’s Education Brief entitled Disproportionality: A Look at Special Education and Race in the Commonwealth, published in September 2008. (The brief is available at [http://www.doe.mass.edu/research/reports/Edbrief_final.doc](http://www.doe.mass.edu/research/reports/Edbrief_final.doc).) Resources will be updated as new information is available so that districts have access to the most up-to-date information and technical assistance resources. More information about this library will be available in the FFY 2010 APR.

Disproportionality information on the MASSDE’s public website is being updated to include FFY 2009 information (see [http://profiles.doe.mass.edu/state_report/special_ed.aspx](http://profiles.doe.mass.edu/state_report/special_ed.aspx)). Through this website a user can select a specific district to access data on Indicator 9.

Revisions, with Justification, to Proposed Targets / Improvement Activities / Timelines / Resources for FFY 2009 (2009-2010):

MASSDE has revised the MA Part B State Performance Plan (SPP) for Indicator 9 to include new targets for FFY 2011 and FFY 2012, and updated and added improvement activities for the current and extended reporting periods in consultation with stakeholders including the Massachusetts Statewide Special Education Steering Committee. See the MA Part B SPP for Indicator 9 for more information.
Overview of the Annual Performance Report Development:

**Monitoring Priority: Disproportionality**

**Indicator 10**: Percent of districts with disproportionate representation of racial and ethnic groups in specific disability categories that is the result of inappropriate identification.

(20 U.S.C. 1416(a)(3)(C))

**Measurement:**

Percent = [(# of districts with disproportionate representation of racial and ethnic groups in specific disability categories that is the result of inappropriate identification) divided by the (# of districts in the State)] times 100.

**State’s definition of “disproportionate representation”:**

Massachusetts defines “disproportionate representation” using a calculation of weighted or alternate risk ratio and a review of the appropriateness of a district’s policies and procedures for identifying students as disabled.

MASSDE calculates a weighted or alternate risk ratio for every school district in each of the six required disability categories (intellectual impairments, specific learning disabilities, emotional disturbance, speech/language impairments, other health impairments, autism) using the techniques described in Westat’s *Methods for Assessing Racial/Ethnic Disproportionality in Special Education* (http://www.idealdata.org/docs/Disproportionality%20Technical%20Assistance%20Guide.pdf). The state uses a minimum cell size of 10 for each racial/ethnic disability group in every district. Cells less than 10 are individually reviewed to see if data irregularities for specific racial and ethnic groups in these districts would suggest disproportionate representation due to inappropriate identification. Once the calculation is made for each district, the weighted risk ratios are compared to the two previous years’ weighted risk ratios. Districts are flagged if for 3 consecutive years, they exhibit a weighted risk ratio of 4.0 or greater for possible over-representation, and of .20 or less for possible under-representation.

All districts identified by way of this quantitative analysis are then subject to a review of the appropriateness of their policies, practices, and procedures (PPPs) for special education eligibility determination and disability identification.

**Description of determination that disproportionate representation is due to inappropriate identification:**

A district identified using the measurement techniques described above submits its current PPPs to MASSDE where they are reviewed by a single analyst. If the committee concluded that the PPPs were inappropriate or otherwise inconsistent with federal and state regulations, and concludes that the PPPs likely caused the disproportionate representation at least to some degree, then a district is identified as having disproportionate representation due to inappropriate identification.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>FFY</th>
<th>Measurable and Rigorous Target</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>2009</strong></td>
<td><strong>0%</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>(2009-2010)</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Actual Target Data for FFY 2009 (2009-2010):

Districts with Disproportionate Representation of Racial and Ethnic Groups in Specific Disability Categories That Was the Result of Inappropriate Identification

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Total Number of Districts</th>
<th>Number of Districts with Disproportionate Representation</th>
<th>Number of Districts with Disproportionate Representation of Racial and Ethnic Groups in Specific Disability Categories That Was the Result of Inappropriate Identification</th>
<th>Percent of Districts</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>FFY 2009</td>
<td>392</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.0%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Discussion of Improvement Activities Completed and Explanation of Progress or Slippage that occurred for FFY 2009:

Explanation of Progress or Slippage

Massachusetts used the October 1, 2009 enrollment and child count data to calculate disproportionality for the FFY 2009 Annual Performance Report (MA APR) submission for Indicator 10. In FFY 2009, 96 out of 392 districts were excluded from the numerator as a result of the minimum n size requirement. All 392 districts were included in the denominator. Using the measurement criteria established above, MASSDE determined that 15 districts met the data threshold for disproportionate representation of racial and ethnic groups in the six disability categories. Of these, 9 were identified for over-representation and 6 for under-representation. Upon additional review of policies, practices, and procedures using the process described above, MASSDE determined that 0.0% of the districts had disproportionate over- or under-representation of racial and ethnic groups in specific disability categories that was due to inappropriate identification. In FFY 2009, MASSDE met its measurable and rigorous target for Indicator 10.

Improvement Activities

Over this past year, MASSDE sought technical assistance from the Northeast Regional Resource Center (NERRC) to engage in a process for refining the formula for calculating disproportionality. MASSDE submitted a proposal to OSEP that incorporated into the disproportionality calculation special consideration for the number of students that were initially evaluated and found eligible for special education services in a district other than the one in which they are currently enrolled. The proposal was not approved by OSEP prior to submitting this report, and therefore was not applied to this analysis.

In support of efforts to strengthen districts’ knowledge about disproportionality, MASSDE has complied relevant articles and research about disproportionality to be included in the forthcoming Massachusetts Online Resource Library. Available resources include MASSDE’s Education Brief entitled *Disproportionality: A Look at Special Education and Race in the Commonwealth*, published in September 2008. (The brief is available at [http://www.doe.mass.edu/research/reports/Edbrief_final.doc](http://www.doe.mass.edu/research/reports/Edbrief_final.doc).) Resources will be updated as new information is available so that districts have access to the most up-to-date information and technical assistance resources. More information about this library will be available in the FFY 2010 APR.

Disproportionality information on the MASSDE’s public website is being updated to include FFY 2009 information (see [http://profiles.doe.mass.edu/state_report/special_ed.aspx](http://profiles.doe.mass.edu/state_report/special_ed.aspx)). Through this website, a user can select a specific district to access data on Indicator 10.

Revisions, with Justification, to Proposed Targets / Improvement Activities / Timelines / Resources for FFY 2009 (2009-2010):

MASSDE has revised the MA Part B State Performance Plan (MA SPP) for Indicator 10 to include new targets for FFY 2011 and FFY 2012, and has updated and added improvement activities for the current and extended reporting periods in consultation with stakeholders including the Massachusetts Statewide Special Education Steering Committee. See the Part B MA SPP for Indicator 10 for more information.
Overview of the Annual Performance Report Development:

**Monitoring Priority: Effective General Supervision Part B / Child Find**

**Indicator 11:** Percent of children who were evaluated within 60 days of receiving parental consent for initial evaluation or, if the State establishes a timeframe within which the evaluation must be conducted, within that timeframe.

(20 U.S.C. 1416(a)(3)(B))

**Measurement:**

a. # of children for whom parental consent to evaluate was received.

b. # of children whose evaluations were completed within 60 days (or State-established timeline).

Account for children included in a but not included in b. Indicate the range of days beyond the timeline when the evaluation was completed and any reasons for the delays.

Percent = [(b) divided by (a)] times 100.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>FFY</th>
<th>Measurable and Rigorous Target</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2009</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Actual Target Data for FFY 2009 (2009-2010):**

<p>| | |</p>
<table>
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<tr>
<th></th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>a.</td>
<td>Number of children for whom parental consent to evaluate was received</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b.</td>
<td>Number of children whose evaluations were completed within 60 days (or State-established timelines)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Percent of children with parental consent to evaluate, who were evaluated within 60 days (or State established-timeline)

Percent = [2657 divided by 2744] times 100.

The FFY 2009 result of 96.8% includes cases where the evaluation was completed within the state established timeline or cases in which the district had an acceptable reason for not meeting the timeline.

**Discussion of Improvement Activities Completed and Explanation of Progress or Slippage that Occurred for FFY 2009:**

- **Explanation of Progress or Slippage**

The FFY 2009 result of 96.8% includes cases where the evaluation was completed within the state established timeline or cases in which the district had an acceptable reason for not meeting the timeline.
Acceptable reasons for extending the timeline are those that are beyond the district’s control, including school cancellation due to weather, parent scheduling needs, and significant student absenteeism.

In order to obtain student level data, MASSDE required each district selected for this monitoring activity in FFY 2009 to collect information and report data on all initial evaluations conducted during October, November, and December, 2009. The MA SPP for this indicator provides additional information on OSEP’s approval of the cohort data collection for Indicator 11.

Since first reporting on Indicator 11, MASSDE has seen a rise in the percentage of students for whom initial evaluations were conducted within the state established timeline: FFY 2005 - 89%, FFY 2006 - 94%, FFY 2007 - 95%, and FFY 2008 - 98%. While this year’s data show a decrease of 1.2 percentage points over the FFY 2008 total, this is still 7.8 percentage points over the baseline established in FFY 2005. This slight decrease is attributable to the use of the cohort model and reflects reasonable variation between different cohorts without concerns of slippage. MASSDE remains committed to continued progress toward meeting the state’s measurable and rigorous target.

The data for the SPP period to date is represented in the graph below.

As described in Table 1 below, districts cited several reasons for inability to complete initial evaluations in a timely manner in the 90 cases where a district did not meet the state established timeline, and did not have an acceptable reason for extending it.

### Table 1: Percentage of Non Acceptable Reasons for Not Meeting Timelines

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Reason</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Insufficient staff availability to complete the evaluation on time</td>
<td>41%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(excessive caseload)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Delay due to district’s scheduling need</td>
<td>18%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Delay due to evaluator reports not received on time</td>
<td>21%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other reasons determined within the district’s control (e.g., staff member unavailable at the time of meeting)</td>
<td>8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Delay due to lack of qualified staff to complete the evaluation on time</td>
<td>12%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
In these cases, the most common reason for failure to meet state established timelines for evaluation was a delay due to staff not being available to complete the evaluation on time (i.e., excessive caseload). However, this dropped from 50% in FFY 2008 to 41% in FFY 2009 while the reason of delay due to lack of qualified staff increased from 4% to 12%. The increase in the lack of qualified staff can be attributed to districts struggling with limited resources during the recent economic downturn; however, MASSDE does not accept limited staffing resources as justification for noncompliance. The next most common reasons for delay were due to evaluator reports not being received on time and the district’s scheduling needs. MASSDE continues to work with school districts to ensure that extension of state established timelines is limited to cases only where there are acceptable extenuating circumstances.

Of the cases that did not meet the state established timeline, the average number of days beyond the Massachusetts 45-day timeline for evaluation and eligibility determination was 17 school working days. This is an increase in the average number of days delay that was reported in FFY 2008 (10 working days). MASSDE is working with school districts to help them recognize that staff availability and district resources are not appropriate reasons for extending evaluation timelines.

Six of the districts that submitted data in the FFY 2009 reporting period received a finding of noncompliance via a letter dated December 28, 2010. With this finding, MASSDE notified districts that they are required to complete corrective actions as soon as possible, but in no case more than one year from identification, consistent with the identification and verification of correction of noncompliance requirements in OSEP Memorandum O9-02. To date, MASSDE has verified through additional data collection that all of the districts have completed the required action (conducted individual initial evaluations for the affected students), though late, unless the students are no longer within the jurisdiction of the district. In order to demonstrate that the districts are correctly implementing the specific regulatory requirements of initial evaluation, MASSDE has instructed each district to submit subsequent, updated data to document their compliance. MASSDE will review the data and determine whether noncompliance has been corrected. MASSDE anticipates that this noncompliance will be verified as corrected within one year of identification, and will report on the results of these verification activities in the FFY 2010 APR for Indicator 11.

**Improvement Activities**

**Verification of Correction of Noncompliance Identified in FFY 2007**

The OSEP Part B FFY 2008 SPP/APR Letter and Response Table required MASSDE to report correction of the noncompliance in FFY 2007 and FFY 2008 regarding Indicator 11. In FFY 2007, five of 98 districts in the cohort group were determined to be noncompliant with state established timelines for evaluation. MASSDE required each district to take corrective actions in reviewing and revising policies, practices, or procedures that interfered with meeting timelines for initial evaluations and determinations of eligibility. Each district was required to document these actions and submit additional reports to MASSDE. MASSDE reviewed these reports and determined that the five districts made required corrections and amended practices as necessary in order to meet the specific regulatory requirements in 34 CFR § 300.301(c)(1). MASSDE also verified through communications about the corrective actions that the districts were implementing correctly all regulatory requirements. Four of the five districts made such corrections within the one year time frame and one district made such corrections, but not within the one year timeframe.

In response to the FFY2008 SPP/APR Letter and Response Table, MASSDE completed additional verification activities in accordance with OSEP Memorandum 09-02. MASSDE verified through additional data collection that the districts completed the required action (conducted individual initial evaluations for the affected students), though late, unless the students were no longer within the jurisdiction of the district. In addition, the districts were required to submit updated, subsequent data on initial evaluations to document compliance, from which MASSDE verified in writing to the districts that the districts were correctly implementing the specific regulatory requirements of 34 CFR §300.301(c)(1).
Verification of Correction of Noncompliance Identified in FFY 2008

In FFY 2008, two of 103 districts in the cohort group were determined to be noncompliant with state established timelines for evaluation. MASSDE required each district to take corrective actions to review and revise policies, practices, or procedures that interfered with meeting timelines for initial evaluations and determinations of eligibility. Each district submitted a corrective action report and subsequent data to demonstrate that the district had corrected each individual case of noncompliance, and that the district is correctly implementing the specific regulatory requirements. Through its review of these data, MASSDE confirmed that the district had conducted initial evaluations, although late, unless the child was no longer within the jurisdiction of the district. MASSDE also reviewed updated data and verified in writing to the districts that the districts are correctly implementing the regulatory requirements of 34 CFR § 300.1.301(c)(1). Verification procedures were consistent with OSEP Memorandum 09-02.

Additional Improvement Activities

During FFY 2009, MASSDE again focused activities on providing districts with additional resources to meet required timelines for conducting an initial evaluation to determine eligibility for special education services. MASSDE continued its work in developing self-assessment tools for use by districts in identifying barriers to meeting state established evaluation timelines. One tool focuses on the reasons for not meeting state established timelines, and the other helps districts to identify trends in personnel and professional disciplines (e.g., speech and language pathology, psychologists, occupational therapists, special educators, etc.) that are involved in the initial evaluation process. Using these tools, districts can identify relevant discipline areas for the initial evaluation/assessment and determine whether the professional personnel in that discipline area are meeting required timelines. Districts can then use this information to focus their improvement activities on ways to address needs in specific disability areas and personnel timelines. MASSDE has received positive feedback from stakeholders on these tools, and has used the input of stakeholders to revise the tools as needed. During FFY 2008, 13 districts participated in a pilot program using these self-assessment tools. Based on MASSDE’s review of this pilot project, MASSDE further refined the tools and used feedback from the pilot districts to update the data collection process for this indicator during FFY 2009.

Additional activities focused on professional development, targeted toward enabling special education administrators and school district staff to generate effective systems change for compliance areas, including Indicator 11. Complete descriptions of the following activities are included in Appendix A:

- **The Special Education Leadership Academies and Seminars** for special education administrators offered activities focused on a number of areas related to special education laws, regulations, and compliance, including initial evaluation timelines.

- MASSDE continued to revise the “Ten Step Guide for Comprehensive Educational Assessment of Students with Visual Impairments” publication that, among other things, recommends types of assessments that may be useful in making a determination of eligibility for a student with a visual impairment for the initial eligibility determination or three-year reevaluation. It also helps to ensure a common understanding of the purpose and complexity of conducting the specialized educational assessment of students with visual impairments.

- **Special Education Summer Institutes** again offered the professional course titled Effective Evaluation of Special Education Programs, focused on building the capacity of special education directors and district teams in evaluating a component or service of their special education programs. Participants gained increased ability to design and conduct program evaluations that inform school/district decision makers about their programs, build buy-in for the programs among participants, engage colleagues in collaborative study and learning that focus on programs they undertake to improve student outcomes, and document lessons learned and accomplishments.

MASSDE has continued to publicly report initial evaluation timelines data. This information can be viewed at [http://profiles.doe.mass.edu/state_report/special_ed.aspx](http://profiles.doe.mass.edu/state_report/special_ed.aspx)

MASSDE will continue to focus its efforts on improving outcomes for students with IEPs, and looks forward to reporting on the results of these efforts in the FFY 2010 APR for Indicator 11.
Revisions, with Justification, to Proposed Targets / Improvement Activities / Timelines / Resources for FFY 2009 (2009-2010):

Targets, improvement activities, timelines, and resources for Indicator 11 have been amended in the Massachusetts Part B State Performance Plan (MA SPP). They include targets for FFY 2011 and FFY 2012. Improvement activities and resources were developed in consultation with the Massachusetts Statewide Special Education Steering Committee. Please see the Indicator 11 MA SPP for more information.
Overview of the Annual Performance Report Development:

**Monitoring Priority: Effective General Supervision Part B / Effective Transition**

**Indicator 12:** Percent of children referred by Part C prior to age 3, who are found eligible for Part B, and who have an IEP developed and implemented by their third birthdays.

(20 U.S.C. 1416(a)(3)(B))

**Measurement:**

a. # of children who have been served in Part C and referred to Part B for Part B eligibility determination.
b. # of those referred determined to be NOT eligible and whose eligibility was determined prior to their third birthdays.
c. # of those found eligible who have an IEP developed and implemented by their third birthdays.
d. # of children for whom parent refusal to provide consent caused delays in evaluation or initial services.
e. # of children who were referred to Part C less than 90 days before their third birthdays.

Account for children included in (a) but not included in (b), (c), (d) or (e). Indicate the range of days beyond the third birthday when eligibility was determined and the IEP developed and the reasons for the delays.

Percent = [(c) divided by (a - b - d - e)] times 100.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>FFY</th>
<th>Measurable and Rigorous Target</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2009 (2009-2010)</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Actual Target Data for FFY 2009 (2009-2010):**

a. # of children who have been served in Part C and referred to Part B for Part B eligibility determination = 433
b. # of those referred determined to be NOT eligible and whose eligibility was determined prior to their third birthdays = 56
c. # of those found eligible who have an IEP developed and implemented by their third birthdays = 268
d. # of children for whom parent refusal to provide consent caused delays in evaluation or initial services = 38
e. # of children who were referred to Part C less than 90 days before their third birthdays = 54

Percent = [268 / (433 – 56 – 38 – 54)] X 100 = **94.0%**

States are also required to indicate the range of days beyond the third birthday when eligibility was determined and the IEP developed, and the reasons for the delays, for children included in (a) but not included in (b), (c), (d) or (e). MASSDE reviewed data from each of the participating districts and determined that time periods and reasons for delay were as follows:
In 18 cases, eligibility was determined and the IEP was developed:

- no more than 10 days after the child’s third birthday – 6% (3 individual cases)
- more than 10 days but less than one month after the child’s third birthday – 11% (3 individual cases)
- more than one month after the child’s third birthday – 72% (13 individual cases)

Identified reasons for delays in these cases included insufficient staff availability (i.e., excessive caseloads) to complete evaluations on time, delay due to district’s scheduling needs or unavailability of staff at the time of meeting, and lack of qualified staff to complete the evaluations.

**Discussion of Improvement Activities Completed and Explanation of Progress or Slippage that occurred for FFY 2009 (2009-2010):**

**Explanation of Progress or Slippage**

In FFY 2009, Massachusetts’ performance on Indicator 12 improved 5.5 percentage points over the FFY 2008 rate of 88.5%. Although MASSDE has not reached the measurable and rigorous target of 100%, MASSDE notes continuous improvement in this area, and attributes improvement to the technical assistance and resources available to improve school districts’ practices, and to the improvements made to the data collection process, including use of the cohort model and the online data collection tool.

As noted in the MA SPP, the data collection mechanism for Indicator 12 was revised in FFY 2009. Under a cohort model (similar to that used in data collection for other compliance indicators), a representative subset of districts reports Indicator 12 data annually to MASSDE. MASSDE now conducts data collection and reporting, identification of noncompliance, and verification of correction activities; prior to this reporting year, these activities were managed by the Massachusetts Department of Early Education and Care (MEEC), pursuant to an Interagency Services Agreement (ISA) with MASSDE. MEEC, the agency responsible for distributing 619 funds to eligible districts through a grant process, continues to cooperate with MASSDE on Indicator 12 activities, including offering technical assistance to school districts.

**Improvement Activities**

**MASSDE’s Response to the OSEP Part B FFY 2008 SPP/APR Letter and Response Table**

OSEP instructed MASSDE to demonstrate in the FFY 2009 APR for Indicator 12 that it verified that each school district with noncompliance identified using FFY 2007 and FFY 2008 data (1) is correctly implementing 34 CFR §300.124(b) (i.e., achieved 100% compliance) based on a review of updated data; and (2) has developed and implemented the IEP, although late, for any child for whom implementation of the IEP was not timely, unless the child is no longer within the jurisdiction of the district, consistent with OSEP Memorandum 09-02.

As described in the FFY 2008 APR, six districts were identified by MEEC in FFY 2008 based on FFY 2007 data as noncompliant with the requirements of Indicator 12. These districts were notified of their compliance status on March 18, 2009, and were instructed to provide MEEC with (1) documentation demonstrating that the action was completed, although late, for those children still under the jurisdiction of the district, and (2) updated data demonstrating that the districts were implementing correctly the regulatory requirements related to Part C to Part B transition. MEEC has assured MASSDE that it completed these required verification activities by March 18, 2010, including verification that each district developed and implemented an IEP for any child for whom implementation was not timely, unless the child is no longer within the district’s jurisdiction.

MASSDE notes that its data collection protocols prior to FFY 2009 served as a means of verifying that districts were implementing correctly the regulatory requirements of transition. Prior to FFY 2009, each district participated in annual data collection activities for Indicator 12. This allowed MASSDE/MEEC to review new data sets from districts each year in accordance with that step of the verification of correction process. Massachusetts was able to verify in this way that the six districts identified by MEEC in FFY 2008 (based on 2007 data) as being out of compliance, have corrected noncompliance insofar as they have demonstrated, through submission of a subsequent data set, that they are correctly implementing
specific regulatory requirements. MASSDE has notified these districts in writing that they have corrected identified noncompliance in accordance with the requirements described in OSEP Memorandum 09-02.

With regard to compliance activities based on the FFY 2008 data collection, MEEC notified 80 school districts of the noncompliance finding on December 23, 2009. MEEC required districts to review and revise data, and provide to it information demonstrating correction of noncompliance. Upon MASSDE’s assumption of data collection and verification activities in 2010, MASSDE recommenced verification activities for these districts. In October 2010, MASSDE notified the districts in writing of their need to: 1) re-submit written documentation verifying the amendment of district policies, procedures, and practices to allow for the correct implementation of the regulation for Part C to B transition; 2) submit documentation and/or updated data demonstrating that the district had developed and implemented the IEP, although late, for any child for whom implementation was not timely, unless the child was no longer within the district’s jurisdiction; and 3) submit updated data for review to demonstrate that the district is correctly implementing the requirements of 34 CFR §300.124(b).

During the verification period, MASSDE provided technical assistance through teleconferences and other training sessions to districts about verification activities. As of December 23, 2010, MASSDE verified correction of noncompliance for each district by reviewing documentation demonstrating districts have developed and implemented the IEP of any child that was not timely, unless the child is no longer within the district’s jurisdiction, and an updated data set submitted to it by districts that demonstrated 100% compliance. All noncompliance that MASSDE identified using FFY 2008 data was verified as corrected within one year of its identification, and MASSDE provided written notification to the districts documenting its acceptance of the districts’ correction and verification activities.

There is no outstanding noncompliance identified using FFY 2007 and FFY 2008 data for Indicator 12. MASSDE recognizes that there was a significant delay between the receipt of data and subsequent identification of noncompliance, and verification of correction of noncompliance. The need to improve oversight and management of data collection and reporting procedures was a primary reason that MASSDE is now managing these activities rather than MEEC. In FFY 2009, MASSDE implemented new systems for collecting and reporting data, and identifying and verifying correction of noncompliance, to address these problems and to prevent their recurrence.

Noncompliance reported using FFY 2009 data

In January 2011, MASSDE notified districts of their compliance status based on FFY 2009 data submitted by a representative cohort of school districts. (The cohort process for data collection and reporting for Indicator 12 began in FFY 2009. Please see the MA SPP for Indicator 12 for more information.) To verify that noncompliance has been corrected, districts must 1) review and amend their policies, procedures, and practices to insure that they are able to implement the regulation correctly; and 2) submit these revised practices to MASSDE for review. Next, MASSDE will require districts to submit updated data to verify that their amended policies and procedures allow for accurate implementation of the regulation. MASSDE will also confirm through subsequent data reports and records review that the districts have developed and implemented the IEP, although late, for any child for whom implementation was not timely, unless the child is no longer within the jurisdiction of the district. Finally, MASSDE will provide written notification to the districts of acceptance of correction and verification activities. MASSDE will report on the status of these verification activities in the FFY 2010 APR.

Technical Assistance

Because OSEP identified Massachusetts as being in need of technical assistance for three consecutive years based, in part, on results for Indicator 12, OSEP advised Massachusetts of available technical assistance and required the state to report on (1) the technical assistance sources from which the state received assistance; and (2) the actions that Massachusetts took as a result of that technical assistance. In response to this instruction, MEEC and MASSDE engaged in the following activities since the last APR report. Additional activities are described in the letter submitted by MASSDE to OSEP on October 1, 2010.
Additional Improvement Activities

In February 2008, Massachusetts was awarded the multi-year SpecialQuest grant to develop a Statewide Birth-Five Leadership Team to improve the inclusive opportunities for children with disabilities birth to five. Activities to date include continued professional development at the statewide level to address systems of inclusive services, including transitions of young children with disabilities from Early Intervention (EI) to Early Childhood Special Education. In addition, our national technical assistance experts, in collaboration with the state leadership team, have supported the work of local systems development in several communities where transitions between Part C and Part B have been a focus. Although the grant funding ended for this activity in August 2010, the state leadership team continues to meet on a quarterly basis to sustain the work begun in this project.

In November 2009 and March and May 2010, MEEC hosted its Communities of Practice networking sessions with the topics Response to Intervention-RTI for Pre-K, Transitions – Creating Seamless Transitions for Children, and Bringing Communities Together. These sessions were available at no cost to the early childhood field; participants included representatives from child care organizations, Head Start, Coordinated Family Community Engagement Grantees, Early Intervention (EI) providers, districts, and state agencies. MEEC program staff shared information on Response to Intervention (RtI) and showed a webinar on Recognition and Response findings from the Frank Porter Graham Child Development Institute. The key concepts addressed at the Bringing Communities Together session focused on strengthening collaboration and sharing resources or ideas as they relate to supporting young children and families, including children with disabilities. Participants were able to network and share their best practice strategies and strengths/concerns with each other, and to brainstorm ways to begin this work in their programs or community. The next Communities of Practice program will focus on common issues identified through districts’ corrective action plans.

MASSDE, MEEC, and the Massachusetts Department of Public Health (MDPH) continue to work collaboratively to support LEAs and local EI programs to establish relationships and develop local Memoranda of Understanding to facilitate smooth transitions for families. Additionally, the agencies collaborate on the online transition training models that were first introduced to the field in the fall of 2008. These activities focus on ways to foster improved communication and partnerships between EI providers and LEAs. One of the training programs, Transition from Part C to Part B, is a requirement for meeting EI competencies and may be used to address noncompliance under Indicator 12. The trainings look at transition from the perspectives of Part C and Part B, and the responsibilities that the three agencies have in the transition process. Technical assistance from the lead agencies is a required element of each unit. The module Connecting the Dots: Massachusetts’ Early Childhood Transition Training was debuted in the fall of 2009 at a Transition Forum hosted by MEEC and MDPH, with participation from MASSDE. In spring 2011, the agencies will host another professional development opportunity for LEA personnel and EI personnel to review the Federal requirements on transition from Part C to Part B, and to share best practices and strategies that support smooth transitions for children and their families. MASSDE will report on this activity in the FFY 2010 APR.

MEEC established a partnership with the MDPH’s 6 Regional Consultative Programs (RCPs) in December 2009 to provide technical assistance and support on special education transition from Part C to Part B and to support inclusion of 3-5 year olds in pre-school settings. In FFY 2009, one RCP participated in the Preschool Task Force that focused on collaboration and cooperation among districts, EIPs, and the personnel in each of these agencies. Additionally, RCPs participated in IEP meetings in LEAs and provided consultation to several LEAs.

MEEC continues to collaborate with MASSDE’s Program Quality Assurance (PQA) unit on annual scheduled compliance reviews. MEEC participates as a member of the PQA monitoring teams that visit school districts as part of the 6 year monitoring cycle to examine issues under Indicator 12. Staff reviews transition practices/timelines and children’s records, interviews district staff, and makes needed compliance findings and recommendations for improvement activities to improve school districts’ transition practices. This helps to ensure that noncompliance is identified early, and timely correction is made.

MASSDE, in partnership with MEEC, MDPH, and Massachusetts HeadStart, has been working to finalize
the state’s **Interagency Transition Agreement.** The Agreement is in the final stages of approval by the each agency. The purpose of this agreement is to address the mandate to develop interagency agreements for coordination and collaboration.

Two of the many grant programs that the SEPP office is involved in had a positive effect on Indicator 12 in FFY 2009. The **Preschool to Grade 3 Curriculum, Instruction, and Assessment Alignment Project (Fund Code 264)** is designed to identify and support strategies and resources that increase districts’ capacities to improve the quality of education and inclusion of children with disabilities through aligning and coordinating curriculum, instruction, and assessment from preschool to grade 3. In FFY 2009, several district grantees implemented activities to support effective transitions into and out of preschool. The purpose of the competitively awarded, **Closing the Early Literacy Gap for Students with Disabilities (Fund Code 297) grant** is to support the development of strategic literacy action plans to enhance and better align educational systems, curriculum, and instructional practices across public preschool and/or kindergarten programs, Head Start, and community-based early childhood education programs. These strategic action plans will help to ensure that all programs serving students with disabilities, aged 3-5, are effective, engaging, developmentally appropriate, and are designed to create seamless transitions across environments and into the next phase of the student’s education. Twenty-eight districts across the state have been awarded grants. In FFY 2009, nearly one third of the awarded districts implemented activities to support effective transitions into and out of preschool.

In FFY 2009, MASSDE and MEEC co-sponsored the **Early Childhood Special Education Professional Development series** for public preschool and kindergarten staff and other early childhood professionals working in programs that serve young students with disabilities. The first series addressed issues of including young children with a diagnosis along the Autism Spectrum; 31 district teams comprising 120 staff participated. The second focused on issues related to behavioral health and ways to address challenging behaviors in order to create more meaningful inclusive opportunities for children with disabilities. There were 102 participants from 24 district teams in attendance. At both series, transitions to preschool were addressed.

**Revisions, with Justification, to Proposed Targets / Improvement Activities / Timelines / Resources for FFY 2009 (2009-2010):**

Targets, improvement activities, timelines, and resources for Indicator 12 have been amended in the Massachusetts Part B State Performance Plan (MA SPP). They include targets for FFY 2011 and FFY 2012. These targets were developed in consultation with the Massachusetts Statewide Special Education Steering Committee. Please see the Indicator 12 MA SPP for more information.
Overview of the Annual Performance Report Development:

**Monitoring Priority: Effective General Supervision Part B / Effective Transition**

**Indicator 13:** Percent of youth with IEPs aged 16 and above with an IEP that includes appropriate measurable postsecondary goals that are annually updated and based upon an age appropriate transition assessment, transition services, including courses of study, that will reasonably enable the student to meet those postsecondary goals, and annual IEP goals related to the student's transition services needs. There also must be evidence that the student was invited to the IEP Team meeting where transition services are to be discussed and evidence that, if appropriate, a representative of any participating agency was invited to the IEP Team meeting with the prior consent of the parent or student who has reached the age of majority.

(20 U.S.C. 1416(a)(3)(B))

**Measurement:**
Percent = \[
\frac{\text{(number of youth with IEPs aged 16 and above with an IEP that includes appropriate measurable postsecondary goals that are annually updated and based upon an age appropriate transition assessment, transition services, including courses of study, that will reasonably enable the student to meet those postsecondary goals, and annual IEP goals related to the student's transition services needs. There also must be evidence that the student was invited to the IEP Team meeting where transition services are to be discussed and evidence that, if appropriate, a representative of any participating agency was invited to the IEP Team meeting with the prior consent of the parent or student who has reached the age of majority)}}{\text{(number of youth with an IEP age 16 and above)}}\] times 100.

**Note:** As required by OSEP, in FFY 2009 MASSDE established a new baseline and targets for Indicator 13, including targets for the extended SPP reporting period (FFY 2011 and FFY 2012). This information is included in the MA SPP for Indicator 13. MASSDE will submit the MA APR for Indicator 13 using the new measurement in the FFY 2010 submission, due February 1, 2012.

This FFY 2009 report includes information about the timely correction of noncompliance reported in MASSDE’s voluntarily submitted FFY 2008 APR for Indicator 13, as required by OSEP in the FFY 2008 Response Table.

**Correction of FFY 2007 and FFY 2008 Findings of Noncompliance:**
Level of compliance (actual target data) State reported for FFY 2007 for this indicator: 99.1%
Level of compliance (actual target data) State reported for FFY 2008 for this indicator: 99.5%

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>FFY 2007 (July 1, 2007 to June 30, 2008)</th>
<th>FFY 2008 (July 1, 2008 to June 30, 2009)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Number of findings of noncompliance the State made</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Number of findings the State verified as timely corrected (corrected within one year from the date of notification to the LEA of the finding)</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Number of findings not verified as corrected within one year ([(1) minus (2)])</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Number of findings not timely corrected (same as the number from (3) above)</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Verification of Correction (either timely or subsequent):

As specified in OSEP’s June 1, 2010 FFY 2008 SPP/APR Response Table, MASSDE must, when reporting the correction of noncompliance, report in its FFY 2009 APR that it has verified that each district with noncompliance reflected in the data the State reported for Indicator 13: (1) is correctly implementing 34 CFR §300.320(b) (i.e., achieved 100% compliance) based on a review of updated data such as data subsequently collected through onsite monitoring or a State data system; and (2) has corrected each individual case of noncompliance, unless the child is no longer within the jurisdiction of the district, consistent with OSEP Memorandum 09-02.

Describe the specific actions that the State took to verify the correction of findings of noncompliance identified in FFY 2007 and FFY 2008:

MASSDE had considered its methodology to verify correction of findings of noncompliance identified in FFY 2007 and FFY 2008 to have been complete. The description of this process was included in Massachusetts’ FFY 2008 APR. To recap, this process involved notifying districts by mail if, upon a desk review by MASSDE of districts’ data, districts were found to be out of compliance for Indicator 13. Districts were instructed to complete certain actions to correct for deficiencies in policies and practices and then submit additional documentation to MASSDE demonstrating that transition planning had been completed for each individual student affected by the noncompliance, unless the child was no longer within the jurisdiction of the district. Districts were also required to sign a statement of assurance certifying that the identified student(s) had received appropriate transition planning and that the district had in place the appropriate policies, practices and procedures to ensure that all students entitled to transition planning services were receiving such services in a timely manner.

Following additional guidance and direction from OSEP in the June 1, 2010 SPP/APR Response Table for FFY 2008, and technical assistance resources describing the verification of correction activities required in OSEP Memorandum 09-02, MASSDE revised its procedures for verification of correction of noncompliance. OSEP made clear the need for states to collect subsequent, updated data from districts demonstrating that the districts have made changes and instituted new policies and practices that allow it to achieve 100% compliance with the requirements of 34 CFR §300.320(b). (Prior verification activities had confirmed that the districts had corrected each individual case of noncompliance, and so MASSDE determined that no changes to these procedures were necessary.)

To complete verification of correction activities for data reported in FFY 2007 and FFY 2008 pursuant to OSEP’s instruction, MASSDE conducted an onsite record review of updated data for each of the five districts (two districts identified using FFY 2007 data and three identified using FFY 2008 data) in January 2011. The process involved:

1. Notifying districts in December 2010 that the district must provide new, updated data regarding Secondary Transition to satisfy fully the requirements of federal law, consistent with OSEP Memorandum 09-02, to verify correction of identified noncompliance.
2. Notifying districts that MASSDE would conduct an onsite review of randomly selected records from the 2009-2010 school year for students with disabilities aged 16 and above with an IEP to confirm that transition planning included coordinated, measurable, annual IEP goals, and transition services that will reasonably enable the student to meet the post-secondary goals.
MASSDE determined a reasonable number of records to review to demonstrate compliance based upon the size of the special education enrollment in the district.

3. Conducting a record review, including a reading of each IEP, to verify that the IEP was a valid, dated, and signed document from the 2009-2010 school year, and that the IEP included a transition plan on Massachusetts’ mandated form 28M/R.

4. A finding that MASSDE verified that the district was correctly implementing the requirements of 34 CFR §300.320(b) (i.e., achieved 100% compliance), if MASSDE determined that all criteria from the review were met.

5. A determination by MASSDE that the finding would remain open and additional corrective action would be determined for the district if MASSDE found that there were missing criteria from this review of updated records.

MASSDE determined from the onsite review of updated data from each district, and in conjunction with MASSDE’s prior determination that districts had corrected each individual cases of noncompliance, unless the child was no longer within the jurisdiction of the district, that all districts were correctly implementing the requirements for secondary transition under 34 CFR §300.320(b). MASSDE notified all districts in writing that the previously identified noncompliance from FFY 2007 or FFY 2008 was resolved according to this verification of correction process. All findings of noncompliance identified using FFY 2007 and FFY 2008 have been corrected.

MASSDE will report on the verification of correction of noncompliance activities for the FFY 2009 baseline data in the FFY 2010 APR for Indicator 13.

Discussion of Improvement Activities Completed and Explanation of Progress or Slippage that occurred in FFY 2009:

Because MASSDE did not report 100% compliance in its baseline data reported in the FFY 2009 MA SPP for Indicator 13, MASSDE is required to review and revise improvement activities, if necessary, that had an effect on the results for FFY 2009 reporting.

In FFY 2009, MASSDE engaged in several activities for maintaining high levels of compliance related to effective transition. MASSDE continued to focus its efforts on creating tools and resources to support educators’ efforts to engage in effective transition planning for students as districts respond to the revised language and measurement for Indicator 13. Professional development to further strengthen educators’ skills and proficiency with transition planning was the other major focus of MASSDE’s improvement activities.

MASSDE’s primary improvement activity during FFY 2009 was the development of a Postsecondary Transition Planning Checklist for districts. (See Appendix C.) MASSDE developed this checklist to aid districts in the gathering of data consistent with the new requirements under Indicator 13. The checklist identified six components of transition planning as required by the new measurement language of this Indicator for FFY 2009. In addition to informing districts about the new requirements, the checklist will allow MASSDE to engage in more detailed and targeted data analysis regarding transition planning.

Additional improvement activities that affected secondary transition in the areas of professional development for educators and technical assistance for LEA’s included:

- **Massachusetts FOCUS Academy (MFA)** – MASSDE’s State Personnel Development Grant offered several online graduate level courses in a variety of key areas, including Post-Secondary Transition Planning. Specific course titles offered during FFY 2009 were Generalist Transition Planning, Youth Development and Self-determination, and Transition Topics. These courses were taught by faculty at the University of Massachusetts- Boston’s Institute for Community Inclusion. The Federation for Children with Special Needs (FCSN) provided a course for educators on Parent and Professional Partnerships: Transition Planning for Students with Disabilities in Middle and High School. Additionally, MASSDE added a two-part course on post-secondary education for educators designed to instruct educators, family members, and adult agency personnel on the principal policies and practices related to transition planning for students with disabilities from the ages of 14 to 22.
The Inclusive Concurrent Enrollment Partnership Programs for Students with Disabilities grant program is focused on building partnerships between high schools and state public institutions of higher education to offer inclusive concurrent enrollment opportunities for students with severe disabilities. As part of the technical assistance provided to the 35 participating high schools, school personnel learned how to conduct person-centered planning for students with disabilities. This transition planning approach is student-led and promotes greater self-determination and self-advocacy skills in youth with disabilities. Partnerships continue to develop their programs to include individualized community-based integrated employment opportunities that align with participating students’ career goals and course selection.

Secondary Transition – Transition Works: Innovative Strategies for Transitioning Youth with Disabilities from School to Work is a five-year grant from the U.S. Department of Education awarded to the Massachusetts Rehabilitation Commission (MRC) that will help support youth with disabilities transitioning from school to work. As part of this initiative, vocational rehabilitation counselors are collaborating with school districts to support youth with disabilities in their transitions from school to work, post-secondary education, and independent living.

Work-Based Learning Plans (WBLP) for Students with Disabilities – Through work-based learning experiences, students have an opportunity to learn about various career paths, explore different work styles, and learn about the environmental supports that are available. Additionally, these experiences allow students to discover the type of work they enjoy, and how they learn best in a workplace setting. The WBLP assists district personnel and families to improve transition outcomes for students with disabilities. The WBLP contains a scoring rubric that serves as a student performance evaluation guide to facilitate employer assessment of each participating student’s WBLP Foundation Skills. Beginning in FFY 2008, the MASSDE Special Education Planning and Policy Office (SEPP) began collaborating with the Student Support, Career and Education (SSCE) Service unit at MASSDE to develop a one page guidance document entitled Using the Massachusetts Work-Based Learning Plan In Transition Planning Activities for Students with Disabilities and to enhance the WBLP Scoring Rubric. The one page document is intended to encourage the inclusion of students with disabilities in WBLP programs; to be used as an option for individual student transition planning; and to support educators, employers, Connecting Activities’ field staff, Workforce Investment Boards, One Stop Career Centers, and Local School-to-Career Partnerships in implementing quality work-based learning for students with disabilities.

The Comprehensive System of Personnel Development (CSPD) Training Project was developed to supplement ongoing personnel preparation activities provided within school districts and other agencies. Two topic areas relate directly to secondary transition planning: Transition from Adolescence into Adulthood in Massachusetts, and The Massachusetts Transition Planning Chart and Effective Transition Planning.

MASSDE offered distance-learning opportunities from the National Association of State Directors of Special Education (NASDSE) through its Professional Development Series, at no cost to school districts and educational organizations in Massachusetts.

MASSDE has a long standing Collaboration with Federation for Children with Special Needs (FCSN), which is the federally-funded Parent Training and Information Center that provides free information, support, technical assistance, and workshops to Massachusetts’ families who have children with disabilities. This year’s topics that relate to transition included Parent’s Rights, IEPs, and Transition 101.

Educational Proficiency Plan (EPPs) – The purpose of the EPP is to increase the support students need to stay in school to meet graduation standards and to have the requisite skills needed for post-secondary success.
The Special Education Program Improvement Grants – Fund Code 249 offered funding to approved private special education schools for professional development activities to help improve the capacity of educators to meet the diverse needs of students with disabilities. The topic for professional development under one of the three priority areas for the grant related to secondary transition included College and Career Readiness: Secondary Transition Planning. This priority area will enable educators to provide quality instruction and transition planning, thus allowing students with disabilities to access to more inclusive environments, and to have appropriate transition plans in place.

The revision of “Ten Step Guide for Comprehensive Educational Assessment of Students with Visual Impairments” includes a new section describing the “hidden” characteristics of a vision loss that affect academic and social factors. Important to secondary transition planning, the document will provide resources to help educators meet the unique needs of students with visual impairments and to prepare them for further education, employment, and independent living.

Community/Residential Education Project – The goal of this project is to facilitate effective transitions from school life to more independent life within the community for students receiving publicly-funded special education services who also meet the Massachusetts Department of Disability Services (MDDS) eligibility criteria for services. This will be accomplished by supporting less restrictive, more cost effective residential options, special education services, and community based supports.

District and School Assistance Centers (DSACs) – MASSDE has opened six regionally-based DSACs to help identified districts and their schools access and use professional development and targeted assistance to improve instruction and raise achievement for all students. MFA courses (see above), including UDL Creating Positive Classroom Environments, and Transition Planning have been integrated into the menu of professional development options available to districts.

The following activities focused on improving effective transition and contributed to the state’s continued success in meeting its target for Indicator 13:

- American Recovery and Reinvestment Act: Saving and Creating Jobs and Reforming Education (ARRA) – IDEA
- Collaboration with Stakeholders
- Special Education Professional Development Summer Institutes

Additional information about these improvement activities is available in Appendix A.

MASSDE continues to report transition data publicly. This information, which is in the process of being updated for FFY 2009, is available at http://profiles.doe.mass.edu/state_report/special_ed.aspx.

MASSDE will continue to focus is efforts on improving the transition planning for students with IEPs and looks forward to reporting on the results of these efforts in the FFY 2010 APR.

Revisions, with Justification, to Proposed Targets / Improvement Activities / Timelines / Resources for FFY 2010 (if applicable):

MASSDE has established a new baseline, targets, and improvement activities for Indicator 13, and has reported them in the revised State Performance Plan (MA SPP) submitted with this report. Pursuant to OSEP’s instructions, the MA SPP includes targets and activities for the extended SPP reporting period, FFY 2011 and FFY 2012. Please see the Indicator 13 MA SPP for more information.
Overview of the Annual Performance Report Development:

**Monitoring Priority: Effective General Supervision Part B / Effective Transition**

**Indicator 14:** Percent of youth who are no longer in secondary school, had IEPs in effect at the time they left school, and were:

A. Enrolled in higher education within one year of leaving high school.

B. Enrolled in higher education or competitively employed within one year of leaving high school.

C. Enrolled in higher education or in some other postsecondary education or training programs; or competitively employed or in some other employment within one year of leaving high school.

(20 U.S.C. 1416(a)(3)(B))

**Measurement:**

A. Percent enrolled in higher education = \[\frac{(# \text{ of youth who are no longer in secondary school, had IEPs in effect at the time they left school and were enrolled in higher education within one year of leaving high school})}{(# \text{ of respondent youth who are no longer in secondary school and had IEPs in effect at the time they left school})}\] times 100.

B. Percent enrolled in higher education or competitively employed within one year of leaving high school = \[\frac{(# \text{ of youth who are no longer in secondary school, had IEPs in effect at the time they left high school and were enrolled in higher education or competitively employed within one year of leaving high school})}{(# \text{ of respondent youth who are no longer in secondary school and had IEPs in effect at the time they left school})}\] times 100.

C. Percent enrolled in higher education, or in some other postsecondary education or training program; or competitively employed or in some other employment = \[\frac{(# \text{ of youth who are no longer in secondary school, had IEPs in effect at the time they left school and were enrolled in higher education, or in some other postsecondary education or training program; or competitively employed or in some other employment})}{(# \text{ of respondent youth who are no longer in secondary school and had IPEs in effect at the time they left school})}\] times 100.

**Note:** As required by OSEP, MASSDE has established a new baseline and targets for Indicator 14, including targets for the extended SPP reporting period (FFY 2011 and FFY 2012). This information is included in the MA SPP for Indicator 14. MASSDE will submit the MA APR for Indicator 14 using the new measurement in the FFY 2010 submission, due February 1, 2012.
Overview of the Annual Performance Report Development:

**Monitoring Priority: Effective General Supervision Part B / General Supervision**

**Indicator 15:** General supervision system (including monitoring, complaints, hearings, etc.) identifies and corrects noncompliance as soon as possible but in no case later than one year from identification.

(20 U.S.C. 1416 (a)(3)(B))

**Measurement:**
Percent of noncompliance corrected within one year of identification:

a. # of findings of noncompliance.

b. # of corrections completed as soon as possible but in no case later than one year from identification.

Percent = [(b) divided by (a)] times 100.

States are required to use the "Indicator 15 Worksheet" to report data for this indicator. (See Appendix D.)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>FFY</th>
<th>Measurable and Rigorous Target</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2009</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Actual Target Data for FFY 2009 (2009-2010) (based on findings of noncompliance from July 1, 2008 to June 30, 2009):**

a. MASSDE made 643 findings of special education noncompliance through the Problem Resolution System (PRS), Coordinated Program Reviews (CPRs), Mid-cycle Reviews (MCRs), State Performance Plan Compliance Indicators (SPPCI), or the Bureau of Special Education Appeals (dispute resolution system) (BSEA) between July 1, 2008 and June 30, 2009.

b. MASSDE uses the date on which it verifies in writing to the Districts submission of data or documentation for evidence of correction of noncompliance as the date on which noncompliance is deemed corrected. For the FFY 2009 reporting period, 638 findings of noncompliance were corrected within one year of the finding.

Percent of noncompliance corrected within one year of identification: (638/643) x 100 = **99.2%**

While MASSDE did not meet the measurable and rigorous target, less than one percent of all findings made in this period were not corrected within one year of identification. As of the date of this report, all findings of noncompliance made in FFY 2009 have been corrected, for an overall to-date correction rate of 100%.

See Appendix D, the Indicator 15 Worksheet for FFY 2009, for the disaggregation of findings made from July 1, 2008 to June 30, 2009.

**Discussion of Improvement Activities Completed and Explanation of Progress or Slippage that occurred for FFY 2009:**

**Explanation of Progress or Slippage**

MASSDE continues to make significant progress toward meeting the measurable and rigorous target for Indicator 15. Of the 643 findings of special education noncompliance made through the PRS, CPR, or MCR system, the SPPCI, or the BSEA in FFY 2009 (findings made from July 1, 2008 to June 30, 2009),
MASSDE verified as corrected 99.2% (638) of them within one year, compared to the FFY 2008 total of 85.5%. Notable is that all findings of noncompliance from this reporting period have been corrected to date. MASSDE verified correction of all noncompliance consistent with the procedures described in OSEP Memorandum 09-02.

For each finding of noncompliance, MASSDE required the LEA to submit to the appropriate MASSDE office (most often Program Quality Assurance (PQA)), additional documentation describing the actions taken by the district to correct the noncompliance. These actions included the district correcting each individual case of noncompliance identified, unless the child was no longer within the jurisdiction of the district, consistent with OSEP Memorandum 09-02. Districts were required to review and revise their policies, practices, and procedures to ensure correct implementation of the specific regulatory requirements where MASSDE identified that the root causes of noncompliance were related to improper implementation of the applicable regulatory requirements.

In order to verify that these actions were completed, and that the district was in full compliance with specific regulatory requirements, MASSDE engaged in desk reviews of the additional compliance documentation provided by the districts. MASSDE also conducted onsite verification visits as necessary to review student records and other documentary evidence of corrective actions taken to change policies, practices, or procedures, including updated records. Through this process of additional review and verification of records, MASSDE determined that each district was correctly implementing the specific regulatory requirements related to the identified area of noncompliance, and had corrected each individual case of noncompliance, unless the child was no longer within the jurisdiction of the district. MASSDE notified all districts in writing of its verification of correction of noncompliance, consistent with the requirements of OSEP Memo 09-02. To date, there are no outstanding findings of noncompliance from this reporting period, nor from any prior reporting periods. (Please note that per OSEP’s instructions, detailed information regarding the correction of noncompliance related to a specific compliance indicator (e.g., Indicator 11, Indicator 12, and Indicator 13) is reported in the FFY 2009 APR for the specific indicator. Please see the FFY 2009 MA APR for those indicators for discussion of the specific verification of correction activities.)

Reasons for MASSDE’s progress related to Indicator 15 include the continued training and support for PQA staff and other MASSDE staff about implementing the one-year correction requirement, improved understanding and oversight of MASSDE’s verification of correction of noncompliance procedures, and improved administrative oversight of complaint management systems and timelines. MASSDE is engaged in continuous improvement activities related to compliance monitoring, training, and technical assistance to ensure the timely correction of noncompliance. The result of these efforts is demonstrated in the target data reported here.

**Improvement Activities**

**Verification of Correction of Noncompliance**

Because OSEP identified MASSDE as being in need of technical assistance for three consecutive years, OSEP required MASSDE in the Massachusetts Part B FFY 2008 SPP/APR Response Table to report on (1) the technical assistance sources from which the state received assistance; and (2) the actions that Massachusetts took as a result of that technical assistance, related to Indicator 15.

In response to this instruction and MASSDE’s continued priority to address issues related to Indicator 15, MASSDE staff participated in several technical assistance opportunities and consulted multiple sources about general supervision and timely correction of noncompliance. PQA staff has continued to participate in teleconferences with other members of the Northeast Regional Resource Center (NERRC) Local Monitoring and General Supervision Work Group about general supervision, attended the OSEP Mega Conference in Washington, D.C. in August 2010, and provided a webinar for NERRC members on MASSDE’s web-based monitoring system (WBMS) on February 17, 2010. Also, MASSDE staff participated in webinars throughout the year hosted by NERRC and OSEP on identification and verification of correction of noncompliance under OSEP Memorandum 09-02, and consulted Massachusetts’ State Contact on several occasions about verification of correction requirements.

MASSDE has used this information and updated guidance from OSEP to strengthen processes and procedures for complaint management and timely correction of noncompliance. (See MASSDE’s
description of verification of correction activities under OSEP Memorandum 09-02 above.) School districts play an important role in ensuring that they continue to maintain compliance with regulatory requirements during and after corrective action periods. As part of the CPR and MCR processes, districts must report on the actions they take during corrective action periods to identify and respond to the root causes of identified noncompliance, and to sustain compliance with specific regulatory requirements. After implementing corrective actions, school districts must continue to monitor their compliance with the relevant requirement and to report results of this internal monitoring to PQA. This system has helped school districts become active partners in correcting noncompliance by allowing them to identify root causes of noncompliance and to target their efforts at correcting them. The success of these efforts is seen in the 13.7 percentage point increase in MASSDE’s Indicator 15 compliance this year.

During FFY 2008, PQA expanded the implementation of its web-based monitoring system (WBMS), piloted during FFY 2007. Districts participating in the second cycle of WBMS reviews submitted self-assessments in the spring of 2009, and upon completion of desk reviews by monitoring team chairpersons, PQA’s onsite verification visits began in October 2009. To prepare subsequent monitoring cohorts, MASSDE held WBMS orientation and training sessions for staff in schools and districts scheduled for onsite reviews during the 2010-2011 school year. In the fall of 2010, MASSDE began to prepare schools and districts for the 2011-2012 monitoring cycle. In November 2010, MASSDE sponsored orientation sessions for 178 personnel from 68 districts; in December 2010 and January 2011, 219 personnel from 69 districts participated in WBMS computer lab based training. As the WBMS is rolled out to all schools and districts in Massachusetts and school personnel gain experience in identifying and correcting noncompliance, and preventing it from occurring, MASSDE expects to see a reduction in identified noncompliance.

MASSDE has continued to provide support to districts through the electronic corrective action plan/progress reporting system (ECAP) to help them improve timely correction of noncompliance. This system, piloted in FFY 2006, has been expanded each year. PQA trained staff from school districts participating in the FFY 2009 standard CPR process in the ECAP/progress reporting system in October 2009. In January 2010, PQA held additional training for 41 personnel from 26 districts on the (ECAP and the WBMS corrective action planning and progress reporting processes. The design of the web-based corrective action plan and progress reporting system was based on the success of the implementation of the ECAP system. Districts receive additional supplemental onsite technical assistance from monitoring team chairpersons on this process within a week or two of MASSDE’s issuing the CPR Final Report. This new protocol and electronic tools for reporting have increased MASSDE’s ability to verify correction of noncompliance by increasing the efficiency of information-sharing.

MASSDE incorporated what was learned from the technical assistance received from external sources, and feedback from districts and staff using the new monitoring system and tools, to further refine its monitoring system to ensure timely correction of noncompliance. These resources have assisted MASSDE in identifying and tracking districts’ noncompliance, and ensuring that it is corrected as soon as possible and no later than one year from identification by MASSDE. The effectiveness of these new and refined systems is seen in the improvement noted in this year’s target data of 99.2%.

Revisions, with Justification, to Proposed Targets / Improvement Activities / Timelines / Resources for FFY 2009:

Targets, improvement activities, timelines, and resources for Indicator 15 have been amended in the Massachusetts Part B State Performance Plan (MA SPP) to include the extended SPP reporting period for FFY 2011 and FFY 2012, consistent with OSEP’s instructions and following consultation with the Massachusetts Statewide Special Education Steering Committee. Please see the Indicator 15 MA SPP for more information.
Overview of the Annual Performance Report Development:

Monitoring Priority: Effective General Supervision Part B / General Supervision

Indicator 16: Percent of signed written complaints with reports issued that were resolved within 60-day timeline or a timeline extended for exceptional circumstances with respect to a particular complaint, or because the parent (or individual or organization) and the public agency agree to extend the time to engage in mediation or other alternative means of dispute resolution, if available in the State.

(20 U.S.C. 1416(a)(3)(B))

Measurement: Percent = [(1.1(b) + 1.1(c)) divided by 1.1] times 100.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>FFY</th>
<th>Measurable and Rigorous Target</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2009 (2009-2010)</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Actual Target Data for FFY 2009 (2009-2010): [(151 + 7) / 158] x 100 = 100%

1.1 – Complaint with reports issued: 158
1.1(b) – Reports within timeline: 151
1.1(c) – Reports within extended timelines: 7

Discussion of Improvement Activities Completed and Explanation of Progress or Slippage that occurred for FFY 2009 (2009-2010):

Explanation of Progress or Slippage

In FFY 2009, MASSDE met its measurable and rigorous target of 100%. This represents an increase of 6 percentage points over the number of signed written special education complaints with reports issued that were resolved within 60 days, or within a timeline extended for exceptional circumstances, over FFY 2008 (94%). This also represents an increase by 8.5 percentage points over FFY 2007 (91.5%), and almost 9 percentage points over FFY 2006 (91.1%).

In meeting its target, MASSDE has kept the number of complaint timelines extended for exceptional circumstances low. In FFY 2009, only seven complaint timelines were extended (4%). All of the extensions were in conformity with the permissible reasons for granting an extension, and were for conservative periods of time. Specifically, three were for less than 30 days and four were for between 30-45 calendar days beyond the original 60 days. MASSDE issued all extended complaint reports within the extended timeline.

Improvement Activities

Massachusetts Part B FFY 2008 SPP/APR Response Table

Technical Assistance Sources and Actions Taken by MASSDE as a Result

Because OSEP identified MASSDE as being in need of technical assistance for three consecutive years, OSEP advised MASSDE in the Massachusetts Part B FFY 2008 SPP/APR Response Table of available technical assistance and required the state to report on (1) the technical assistance sources from which the state received assistance, and (2) the actions that Massachusetts took as a result of that technical assistance.
In response to this instruction, MASSDE staff has continued to examine specific areas of challenge in meeting the required timelines for all written complaints, and researched data and resources from other states. Specifically, in FFY 2009 Program Quality Assurance (PQA) staff reviewed the SPP/APR Calendar’s “Technical Assistance for Part B, Indicator 16 Investigative Questions”, and closely examined the data and resources from other states reported in the Five Year Annual Report Summaries for Written Complaints, Mediations and Due Process prepared by The Center for Appropriate Dispute Resolution in Special Education (CADRE) in March 2010, and CADRE’s results of Part B SPP/APR Indicator Analyses (FFY 2008) for Indicator #16. Analysis of the data indicates that MASSDE’s performance on this indicator is consistent with the national trend of decreased use of extensions in order to achieve timely completion of complaint reports, and at the same time improved the percentage of timely completed complaint reports. Historically, MASSDE has consistently received more than 2.5 times the national mean rate of written state complaints, so the consistency with national trends underscores the significant progress that MASSDE has made in this area.

The continued implementation of revised practices to manage timeline extensions has supported MASSDE’s improvement in compliance with Indicator 16 timelines. As described in the FFY 2008 APR for Indicator 16, these practices have included weekly meetings between an assistant director and the supervisor of the complaint management system, and regular meetings with complaint investigators (PRS specialists) to review complaints, troubleshoot problems, and manage extension of timelines. MASSDE has also improved intra-agency communication about issues affecting complaints when the involvement of other MASSDE program staff is needed. This increased communication within PQA and with other agency staff helps to ensure that timelines are met and extensions are not sought for inappropriate purposes.

In FFY 2009, MASSDE added the use of a listserv hosted by Mountain Plains Regional Resource Center Complaint Investigator's Work Group (MPRRC-CI) to provide another vehicle for complaint investigators to discuss and share ideas for improving skills, and to improve understanding and clarification of special education law, consistent with OSEP interpretation, on matters that may be the subject of a complaint. This tool serves as a resource for complaint investigators to network and collaborate with colleagues from other states. MPRRC-CI operates under a grant from OSEP, with partial support provided by Utah State University.

The effect of these communication and oversight strategies is seen in the progress that MASSDE made this year in meeting the 100% target for the number of complaint reports issued within appropriate timelines, and keeping the number low for complaints that received extensions.

Revisions, with Justification, to Proposed Targets / Improvement Activities / Timelines / Resources for FFY 2009:

Targets, improvement activities, timelines, and resources for Indicator 16 have been amended in the Massachusetts Part B State Performance Plan (MA SPP) to include the extended SPP reporting period for FFY 2011 and FFY 2012, consistent with OSEP’s instructions and following consultation with the Massachusetts Statewide Special Education Steering Committee. Please see the Indicator 16 MA SPP for more information.
Overview of the Annual Performance Report Development:

Monitoring Priority: Effective General Supervision Part B / General Supervision

Indicator 17: Percent of adjudicated due process hearing requests that were adjudicated within the 45-day timeline or a timeline that is properly extended by the hearing officer at the request of either party or in the case of an expedited hearing, within the required timelines.

(20 U.S.C. 1416(a)(3)(B))

Measurement: Percent = [(3.2(a) + 3.2(b)) divided by 3.2] times 100.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>FFY</th>
<th>Measurable and Rigorous Target</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2009 (2009-2010)</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Actual Target Data for FFY 2009 (2009-2010): \[
\frac{(4+13)}{18} \times 100 = 94.4\%
\]

3.2 – Hearings fully adjudicated: 18
3.2(a) – Decisions within timeline (including expedited): 4
3.2(b) – Decisions within extended timeline: 13

MASSDE is submitting with this report Table 7 Report: of Dispute Resolution Under Part B of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act, 2009-2010, to document the data reported for Indicator 19. Please see Appendix E.

Discussion of Improvement Activities Completed and Explanation of Progress or Slippage that occurred for FFY 2009 (2009-2010):

Explanation of Progress or Slippage

During the FFY 2009 reporting period, 18 hearings were fully adjudicated by the Bureau of Special Education Appeals (BSEA). Of those, four hearing decisions were issued during the 45-day timeline, and 13 were issued within a timeline that was properly extended by the hearing officer at the request of either party, or within the required timelines for an expedited hearing.

Since MASSDE established the baseline and target data for Indicator 17 in FFY 2004, the data have shown relative consistency or improvement, and results have been at target or just below target since FFY 2005, as demonstrated in the chart below.
In the FFY 2009 reporting period, Massachusetts did not meet its measurable and rigorous target of 100% because a single hearing decision was not issued within the 45-day timeline due to issues related to understaffing. MASSDE recognizes that this is not an acceptable reason for extending timelines under 34 CFR § 300.515(a), and the BSEA is continuing to focus its improvement activities on managing timelines to ensure that this circumstance is an anomaly and does not reoccur.

**Improvement Activities**

Massachusetts’ consistency in maintaining high levels of compliance in this area is due to the BSEA’s ongoing work to manage internal procedures for tracking timelines. In FFY 2009, the BSEA again prioritized supervision and monitoring of hearing officers’ caseloads. Some factors that have contributed to the BSEA’s holding hearings and issuing decisions in a timely manner have been greater oversight of and equalization of case loads. Other written resources for parties (e.g., the Guide for Pro Se Litigants, available at [http://www.doe.mass.edu/bsea/forms/prose_guide.pdf](http://www.doe.mass.edu/bsea/forms/prose_guide.pdf); the Pro Se Reference Manual, [http://www.doe.mass.edu/bsea/forms/proselitigant_manual.pdf](http://www.doe.mass.edu/bsea/forms/proselitigant_manual.pdf); and Advancement/Postponement Request Form, [http://www.doe.mass.edu/bsea/forms/postponement.pdf](http://www.doe.mass.edu/bsea/forms/postponement.pdf) that were first reported in last year’s APR have helped parties to understand better the hearing process and the legal requirements for timely adjudication of due process hearing requests, and the circumstances under which extensions are permissible. Extensions are not granted unless requests are submitted in writing and agreed to by the parties, or if ordered by the hearing officer following a review of the circumstances and determination that an extension is allowable by law.

Effective July 1, 2010, the administrative oversight and management of the BSEA was transferred from MASSDE to the Massachusetts Division of Administrative Law Appeals (DALA). Although the BSEA has always been an impartial agency, free from decision-making review by or influence of MASSDE, the establishment of the BSEA as a separate subdivision of DALA was initiated at the recommendation of the Office of Special Education and Rehabilitative Services (OSERS) following a request for guidance from the MASSDE Commissioner of Education. While MASSDE will continue to provide general oversight to the BSEA that is necessary for ensuring compliance with the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), 20 U.S.C. § 1400 et seq., DALA and the BSEA director will work together to manage the Bureau and its functions.

As part of this restructuring, beginning in FFY 2010, the BSEA and DALA will be reviewing all timeline and reporting requirements under the IDEA and state special education law and regulations, and...
assessing current administrative systems to determine what changes are needed. The need for upgrading data and tracking systems, forms, and status reporting will be evaluated, and necessary changes will be made to those systems. MASSDE will report on the results of these activities in the FFY 2010 APR.

Revisions, with Justification, to Proposed Targets / Improvement Activities / Timelines / Resources for FFY 2009 (2009-2010):

Targets, improvement activities, timelines, and resources for Indicator 17 have been amended in the Massachusetts Part B State Performance Plan (MA SPP) to include the extended SPP reporting period for FFY 2011 and FFY 2012, consistent with OSEP’s instructions and following consultation with the Massachusetts Statewide Special Education Steering Committee. Please see the Indicator 17 MA SPP for more information.
Overview of the Annual Performance Report Development:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Monitoring Priority: Effective General Supervision Part B / General Supervision</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

**Indicator 18:** Percent of hearing requests that went to resolution sessions that were resolved through resolution session settlement agreements.

(20 U.S.C. 1416(a)(3)(B))

**Measurement:** Percent = (3.1(a) divided by 3.1) times 100.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>FFY</th>
<th>Measurable and Rigorous Target</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2009 (2009-2010)</td>
<td>50%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Actual Target Data for FFY 2009 (2009-2010):** \((21 / 38) \times 100 = 55.3\%\)

3.1 – Resolution meetings: 38
3.1(a) – Written settlement agreements: 21

MASSDE is submitting with this report Table 7 Report: of Dispute Resolution Under Part B of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act, 2009-2010, to document the data reported for Indicator 19. Please see Appendix E.

**Discussion of Improvement Activities Completed and Explanation of Progress or Slippage that occurred for FFY 2009:**

**Explanation of Progress or Slippage**

Of the 38 resolution meetings that were held in FFY 2009 and reported to the Bureau of Special Education Appeals (BSEA), 21 resulted in written settlement agreements. This represents an increase of more than 6 percentage points over the actual data for FFY 2008. MASSDE/BSEA met its measurable and rigorous target in FFY 2009.

**Improvement Activities**

In FFY 2008 and FFY 2009, BSEA has been able to report more accurate and valid data regarding resolution sessions. As demonstrated in the chart below, there has been a significant increase in the percentage of reported hearing requests that went to resolution sessions that were resolved through resolution session settlement agreements.
This increase is attributable, in part, to the BSEA’s efforts to revise and better manage its data collection procedures and resources. As described in the FFY 2008, APR, the BSEA significantly revised its data collection procedures and resources during that year. Hearing Officers now use a “19 day call” system to communicate with the parties about the status of resolution meetings and any subsequent agreements after the hearing request. Also, every parent that files a request for a hearing receives a form reminding them of the legal requirement to withdraw the request if the case is settled in a resolution session. A similar form is sent to each special education director, also, requesting notification if the case is settled at the resolution session.

The BSEA has also continued to disseminate information about due process requirements during its annual trainings with special education directors and representatives of educational collaboratives throughout the state.

Effective July 1, 2010, the BSEA was transferred from MASSDE to the Massachusetts Division of Administrative Law Appeals (DALA). Although the BSEA has always been an impartial agency, free from decision-making review by or influence of MASSDE, the establishment of the BSEA as a separate subdivision of DALA was done at the instruction of the Office of Special Education and Rehabilitative Services (OSERS) by letter dated January 15, 2009, in response to a request for guidance from the Massachusetts Commissioner of Education. While MASSDE will continue to provide general oversight to the BSEA that is necessary for ensuring compliance with the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), 20 U.S.C. § 1400 et seq., DALA and the BSEA director will work together to manage the Bureau and its functions.

As part of this restructuring, beginning in FFY 2010 the BSEA and DALA will be reviewing all timeline and reporting requirements under the IDEA and state special education law and regulations, and assessing current systems to determine what changes are needed. The need for upgrading data and tracking systems, forms, instructions and other written materials, and systems for data collection will be evaluated, and necessary changes will be made to them. MASSDE will report on the results of these activities in the FFY 2010 APR.
Revisions, with Justification, to Proposed Targets / Improvement Activities / Timelines / Resources for FFY 2009 (2009-2010):

Targets, improvement activities, timelines, and resources for Indicator 17 have been amended in the Massachusetts Part B State Performance Plan (MA SPP). They include targets for FFY 2011 and FFY 2012, and a revised target for FFY 2010. These targets, expressed in a range, are consistent with OSEP’s recommendation and were developed in consultation with the Massachusetts Statewide Special Education Steering Committee. Please see the Indicator 18 MA SPP for more information.
Overview of the Annual Performance Report Development:

**Monitoring Priority: Effective General Supervision Part B / General Supervision**

**Indicator 19:** Percent of mediations held that resulted in mediation agreements.

(20 U.S.C. 1416(a)(3)(B))

**Measurement:** Percent = \([(2.1(a)(i) + 2.1(b)(i)) \text{ divided by } 2.1] \times 100.\)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>FFY</th>
<th>Measurable and Rigorous Target</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2009</td>
<td>75% - 86%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(2009-2010)</td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>

**Actual Target Data for FFY 2009:** \([(35 + 706) / 854] \times 100 = 86.8\% \)

2.1 – Mediations held: 854
2.1(a)(i) – Mediation agreements related to due process complaints: 35
2.1(b)(i) – Mediation agreements not related to due process: 706

MASSDE is submitting with this report Table 7 Report: of Dispute Resolution Under Part B of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act, 2009-2010, to document the data reported for Indicator 19. Please see Appendix E.

**Discussion of Improvement Activities Completed and Explanation of Progress or Slippage that occurred for FFY 2009 (2009-2010):**

**Explanation of Progress or Slippage**

The MASSDE mediation program is managed by the Bureau of Special Education Appeals (BSEA). Of the 854 mediations held in FFY 2009, agreements were reached in 35 of them that were related to due process complaints, and 706 resulting agreements were not related to due process complaints. Agreements were reached in 86.8% of mediations held in FFY 2009. This result is consistent with national mediation success rate data that are reflected in the measurable and rigorous targets for Indicator 19. As demonstrated in the chart below, MASSDE’s results for Indicator 19 have been relatively consistent since FFY 2005, the first reporting year. In FFY 2009, MASSDE exceeded its measurable and rigorous target.
Improvement Activities

In FFY 2009, BSEA staff continued to focus on training and technical assistance in special education mediations to improve understanding of the mediation process. Each year, mediation staff participates in statewide training programs with the Federation for Special Needs and other organizations on due process. These sessions focus, in part, on the mediation process and how it works. The increasing understanding by school districts, parents, and advocates of this dispute resolution resource has resulted in an increase each year in the number of mediations held.

Effective July 1, 2010, the BSEA was transferred from MASSDE to the Massachusetts Division of Administrative Law Appeals (DALA). Although the BSEA has always been an impartial agency, free from decision-making review by or influence of MASSDE, the establishment of the BSEA as a separate subdivision of DALA was done at the instruction of the Office of Special Education and Rehabilitative Services (OSERS) by letter dated January 15, 2009, in response to a request for guidance from the Massachusetts Commissioner of Education. While MASSDE will continue to provide general oversight to the BSEA that is necessary for ensuring compliance with the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), 20 U.S.C. § 1400 et seq., DALA and the BSEA director will work together to manage the Bureau and its functions.

As part of this restructuring, beginning in FFY 2010 the BSEA and DALA will be reviewing all requirements under the IDEA and state special education law and regulations, and assessing current systems to determine what administrative changes are needed. The need for upgrading data and tracking systems, forms, instructions, and other written materials about mediation, and systems for data collection will be evaluated, and necessary changes will be made to them. MASSDE will report on the results of these activities in the FFY 2010 APR.

Revisions, with Justification, to Proposed Targets / Improvement Activities / Timelines / Resources for FFY 2009 (2009-2010):

Targets, improvement activities, timelines, and resources for Indicator 19 have been amended in the Massachusetts Part B State Performance Plan (MA SPP) to include FFY 2011 and FFY 2012, and were developed in consultation with the Massachusetts Statewide Special Education Steering Committee. Please see the Indicator 19 MA SPP for more information.
Overview of the Annual Performance Report Development:

Monitoring Priority: Effective General Supervision Part B / General Supervision

Indicator 20: State reported data (618 and State Performance Plan and Annual Performance Report) are timely and accurate.

(20 U.S.C. 1416(a)(3)(B))

**Measurement:**
State reported data, including 618 data, State Performance Plan, and Annual Performance Reports, are:

a. Submitted on or before due dates (February 1 for child count, including race and ethnicity; placement; November 1 for exiting, discipline, personnel and dispute resolution; and February 1 for Annual Performance Reports and assessment); and

b. Accurate, including covering the correct year and following the correct measurement.

States are required to use the “Indicator 20 Scoring Rubric” for reporting data for this indicator (see Appendix F).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>FFY</th>
<th>Measurable and Rigorous Target</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2009 (2009-2010)</td>
<td>100%</td>
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</table>

Actual Target Data for FFY 2009 (2009-2010): a. 100% of data submitted on or before due-dates  
b. 100% of data submitted accurately

**Indicator #20 Calculation**

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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A. APR Grand Total</td>
<td>43</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B. 618 Grand Total</td>
<td>45</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C. APR Grand Total (A) + 618 Grand Total (B) =</td>
<td>88</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total N/A in APR</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total N/A in 618</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Base</strong></td>
<td><strong>88</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D. Subtotal (C divided by Base*) =</td>
<td>1.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>E. Indicator Score (Subtotal D x 100) =</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The target data for FFY 2009 were based on MASSDE’s ability to produce its required data submissions for FFY 2009 (618 data: Tables 1-7, and the APR submission) in a manner consistent with OSEP’s data submission requirements. The percent compliance indicates the percentage of data submissions that
were deemed to be successfully submitted for FFY 2009. For further explanation on how this calculation was derived, please refer to the scoring rubric located in Appendix F.

Discussion of Improvement Activities Completed and Explanation of Progress or Slippage that occurred for FFY 2009 (2009-2010):

Explanation of Progress or Slippage
MASSDE has improved its performance on Indicator 20 over the FFY 2008 score of 97.7% and met its measurable and rigorous target in FFY 2009. Using the Indicator 20 scoring rubrics, data for all seven 618 tables and 19 SPP/APR indicators are considered timely and complete, and have passed edit checks.

The figures in the APR Table included in Appendix F of this report were reviewed in the clarification period to reflect submission by MASSDE of valid and reliable data, and correct calculations for Indicators 4A, 5, 12, and 14 that OSEP identified in the Part B SPP/APR Status Table. Also, because MASSDE was not required to submit data for Indicator 8 during this reporting period because all districts reported at least once during the SPP cycle, MASSDE has amended the APR Score Calculation and Base to reflect the adjusted total points. See the Indicator 8 APR for more information.

Improvement Activities
MASSDE continued to improve its data collection systems with more rigorous validation rules, and refined definitions for reporting categories. Technical supports and trainings for districts on data collection resources and procedures continue to be held throughout the year to support school district compliance with data reporting requirements. These efforts have resulted in more accurate, timely, and reliable data. In addition, to improve its efforts to collect and report data timely and accurately, MASSDE participated in trainings developed and offered by the Data Accountability Center (DAC), the Council of Chief State School Officers (CCSSO), and others. MASSDE will continue to use these and other available resources to maintain its excellent performance in providing timely and accurate data through future 618 data as well as SPP/APR data submissions.

Revisions, with Justification, to Proposed Targets / Improvement Activities / Timelines / Resources for FFY 2009 (2009-2010):
Targets, improvement activities, timelines, and resources for Indicator 20 have been amended in the Massachusetts Part B State Performance Plan (MA SPP) to include the extended SPP reporting period for FFY 2011 and FFY 2012, consistent with OSEP’s instructions and following consultation with the Massachusetts Statewide Special Education Steering Committee. Please see the Indicator 20 MA SPP for more information.
Appendix A: Description of Selected Cross-Cutting Improvement Activities (FFY 2009)

Many of the MASSDE improvement activities are cross-cutting; they have an effect on multiple indicator areas. The MA SPP Improvement Activity charts for each indicator list the activities that relate to that particular indicator. Below is a more complete description of the cross-cutting activities.

Contents of Appendix A:

- ARRA Entitlement Grants
- ARRA Title II-D Technology Competitive Grants Programs
- Central Massachusetts Communities of Care Positive Behavioral Interventions (PBIS) Grant – Fund Code 250
- Closing the Achievement Gaps Legislation
- Closing the Early Literacy Gap for Students with Disabilities – Fund Code 297
- Collaboration between MASSDE Curriculum and Instruction Math Office and Special Education Planning and Policy Development Office (SEPP)
- Collaboration with Federation for Children with Special Needs
- Collaboration with Stakeholders
- Community/Residential Education Project
- Comprehensive System of Personnel Development Training Project (CSPD)
- Curriculum, Instruction, and Assessment Summit
- District and School Assistance Centers (DSACs)
- Dropout Prevention and Recovery Workgroup
- Dropout Prevention, Intervention, and Recovery Website
- Early Childhood Special Education Professional Development
- Early Warning Indicator Index (EWII)
- Educational Proficiency Plans (EPPs)
- Emergent Literacy Grant
- Federal School Turnaround Grants
- Graduation and Dropout Prevention and Recovery Commission
- Inclusive Concurrent Enrollment Partnership Programs for Students with Disabilities
- Massachusetts FOCUS Academy (MFA)
- Massachusetts Task Force on Behavioral Health and Public Schools
- Massachusetts Online Resource Library
- National Association of State Directors of Special Education (NASDSE) Professional Development Series
- Preschool to Grade 3 Curriculum, Instruction, and Assessment Alignment Project - Fund Code 264A and 264B
- Procedures for Timely Verification of Correction of Noncompliance
- Project FOCUS Academy
- Revision of “Is Special Education the Right Service?” (ISERS)
- Revision of “Ten Step Guide for Comprehensive Educational Assessment of Students with Visual Impairments”
- Secondary School Reading Grant
- Secondary Transition - TransitionWorks: Innovative Strategies for Transitioning Youth with Disabilities from School to Work
- Self-Assessment Disproportionality Tool for Districts
- Sign Language Video Resource Library
- Special EDITION Online Newsletter
- Special Education Leadership Academies and Seminars
- Special Education Professional Development Summer Institutes
- Special Education Program Improvement Grants – Fund Code 274
- Special Education Program Improvement Grants – Fund Code 249
- Special Education Website
- Trauma Sensitive Schools Initiative
- Work-Based Learning Plans for Students with Disabilities
ARRA Entitlement Grants

Indicators 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 11, 12, 13, 14

Massachusetts school districts allocated funds from the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA) to a variety of activities designed to improve outcomes for students with disabilities, including but not limited to:

- professional development for special educators and general educators in inclusive classrooms, administrators, and related service providers;
- new and/or expanded programs designed for special populations such as students on the Autism Spectrum, dropout prevention and recovery, reading disabilities, etc.;
- hiring consultants to evaluate programs and practices, and provide technical assistance for designing systemic changes to improve them;
- creating positive learning environments;
- collaborating with other districts to develop and implement new programs, especially for high school students, to provide transitional services including career and college preparation;
- hiring support staff including guidance counselors, school social workers, school adjustment counselors, etc., with particular therapeutic and counseling skills for this population;
- updating technology, including low and high tech systems and equipment for direct instruction, monitoring progress, and reporting data; and
- other innovative initiatives specific to characteristics and needs of the districts.

ARRA Title II-D Technology Competitive Grants Program – MASSDE Student Support Services Unit

Indicators 1, 2, 4, 14

The purpose of this federal grant program is to improve student achievement through the effective use of technology in elementary and secondary schools. This program supports proposals that create robust, technology-infused environments that sustain the following four priority areas:

1. Projects that work collaboratively with MASSDE to create, implement, and evaluate online courses/modules for underserved high school students in alternative education, credit recovery, or credit acceleration programs. Grant recipients may adapt an online course/module, or partner with an organization to design and develop the online courses/modules that align with the Massachusetts Curriculum Frameworks or the Massachusetts High School Program of Studies (MassCore). Products created must be in a format that can be shared with MASSDE; successful models will be disseminated and used by other districts.

2. Projects that create effective technology-rich environments that support existing tiered-instruction in English language arts and Mathematics. The tiered-instruction may include all three levels: core instruction, supplemental instruction, and intensive intervention on any one level.

3. Projects in which the grant recipients will work collaboratively with MASSDE’s partners (e.g., WGBH Teachers’ Domain, Verizon Thinkfinity) or other research-based successful models, to:
   a. design, develop, and implement online professional development;
   b. mentor participating teachers who are teaching in technology-rich classrooms;
   c. support participating teachers to reflect and refine their teaching; and
   d. select promising practices that integrate technology into curriculum and instruction.

4. Projects that use appropriate technology effectively to implement formative, benchmark, and summative (MEPA) assessments, particularly in schools that have high number of English language learner (ELL) students.
Central Massachusetts Communities of Care Positive Behavioral Interventions (PBIS) Grant  Fund Code 250

Indicators 2, 4, 5

The purpose of this grant program is to support the partnership of select school districts in Worcester County with the Central Massachusetts Communities of Care Project (CMCC) to develop and implement PBIS, a tiered system for improving school climate by supporting positive behaviors throughout the school. Schools participating in the grant program receive PBIS training, associated technical assistance, and other resources from the CMCC. CMCC is a provider of care management services for youth with serious emotional disturbance, with community-based family centers in Worcester County. The priorities of the grant program are to:

- Increase the capacity of school districts in Worcester County to foster positive school climates, support positive behaviors throughout participating schools, and to reduce disruptive behaviors; and
- Increase participating schools’ ability to identify students, grades 4-8, in need of mental health services, and to respond to the need for intensive support via both internal capacity and community-based mental health providers.

The goal of the school district-CMCC partnership is to identify at-risk students who are in need of mental health services and to reduce and/or prevent court involvement among students with emotional impairments. Participating districts receive professional development as well as onsite assistance in the development and implementation of the principles of PBIS. The training from this grant is designed to ensure sustainable implementation and long-term success of this initiative in participating schools.

Closing the Achievement Gaps Legislation

Indicators 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 14

On January 18, 2010, Massachusetts enacted this education reform legislation to intervene in underperforming (Level 4) schools. The schools identified are targeted for aggressive intervention that is focused on a plan developed in collaboration with the superintendent, the school committee, the local teachers’ union, administrators, teachers, community representatives, and parents.

Closing the Early Literacy Gap for Students with Disabilities – Fund Code 297

Indicators 6, 7, 8, 12

The purpose of this competitive grant opportunity is to support the development of strategic literacy action plans to enhance and align educational systems, curriculum, and instructional practices across public preschool and/or kindergarten programs, Head Start, and community-based early childhood education programs. The strategic action plans help to ensure that all programs serving students with disabilities, ages 3-5, are effective, engaging, developmentally appropriate, and designed to create seamless transitions across environments and into the next phase of the students’ education. District study teams assess current language and literacy strategies and practices, literacy intervention and differentiated strategies, and ways to use information from students’ IEPs to support language and literacy across the curriculum and in the school environment.

Collaboration between MASSDE’s Curriculum and Instruction Math Office and Special Education Planning and Policy Development Office (SEPP)

Indicators 3, 5

With input and guidance from the urban superintendents, the Massachusetts Urban Math Liaisons network (Mathematics directors providing guidance and support in Mathematics in Massachusetts public schools) identified the supporting students with disabilities in Mathematics as a critical priority in the urban districts. In response to this need, the Math Specialist Support group dedicated its meetings to developing a district level collaboration between special educators and math specialists. The learning objectives for the collaboration include:
1. creating sense-making opportunities regarding the necessity of, and resources for, promoting the belief that students with disabilities can learn rigorous Mathematics and deserve a chance to learn high quality and higher order Mathematics;
2. developing an understanding of what contributes to students with disabilities having difficulty learning Mathematics, by exploring research findings and listening to experts on the subject;
3. articulating necessary practices and strategies to support students with difficulties in Mathematics, and identifying strategic customization of instructional practices; and
4. identifying district and school structures and supports for students with disabilities learning Mathematics, including professional development, coaching, curriculum needs, policy, and time for collaboration.

Collaboration with Federation for Children with Special Needs

**Indicators 3, 5, 6, 7, 8, 12, 13**

MASSDE has a longstanding relationship with the Federation for Children with Special Needs (FCSN), the Parent Training and Information Center federally funded to provide free information, support, technical assistance, and workshops to Massachusetts’ families who have children with disabilities. FCSN provides training and technical assistance to families throughout Massachusetts on behalf of MASSDE. Training topics include:

- Transition from Early Intervention to Special Education
- Parents’ Rights
- IEPs
- The Massachusetts Comprehensive Assessment System (MCAS)
- Transition 101
- Understanding My Child’s Learning Style

FCSN is a key partner of MASSDE in writing and implementing the State Personnel Development Grants. Responsibilities of FCSN include the developing and providing instruction for 3-credit graduate level courses for Massachusetts educators on ways to work with parents. Additional responsibilities include the creating self-guided modules for parents and families on successful transition for middle and high school students, and developing alternate version of these modules for special populations such as Spanish speakers. Staff from FCSN facilitates collaboration between district staff and parents through the A.P.P.L.E. model. Also, FCSN participates in the state stakeholder input opportunities, assists in developing MASSDE technical assistance documents, and has included MASSDE staff as presenters in the annual Visions of Community conference.

Collaboration with Stakeholders

**All Indicators**

**Special Education Advisory Council (SAC)** – The SAC is a group of parents and professionals charged under federal and state special education laws to provide policy guidance to MASSDE on issues affecting special education and related services for students with disabilities within the Commonwealth. The SAC’s responsibilities include:

- advising MASSDE on unmet needs within the state in the education of students with disabilities;
- providing public comment on proposed rules and regulations for special education;
- advising MASSDE on developing evaluations and corrective action plans; and
- assisting in coordinating services to students with disabilities.

**Statewide Special Education Steering Committee** – Stakeholders from across disciplines, including parent, educators, administrators, advocates, and agency representatives, meet annually as members of the Steering Committee to:

- review baseline and current data (618 data and monitoring data);
- identify areas in need of attention; and
- plan for improvement activities.
Community/Residential Education Project – Massachusetts Department of Developmental Services (MDDS)

Indicators 5, 13, 14

The Community/Residential Education Project was developed through an interagency agreement between MASSDE and MDDS. The project’s goal is to facilitate effective transitions from school life to more independent life within the community of students receiving publicly funded special education services who also meet the MDDS eligibility criteria for services. This goal is accomplished by supporting less restrictive, more cost effective residential options, special education services, and community based supports.

The project provides greater flexibility in service delivery based on individual support needs. Supports are provided to participants and their families to increase the family’s capacity to care for their child in the home, and/or increase the participants’ and families’ capacity for effective interactions within the home and with the community. Students participating in this project may return home from residential education placements, or utilize the project to obtain a diverse array of supports in their home communities as an alternative to an initial residential special education school placement.

Comprehensive System of Personnel Development (CSPD) Training Project

Indicators 3, 5, 11, 13, 14

The CSPD Training Project was developed as a response to requirements of the Individuals with Disabilities Education (IDEA) 97 that required states to develop a multifaceted approach to personnel development under regulations for CSPD. To fulfill this obligation, MASSDE's Special Education Planning and Policy Development Office (SEPP) instituted a series of training activities to supplement ongoing personnel preparation activities that are provided within school districts and other agencies.

The CSPD Training Project presently consists of three components:

1. **Training Modules**: SEPP offers training units to assist school districts and other agencies in providing high quality professional development on special education related topics. The units consist of annotated PowerPoint Presentations, and in some cases, supplemental handouts. Topics include:
   a. The Massachusetts IEP Process
   b. A Principal’s Role and Special Education in Massachusetts
   c. Is Special Education the Right Service?
   d. Transition From Adolescence Into Adulthood in Massachusetts
   e. The Massachusetts Transition Planning Chart and Effective Transition Planning
   f. Specific Learning Disabilities: Eligibility Determination under IDEA 2004

2. **CSPD Trainers**: SEPP has contracted with a limited number of trainers who receive ongoing training on the CSPD Training Modules. CSPD Trainers work with groups of 50+ individuals in public schools, and approved special education schools. Requests for training for groups larger than 50 people serving multiple districts and/or agencies are given priority.

3. **CSPD Districts**: The 40 largest districts in Massachusetts may send the districts’ professional development provider to training sessions on the modules. It is an opportunity for participants to affect MASSDE work (including the development of new modules) and network with colleagues.

Curriculum, Instruction, and Assessment Summit

Indicators 1, 2, 3, 4, 8

MASSDE holds an annual Curriculum, Instruction, and Assessment Summit to:

- share MASSDE resources for strengthening curriculum, instruction, and assessment;
- identify needs for future development of curriculum resources and technical assistance; and
- build capacity of the MASSDE, districts, and schools through regional partnerships.
District and School Assistance Centers (DSACs) – MASSDE Center for School & District Accountability

*Indicators 2, 3, 4, 5, 13*

During FFY 2009, MASSDE opened six regionally based DSACs to help identified districts and their schools use professional development and targeted assistance to improve instruction and raise achievement for all students. DSACs use a regional approach that leverages the knowledge, skills, and expertise of local educators to address shared needs through an emphasis on expanding district and school capacity for sustained improvement. Focused professional development offerings are directed at building essential knowledge and skills of educational leaders and teachers in major content areas and for key student groups. In FFY 2009, the professional development offerings designed to help educators improve the outcomes for students with disabilities included graduate level courses on *Universal Design for Learning*, *Creating Positive Learning Environments*, *Youth Development and Self-Determination*, and *Transition Planning*. Additionally, Mathematics Specialists focus on helping general and special educators develop the necessary skills to help improve the Mathematics skills of students with disabilities.

Dropout Prevention and Recovery Workgroup – MASSDE Urban & Commissioner’s Districts Unit and Secondary Support Services Unit

*Indicators 1, 2, 4, 14*

The Workgroup is supported by both the Urban and Commissioner’s Districts unit and the Secondary Support Services unit of MASSDE. The Workgroup is made up of 18 urban districts whose combined number of student dropouts represents almost half of the total number of students in the Commonwealth who drop out of school. This year, the group expanded its outreach to 77 urban districts that had at least one school with a dropout rate that exceeded the state’s rate. One hundred and thirty-three high schools that met this criterion. The Workgroup’s focus is on facilitating the sharing of promising practices among districts, and supporting districts’ team activities through face-to-face meetings and webinars. Districts host the meetings, which usually include a short, formal presentation of the host districts’ initiatives and opportunities to observe the activities described, brainstorm ideas and resources, and provide support and technical assistance to each other.

Dropout Prevention, Intervention, and Recovery Website – MASSDE Student Support and Secondary School Services Unit

*Indicators 1, 2, 4, 14*

The website describes information and resources including an extensive collection of dropout reduction related articles/reports, other websites, dropout data overview information, and descriptions of state activities. New promising practices are added as they are developed and evaluated.

Early Childhood Special Education Professional Development

*Indicators 6, 7, 8, 12*

In FFY 2009, MASSDE and the Massachusetts Department of Early Education and Care (MEEC) co-sponsored two training series and a Special Education Professional Development Summer Institute for public preschool and kindergarten staff and other early childhood professionals working in programs that serve young students with disabilities. The series’ offered 2 training days focused on strengthening knowledge and skills of administrators, teachers, and paraprofessionals. The first series addressed inclusion of young children with a diagnosis on the Autism Spectrum. The second series focused on issues related to behavioral health and ways to address challenging behaviors in order to create meaningful inclusive opportunities for children with disabilities.

Early Warning Indicator Index (EWII)

*Indicators 1, 2, 3, 4, 14*

Using a statistical regression model, MASSDE developed a predictive tool to identify students at risk for not graduating in four years or less of high school. Based on middle school data (grade 7 and 8), ninth graders from several urban districts are grouped according to five at-risk categories designated by degrees of risk.
The findings are distributed to the appropriate districts to allow them to design targeted, student-centered interventions. This project will be made available to all districts in FFY 2010.

**Educational Proficiency Plans (EPP) – MASSDE Student Support and Secondary School Services Unit**

*Indicators 1, 2, 3, 4, 13, 14*

An EPP is an educational planning tool to be developed for the subject area(s) in which a student does not score at least 240 or above on the grade 10 English Language Arts (ELA) and Mathematics Massachusetts Comprehensive Assessment System (MCAS). An EPP includes:

- a review of the student's strengths and weaknesses based on MCAS and other assessment results, coursework, grades, and teacher input;
- the courses the student will be required to take and successfully complete in grades 11 and 12 in the relevant content area(s); and
- a description of the assessments the school will administer to the student annually to determine whether s/he is making progress toward proficiency.

The EPP requirement is intended to increase the likelihood that students graduating from high school have the requisite skills needed for postsecondary success. Students are encouraged to and supported in taking challenging courses that will better prepare them for postsecondary educational or career opportunities. For students with disabilities, MASSDE recommends that students' IEPs are used to assist in identifying students' strengths and weaknesses in the learning environment as the EPP is developed.

**Emergent Literacy Grant**

*Indicators 3, 5, 6*

In order to increase districts’ capacity to support all learners in emergent literacy, the Center for Applied Special Technology (CAST) provided training to educators and parents in the use of research-based, universally-designed technology for developing literacy skills in early learners, especially those with cognitive disabilities, in an inclusive environment. During the three years of the project (2004-2006), seventeen school districts that were involved in the Massachusetts Comprehensive System of Personnel Development participated in the "Universally-Designed Technology for Literacy" project. For more information, see [http://madoe.cast.org/](http://madoe.cast.org/).

**Federal School Turnaround Grants**

*Indicators 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 8*

These USED competitive grants are for states to use to assist the lowest performing schools. Districts with one or more Level 4 schools are eligible to apply. MASSDE awards grants based on the plans districts develop under the Closing the Achievement Gaps legislation. Districts applying for the grants are required to choose one of four prescribed intervention models and demonstrate capacity to implement that model effectively over three years. The four models are:

1. Turnaround
2. Transformation
3. Close/Consolidate
4. Restart

To date, MASSDE has identified thirty-five schools in nine districts as Level 4.

**Graduation and Dropout Prevention and Recovery Commission – MASSDE Student Support and Secondary School Services Unit**

*Indicators 1, 2, 14*

In August 2008, the Massachusetts State Legislature passed [An Act to Improve Dropout Prevention and Reporting of Graduation Rates](http://www.mass.gov), which established a Commission to make recommendations in 10 topic areas. The Massachusetts Executive Office of Education (MEOE) released the final Commission report, *Making the Connection*, in October 2009. The report includes findings and recommendations in four main areas: 1) new statewide expectations; 2) early identification; 3) effective prevention, interventions, and
recovery; and 4) responsive reforms and budget priorities.

### Inclusive Concurrent Enrollment Partnership Programs for Students with Disabilities

**Indicators 5, 13, 14**

This state-funded pilot grant program is designed to build and expand partnerships between high schools in public school districts and partnering state public institutions of higher education to offer inclusive concurrent enrollment opportunities for students with significant disabilities, ages 18-22, in credit or non-credit courses that include non-disabled students. These partnerships will result in improved systems that better serve students with disabilities and support their college and work success.

The partnership programs are designed to: 1) promote and enhance academic, social, functional, and employment skills and outcomes; 2) provide opportunities for students with severe disabilities to participate with their non-disabled peers in inclusive credit or non-credit courses; and 3) promote students’ participation in the student life of the college community.

As part of the improvement and expansion of these programs, partnerships continue to develop their programs to include individualized community-based integrated employment opportunities that align with participating student career goals and course selection.

### Massachusetts FOCUS Academy (MFA)

**Indicators 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 8, 13, 14**

MFA is a federally funded five-year grant (SPDG) that builds upon the previous successes of Project FOCUS and Project FOCUS Academy (PFA). The grant program provides online professional development opportunities and leadership institutes to educators, families, and other stakeholders on a variety of topics related to instructing students with disabilities, with a particular focus on middle and high schools. Course offerings include *Universal Design for Learning; Positive Behavioral Supports; Family Engagement; Post-Secondary Transition; Differentiated Instruction; Collaborative Teaching Model;* and *Generalist Transition Courses I and II.* A new course in FFY 2009 entitled *Teacher-Leadership* is designed to prepare participants to assume leadership roles in their schools as demonstrated by their design, implementation, and evaluation of professional development activities that increase the capacity of the district in one of the focused content areas described above. Candidates are invited to participate based on their completion of all of the courses offered in one of the content areas, and a recommendation from the instructor(s). The MFA courses are research-based, have the rigor and expectations of three or four credit graduate level courses, and target areas that increase teacher effectiveness and affect student outcomes.

### Massachusetts Task Force on Behavioral Health and Public Schools

**Indicators 1, 2, 4, 5, 6, 8, 14**

Section 19 of Chapter 321 of the Acts of 2008 required the creation of the Task Force on Behavioral Health and Public Schools. Since January 2009, the Task Force worked to create a framework for supportive school environments, and developed a self-assessment tool to improve educational outcomes for students with behavioral health needs and to assist school environments in fostering effective collaboration with community based behavioral health providers. The framework addresses areas such as school leadership, professional development, access to behavioral health services, effective academic and non-academic supports, family engagement, and referral policies and protocols. The self-assessment tool measures schools’ capacity to address students’ behavioral health needs and to identify issues and areas that need further state and/or local support and focus.

### Massachusetts Online Resource Library

**Indicators 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 8, 9, 10, 13, 14**

MASSDE/SEPP is developing an online Resource Library to highlight OSEP Funded Technical Assistance and Dissemination Resources and other online resources. This resource is designed to provide evidence-based practices in professional development. The library will include information on the IRIS Center; Access Center: Improving Outcomes for Students K-8; Center for Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports (PBIS); National Center on Response to Intervention; and the NASDSE Professional Development Series.
### National Association of State Directors of Special Education (NASDSE) Professional Development Series

**Indicators 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 13, 14**

NASDSE, with support from the Pennsylvania Department of Education and the Pennsylvania Training and Technical Assistance Network (PaTTAN), offers the NASDSE Professional Development Series. These conferences bring nationally recognized experts to the states using technology, providing an affordable means of quality personnel development for a variety of stakeholders. Experts provide important information on high-interest topics to audiences that include state directors of special education, state agency staff, local administrators, teachers, related service providers, higher education faculty, families, and other stakeholders.

Conference topics that are made available via satellite, streaming video, and/or DVD, have included:

- Seclusion and Restraint: The Impact of Federal and State Policy on the Classroom
- Healthy, Physically Fit and Ready for Action: Addressing the Physical Education and Activity Needs of Individuals with Disabilities
- Connecting Educational Standards to Student Learning Plans
- Policy to the Classroom

### Preschool to Grade 3 Curriculum, Instruction, and Assessment Alignment Project - Fund Code 264A & 264B

**Indicators 5, 6, 7, 8, 12**

The purpose of this three-year grant program is to identify and support strategies and resources to increase districts’ capacity to improve the quality of education and inclusion of children with disabilities by aligning and coordinating curriculum, instruction, and assessment from Preschool to Grade 3.

Planning grantees (264A) research, discuss, and document their strategies, training, and progress within and/or across the age span, with a focus on how students with disabilities access the general curriculum. The teams bring together early childhood educators, elementary school staff, special education professionals, administrators, and parents to explore the alignment of curriculum, instruction, and assessment in inclusive classrooms; identify best practices to support all students along the pre-K to grade 3 continuum; and prioritize areas of strength and needed improvement.

Teams in the continuation year (264B) implement 2-3 strategies that have been identified during the planning year as a means of strengthening inclusion practices and building a continuum in the early elementary grades. FFY 2010 will be the final year of funding for Fund Code 264B; best practices and outcomes will be reported and disseminated statewide.

### Procedures for Timely Verification of Correction of Noncompliance

**Indicators 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 15, 16**

Using updated guidance from the Office of Special Education Programs (OSEP) and other technical assistance sources, MASSDE reviewed and revised procedures for verifying correction of noncompliance for the above-referenced indicators in accordance with OSEP Memorandum 09-02 from October 17, 2008. Verification activities include:

1. If needed, changing, or requiring each district to change, policies, procedures and/or practices that
for noncompliance concerning a child-specific requirement, requiring each district to submit updated
data demonstrating that each district has corrected each individual case of noncompliance or
completed the required action, although late, unless the child is no longer within the jurisdiction of the
district; and
(3) requiring each district to submit updated data for review to demonstrate that each district is correctly
implementing the specific regulatory requirements (i.e., achieved 100% compliance).

When data reflects that each instance of child-specific noncompliance has been remedied, and that the
district is 100% compliant with the specific regulatory requirements, MASSDE notifies the district in writing
that it has verified correction of identified noncompliance.

### Project FOCUS Academy

**Indicators: 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 8, 13, 14**

In the fall of 2004, MASSDE was awarded a three-year U.S. Department of Education (USDOE) funded State
Improvement Grant (SIG) - Project FOCUS Academy (PFA). Project FOCUS Academy was designed to
develop professional development programs to help students with disabilities build sound career goals and
learn skills to ensure successful postsecondary outcomes. As part of the SIG, MASSDE worked with
educators from selected high schools. The project’s design required study groups from high schools to
participate in face-to-face and distance-learning professional development opportunities in the areas of:

- Transition/Post-Secondary Outcomes;
- School-wide Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports;
- Universal Design for Learning; and
- Family Participation.

The distance-learning model was offered through MASSDE’s Massachusetts Online Network for Education
(MassONE).

### Revision of “Is Special Education the Right Service?” (ISERS)

**Indicators: 3, 5, 6, 9, 10**

The ISERS document offers guidance for practitioners and parents on how to:

- identify students with disabilities;
- be knowledgeable of updated regulations and characteristics of disabilities;
- define appropriate services and interventions; and
- ensure a responsive general education environment for all students.

Revision began in March, 2009 with the convening of Disability Workgroups composed of experts in each of
the areas of disability to review the current document for accuracy and relevance in light of new research and
current practices.

### Revision of “Ten Step Guide for Comprehensive Educational Assessment of Students with
Visual Impairments”

**Indicators: 3, 5, 6, 11, 13**

The “Ten Step Guide”: 1) recommends types of assessments that are useful in making a determination of
eligibility for a student with a visual impairment for the initial eligibility determination or three-year
reevaluation; 2) helps to ensure a common understanding of the purpose and complexity of conducting the
specialized educational assessment of students with visual impairments; and 3) provides resources to help
educators meet the unique needs of students with visual impairments, and to prepare them for further
education, employment, and independent living.

Members of the Vision Impairment Disability Workgroup, working with other experts in the fields of diagnosis,
treatment, education, and training of students with visual impairments, have collaborated to revise the “Ten
Step Guide” to reflect updated regulatory information and include best practices. The revised guide includes
a new section describing the “hidden” characteristics of a vision loss that affect academic and social factors.
Understanding these characteristics will enable non-vision specialists to facilitate meaningful inclusion and
participation of students with visual impairments throughout the school day. The revised document will be re-formatted for use as a web-based resource.

### Secondary School Reading Grant

**Indicators 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 14**

The Massachusetts Middle and High School Reading Initiative project began in 2002 with the development of the Massachusetts Secondary Literacy Framework. This framework includes three key components: reading instruction for all students, additional intervention programs for struggling readers, and a comprehensive reading assessment system. The model's school-wide approach is based on eight fundamental principles: (1) involvement of all staff in literacy instruction; (2) a focus on reading across the content areas; (3) multiple interventions for struggling readers; (4) professional development for all staff; (5) adequate time for reading and writing in the school schedule; (6) flexible grouping patterns; (7) assessment that drives instruction; and (8) leadership support and guidance.

Recipient schools receive small planning grants to form reading leadership teams and to develop a school profile of current practices and a related school action plan. For three succeeding years, schools then receive small grants to implement one or more elements of their action plans. In addition to receiving a small grant, schools come together in network meetings three times a year to discuss current research on adolescent literacy and share their efforts to improve adolescent literacy achievement. Members of the Reading Leadership Team at each school (which consists of a cross-section of staff, including representatives from all content areas and special programs) attend these meetings.

Topics discussed include: Creating a School-wide Approach to Improving Reading; Assessing Literacy Needs; Vocabulary Development; Improving Comprehension; Motivation; Helping the Struggling Adolescent Reader; Content Area Literacy; and Effective Writing Instruction. Participants have had an opportunity to hear from a number of national literacy experts, including Cathy Collins Block, Dorothy Strickland, Tim Shanahan, Donald Deshler, Steve Graham, Donald Leu, and John Guthrie. Staff from project schools and other Massachusetts schools lead breakout sessions at each network meeting. These breakout sessions provide an opportunity for other project schools to learn about the promising practices that are being tried by other schools. At each meeting, school teams have a chance to meet with each other to reflect on the day's learning and to discuss implications for their schools.

### Secondary Transition - TransitionWorks: Innovative Strategies for Transitioning Youth with Disabilities from School to Work – Massachusetts Rehabilitation Commission (MRC) 5 Year Federal Grant

**Indicators 1, 2, 4, 13, 14**

TransitionWorks: Innovative Strategies for Transitioning Youth with Disabilities from School to Work, is a five-year grant from USED awarded to MRC to support transitioning youth with disabilities from school to work. The program focuses on aligning existing services and developing innovative practices. As part of this initiative, vocational rehabilitation counselors are partnering with local school districts to support youth with disabilities in their transitions from school to work, post-secondary education, and independent living. MASSDE, the Federation for Children with Special Needs, Urban Pride, Commonwealth Corporation, and the Institute for Community Inclusion are partnering with MRC to implement the grant activities.

### Self-Assessment Disproportionality Tool for Districts

**Indicators 9, 10**

Incorporated into technical assistance for flagged districts with disproportionate representation in special education, this self-assessment tool encourages districts to examine their own policies and procedures regarding special education eligibility and disability definition.
### Sign Language Video Resource Library

**Indicators 3, 5**

The purpose of this library project is to develop Mathematics and science/technology vocabulary reference tools that educational interpreters and teachers of students who are deaf or hard-of-hearing may incorporate into instruction. Available technical assistance will include written guides and DVDs. The design of the tool will be user-friendly, and promote ready access for end users. In addition, under this project, MASSDE provides a cost-free institute for educational interpreters to improve participants’ sign vocabulary in Mathematics and science/technology content areas for grades 7-12.

### Special Edition Online Newsletter

**All Indicators**

The purpose of this newsletter is to provide school districts with ongoing technical assistance and to prompt dialogue within, among, and between districts and MASSDE, organized around the State Performance Plan (SPP) indicators.

### Special Education Leadership Academies and Seminars

**Indicators 3, 5, 6, 8, 11**

As part of the Special Education Summer Institute, MASSDE annually provides two Special Education Leadership Academies. The academies provide opportunities for school district special education administrators to develop new leadership skills and to improve current skills. Academy I is open to administrators who have 1-5 years of experience; Academy II is for administrators with more than 5 years of experience. Both Academies provide professional development to administrators in the following areas:

- effective leadership in the areas of state and federal laws and regulations;
- fiscal administration;
- data collection and analysis;
- staff recruitment and retention;
- instructional program design and improvement; and
- access to the general curriculum based on the Massachusetts Curriculum Frameworks.

MASSDE sponsors ongoing leadership seminars for former participants of the Leadership Academies for participants to reconnect and network with their Academy colleagues and share effective practices, policies, strategies, and products.

### Special Education Professional Development Summer Institutes

**Indicators 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 11, 12, 13, 14**

The Special Education Summer Institutes are statewide professional development opportunities provided free of charge to special education professionals. Sponsored by MASSDE in partnership with school districts, educational collaboratives, institutions of higher education, and professional associations, the Institutes are designed to support approved private special education schools', educational collaboratives', and local school districts' efforts to increase the quality of programs and services provided to students with disabilities, and increase the number of highly qualified educators working in the field of special education. SEPP collaborates with the MASSDE Office of Curriculum and Instruction to provide professional development institutes in specific curriculum content areas. Some of the Special Education Institutes topics include:

- Access to Print: A Framework for All Learners
- Assessing English Language Learners (ELL) with Disabilities
- Effective Evaluation of Special Education Programs
- Language and Expository Discourse
- Managing Behavior in an Inclusive Classroom
- Mathematics and/or Science and Technology: American Sign Language (ASL) and Other Signed Systems
- Occupational Therapy Services in Educational Settings
- Strategies for Students with Sensory Integration Dysfunction in an Inclusive Classroom
- Sustaining Braille Proficiency of Licensed Teachers of Students with Visual Impairments
- Topics in Teaching Literacy to Students who are Deaf of Hard-of-hearing
- Special Education Professional Development Seminar for Educators of Students who are Deaf or Hard of Hearing

### Special Education Program Improvement Grants – Fund Code 274

**Indicators 3, 4, 5, 11**

The purpose of this grant program was to fund professional development activities to improve the skills and capacity of educators to meet the diverse needs of students with disabilities. Fund Code 274 was available to all public school districts and educational collaboratives (during FFY 2005 – FFY 2007). For FFY 2006 and FFY 2007, the priorities for Fund Code 274 were:

- Priority 1 - Enhancing Induction and Mentoring Programs *(required)*
- Priority 2a - Serving Students with Autism Spectrum Disorders in Inclusive Settings
- Priority 2b - Curriculum Development, Instruction, and Classroom Assessment
- Priority 2c - Meeting the Behavioral and Social Needs of a Diverse Student Population
- Priority 3 - Recruitment and/or Additional Professional Development Needs as Identified by the District or Educational Collaborative *(10% max could be used for this priority)*

Almost every school district in the state utilized Fund Code 274 funds, and participated in regional professional development conferences designed to support the priorities of the grant.

### Special Education Program Improvement Grants – Fund Code 249

**Indicators 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 12, 13**

The purpose of this grant program is to fund professional development activities that will help to improve the skills and capacity of educators to meet the diverse needs of students with disabilities. Its priorities are to enhance program-based induction, mentoring, and retention programs and to advance the skills of educators through professional development activities. Fund Code 249 is available to all approved private special education schools.


All funded programs must be effective, sustained, and intensive in order to have a positive and lasting positive influence on classroom instruction and outcomes for students with disabilities.

### Special Education Website

**All Indicators**

The Special Education section of MASSDE’s website provides a variety of tools, news items, and resources to districts, parents, and other stakeholders: [http://www.doe.mass.edu/sped/](http://www.doe.mass.edu/sped/). Some of the most visited sections of the website are:

- **Headlines:** [http://www.doe.mass.edu/sped/](http://www.doe.mass.edu/sped/)
- **Contact Us – Opportunity for external customers to request information/ask questions:** specialeducation@doe.mass.edu
- **Grants:** [http://www.doe.mass.edu/sped/grants.html](http://www.doe.mass.edu/sped/grants.html)
- **Training:** [http://www.doe.mass.edu/sped/training.html](http://www.doe.mass.edu/sped/training.html)
- **Forms and Notices:** [http://www.doe.mass.edu/sped/iep/](http://www.doe.mass.edu/sped/iep/)
- **Special Education Program Plan:** [http://www.doe.mass.edu/sped/programplan/](http://www.doe.mass.edu/sped/programplan/)
- **Special Education Data:** [http://profiles.doe.mass.edu/state_report/special_ed.aspx](http://profiles.doe.mass.edu/state_report/special_ed.aspx)
### Trauma Sensitive Schools Initiative – MASSDE Student Support Services Unit

**Indicators 1, 2, 4**

This MASSDE initiative focuses on the needs of students who have experienced or witnessed trauma by assisting with reducing the barriers that may affect academic performance, classroom behavior, and relationships that result from trauma. MASSDE is working to bring "trauma sensitive" practices to schools across the state through annual trainings and technical assistance that incorporate best practices and strategies for creating a safe supportive school environment where all students can learn, and where students are held to high expectations.

### Work-Based Learning Plans (WBLP) for Students with Disabilities – MASSDE Student Support, Career & Education Services

**Indicators 2, 4, 13, 14**

The Massachusetts WBLP is a diagnostic, goal-setting and assessment tool designed to drive student learning and productivity on the job. It was developed by the MASSDE through an interagency collaboration of employers, educators, and workforce development professionals. Through work-based learning experiences, students have an opportunity to learn about various career areas and try different work styles, find out what type of work they enjoy, find out how they learn best in a workplace setting, and find out what natural supports are available. Students learn and practice basic foundation skills and begin to develop life-long career skills.

Beginning in March 2009, SEPP collaborated with the MASSDE Connecting Activities Office to develop a guidance document called *Using the Massachusetts Work-Based Learning Plan In Transition Planning Activities for Students with Disabilities* and to enhance the WBLP Scoring Rubric. The document is intended to: encourage the inclusion of students with disabilities in WBLP programs; be used as an option for individual student transition planning; and support educators, employers, Connecting Activities field staff, Workforce Investment Boards, One Stop Career Centers, and Local School-to-Career Partnerships in the implementation of quality work-based learning for students with disabilities.

Through this collaboration, MASSDE also created the Work Experience and Transition Activities resource webpage. This resource lists resources, including websites, articles, and program materials, to assist in planning the work experiences and developing WBLPs for students with disabilities.
Appendix B: Massachusetts Parent Survey for Special Education for Indicator 8 (FFY 2005)

- This is a survey for parents of students receiving special education services. Your responses will help guide efforts to improve services and results for children and families. (Note: If you have more than one child currently receiving special education services, you may choose to submit one or more surveys, based upon your experiences as related to your children.)
- For each statement below, please select one of the following response choices: very strongly disagree (VSD), strongly disagree (SD), disagree (D), agree (A), strongly agree (SA), very strongly agree (VSA). You may skip any item that you feel does not apply to you or your child.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Schools' Efforts to Partner with Parents</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
<th>Agree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>VSD</td>
<td>SD</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1. I am considered an equal partner with teachers and other professionals in planning my child's program.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. I was offered special assistance (such as child care) so that I could participate in the Individualized Educational Program (IEP) meeting.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. At the IEP meeting, we discussed how my child would participate in statewide assessments.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>4. My child's teachers give me enough time and opportunities to discuss my child's needs and progress.</td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. All of my concerns and recommendations were documented on the IEP.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>6. Teachers and administrators at my child's school invite me to share my knowledge and experience with school personnel.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>7. I was given information about organizations that offer support for parents of students with disabilities.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>8. I have been asked for my opinion about how well special education services are meeting my child's needs.</td>
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<tr>
<td>9. My child's evaluation report is written in terms I understand.</td>
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<tr>
<td>10. IEP meetings are scheduled at a time and place that are convenient for me.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>11. Teachers are available to speak with me.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12. Teachers treat me as a team member.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13. I feel I can disagree with my child's special education program or services without negative consequences for me or my child.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Teachers and administrators:</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
<th>Agree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>VSD</td>
<td>SD</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14. - seek out parent input.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15. - show sensitivity to the needs of students with disabilities and their families.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16. - encourage me to participate in the decision-making process.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17. - respect my cultural heritage.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The school:

18. - has a person on staff that is available to answer parents’ questions.

19. - communicates regularly with me regarding my child’s progress on IEP goals.

20. - gives me choices with regard to services that address my child's needs.

21. - offers parents training about special education issues.

22. - offers parents a variety of ways to communicate with teachers.

23. - gives parents the help they may need to play an active role in their child's education.

24. - provides information on agencies that can assist my child in the transition from school.

25. - explains what options parents have if they disagree with a decision of the school.

Demographic Information

26. Number of years child has received special education services
   - Less than 1 year
   - 1-3 years
   - 4-7 years
   - More than 7 years

27. Child’s race/ethnicity
   - White
   - Black or African-American
   - Hispanic or Latino
   - Asian or Pacific Islander
   - American Indian or Alaskan Native
   - Multi-racial

28. Language spoken in the home
   - English
   - Spanish
   - Portuguese
   - Chinese
   - Creole/Haitian
   - Vietnamese
   - Other ____________________

29. Child’s school level
   - Elementary School
   - Middle School
   - High School

30. Child’s Primary Disability (check one)
   - Autism
   - Communication Impairment
   - Deaf-Blind Impairment
   - Developmental Delay
   - Emotional Impairment
   - Health Impairment
   - Hearing Impairment
   - Intellectual Impairment
   - Multiple Disabilities
   - Neurological Impairment
   - Physical Impairment
   - Specific Learning Disability
   - Vision Impairment

Thank you for participating.
Appendix C: Massachusetts Post-School Outcomes Survey for Indicator 14 (FFY 2006)

School District:

Student Name:

SASID: Date of Exit from School (mm/yyyy):

Gender: □ - Male □ - Female

Method of Response: □ - Email □ - Mail □ - Telephone □ - Other □ - Non-Responder

Question 1: What is your educational status since leaving high school?

□ - CURRENTLY enrolled or attending classes
□ - NOT CURRENTLY enrolled or attending, but have enrolled or attended classes
□ - HAVE NOT enrolled or attended classes

Question 2: If you have enrolled or attended classes at any time since leaving high school, what type of program did you attend?

□ - 4-year college or university
□ - 2-year college or university
□ - Technical or vocational school
□ - GED program
□ - Adult education in the community
□ - Job Corp, Work Force Development program, etc.
□ - Other Describe: ______________________
□ - Not applicable - Have not enrolled or attended classes

Question 3: If you have enrolled or attended classes at any time since leaving high school, what was your enrollment status?

□ - Full-time student enrolled in a degree program
□ - Part-time student enrolled in a degree program
□ - Not enrolled in a degree program, but taking classes
□ - Not applicable - Have not enrolled or attended classes

Question 4: If you have enrolled or attended classes at any time since leaving high school, how long does the program require to finish?

□ - Less than 1 academic year
□ - 1 academic year or more
□ - Not applicable - Have not enrolled or attended classes

Question 5: If you have enrolled or attended classes at any time since leaving high school, have you completed one class or more?

□ - Yes
□ - No
☐ - Not applicable - Have not enrolled or attended classes
Question 6: What is your employment status since leaving high school? (This includes current and previous employment.)

- Employed – in the competitive job market
- Full-Time Military Service
- Self-employed – including working for a family business
- Supported Employment – job placement with ongoing support from a job coach or agency
- Unemployed – not employed but looking for employment
- Not in the Labor Force – not employed and not looking for employment

Question 7: If you have been employed at any time since leaving high school, what is the longest amount of time you worked at the same job?

- Less than 3 months
- 3 months or more
- Not applicable - Not employed since leaving high school

Question 8: If you have been employed at any time since leaving high school, how many hours did you work in a typical week? (This includes summer employment.)

- 20 hours or more per week
- Less than 20 hours per week
- Not applicable - Not employed since leaving high school

Question 9*: If you have been employed at any time since leaving high school, what is the highest wage you were paid per hour? (This includes tips if you earn them.)

- Less than $8.00 per hour
- $8.00 per hour
- More than $8.00 per hour
- Not applicable - Not employed since leaving high school

*Massachusetts’ minimum wage is $8.00/ hour as of January 1, 2008.

Thank you for participating in this survey. If you have any questions, please call:

If you are returning this survey by mail, please send it to:
Appendix D: Indicator 15 Worksheet (FFY 2009)

PART B INDICATOR 15 WORKSHEET

In completing the worksheet, the number recorded in column (b) cannot exceed the number recorded in column (a). If the number in column (b) exceeds column (a) the column (b) cell will turn red.

This worksheet calculates the percent of noncompliance corrected within one year of identification. The self-calculating cells are highlighted in gray. Be careful not to enter data into these cells because the calculations will not work properly.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Indicator/Indicator Clusters</th>
<th>General Supervision System Components</th>
<th># of LEAs Issued Findings in FFY 2008 (7/1/08 to 6/30/09)</th>
<th>(a) # of Findings of noncompliance identified in FFY 2008 (7/1/08 to 6/30/09)</th>
<th>(b) # of Findings of noncompliance from (a) for which correction was verified no later than one year from identification</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Percent of youth with IEPs graduating from high school with a regular diploma.</td>
<td>Monitoring Activities: Self-Assessment/ Local APR, Data Review, Desk Audit, On-Site Visits, or Other</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Percent of youth with IEPs dropping out of high school.</td>
<td>Dispute Resolution: Complaints, Hearings</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Participation and performance of children with disabilities on statewide assessments.</td>
<td>Monitoring Activities: Self-Assessment/ Local APR, Data Review, Desk Audit, On-Site Visits, or Other</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>120</td>
<td>119</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. Percent of preschool children with IEPs who demonstrated improved outcomes.</td>
<td>Dispute Resolution: Complaints, Hearings</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Monitoring Activities: Self-Assessment/ Local APR, Data Review, Desk Audit, On-Site Visits, or Other</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>---</td>
<td>--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>---</td>
<td>---</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4A. Percent of districts identified as having a significant discrepancy in the rates of suspensions and expulsions of children with disabilities for greater than 10 days in a school year.</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>39</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4B. Percent of districts that have: (a) a significant discrepancy, by race or ethnicity, in the rate of suspensions and expulsions of greater than 10 days in a school year for children with IEPs; and (b) policies, procedures or practices that contribute to the significant discrepancy and do not comply with requirements relating to the development and implementation of IEPs, the use of positive behavioral interventions and supports, and procedural safeguards.</td>
<td>Dispute Resolution: Complaints, Hearings</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Percent of children with IEPs aged 6 through 21 - educational placements.</td>
<td>Monitoring Activities: Self-Assessment/ Local APR, Data Review, Desk Audit, On-Site Visits, or Other</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>75</td>
<td>75</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Percent of preschool children aged 3 through 5 – early childhood placement.</td>
<td>Dispute Resolution: Complaints, Hearings</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. Percent of parents with a child receiving special education services who report that schools facilitated parent involvement as a means of improving services and results for children with disabilities.</td>
<td>Monitoring Activities: Self-Assessment/ Local APR, Data Review, Desk Audit, On-Site Visits, or Other</td>
<td>69</td>
<td>163</td>
<td>163</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. Percent of districts with disproportionate representation of racial and ethnic groups in special education that is the result of inappropriate identification.</td>
<td>Monitoring Activities: Self-Assessment/ Local APR, Data Review, Desk Audit, On-Site Visits, or Other</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10. Percent of districts with disproportionate representation of racial and ethnic groups in specific disability categories that is the result of inappropriate identification.</td>
<td>Dispute Resolution: Complaints, Hearings</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>---</td>
<td>---</td>
<td>---</td>
<td>---</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11. Percent of children who were evaluated within 60 days of receiving parental consent for initial evaluation or, if the State establishes a timeframe within which the evaluation must be conducted, within that timeframe.</td>
<td>Monitoring Activities: Self-Assessment/ Local APR, Data Review, Desk Audit, On-Site Visits, or Other</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12. Percent of children referred by Part C prior to age 3, who are found eligible for Part B, and who have an IEP developed and implemented by their third birthdays.</td>
<td>Monitoring Activities: Self-Assessment/ Local APR, Data Review, Desk Audit, On-Site Visits, or Other</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13. Percent of youth aged 16 and above with IEP that includes appropriate measurable postsecondary goals that are annually updated and based upon an age appropriate transition assessment, transition services, including courses of study, that will reasonably enable the student to meet those postsecondary goals, and annual IEP goals related to the student’s transition service needs.</td>
<td>Monitoring Activities: Self-Assessment/ Local APR, Data Review, Desk Audit, On-Site Visits, or Other</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dispute Resolution: Complaints, Hearings</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Other areas of noncompliance: Faculty, Staff, and Administration

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Monitoring Activities: Self-Assessment/ Local APR, Data Review, Desk Audit, On-Site Visits, or Other</th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>26</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dispute Resolution: Complaints, Hearings</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Other areas of noncompliance: Record Keeping

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Monitoring Activities: Self-Assessment/ Local APR, Data Review, Desk Audit, On-Site Visits, or Other</th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dispute Resolution: Complaints, Hearings</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Other areas of noncompliance: Other areas of noncompliance: Among Bureau of Special Education Appeals findings, appropriateness of IEP or of placement; among complaint findings, multiple areas, the bulk of which (47) involved non-implementation or partial implementation of IEP

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Monitoring Activities: Self-Assessment/ Local APR, Data Review, Desk Audit, On-Site Visits, or Other</th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>75</td>
<td>90</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dispute Resolution: Complaints, Hearings</td>
<td></td>
<td>90</td>
<td>90</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

#### Sum the numbers down Column a and Column b

|  | 643 | 638 |

#### Percent of noncompliance corrected within one year of identification =

\[
\text{(column (b) sum divided by column (a) sum) times 100.}
\]

\[
\frac{(b)}{(a)} \times 100 = 99.22\%
\]
## Appendix E: Table 7 – Report of Dispute Resolution (FFY 2009)

Report of Dispute Resolution Under Part B of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act
Complaints, Mediations, Resolution Sessions, and Due Process Hearings

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SECTION A: Written, Signed Complaints</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>(1) Total number of written, signed complaints filed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(1.1) Complaints with reports issued</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(a) Reports with findings of noncompliance</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(b) Reports within timeline</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(c) Reports within extended timelines</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(1.2) Complaints pending</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(a) Complaints pending a due process hearing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(1.3) Complaints withdrawn or dismissed</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SECTION B: Mediation Requests</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>(2) Total number of mediation requests received through all dispute resolution processes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(2.1) Mediations held</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(a) Mediations held related to due process complaints</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(i) Mediation agreements related to due process complaints</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(b) Mediations held not related to due process complaints</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(i) Mediation agreements not related to due process complaints</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(2.2) Mediations pending</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(2.3) Mediations withdrawn or not held</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SECTION C: Due Process Complaints</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>(3) Total number of due process complaints filed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(3.1) Resolution meetings</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(a) Written settlement agreements reached through resolution meetings</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(3.2) Hearings fully adjudicated</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(a) Decisions within timeline (include expedited)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(b) Decisions within extended timeline</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(3.3) Due process complaints pending</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(3.4) Due process complaints withdrawn or dismissed (including resolved without a hearing)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SECTION D: Expedited Due Process Complaints (Related to Disciplinary Decision)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>(4) Total number of expedited due process complaints filed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(4.1) Resolution meetings</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(a) Written settlement agreements</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(4.2) Expedited hearings fully adjudicated</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(a) Change of placement ordered</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(4.3) Expedited due process complaints pending</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(4.4) Expedited due process complaints withdrawn or dismissed</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
**Appendix F: Indicator 20 Scoring Rubric (FFY 2009)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>APR Indicator</th>
<th>Valid and Reliable</th>
<th>Correct Calculation</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3A</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3B</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3C</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4A</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4B</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
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<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
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<tr>
<td>8</td>
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<td>N/A</td>
<td>N/A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
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<td>2</td>
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<tr>
<td>10</td>
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<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
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<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Subtotal</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td><strong>38</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**APR Score Calculation**

**Timely Submission Points** - If the FFY 2009 APR was submitted on-time, place the number 5 in the cell on the right.

**Grand Total** - (Sum of subtotal and Timely Submission Points) = 43.00
### 618 Data - Indicator 20

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table</th>
<th>Timely</th>
<th>Complete Data</th>
<th>Passed Edit Check</th>
<th>Responded to Data Note Requests</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Table 1 - Child Count</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>4</td>
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<tr>
<td>Due Date: 2/1/10</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Table 2 - Personnel</td>
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<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Due Date: 11/1/10</td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Table 3 - Ed. Environments</td>
<td>1</td>
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<td>1</td>
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<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Due Date: 2/1/10</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Table 4 - Exiting</td>
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<td>1</td>
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<tr>
<td>Due Date: 11/1/10</td>
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<td></td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Table 5 - Discipline</td>
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<td>1</td>
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<td>N/A</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Due Date: 11/1/10</td>
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<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Table 6 - State Assessment</td>
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<td>N/A</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>N/A</td>
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<tr>
<td>Due Date: 2/1/11</td>
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<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Table 7 - Dispute Resolution</td>
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<td>1</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Due Date: 11/1/10</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Subtotal</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

#### 618 Score Calculation

| Grand Total (Subtotal X 2.143) = | 45 |

#### Indicator #20 Calculation

| A. APR Grand Total               | 43.00 |
| B. 618 Grand Total              | 45.00 |
| C. APR Grand Total (A) + 618 Grand Total (B) = | 88.00 |
| Total N/A in APR                | 0     |
| Total N/A in 618                | 0     |
| **Base**                        | 88.00 |
| D. Subtotal (C divided by Base*) = | 1.000 |
| E. Indicator Score (Subtotal D x 100) = | 100.00 |