

**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:**

Percent = [(# of districts with disproportionate representation of racial and ethnic groups in special education and related services 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 each school district using the techniques described in detail in Westat's *Methods for Assessing Racial/Ethnic Disproportionality in Special Education* (<http://www.ideadata.org/docs/Disproportionality%20Technical%20Assistance%20Guide.pdf>). 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. Cells less than 20 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 3.0 or greater for possible over-representation, and of .25 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.

FFY	Measurable and Rigorous Target
2009 (2009-2010)	0%

**Actual Target Data for FFY 2009 (2009-2010):****Districts with Disproportionate Representation of Racial and Ethnic Groups That Was the Result of Inappropriate Identification**

Year	Total Number of Districts	Number of Districts with Disproportionate Representation	Number of Districts with Disproportionate Representation of Racial and Ethnic Groups that was the Result of Inappropriate Identification	Percent of Districts
FFY 2009 (2009-2010)	392	1	0	0.0%

**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 compiled 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.