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# Authority & State Requirements

## Why does the Department make determinations regarding Local Education Agencies’ (LEA) specific needs for technical assistance or intervention in special education (LEA Determinations)?

The Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) requires that states both monitor LEAs’ implementation of IDEA1 requirements and enforce those requirements. *See* [20 U.S.C. § 1416](https://sites.ed.gov/idea/statute-chapter-33/subchapter-ii/1416/) and [34 C.F.R. §300.600](https://sites.ed.gov/idea/regs/b/f/300.600). The Department must make LEA determinations annually consistent with the requirements in IDEA. *See* [34 C.F.R.](https://sites.ed.gov/idea/regs/b/f/300.600)

[300.600](https://sites.ed.gov/idea/regs/b/f/300.600). Similarly, the U.S. Department of Education annually determines if Massachusetts meets IDEA’s requirements, needs assistance in implementing them, needs intervention in implementing them, or needs substantial intervention implementing them. *See* [34 C.F.R. § 300.603](https://sites.ed.gov/idea/regs/b/f/300.603).

## How are IDEA’s requirements for states related to LEA determinations?

IDEA requires states to make sure that IDEA’s requirements are carried out, that educational programs for children and youth with disabilities are under the general supervision of persons responsible for educational programs for children and youth with disabilities, and that they meet the state’s educational standards. *See* [34](https://sites.ed.gov/idea/regs/b/b/300.149)

[C.F.R. 300.149](https://sites.ed.gov/idea/regs/b/b/300.149). It also requires that states make sure IDEA’s requirements are carried out consistent with requirements in the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act. *Id*.

One of the ways that the U.S. Department of Education works with states to improve results for children and youth with disabilities is through its [Results Driven Accountability (RDA)](https://www2.ed.gov/about/offices/list/osers/osep/rda/index.html) system. This system has three components:

1. State Performance Plan/Annual Performance Reports (SPP/APR), which measures results and compliance. States are currently developing State Systematic Improvement Plans (SSIPs), designed to improve outcomes in targeted areas.
2. Determinations, which reflect state performance on results, as well as compliance.
3. Differentiated monitoring and support for all states, but especially low performing states.

Just as the U.S. Department of Education uses [determinations at the state level](https://sites.ed.gov/idea/idea-files/2022-determination-letters-on-state-implementation-of-idea/) to evaluate the provision of special education to children and youth with disabilities, so does the Department use determinations at the district level to evaluate how IDEA’s requirements are being met at the local level. *See “*Special Education Policy Memo - Determinations of Need for Special Education Technical Assistance or Intervention” on our [Local](https://www.doe.mass.edu/sped/osep/determinations.html) [Education Agencies' (LEA) Special Education Determinations website](https://www.doe.mass.edu/sped/osep/determinations.html)**.**

In July 2023, the U.S. Department of Education’s Office of Special Education and Rehabilitative Services released their [State General Supervision Responsibilities Under Parts B and C of the IDEA](https://sites.ed.gov/idea/idea-files/guidance-on-state-general-supervision-responsibilities-under-parts-b-and-c-of-the-idea-july-24-2023/) (OSEP QA 23-01). Within the document, there are specific factors a State must consider when making annual determinations of the performance of an LEA or EIS program.

1 References to IDEA made in this document concern IDEA Part B. IDEA Part B includes provisions related to formula grants that assist states in providing a free appropriate public education in the least restrictive environment for children with disabilities ages three through 21. *See* [IDEA Statute and Regulations](https://sites.ed.gov/idea/statuteregulations/).

Those factors are:

1. Performance on Compliance Indicators
2. Valid and Reliable Data
3. Correction of Identified Noncompliance
4. Other data available to the State about the LEA’s or EIS program’s compliance with IDEA, which could include any relevant audit findings, or the denial of a Free and Appropriate Public Education (FAPE), for example.

## What categories do states use for LEA determinations?

The IDEA requires states to make determinations annually about the performance of each local educational agency using these categories:

1. *Meets requirements* and purposes of Part B (MR)
2. *Needs assistance* in meeting the requirements of Part B (NA)
3. *Needs intervention* in meeting the requirements of Part B (NI)
4. *Needs substantial intervention* in meeting the requirements of Part B (NSI) See [Monitoring and Enforcement](https://sites.ed.gov/idea/topic-areas/#Monitoring-Enforcement)

## Where are LEA determinations publicly reported?

The Department publishes an annual list of [LEA determinations](https://www.doe.mass.edu/sped/osep/determinations.html).

## What happens if the Department determines a district needs technical assistance or intervention?

* + If the Department determines that a district is not meeting the requirements of IDEA, including the targets in the State’s Performance Plan, the Department must prohibit that district from reducing its maintenance of effort under [34 C.F.R. § 300.203](https://sites.ed.gov/idea/regs/b/c/300.203) for any fiscal year. *See* [34 C.F.R. § 300.608](https://sites.ed.gov/idea/regs/b/f/300.608).
	+ States must mirror most, but not all, of the [enforcement](https://sites.ed.gov/idea/files/08-0101_Monitoring_FINAL_June_2009.pdf) actions outlined in IDEA for the Office of Special Education Programs (OSEP) to use with states. [*See* 34 C.F.R. § 300.600](https://sites.ed.gov/idea/regs/b/f/300.600).
	+ States must require districts to prepare and implement a corrective action plan or improvement plan.

[*See* 34 C.F.R. § 300.600](https://sites.ed.gov/idea/regs/b/f/300.600).

* + States are not restricted from using any other authority available to monitor and enforce the requirements of IDEA. *See* [34 C.F.R. § 300.608](https://sites.ed.gov/idea/regs/b/f/300.608).

# LEA Determination Matrix

## How are LEA determinations made in Massachusetts?

In Massachusetts, LEA determinations reflect performance, compliance, and other considerations related to special education. In continuing to improve the determination process, the LEA determinations matrix has been revised for 2024, in order to best reflect our State’s General Supervision Process. Criteria have been added or adjusted to meet requirements set forth by OSEP.

The Performance category of the matrix includes the following criteria taken from the State Performance Plan and Annual Performance Report (SPP/APR):

* Indicator 1- Graduation rate for children and youth with disabilities (2022-23 SY);
* Indicator 2- Dropout rate for children and youth with disabilities (2022-23 SY);
* Indicator 3B- MCAS proficiency rates in areas of reading and math for children and youth with disabilities in grades 4, 8, and HS (2023-24 SY);
* Indicator 5A- Percentage of children and youth with disabilities in school-age programs who are in the regular classroom for 80% or more of the day (2023-24 SY); and
* Indicator 6A- Percentage of preschool children with disabilities who are attending and receiving the majority of special education and related services in a regular early childhood program (2023-24 SY).

The Compliance category of the matrix includes the following criteria taken from the State Performance Plan and Annual Performance Report (SPP/APR) and monitoring results:

* Indicator 4B- Significant Discrepancy in Discipline by Race/Ethnicity (2022-23 SY);
* Indicator 9- Disproportionate Representation by Race/Ethnicity (2023-24 SY);
* Indicator 10- Disproportionate Representation in Specific Disability Categories by Race/Ethnicity (2023-24 SY);
* Indicator 11- Child Find (2023-24 SY);
* Indicator 12- Early Childhood Transition (Part C to B) (2023-24 SY);
* Indicator 13- Secondary Transition (2023-24 SY);
* Identification of Noncompliance Findings (Public School Monitoring (PSM)/Problem Resolution Systems (PRS) (2023-24 SY); and
* Correction of Noncompliance from PSM and PRS (findings from 2022-23 SY).

The Other Considerations category of the matrix includes the following criteria:

* Maintenance of Effort (MOE) compliance standard (2022-23 SY);
* SPP/APR Indicator 7 useable records (2023-24 SY);
* SPP/APR Indicator 14 response rate (2023-24 SY);
* Timely submission of Child Count data (2023-24 SY); and
* Accurate and reliable Child Count data (2023-24 SY).

This system is one way for the Department to measure district performance in key areas of special education performance and compliance. It is intended to start and/or continue a conversation with districts about how the Department can help support improvement.

## Are any criteria in the matrix weighted?

This year there are no matrix criteria that are weighted. Each Performance and Compliance criteria is worth 2 points. Each Other Considerations criteria is worth 1 point.

## What are the total number of points that a district could earn using the matrix?

It depends. The full matrix has a possible point scale of 47. However, some criteria are not assessed every year for each district, so the total points a district can earn may vary each year.

For example, if your district did not collect and report data for Indicators 11 (Child Find), Indicator 12 (Early Childhood Transition (Part C to Part B), or Indicator 13 (Secondary Transition) during the determination cycle, the total possible points available for your district are reduced by six points, with a new possible point total of 41.

For more information see “Special Education Policy Memo - Determinations of Need for Special Education Technical Assistance or Intervention” on our [Local Education Agencies' (LEA) Special Education Determinations](https://www.doe.mass.edu/sped/osep/determinations.html) [website](https://www.doe.mass.edu/sped/osep/determinations.html).

## How are matrix points assigned for the LEA determination?

The tables below provide details on point assignments for criteria in all three categories of the matrix: Performance, Compliance, and Other Considerations.

|  |
| --- |
| **PERFORMANCE** |
| **Matrix Criteria** | **Point Assignments** |
| **2 points** | **1 point** | **0 points** |
| **Graduation Rate**(2022-23 SY) | Graduation rate is at or above the state target (79.33%) | Graduation rate is below the state target (79.33%) and at or above thebelow-target2 median (64.80%) | Graduation rate is below the state target (79.33%) and the below-target median (64.80%) |
| **Dropout Rate**(2022-23 SY) | Dropout rate is at or below the state target (12.47%) | Dropout rate is above the state target (12.47%) and at or below thebelow-target median (26.21%) | Dropout rate is above the state target (12.47%) and the below-target median (26.21%) |
| **MCAS Reading Proficiency - Grade 4** (2023-24 SY) | MCAS proficiency rate is at or above the state target (23.00%) | MCAS proficiency rate is below the state target (23.00%) and at or above the below-target median (8.41%) | MCAS proficiency rate is below the state target (23.00%) and the below-target median (8.41%) |
| **MCAS Reading Proficiency - Grade 8** (2023-24 SY) | MCAS proficiency rate is at or above the state target (14.00%) | MCAS proficiency rate is below the state target (14.00%) and at or above the below-target median (5.78%) | MCAS proficiency rate is below the state target (14.00%) and the below-target median (5.78%) |
| **MCAS Reading Proficiency - High School**(2023-24 SY) | MCAS proficiency rate is at or above the state target (29.00%) | MCAS proficiency rate is below the state target (29.00%) and at or above the below-target median (13.65%) | MCAS proficiency rate is below the state target (29.00%) and the below-target median (13.65%) |

2 The below-target median is calculated by excluding LEAs meeting the state target from the analysis and calculating the median rate based on the data for the remaining LEAs that did not meet the state target.

|  |
| --- |
| **PERFORMANCE** |
| **Matrix Criteria** | **Point Assignments** |
| **2 points** | **1 point** | **0 points** |
| **MCAS Math Proficiency****- Grade 4**(2023-24 SY) | MCAS proficiency rate is at or above the state target (14.00%) | MCAS proficiency rate is below the state target (14.00%) and at or above the below-target median (6.65%) | MCAS proficiency rate is below the state target (14.00%) and the below-target median (6.65%) |
| **MCAS Math Proficiency****- Grade 8**(2023-24 SY) | MCAS proficiency rate is at or above the state target (10.00%) | MCAS proficiency rate is below the state target (10.00%) and at or above the below-target median (3.70%) | MCAS proficiency rate is below the state target (10.00%) and the below-target median (3.70%) |
| **MCAS Math Proficiency****- High School**(2023-24 SY) | MCAS proficiency rate is at or above the state target (18.00%) | MCAS proficiency rate is below the state target (18.00%) and at or above the below-target median (7.52%) | MCAS proficiency rate is below the state target (18.00%) and the below-target median (7.52%) |
| **Educational Environments - School-Age** (2023-24 SY) | Percentage of school-age children and youth with disabilities in the regular classroom 80% or more of the day is at or above the state target (65.49%) | Percentage of school-age children and youth with disabilities in the regular classroom 80% or more of the day is below the state target (65.49%) and at or above the below-target median (57.58%) | Percentage of school-age children and youth with disabilities in the regular classroom 80% or more of the day is below the state target (65.49%) and the below-target median (57.58%) |
| **Educational Environments - Preschool** (2023-24 SY) | Percentage of preschool children with disabilities attending and receiving the majority of special education and related services in a regular preschool setting is at or above the state target (52.31%) | Percentage of preschool children with disabilities attending and receiving the majority of special education and related services in a regular preschool setting is below the state target (52.31%) and at or above the below-target median (23.74%) | Percentage of preschool children with disabilities attending and receiving the majority of special education and related services in a regular preschool setting is below the state target (52.31%) and the below-target median (23.74%) |

|  |
| --- |
| **COMPLIANCE** |
| **Matrix Criteria** | **Point Assignments** |
| **2 points** | **1 point** | **0 points** |
| **SPP/APR Indicator 4B**(2022-23 SY) | **Data Review:**No significant discrepancy3 | **N/A** | **Data Review:**Flagged for significant discrepancy |
| **PPP Review:4**No finding(s) of noncompliance | **PPP Review:**Finding(s) of noncompliance |
| **SPP/APR Indicator 9**(2023-24 SY) | **Data Review:**No disproportionate representation5 | **Data Review:**Flagged for disproportionate representation |
| **PPP Review:**No finding(s) of noncompliance | **PPP Review:**Finding(s) of noncompliance |
| **SPP/APR Indicator 10**(2023-24 SY) | **Data Review:**No disproportionate representation | **Data Review:**Flagged for disproportionate representation |
| **PPP Review:**No finding(s) of noncompliance | **PPP Review:**Finding(s) of noncompliance |
| **SPP/APR Indicator 11**(2023-24 SY) | Percentage of children and youth with initial evaluations completed within the state timeline is at or above 95.00% | Percentage of children and youth with initial evaluations completed within the state timeline is below 95.00% and at or above 75.00% | Percentage of children and youth with initial evaluations completed within the state timeline is below 75.00% |

3 For more details about significant discrepancy, see the *SPP/APR Indicator 4B* section of this FAQ.

4 For more details about compliance reviews, see the *SPP/APR Indicator 4B*, *SPP/APR Indicator 9,* and *SPP/APR Indicator 10* sections of this FAQ.

5 For more details about disproportionate representation, see *SPP/APR Indicator 9* and *SPP/APR Indicator 10* sections of this FAQ.

|  |
| --- |
| **COMPLIANCE** |
| **Matrix Criteria** | **Point Assignments** |
| **2 points** | **1 point** | **0 points** |
| **SPP/APR Indicator 12**(2023-24 SY) | Percentage of children transitioning from Part C to Part B who are eligible and have an IEP implemented by their third birthday is at or above 95.00% | Percentage of children transitioning from Part C to Part B who are eligible and have an IEP implemented by their third birthday is below 95.00% and at or above 75.00% | Percentage of children transitioning from Part C to Part B who are eligible and have an IEP implemented by their third birthday is below 75.00% |
| **SPP/APR Indicator 13**(2023-24 SY) | Percentage of children and youth with disabilities aged 14 and above with measurable, annually updated IEP goals and appropriate transition assessments, services, and courses is at or above 95.00% | Percentage of children and youth with disabilities aged 14 and above with measurable, annually updated IEP goals and appropriate transition assessments, services, and courses is below 95.00% and at or above 75.00% | Percentage of children and youth with disabilities aged 14 and above with measurable, annually updated IEP goals and appropriate transition assessments, services, and courses is below 75.00% |
| **Findings of Noncompliance** (2023-24 SY) | 0 total special education findings of noncompliance (from PSM and PRS) | 1 to 5 total special education findings of noncompliance (from PSM and PRS) | 6 or more total special education findings of noncompliance (from PSM and PRS) |
| **Correction of Findings of Noncompliance** (2022-23 SY) | 0 findings of noncompliance uncorrected after one year and/or still uncorrected from previous years | 1 to 2 findings of noncompliance uncorrected after one year and/or still uncorrected from previous years | 3 or more findings of noncompliance uncorrected after one year and/or still uncorrected from previous years |

|  |
| --- |
| **OTHER CONSIDERATIONS** |
| **Matrix Criteria** | **Point Assignments** |
| **1 point** | **0 points** |
| **MOE Compliance Standard**(2023-24 SY) | Met one of two MOE compliance standards during submission of the IDEA grant application | Did not meet either MOE compliance standard during submission of the IDEA grant application |
| **SPP/APR Indicator 7 - Useable Records** (2023-24 SY) | Percentage of useable records related to Early Childhood Outcomes is at or above the state percentage (23.70%) | Percentage of useable records related to Early Childhood Outcomes is below the state percentage (23.70%) |
| **SPP/APR Indicator 14 -****Response Rate**(2023-24 SY) | Response rate on the Indicator 14 survey (Massachusetts After High School Survey) is at or above the state response rate (25.47%) | Response rate on the Indicator 14 survey (Massachusetts After High School Survey) is below the state response rate (25.47%) |
| **Timely Submission of Child Count Data** (2023-24 SY) | Submitted the IDEA Equitable Services Annual Child Count application by the designated due date (April 2024) | Did not submit the IDEA Equitable Services Annual Child Count application by the designated due date (April 2024) |
| **Accurate and Reliable Child Count Data** (October 1, 2024) | Did not request decertification of the data in their Child Count application in order to address data quality concerns or inaccuracies | Requested decertification of the data in their Child Count application in order to address data quality concerns or inaccuracies |

## How is the LEA determination percentage calculated?

(Sum of points earned across all criteria with reportable data) *divided by* (Total Number of Possible Points in Criteria with Reportable Data)

## How is the LEA determination category assigned?

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Meets Requirements (MR)** | **Needs Assistance (NA)** | **Needs Intervention (NI)** | **Needs Substantial Intervention (NSI)** |
| LEA determination percentage75.0 – 100.0 | LEA determination percentage65.0 – 74.9 | LEA determination percentage0 – 64.9 | A substantial failure to comply with a condition of LEA eligibility under Part B of the IDEA([300.200-300.213](https://sites.ed.gov/idea/regs/b/c)) |

# Data Source

## What if I think that the SIMS data was not coded/entered correctly?

The data used for several of the criteria come from each district’s certified SIMS submissions. Data that were submitted and certified in a now-closed SIMS collection window are considered final and cannot be changed.

## How can I get a list of the children and youth identified in the respective categories, i.e., graduation, dropout, educational environments (LRE)?

The Security Portal has graduation and dropout reports, which you can access with the right permissions. If you don’t have access to the report, contact your district’s [directory administrator](https://www.doe.mass.edu/infoservices/data/diradmin/list.aspx).

# Performance Indicators Used in the LEA Determination Graduation Rate

## Is this the same measurement as last year?

No, last year the state used the 5-year cohort graduation rate, which is different from the SPP/APR Indicator 1 graduation rate being used this year. Additionally, this criteria is no longer weighted as it was last year (weight of x1.5 was previously applied).

As a reminder, SPP/APR Indicator 1 graduation rate is lagged one year and the data used for determinations comes from the 2022-23 school year.

## How is the graduation rate calculated for LEA determinations?

For LEA determinations, the Department calculates the graduation rate using the same methodology for SPP/APR Indicator 1.

The Department tracks children and youth with disabilities who were in special education at the start of the reporting period (July 1) and exited special education on or before the end of the reporting period (June 30). The graduation rate is only considering those children and youth exiting within one year as opposed to following a cohort of children and youth based on when they entered 9th grade.

[SPP/APR Indicator 1 graduation rate calculation](https://www.doe.mass.edu/sped/spp/indicators/indicator1/#%3A~%3Atext%3DWhat%20Is%20Indicator%201%3F%2Cwith%20a%20high%20school%20diploma):

*Numerator:*

*Number of children and youth in special education at the start of the reporting period (July 1) who exited special education due to graduating with a regular high school diploma by the end of the reporting period (June 30).*

*Denominator:*

*Children and youth in special education at the start of the reporting period who exited special education with the reasons of graduated with a regular high school diploma, graduated with an alternate diploma, received a certificate, reached maximum age, or dropped out.*

## Why did the Department change the graduation rate calculation to that used in SPP/APR Indicator 1?

Since the 5-year cohort graduation rate was introduced in the matrix, there has been feedback that using this rate (and the delay in the data) didn’t provide a good look at children and youth with disabilities and their outcomes within a district. In FFY 2020, OSEP changed the measurement for SPP/APR Indicators 1 and 2 to look at all children and youth with disabilities who exited in a given year, by means of graduating with a regular high

school diploma, receiving a certificate, reaching the maximum age for services, or dropping out. This should allow districts to get a better sense of who their exiters (children and youth with IEPs) are each year, and by which method they are leaving school.

The Department still provides the 4- and 5-Year Cohort Graduation rates, but for Annual LEA Determinations, the Department will now be using SPP/APR Indicators 1 and 2.

## For districts that have strong programs for children and youth ages 18-22, what is the impact on this measurement? Does this impact districts’ overall LEA determination rating?

All children and youth with IEPs must be represented in the LEA determinations– the special education accountability and assistance system. Enrolled children and youth aged 18-22 do not inappropriately impact this measurement or a district’s overall determination calculation.

In most districts, there are small numbers of children and youth aged 18-22 enrolled. A district’s graduation rate could be lower if they have many children and youth with significant disabilities who are appropriately staying enrolled beyond 4 years. However, this measure’s impact on the overall determination calculation is reasonable as it represents only one of numerous measures in the rubric.

## Where is my district’s SPP/APR Indicator 1 graduation data publicly reported?

[SPP/APR Indicator 1 (2022-23 SY)](https://profiles.doe.mass.edu/statereport/special_education.aspx): Use the dropdown lists to filter on year and indicator type.

## Why is SPP/APR Indicator 1 graduation data different from other graduation rates?

The SPP/APR Indicator 1 graduation rates come from a unique special education exiting report that is not based on a graduation cohort. The graduation rates in the *Graduation Rate Report (District) for All Students* on the [School and District Profiles](https://profiles.doe.mass.edu/statereport/gradrates.aspx) website are based on cohorts and result in different data.

If your district wants to compare the graduation rates of children and youth with disabilities to children and youth without disabilities, use the cohort graduation rates in the *Graduation Rate Report (District) for All Students*.



## How can I get a list of the children and youth identified in the respective categories?

Edwin in the Security Portal application has graduation and dropout reports that drill down to the individual student level, which you can access with the right permissions. If you do not have access to the report, contact your district’s [directory administrator](https://www.doe.mass.edu/infoservices/data/diradmin/export_list.aspx).

## What resources are available to help me better understand this data?

* [SPP/APR Indicator 1 graduation rates](https://www.doe.mass.edu/sped/spp/indicators/indicator1/#%3A~%3Atext%3DWhat%20Is%20Indicator%201%3F%2Cwith%20a%20high%20school%20diploma) additional information
* [State Performance Plan (MA SPP) and Annual Performance Reports (MA APR)](https://www.doe.mass.edu/sped/spp/maspp.html)
* Cohort graduation rates on [School and District Profiles](https://profiles.doe.mass.edu/statereport/gradrates.aspx) website
* Contact Education Data Services

# Dropout Rate

## Is this the same measurement as last year?

No, last year the state used the state annual dropout rate, which is different from the SPP/APR Indicator 2 dropout rate being used this year.

As a reminder, SPP/APR Indicator 2 dropout rate is lagged one year and the data used for determinations comes from the 2022-23 school year.

## What is the definition of dropout?

The definition of a dropout is provided in the [DESE Attendance and Dropout Reporting Guidance](https://www.doe.mass.edu/infoservices/data/sims/reporting-guidance.docx) document. For purposes of reporting data to DESE, a dropout is defined as a student in grade six through twelve who:

1. Was enrolled in school at some point during the current school year;
2. Is not enrolled on the report date;
3. Has not graduated from high school or completed a state or district-approved educational program; and
4. Does not meet any of the following exclusionary conditions:
	1. Transfer to another public school district, private school, or state- or district-approved education program;
	2. Temporary school-approved absence due to suspension or illness; or
	3. Death.

In reporting October SIMS data, any student who was enrolled in the district the prior year, was expected to return for the current year but has not, and does not meet conditions 3 and 4 above, should be reported as a dropout (DOE12=36).

## How is the dropout rate calculated for LEA determinations?

For LEA determinations, the Department calculates the dropout rate using the same methodology for SPP/APR Indicator 2.

[SPP/APR Indicator 2 graduation rate calculation](https://www.doe.mass.edu/sped/spp/indicators/indicator2/):

*Numerator:*

*Number of children and youth in special education at the start of the reporting period (July 1) who exited special education due to dropping out by the end of the reporting period (June 30).*

*Denominator:*

*Children and youth in special education at the start of the reporting period who exited special education with the reasons of graduated with a regular high school diploma,*

*graduated with an alternate diploma, received a certificate, reached maximum age, or dropped out.*

## Why did the Department change the dropout rate calculation to that used in SPP/APR Indicator 2?

Since the annual dropout rate was introduced in the Determinations Rubric, there has been feedback that using this rate (and the delay in the data) didn’t provide a good look at children and youth with disabilities and their outcomes within a district. In FY 2020, OSEP changed the measurement for SPP/APR Indicators 1 and 2 to look at all children and youth with disabilities who exited in a given year, by means of graduating with a regular high school diploma, receiving a certificate, reaching the maximum age for services, or dropping out. This should allow districts to get a better sense of who their exiters (children and youth with IEPs) are each year, and by which method they are leaving school.

## Where is my district’s dropout data publicly reported?

[SPP/APR Indicator 2 (2022-23 SY)](https://profiles.doe.mass.edu/statereport/special_education.aspx): Use the dropdown lists to filter on year and indicator type.

## Why is SPP/APR Indicator 2 dropout data different from other dropout rates?

The SPP/APR Indicator 2 dropout rates come from a unique special education exiting report that only accounts for children and youth with disabilities in special education at the start of the reporting period who dropped out by the end of the reporting period. The dropout rates in the *Dropout Report (District) All Students* on the [School](https://profiles.doe.mass.edu/statereport/dropout.aspx) [and District Profiles](https://profiles.doe.mass.edu/statereport/dropout.aspx) website include all children and youth with (and without) disabilities who dropped out, regardless of whether they were in special education at the start of the reporting period.

If your district wants to compare the dropout rates of children and youth with disabilities to children and youth without disabilities, use the dropout rates in the *Dropout Report (District) for All Students*.



## What resources are available to help me better understand this data?

* [SPP/APR Indicator 2 dropout rates](https://www.doe.mass.edu/sped/spp/indicators/indicator2/) additional information
* [State Performance Plan (MA SPP) and Annual Performance Reports (MA APR)](https://www.doe.mass.edu/sped/spp/maspp.html)
* [DESE Attendance and Dropout Reporting Guidance](https://www.doe.mass.edu/infoservices/data/sims/reporting-guidance.docx)
* Annual dropout rates on [School and District Profiles](https://profiles.doe.mass.edu/statereport/dropout.aspx) website
* [Understanding Dropout Calculations](https://www.doe.mass.edu/infoservices/data/guides/dropout-calc.html)
* Contact Education Data Services

# MCAS Proficiency Rates - NEW

This year, the Department has introduced a new data point, using information from the SPP/APR Indicator 3 - Statewide Assessment. Indicator 3 includes four separate measurements that include six different groups. For the 2023-2024 Determinations, the Department is using Indicator 3B (Proficiency Rate for Children with IEPs Against Grade Level Academic Achievement Standards), specifically looking at reading and math proficiency rates for children and youth with disabilities in grades 4, 8, and 10. For districts that do not have children and youth in one or more of these grades, this criteria will not be used in their LEA Determination rating.

## What is the proficiency rate?

For SPP/APR Indicator 3, the Department defines proficiency as those children and youth with disabilities Meeting Expectations and Exceeding Expectations on the MCAS.

## How is the proficiency rate calculated for LEA determinations?

For LEA determinations, the Department calculates the MCAS proficiency rates based on the methodology used for SPP/APR Indicator 3, measure B.

[SPP/APR Indicator 3B proficiency rate calculation](https://www.doe.mass.edu/sped/spp/indicators/indicator3/):

*Numerator:*

*Children and youth with disabilities scoring “Meeting Expectations” and “Exceeding Expectations” on MCAS for given subjects and grades*

*Denominator:*

*All children and youth with disabilities with a valid score on MCAS for given subjects and grades*

## Why include different achievement data?

Last year’s inclusion of SPP/APR Indicator 3 data was introduced to try and get a more holistic view of the district performance for children and youth with disabilities. By limiting the data to a single grade level and content area, districts that did not have the requisite population were not able to get a sense of how their children and youth with disabilities were performing.

The change this year includes all three grade levels included in the Indicator 3 measurement (grades 4, 8, and 10), in both content areas (reading and math). Additionally, since there were other changes made to some criteria, the gap in proficiency rates metric was not comparable anymore. The Department decided to use the actual proficiency rates of children and youth with disabilities on the MCAS. The inclusion of these data points will provide a more holistic view of performance in the district, and identify areas that could be strengthened.

## Where can I find this data?

Data regarding the Achievement Results for All Students and Students with IEPs can be found at <https://profiles.doe.mass.edu/statereport/mcas.aspx>. You can filter by grade level and student groups. Alternatively, you may go to Edwin Analytics → Assessments → MCAS → Achievement Analysis → PE304 MCAS District and School Results by Subgroup

## What resources are available to help me better understand this data?

* [State Performance Plan (MA SPP) and Annual Performance Reports (MA APR)](https://www.doe.mass.edu/sped/spp/maspp.html)
* MCAS achievement results on [School and District Profiles](https://profiles.doe.mass.edu/statereport/mcas.aspx) website

# LRE Ages 5-21

## Is this the same measurement as last year?

Yes and no. Last year the state used a combined full inclusion rate for children and youth with disabilities ages 3 through 21, which used both Indicators 5A and 6A. This year these two criteria have been separated into their own and this criteria specifically focuses on SPP/APR Indicator 5 educational environments data. Additionally, **this criteria is no longer weighted as it was last year (weight of x2.0 was previously applied).**

## Who is included in this measurement?

Children and youth with disabilities who are in school-age programs, meaning children with disabilities aged 5 years old and in kindergarten and children and youth with disabilities ages 6 through 21.

## How is this rate calculated for LEA determinations?

The Department calculates this rate based on data submitted by districts in the annual October SIMS submission. The data used are from SPP/APR Indicator 5, measure A, which considers school-age children and youth with disabilities inside the regular classroom 80% or more of the day.

*Numerator:*

*Number of children and youth with disabilities five years old in kindergarten through age 21 in a regular classroom 80% or more of the day (SIMS code DOE034-10)*

*Denominator:*

*Number of school-age children and youth with disabilities ages five years old in kindergarten through age 21*

## Some districts receive a large number of children and youth who are Department of Children and Families (DCF)-involved and already have a placement outside of full inclusion when enrolled. Has the Department considered this in the scoring of this measurement? Does this impact districts’ overall LEA determination rating?

Yes, the Department has considered this. All children and youth with IEPs have a right to FAPE and must be represented in the LEA determinations, which are part of the Department’s special education accountability and assistance system.

In most districts, there are small numbers of children and youth enrolled that fit this description. A district’s rate could be lower if they have many children and youth who are assigned to a district because of a student’s

DCF-involvement. However, this measure’s impact on the overall determination calculation is reasonable as it represents only one of numerous measures in the rubric.

## Where is this data publicly reported?

[SPP/APR Indicator 5, measure A (2023-24 SY)](https://profiles.doe.mass.edu/statereport/special_education.aspx): Use the dropdown lists to filter on year and indicator type.

## What resources are available to help me better understand this data?

* [SPP/APR Indicator 5 LRE](https://www.doe.mass.edu/sped/spp/indicators/indicator5/) additional information
* [State Performance Plan (MA SPP) and Annual Performance Reports (MA APR)](https://www.doe.mass.edu/sped/spp/maspp.html)
* Contact Special Education Planning and Policy Development

# LRE Ages 3-5

## Is this the same measurement as last year?

Yes and no. Last year the state used a combined full inclusion rate for children with disabilities ages 3 through 21, which used both Indicators 5A and 6A. This year these two criteria have been separated into their own, which is different from and this criteria specifically focuses on SPP/APR Indicator 6 educational environments data being used this year. Additionally, this criteria is no longer weighted as it was last year (weight of x2.0 was previously applied).

## Who is included in this measurement?

Children with disabilities who are in preschool programs, meaning children with disabilities ages 3 through 5 years old and in a regular preschool setting.

## How is this rate calculated for LEA determinations?

The Department calculates this rate based on data submitted by districts in the annual October SIMS submission. The data used are from SPP/APR Indicator 6, measure A, which considers preschool children with disabilities who are attending a regular preschool program and receiving the majority of special education and related services in the regular preschool program.

*Numerator:*

*Children with disabilities ages 3-5 in preschool attending and receiving the majority of their special education and related services in a regular preschool setting (SIMS codes DOE032-31 and DOE032-34)*

*Denominator:*

*Preschool children with disabilities ages 3-5*

## Some districts receive a large number of children and youth who are Department of Children and Families (DCF)-involved and already have a placement outside of full inclusion when enrolled. Has the Department considered this in the scoring/weighting of this measurement? Does this impact districts’ overall LEA determination rating?

Yes, the Department has considered this. All children and youth with IEPs have a right to FAPE and must be represented in the LEA determinations, which are part of the Department’s special education accountability and assistance system.

In most districts, there are small numbers of children and youth enrolled that fit this description. A district’s rate could be lower if they have many children and youth who are assigned to a district because of a student’s

DCF-involvement. However, this measure’s impact on the overall determination calculation is reasonable as it represents only one of numerous measures in the rubric.

## Where are these data publicly reported?

[SPP/APR Indicator 6, measure A (2023-24 SY)](https://profiles.doe.mass.edu/statereport/special_education.aspx): Use the dropdown lists to filter on year and indicator type.

## What resources are available to help me better understand this data?

* [SPP/APR Indicator 6 LRE](https://www.doe.mass.edu/sped/spp/indicators/indicator6/) additional information
* [State Performance Plan (MA SPP) and Annual Performance Reports (MA APR)](https://www.doe.mass.edu/sped/spp/maspp.html)
* Contact Special Education Planning and Policy Development

# Compliance Indicators Used in the LEA Determinations SPP/APR Indicator 4B

## Is this the same measurement as last year?

Yes and no. Last year, SPP/APR Indicators 4B, 9, and 10 were combined into one piece of criteria. This year, the 3 indicators are being reported separately and assigned points individually in the matrix. However, the same information that has been used for Indicator 4B will be applied again this year.

As a reminder, Indicator 4B is lagged and the data reported in this year’s determination comes from the 2021-22 and 2022-23 school years.

## What does SPP/APR Indicator 4B measure?

Indicator 4B includes two key pieces of information.

First is a **Data Review** conducted by the Department to determine whether districts demonstrate significant discrepancy in the rate of children and youth with disabilities in particular racial/ethnic groups who are suspended or expelled for greater than 10 days (long-term removals). The Department determines districts to have significant discrepancy when there is one or more racial/ethnic group of children and youth with disabilities who:

1. Meet minimum student population requirements (at least 10 children and youth with disabilities in a particular racial/ethnic group who are enrolled in a district and at 3 children and youth with disabilities in the same racial/ethnic group who were suspended or expelled for greater than 10 days) and
2. Exceed the significant discrepancy threshold of five times (x 5) the state rate of children and youth with disabilities (inclusive of all racial/ethnic groups) for three consecutive years in the same racial/ethnic group.

Second is a **PPP Review** in which districts flagged for significant discrepancy must submit to the Department a review of policies, procedures, and practices (PPP) related to long-term disciplinary removals. If PPPs indicate noncompliance that contributed to the significant discrepancy, then districts are required to revise any identified noncompliance.

## What do the Indicator 4B designations in the Compliance Matrix mean?

For Indicator 4B, the Compliance Matrix includes information on the **Data Review** and the **PPP Review**. A maximum of two points are assigned to each of the components. The point assignments for the components are as follows:

### Data Review

2 points *=* District does not meet criteria for significant discrepancy (not flagged). 0 points = District meets criteria for significant discrepancy (flagged).

### PPP Review

2 points *=* District does not demonstrate noncompliance in PPPs. 0 points = District demonstrates noncompliance in PPPs.

## What resources are available to help me better understand this data?

* Indicator 4B public reporting on [School and District Profiles](https://profiles.doe.mass.edu/statereport/special_education.aspx) website
* [SPP/APR Indicator 4B](https://www.doe.mass.edu/sped/spp/indicators/indicator4/) additional information
* [State Performance Plan (MA SPP) and Annual Performance Reports (MA APR)](https://www.doe.mass.edu/sped/spp/maspp.html)
* [Rethinking Discipline, Significant Disproportionality, and Indicators 4, 9, and 10](https://www.doe.mass.edu/sfs/discipline/indicators-4-9-10.docx)
* Contact Special Education Planning and Policy Development

# SPP/APR Indicator 9

## Is this the same measurement as last year?

Yes and no. Last year, SPP/APR Indicators 4B, 9, and 10 were combined into one piece of criteria. This year, the 3 indicators are being reported separately and assigned points individually in the matrix. However, the same information that has been used for Indicator 9 will be applied again this year.

## What does SPP/APR Indicator 9 measure?

Indicator 9 includes two key pieces of information.

First is a **Data Review** conducted by the Department to determine whether districts demonstrate disproportionate representation in the rates of children and youth with disabilities in a particular racial/ethnic group who are identified in a federal disability category. The Department determines districts to have disproportionate representation when there is one or more racial/ethnic group of children and youth with disabilities who:

1. Meet minimum student population requirements (at least 10 children and youth in a particular racial/ethnic group who are identified in a federal disability category and at least 10 children and youth with disabilities in all other racial/ethnic groups who were identified in a federal disability category).\*
2. Exceed the disproportionate representation weighted risk ratio/alternate risk ratio threshold of 3.00 for three consecutive years in the same racial/ethnic group. Note that weighted risk ratios control for the state racial/ethnic group composition as well as the district racial/ethnic group composition.

Second is a **PPP Review** in which districts flagged with disproportionate representation must submit to the Department a review of PPPs related to the identification of children and youth as having federal disabilities. If PPPs indicate noncompliance that contributed to the disproportionate, then districts are required to revise any identified noncompliance.

\*In homogenous populations where there are 10 children and youth in a particular racial/ethnic group who are identified in a federal disability category but not at least 10 children and youth in all other racial/ethnic groups, the Department uses an alternate risk ratio where the particular racial/ethnic group in a district is compared to all other racial/ethnic groups in the *state*.

## What do the Indicator 9 designations in the Compliance Matrix mean?

For Indicator 9, the Compliance Matrix includes information on the **Data Review** and the **PPP Review**. A maximum of two points are assigned to each of the components. The point assignments for the components are as follows:

### Data Review

2 points *=* District does not meet criteria for disproportionate representation (not flagged).

0 points = District meets criteria for disproportionate representation (flagged).

### PPP Review

2 points *=* District does not demonstrate noncompliance in PPPs. 0 points = District demonstrates noncompliance in PPPs.

## What resources are available to help me better understand this data?

* Indicator 9 public reporting on [School and District Profiles](https://profiles.doe.mass.edu/statereport/special_education.aspx) website
* [SPP/APR Indicator 9](https://www.doe.mass.edu/sped/spp/indicators/indicator9/) additional information
* [State Performance Plan (MA SPP) and Annual Performance Reports (MA APR)](https://www.doe.mass.edu/sped/spp/maspp.html)
* [Rethinking Discipline, Significant Disproportionality, and Indicators 4, 9, and 10](https://www.doe.mass.edu/sfs/discipline/indicators-4-9-10.docx)
* Contact Special Education Planning and Policy Development

# SPP/APR Indicator 10

## Is this the same measurement as last year?

Yes and no. Last year, SPP/APR Indicators 4B, 9, and 10 were combined into one piece of criteria. This year, the 3 indicators are being reported separately and assigned points individually in the matrix. However, the same information that has been used for Indicator 10 will be applied again this year.

## What does SPP/APR Indicator 10 measure?

Indicator 10 includes two key pieces of information.

First is a **Data Review** conducted by the Department to determine whether districts demonstrate disproportionate representation in the rates of children and youth with disabilities in a particular racial/ethnic group who are identified in one of 6 disability categories (i.e., autism, emotional disturbance, intellectual disability, other health impairments, specific learning disabilities, and speech or language impairments). The Department determines districts to have disproportionate representation when there is one or more racial/ethnic group of children and youth with disabilities who:

1. Meet minimum student population requirements (at least 10 children and youth in a particular racial/ethnic group who are identified in one of the 6 disability categories outlined above and at least 10 children and youth with disabilities in all other racial/ethnic groups who were identified in the same disability category).\*
2. Exceed the disproportionate representation weighted risk ratio/alternate risk ratio threshold of 4.00 for three consecutive years in the same racial/ethnic group and same disability category. Note that weighted risk ratios control for the state racial/ethnic group composition as well as the district racial/ethnic group composition.

Second is a **PPP Review** in which districts flagged with disproportionate representation must submit to the Department a review of PPPs related to the identification of children and youth as having federal disabilities. If PPPs indicate noncompliance that contributed to the disproportionate, then districts are required to revise any identified noncompliance.

\*In homogenous populations where there are 10 children and youth in a particular racial/ethnic group who are identified in one of 6 disability categories but not at least 10 children and youth in all other racial/ethnic groups in the disability category, the Department uses an alternate risk ratio where the particular racial/ethnic group in one of the 6 disability categories in a district is compared to all other racial/ethnic groups in that same disability category in the *state*.

## What do the Indicator 10 designations in the matrix mean?

For Indicator 10, the Compliance Matrix includes information on the **Data Review** and the **PPP Review**. A maximum of two points are assigned to each of the components. The point assignments for the components are as follows:

### Data Review

2 points *=* District does not meet criteria for disproportionate representation (not flagged). 0 points = District meets criteria for disproportionate representation (flagged).

### PPP Review

2 points *=* District does not demonstrate noncompliance in PPPs. 0 points = District demonstrates noncompliance in PPPs.

## What resources are available to help me better understand this data?

* Indicator 10 public reporting on [School and District Profiles](https://profiles.doe.mass.edu/statereport/special_education.aspx) website
* [SPP/APR Indicator 10](https://www.doe.mass.edu/sped/spp/indicators/indicator10/) additional information
* [State Performance Plan (MA SPP) and Annual Performance Reports (MA APR)](https://www.doe.mass.edu/sped/spp/maspp.html)
* [Rethinking Discipline, Significant Disproportionality, and Indicators 4, 9, and 10](https://www.doe.mass.edu/sfs/discipline/indicators-4-9-10.docx)
* Contact Special Education Planning and Policy Development

Yes and no. Last year, SPP/APR Indicators 11, 12, 13 were combined into one component. This year, the 3 indicators are being reported separately and assigned points individually in the matrix. However, the same information that has been used for Indicator 11 will be applied again this year.

## What data are included in this category?

When a district goes through Tiered Focus Monitoring (TFM) Group A, they submit their SPP/APR Indicators 11-13 data to the Department through the Communication Hub and Monitoring Portal (CHAMP). The data are analyzed by Monitoring Specialists at the Department and compliance for each record for all 3 Indicators, including SPP/APR Indicator 11, is determined and a compliance percentage is calculated.

Indicator 11 is the percentage of children and youth whose initial evaluation and eligibility determination was completed within 45 school days from the time of parental consent.

## How is compliance calculated?

The Department calculates this rate based on the compliance results from monitoring of timelines.

*Numerator:*

*Number of children and youth who had initial evaluations and eligibility determinations completed within 45 schools day from the time of parent consent*

*Denominator:*

*Number of children and youth for whom parental consent for initial evaluations was received*

## What if my district did not get monitored for Group A IMR?

There would be no compliance data to report and this category would not count towards your Determination rating for this year.

## What resources are available to help me better understand this data?

* [Indicator 11 Quick Reference Guide](https://www.doe.mass.edu/sped/spp/indicators/indicator11/indicator11-qrg.docx)
* Indicator 11 public reporting on [School and District Profiles](https://profiles.doe.mass.edu/statereport/special_education.aspx) website
* [State Performance Plan (MA SPP) and Annual Performance Reports (MA APR)](https://www.doe.mass.edu/sped/spp/maspp.html)

Yes and no. Last year, SPP/APR Indicators 11, 12, and 13 were combined into one component. This year, the 3 indicators are being reported separately and assigned points individually in the matrix. However, the same information that has been used for SPP/APR Indicator 12 will be applied again this year.

## What data are included in this category?

When a district goes through Tiered Focus Monitoring (TFM) Group A, they submit their SPP/APR Indicators 11-13 data to the Department through the Communication Hub and Monitoring Portal (CHAMP). The data are analyzed by Monitoring Specialists at the Department and compliance for each record for all 3 Indicators, including SPP/APR Indicator 12, is determined and a compliance percentage is calculated.

Indicator 12 is the percentage of children transitioning from Early Intervention (Part C) who were found eligible for special education services (Part B) and have an IEP implemented by their third birthday.

## How is compliance calculated?

The Department calculates this rate based on the compliance results from monitoring of timelines.

*Numerator:*

*Number of children determined eligible for special education with an IEP developed and implemented by their third birthday*

*Denominator:*

*[Number of children transitioning from Part C to Part B] - [Number of children determined not eligible by their third birthday] - [Number of children for whom parent refusal to provide consent caused delays in evaluation or initial services or to whom exceptions under* [*34 C.F.R. § 300.301(d)*](https://sites.ed.gov/idea/regs/b/d/300.301) *applied] - [Number of children determined to be eligible for early intervention services under Part C less than 90 days before their third birthdays]*

## What if my district did not get monitored for Group A IMR?

There would be no compliance data to report and this category would not count towards your Determination rating for this year.

## What resources are available to help me better understand this data?

* [Indicator 12 Quick Reference Guide](https://www.doe.mass.edu/sped/spp/indicators/indicator12/indicator12-qrg.docx)
* Indicator 12 public reporting on [School and District Profiles](https://profiles.doe.mass.edu/statereport/special_education.aspx) website
* [State Performance Plan (MA SPP) and Annual Performance Reports (MA APR)](https://www.doe.mass.edu/sped/spp/maspp.html)

# SPP/APR Indicator 13

## Is this the same measurement as last year?

Yes and no. Last year indicators 11, 12, and 13 were combined into one component. This year, the 3 indicators are being reported separately and assigned points individually in the matrix. However, the same information that has been used for Indicator 13 will be applied again this year.

## What data are included in this category?

When a district goes through Tiered Focus Monitoring (TFM) Group A, they submit their SPP/APR Indicators 11-13 data to the Department through the Communication Hub and Monitoring Portal (CHAMP). The data are analyzed by Monitoring Specialists at the Department and compliance for each record for all 3 Indicators, including SPP/APR Indicator 13, is determined and a compliance percentage is calculated.

Indicator 13 is the percentage of children and youth with disabilities aged 14 and above who receive

IDEA-compliant secondary transition planning and services. Compliant transition planning and services must include the following:

* 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;
* Annual IEP goals related to the student’s transition services needs;
* 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 that is likely to be responsible for providing or paying for transition services, including, if appropriate, pre-employment transition services, was invited to the IEP Team meeting with the prior consent of the parent or student who has reached the age of majority.

## How is compliance calculated?

The Department calculates this rate based on the compliance results from monitoring of timelines.

*Numerator:*

*Number of children and youth aged 14 and above with IDEA-compliant transition plans and services*

*Denominator:*

*Number of children and youth aged 14 and above with IEPs reviewed for IDEA-compliant transition plans and services*

## What if my district did not get monitored for Group A IMR?

There would be no compliance data to report and this category would not count towards your Determination rating for this year.

## What resources are available to help me better understand this data?

* [Indicator 13 Quick Reference Guide](https://www.doe.mass.edu/sped/spp/indicators/indicator13/indicator13-qrg.docx)
* Indicator 13 public reporting on [School and District Profiles](https://profiles.doe.mass.edu/statereport/special_education.aspx) website
* [State Performance Plan (MA SPP) and Annual Performance Reports (MA APR)](https://www.doe.mass.edu/sped/spp/maspp.html)

# Identification of Noncompliance: Number of Findings

For this year, the number of findings of **special education** non-compliance found either through Public School Monitoring’s (PSM) TFM (Group A and Group B) or through Problem Resolution Systems (PRS) is combined into a single category.

## Is this the same measurement as last year?

Yes and no. The Department is using the same information sources as last year (PSM and PRS findings, combined), but will no longer be calculating the rate of findings per 1000 children and youth with disabilities.

## What data are included in this category?

The category includes all special education findings and complaints resulting in a non-compliance finding during the determination cycle, regardless of when the complaint is presently open and pending corrective action implementation or has been closed.

The calculation does not include the findings for SPP/APR Indicators 4B, 9, 10, 11, 12, and 13, as these data are already captured as their own independent criteria in the matrix.

## Why include the total number of findings rather than the previously used rate?

Given that there is an increased number of criteria that is being used in this year’s LEA Determinations, the impact that noncompliance findings have on a district are much smaller. By previously using a rate (per 1,000 children and youth with disabilities), it “leveled” the field to control for district size. However, looking at this year’s LEA Determinations data, use of a rate would have impacted smaller districts to a greater extent.

By moving to the total number of findings of noncompliance made by both PSM and PRS, and establishing rigorous thresholds for point assignment, districts who had 1 or 2 findings will not be as disproportionately affected as they would have if the Department continued using a rate. Districts, regardless of size, with a high number of findings would still have received the least number of points available, whether it was a rate or the true number of findings.

This change is also easier to understand for all parties and will not require districts to investigate what the actual findings were, as had to be done when a rate was used. The Department will be providing information to districts regarding the findings that were used in this criterion (e.g., case numbers, dates of finding, or specific criteria that the finding was on).

## What resources are available to help me better understand the PSM data?

* [PSM Webpage](https://www.doe.mass.edu/psm/)
* [TFM Toolkit](https://www.doe.mass.edu/psm/resources/tfm-toolkit.docx)
* [TFM Reports](https://www.doe.mass.edu/psm/tfm/reports/)

## What resources are available to help me better understand the PRS data?

* [PRS website](http://www.doe.mass.edu/prs/)
* [PRS Liaisons](https://www.doe.mass.edu/prs/specialist.html)
* [PRS Information Guide](https://www.doe.mass.edu/prs/guide/default.html)
* Contact the Problem Resolution System Office

# Correction of Noncompliance

Consistent with [OSEP QA 23-01](https://sites.ed.gov/idea/files/Guidance_on_State_General_Supervision_Responsibilities_under_Parts_B_and_C_of_IDEA-07-24-2023.pdf), once a finding of non-compliance is issued to a district, they must correct the noncompliance and the Department must verify correction of noncompliance no later than one year from date of notification. Within this category, the Department uses any outstanding noncompliance not corrected within the one-year timeframe and/or the district did not supply the Department with sufficient documentation related to noncompliance within a timely manner.

Uncorrected noncompliance findings in this category are lag data and come from the previous school year (2022-2023).

## Is this the same measurement as last year?

Yes and no. The Department used the same information sources as last year for those districts not demonstrating timely correction of noncompliance, but will no longer calculate the per 1000 children and youth with disabilities.

## What data are included in this category?

The category includes the number of a district’s noncompliance findings that did not receive verified correction within one year of written notification.

## Why include the total number of uncorrected findings rather than the previously used rate?

Given the increased number of criteria used in this year’s LEA Determinations, the impact that noncompliance findings have on a district are much smaller. By previously using a rate (per 1,000 children and youth with disabilities), it “leveled” the field to control for district size. However, looking at this year’s LEA Determinations data, use of a rate disproportionately impacted smaller districts .

By moving to the total number of findings of noncompliance not corrected within one year of written notification and establishing rigorous thresholds for point assignment, districts who had 1 or 2 findings not corrected within the required timeline will not be as disproportionately affected if the Department continued using a rate.

Districts, regardless of size, with a high number of findings not corrected within the required timeline would still receive the least number of points available, whether it was a rate or the true number of findings.

This change is also easier to understand for all parties and will not require districts to investigate the actual uncorrected findings like when a rate was used. The Department will provide information to districts regarding the findings of noncompliance not verified as corrected within one year that were used in this criterion (e.g., case numbers, dates of finding, or specific criteria that the finding was on).

# Other Considerations Used in LEA Determinations Maintenance of Effort (MOE) Compliance Standard - NEW

## What is MOE?

The MOE requirement obligates LEAs receiving funds under IDEA Part B Section 611 (DESE Fund Code 240) and 619 (DESE Fund Code 262) to budget and spend at least the same amount of local and state funds for the education of children and youth with disabilities on a year-to-year basis.

Districts receiving NA, NI, or NSI determinations must not use the MOE adjustment flexibility available under IDEA and must budget for special education in 2023-2023 at least as much state and local funds in the aggregate or per pupil as it budgeted and spent the last year it met MOE.

## What are MOE compliance standards?

An LEA may demonstrate MOE eligibility through either of these two calculations: (1) the combination of State and local funds in the aggregate; or (2) the combination of State and local funds on a per capita basis. Using the budgeted amounts to meet MOE that the LEA reports on the IDEA Consolidated Application, the Department determines an LEA’s eligibility for IDEA funding. It is important that an LEA demonstrates compliance with the eligibility standard and if not, indicates on their grant application the reason for not meeting the eligibility standard.

## What resources are available to help me better understand this data?

* [IDEA Local Educational Agency Maintenance of Effort Quick Reference Guide](https://www.doe.mass.edu/federalgrants/idea/qrg-moe.docx)
* [34 CFR §300.203](https://sites.ed.gov/idea/regs/b/c/300.203)
* [34 CFR §300.204](https://sites.ed.gov/idea/regs/b/c/300.204)
* [34 CFR §300.205](https://sites.ed.gov/idea/regs/b/c/300.205)
* Center for IDEA Fiscal Reporting (CIFR) [LEA MOE Calculator](https://cifr.wested.org/resources/lea-moe/calculator/)
* Center for IDEA Fiscal Reporting (CIFR) [LEA MOE Organizer](https://cifr.wested.org/resources/lea-moe/organizer/)

# SPP/APR Indicator 7: Useable Records - NEW

## What is SPP/APR Indicator 7?

The SPP/APR Indicator 7 evaluates Early Childhood Outcomes across three key measures:

* Positive social-emotional skills (including social relationships)
* Acquisition and use of knowledge and skills (including early language/communication and early literacy)
* Use of appropriate behaviors to meet needs

For each of the three measures, the Department evaluates the percentage of children with disabilities in preschool for at least six months who 1) entered the preschool program below age expectations in an Outcome and substantially increased their rate of growth by the time they turned 6 years of age or exited the program or

2) were functioning within age expectations in an Outcome by the time they turned 6 years of age or exited the program.

## What are useable records?

In order to measure Early Childhood Outcomes and any progress children with disabilities make during their preschool education, districts must collect both entrance and exit ratings. It is the comparison of these ratings that allows the Department to see growth in Outcomes and whether age expectations for the Outcome were met upon a child’s exit from preschool. For this reason, the Department is prioritizing the collection of useable records.

SPP/APR Indicator 7 records are unusable when they are incorrectly reported and an entrance and/or exit rating is missing. Thus, the Department will be awarding one point for districts in which the percent of useable records for analyzing Early Childhood Outcomes meets or exceeds the state’s percent of useable records and no points for districts with a percent of useable records below the state percentage.

## Where does the data come from?

Entrance and exit ratings for preschool children with disabilities are submitted by LEAs through the Early Childhood Outcomes Survey database three times per year. Information about these ratings can be found in the database.

## How are the data calculated?

The Department calculates this rate based on the number of children with disabilities in preschool who had useable records for Indicator 7 reporting.

*Numerator:*

*Number of records with all required data points (e.g., entrance and exit ratings) for children with disabilities exiting preschool or turning six years old that were used in SPP/APR Indicator 7 calculations.*

*Denominator:*

*Number of children with disabilities exiting preschool or turning six years old.*

## What resources are available to help me better understand this data?

* [SPP/APR Indicator 7 guidance](https://www.doe.mass.edu/sped/spp/indicators/indicator7/)
* [State Performance Plan (MA SPP) and Annual Performance Reports (MA APR)](https://www.doe.mass.edu/sped/spp/maspp.html)
* Public reporting on [School and District Profiles](https://profiles.doe.mass.edu/statereport/special_education.aspx)

# SPP/APR Indicator 14: Response Rate - NEW

## What is SPP/APR Indicator 14?

The SPP/APR Indicator 14 evaluates Post-School Outcomes for children and youth with disabilities who exited high school and within one year after exiting were:

* Enrolled in higher education
* Enrolled in higher education or competitively employed
* Enrolled in higher education or in some other postsecondary education or training program; or competitively employed or in some other employment

Post-School Outcomes come from data collected through an Indicator 14 survey (Massachusetts After High School Survey) to be completed by all districts with children and youth with disabilities exiting high school in the prior school year.

## Why is the response rate important?

In order to measure Post-School Outcomes, children and youth with disabilities who exited high school one year prior (or their families) must respond to the survey to ascertain what they have done since leaving high school. In order to get an accurate and reliable picture of what children and youth with disabilities are doing upon leaving high school, high response rates to the survey are important.

Higher response rates improve representativeness of the population, mitigate nonresponse bias that may misrepresent the data for certain groups, and increase confidence in the accuracy of data collected. Thus, the Department will award one point for districts in which their response rate meets or exceeds the state’s response rate and no points for districts with a response rate below the state rate.

## How is the response rate calculated?

The Department calculates this rate based on the number of children and youth with disabilities who exited high school the year prior and responded to the Indicator 14 survey (Massachusetts After High School Survey).

*Numerator:*

*Number of respondents to the Indicator 14 survey.*

*Denominator:*

*Number of children and youth with disabilities who exited high school one year prior and were eligible to respond to the Indicator 14 survey.*

## What resources are available to help me better understand this data?

* [SPP/APR Indicator 14 guidance](https://www.doe.mass.edu/sped/spp/indicators/indicator14/)
* [State Performance Plan (MA SPP) and Annual Performance Reports (MA APR)](https://www.doe.mass.edu/sped/spp/maspp.html)
* Public reporting on [School and District Profiles](https://profiles.doe.mass.edu/statereport/special_education.aspx)

# Timely Submission of Child Count Data - NEW

This new criteria indicates whether a district submitted the IDEA Equitable Services Annual Child Count application by the designated due date (April 2024).

## Why is timely submission of Child Count now included in LEA Determinations?

Child Count data is foundational to many state and federal reports and also has fiscal implications for districts. This makes timely submissions of Child Count data, including annual data regarding evaluation, eligibility determinations, and provision of equitable services for eligible parentally-placed private and home school children and youth, are important for the Department to fulfill all associated reporting requirements. Further, [OSEP QA 23-01](https://sites.ed.gov/idea/files/Guidance_on_State_General_Supervision_Responsibilities_under_Parts_B_and_C_of_IDEA-07-24-2023.pdf) stipulates that as part of LEA Determinations, states must consider valid and reliable data as well as other data available to the State about the LEA’s or EIS program’s compliance with IDEA. The Department considers the timeliness of data submission to be an important piece of determining validity and reliability of data. For this reason, the Department will award one point for districts completing and certifying the annual data submission in the IDEA Equitable Services Annual Child Count application by the April 2024 due date and zero points for districts failing to submit the Child Count application on or before the April 2024 due date.

## What resources are available to help me better understand this data?

* [IDEA Equitable Services Child Count Reporting Requirements](https://www.doe.mass.edu/sped/advisories/policy-procedure-memo2023-3.html)

# Accurate and Reliable Child Count Data - NEW

This new criteria indicates whether or not an LEA requested or needed decertification of the data in their Child Count application in order to address data quality concerns or inaccuracies.

## Why is accurate and reliable Child Count data now included in LEA Determinations?

Child Count data is foundational to many state and federal reports and also has fiscal implications for districts. This makes timely submissions of Child Count data important in order for the Department to fulfill all associated reporting requirements. Further, [OSEP QA 23-01](https://sites.ed.gov/idea/files/Guidance_on_State_General_Supervision_Responsibilities_under_Parts_B_and_C_of_IDEA-07-24-2023.pdf) stipulates that as part of LEA Determinations, states must consider valid and reliable data as well as other data available to the State about the LEA’s or EIS program’s compliance with IDEA. For this reason, the Department will award one point for districts not requesting decertification of the IDEA Equitable Services Annual Child Count application in order to address data quality concerns or inaccuracies and zero points for districts failing requesting decertification of the IDEA Equitable Services Annual Child Count application.

## What resources are available to help me better understand this data?

* [IDEA Equitable Services Child Count Reporting Requirements](https://www.doe.mass.edu/sped/advisories/policy-procedure-memo2023-3.html)

# Assistance

## What does a district need to do if determined to Meet Requirements (MR)?

There are no activities required.

## What does a district need to do if determined to Need Assistance (NA)?

1. All districts determined NA should attend the Determination Status technical assistance Webinar on May 7, 2025 from 3-4p ET. Team members who were unable to attend should review the recording. This resource will help you:
	1. Understand the criteria contained in the new Determination Status Matrix
	2. Understand the calculations used to make the LEA determinations.
	3. Understand the fiscal implications of LEA determinations.
	4. Recognize district leadership roles related to the LEA determinations.
	5. Integrate data from the LEA determinations in school and district improvement planning.
	6. Become familiar with the process of root cause analysis and action/improvement planning.
	7. Start and/or continue an evidence-based root cause analysis and action/improvement planning process.
2. All NA districts ***must not use the flexibility available under the MOE provisions of IDEA*** and must budget for special education in 2023-2024 at least as much state and local funds in the aggregate or per pupil as it budgeted and spent in the last year it met MOE.
3. All NA districts must prepare for and participate in two, one-day, onsite technical assistance convenings:
	1. A fall convening focused on root cause analysis
	2. A winter convening focused on action planning
4. During these convenings, districts in their first year of NA status will explore their data and begin their root cause analysis and action planning. Districts with a prior NA or NI status will review their data, reflect on and revise their prior root cause analysis, and update their action planning.
5. All NA districts will also be provided office hours and/or webinars to assist them in
	1. Conducting a root cause analysis
	2. Developing an action plan
	3. Implementing, progressing monitoring, and updating their action plan
6. In the spring, NA districts will use a DESE-provided template or form to submit a portion of their action plan to the Department. This submission will be aligned to the content and tools covered in the convenings, office hours, and webinars.
7. To support their success in addressing their determination status, *all districts that are determined as NA are required to participate in the technical assistance opportunities described above.*

## What does a district need to do if determined as NI or NSI?

1. All districts determined NI should attend the Determination Status technical assistance Webinar on May 7, 2025 from 3-4p ET. Team members who were unable to attend should review the recording. This resource will help you:
	1. Understand the criteria contained in the new Determination Status Matrix
	2. Understand the calculations used to make the LEA determinations.
	3. Understand the fiscal implications of LEA determinations.
	4. Recognize district leadership roles related to the LEA determinations.
	5. Integrate data from the LEA determinations in school and district improvement planning.
	6. Become familiar with the process of root cause analysis and action/improvement planning.
	7. Start and/or continue an evidence-based root cause analysis and action/improvement planning process.
2. All NI districts ***must not use the flexibility available under the MOE provisions of IDEA*** and must budget for special education in 2023-2024 at least as much state and local funds in the aggregate or per pupil as it budgeted and spent in the last year it met MOE.
3. All NI districts must prepare for and participate in two, onsite technical assistance convenings:
	1. A two-day fall convening focused on root cause analysis
	2. A one-day winter convening focused on action planning
4. During these convenings, districts in their first year of NI status will explore their data and begin their root cause analysis and action planning. Districts with a prior NA or NI status will review their data, reflect on and revise their prior root cause analysis, and update their action planning.
5. All NI districts will receive 3 individual consult calls with the SPED Strategies team. One following each convening, and one following their new determination status in the spring. These calls will support districts in:
	1. Conducting a root cause analysis
	2. Developing an action plan
	3. Implementing, progressing monitoring, and updating their action plan
6. In the spring, NI districts will use a DESE-provided template to submit their action plan to the Department. This submission will be aligned to the content and tools covered in the convenings and consult calls.
7. To support their success in addressing their determination status, *all districts that are determined as NI are required to participate in the technical assistance opportunities described above.*
8. NI districts are also required to participate in Making Money Matter (M3).

## Is there a list of districts that have been identified for networking and comparative purposes? Can we access information to identify groups of districts that have been identified for similar reasons (to attempt to share resources/ideas/practices)?

No. Districts may consider using the [special education RADAR report](https://www.doe.mass.edu/research/radar/) to identify similar districts for comparative and networking purposes. Districts are encouraged to work with existing assistance teams (SSoS, OST, Charter, PSM, SEPP) to align with existing improvement plans.

A list of all districts’ LEA determinations is available at [MA Local Education Agencies' (LEA) Determinations of](https://www.doe.mass.edu/sped/osep/determinations.html) [Need](https://www.doe.mass.edu/sped/osep/determinations.html) webpage.

## What resources are available to help me better understand this data?

The [MA Local Education Agencies' (LEA) Determinations of Need](https://www.doe.mass.edu/sped/osep/determinations.html) webpage has helpful resources.

# Making Money Matter (M3)

*Updated content for this section will be coming soon.*

# Additional Questions

## Why have some of the calculations changed?

We are committed to improving the LEA determination process. This is a work in progress and the Department appreciates feedback.

## Where can I find data resources?

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Measure** | **Resources/Reports** |
| **Graduation Rate** | Publicly reporting on district status: <https://profiles.doe.mass.edu/statereport/special_education.aspx> |
| **Dropout Rate** | Publicly reporting on district status: <https://profiles.doe.mass.edu/statereport/special_education.aspx> |
| **MCAS Proficiency Rates** | Profiles: <https://profiles.doe.mass.edu/statereport/nextgenmcas.aspx> [Security Portal](https://gateway.edu.state.ma.us/): Assessment – Achievement Analysis ORgo to Edwin Analytics → Assessments → MCAS → Achievement Analysis to view the report “PE304: MCAS District and School Results by Subgroup” |
| **Educational Environments: School-Age** | Publicly reporting on district status: <https://profiles.doe.mass.edu/statereport/special_education.aspx> |
| **Educational Environments: Preschool** | Publicly reporting on district status: <https://profiles.doe.mass.edu/statereport/special_education.aspx> |
| **SPP/APR Indicator 4B** | Flagged and Identified Districts have data emailed to the Superintendent and Special Education DirectorPublicly reporting on district status: <https://profiles.doe.mass.edu/statereport/special_education.aspx> |
| **SPP/APR Indicator 9** | Flagged and Identified Districts have data emailed to the Superintendent and Special Education DirectorPublicly reporting on district status: <https://profiles.doe.mass.edu/statereport/special_education.aspx> |

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **SPP/APR Indicator 10** | Flagged and Identified Districts have data emailed to the Superintendent and Special Education DirectorPublicly reporting on district status: <https://profiles.doe.mass.edu/statereport/special_education.aspx> |
| **SPP/APR Indicator 11** | Indicator 11 data are submitted to the Department using the Communication Hub and Monitoring Portal (CHAMP) when a district goes through Group A of the TFM.Publicly reporting on district status: <https://profiles.doe.mass.edu/statereport/special_education.aspx> |
| **SPP/APR Indicator 12** | Indicator 12 data are submitted to the Department using the Communication Hub and Monitoring Portal (CHAMP) when a district goes through Group A of the TFM.Publicly reporting on district status: <https://profiles.doe.mass.edu/statereport/special_education.aspx> |
| **SPP/APR Indicator 13** | Indicator 13 data are submitted to the Department using the Communication Hub and Monitoring Portal (CHAMP) when a district goes through Group A of the TFM.Publicly reporting on district status: <https://profiles.doe.mass.edu/statereport/special_education.aspx> |
| **Identification of Noncompliance** | **Public School Monitoring**Public School TFM Reports: <https://www.doe.mass.edu/psm/tfm/reports/>**Problem Resolution System:** compliance@doe.mass.edu |
| **Correction of Noncompliance** | **Public School Monitoring**Public School TFM Reports: <https://www.doe.mass.edu/psm/tfm/reports/>**Problem Resolution System:** compliance@doe.mass.edu |
| **MOE Compliance Standard** | IDEA Local Educational Agency Maintenance of Effort Quick Reference Guide <https://www.doe.mass.edu/federalgrants/idea/qrg-moe.docx> |
| **SPP/APR Indicator 7: Useable Records** | IDEAData@mass.gov |
| **SPP/APR Indicator 14: Response Rate** | IDEAData@mass.gov |

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Timely Submission of Child Count Data** | IDEA Equitable Services Child Count Reporting Requirements <https://www.doe.mass.edu/sped/advisories/policy-procedure-memo2023-3.html> |
| **Accurate and Reliable Child Count Data** | IDEA Equitable Services Child Count Reporting Requirements <https://www.doe.mass.edu/sped/advisories/policy-procedure-memo2023-3.html> |

# Department Contact Information

## Who do I contact with additional data questions?

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Measure** | **Resources/Reports** |
| **Graduation Rate Dropout Rate** | data@doe.mass.edu |
| **MCAS Proficiency Rates** | [mcas@doe.mass.edu](https://www.doe.mass.edu/contact/qanda.aspx?orgcode=ATAC_SA09) |
| **Educational Environments: School-Age** | Specialeducation@doe.mass.edu |
| **Educational Environments: Preschool** | Specialeducation@doe.mass.edu |
| **SPP/APR Indicators 4B, 9, and 10** | Specialeducation@doe.mass.edu |
| **SPP/APR Indicators 11, 12, and 13** | <https://www.doe.mass.edu/psm/contact-info.html> specialeducation@doe.mass.edu |
| **Problem Resolution System Complaints** | compliance@doe.mass.edu |
| **Public School Monitoring Compliance** | <https://www.doe.mass.edu/psm/contact-info.html> |
| **MOE Compliance Standard** | IDEAfiscal@mass.gov |
| **SPP/APR Indicator 7: Useable Records** | IDEAData@mass.gov |
| **SPP/APR Indicator 14: Response Rate** | IDEAData@mass.gov |
| **Child Count Data Submission** | IDEAfiscal@mass.gov |