**State Performance Plan / Annual Performance Report: Part B**

**for STATE FORMULA GRANT PROGRAMS under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act**

**For reporting on
FFY 2022**

**Massachusetts**



**PART B DUE February 1, 2024**

**U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION**

**WASHINGTON, DC 20202**

# Introduction

**Instructions**

Provide sufficient detail to ensure that the Secretary and the public are informed of and understand the State’s systems designed to drive improved results for students with disabilities and to ensure that the State Educational Agency (SEA) and Local Educational Agencies (LEAs) meet the requirements of IDEA Part B. This introduction must include descriptions of the State’s General Supervision System, Technical Assistance System, Professional Development System, Stakeholder Involvement, and Reporting to the Public.

## Intro - Indicator Data

**Executive Summary**

The Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (MA DESE or the Department) is pleased to make available the Massachusetts IDEA Part B FFY 2022 State Performance Plan/Annual Performance Report (SPP/APR). As demonstrated by the Indicator reporting, MA DESE continues to pursue high targets in order to reflect its Commonwealth’s commitment to high performance expectations for students with disabilities. The SPP/APR serves as the primary blueprint that drives much of MA DESE’s work in special education. The annual reporting and related monitoring of state and local performance and compliance indicators is a key measure of assessing change in outcomes for students with IEPs. The SPP/APR provides baseline data, targets, discussion of the general supervision system, and improvement activities around which special education work in the agency is organized. Input from a diverse group of stakeholders is reflected in the SPP/APR targets and activities. The SPP/APR includes target data, data for the reporting year, an explanation of progress or slippage, and discussion of additional information that provides context for the year’s results. MA DESE also reports annually to the public on the performance of LEAs compared to state targets. Current and historical SPP/APRs are available at: http://www.doe.mass.edu/sped/spp/maspp.html. LEA performance data may be reviewed at: https://profiles.doe.mass.edu/statereport/special\_education.aspx.

While the COVID-19 pandemic is largely over, effects of it still linger in the reporting for FFY 2022, as evidenced in the lag data used for a number of Indicators. For example, FFY 2022 is the last year of the modified competency determination that affects graduation rates (Indicator 1) and the multi-year analysis for Suspension and Discipline rates still includes the 2020-2021 school year, which was strongly affected by COVID (Indicators 4A/B). Even with these lingering effects, Massachusetts saw improvements in a number of Indicators, and MA DESE is hopeful that these positive trends will continue in the coming years. Additionally, MA DESE has ended the sampling model of data collection for Indicators 7 and 14 (read more in the individual Indicator narratives) and moved to census collection. We hope that by collecting statewide data for these two Indicators, we will gain a better insight into the outcomes of our students with disabilities, from pre-school through post-secondary school.

**Additional information related to data collection and reporting**

For FFY 2022 MA DESE continued to expand its Stakeholder Engagement, moving beyond simply sharing data on the Indicators within the SPP/APR. It engaged with Stakeholders more frequently throughout the year, virtually meeting once a month, and set the purpose for each meeting to primarily focus on the development of strategies to improve outcomes for students with disabilities. MA DESE continues to strive to increase outreach to stakeholders by utilizing strategies that focus on increasing involvement from students, families, and district staff from historically resilient communities.

**Number of Districts in your State/Territory during reporting year**

399

**General Supervision System:**

**The systems that are in place to ensure that the IDEA Part B requirements are met (e.g., integrated monitoring activities; data on processes and results; the SPP/APR; fiscal management; policies, procedures, and practices resulting in effective implementation; and improvement, correction, incentives, and sanctions).**

In FFY 2022, MA DESE expanded the process of reviewing and improving its General Supervision System, an integrated and cohesive system whose eight key components are aligned to ensure that IDEA Part B requirements are met. This work was not done in isolation, but in coordination and collaboration across the Department and with other agencies, Technical Assistance providers, and outside stakeholders including key staff from the Massachusetts Parent Training and Information Center to ensure efficacy and improved outcomes for children with disabilities. The key components are:
• SPP/APR (https://www.doe.mass.edu/sped/spp/maspp.html);
• Policies, Procedures and Effective Implementation (https://www.doe.mass.edu/sped/policy.html);
• Integrated Monitoring Activities (https://www.doe.mass.edu/sped/cc.html);
• Fiscal Management (https://www.doe.mass.edu/federalgrants/idea/);
• Data on Processes and Results (https://www.doe.mass.edu/DataAccountability.html);
• Improvement, Correction, Incentives, and Sanctions (https://www.doe.mass.edu/sped/osep/determinations.html);
• Effective Dispute Resolution (https://www.doe.mass.edu/prs/); and
• Targeted Technical Assistance and Professional Development (https://www.doe.mass.edu/sped/ta.html).

DATA
MA DESE collects, analyzes, disaggregates, and reports data on all of its 399 LEAs each year to provide OSEP with the status of Special Education performance and compliance across the Commonwealth. This is a collaborative effort across multiple units within MA DESE. Technical Assistance and Professional Development around the Indicators is offered both broadly for all LEAs and more targeted assistance for LEAs based on identified need or the prior year’s data. LEAs submit some data directly to the Department through the Student Information Management System (SIMS) and the School Safety and Discipline Report (SSDR). Other information is collected through monitoring efforts such as the Web Based Monitoring System (WBMS), and other collection methods such as surveys, e.g., the Early Childhood Outcomes Survey Database (ECOS). MA DESE continues to work with TA providers to document data protocols and to improve data quality and use.

MONITORING
LEAs are reviewed every three years through Tiered Focus Monitoring (TFM). This process emphasizes elements most tied to student outcomes and alternates the focus of each review between Group A: Student Identification, IEP Development, Programming and Support Services, and Equal Opportunity, and Group B: Licensure and Professional Development, Parent/Student/Community Engagement, Facilities and Classroom Observations, Oversight, Time and Learning, and Equal Access. Approximately 130 LEAs are monitored each year, with roughly half (65-70) falling into each group.

The Department has developed a specific set of criteria (Targeted Standards) that is used in the review process for each LEA when it goes through the two phases of TFM, the processes for which are described below:
Self-Assessment Phase:
• District/school reviews special education and civil rights documentation for required elements, including document uploads into Web Based Monitoring System (WBMS).
• District/school reviews a sample of special education student records selected across grade levels, disability categories, and levels of need.
• Upon completion of these two internal reviews, the district/school submits its self-assessment via WBMS to the Department for review.
During the on-site verification phase, the Department:
• Reviews a sample of student records from the special education roster and others submitted by the district as part of its self-assessment. The onsite team conducts this review, using standard Department procedures, to determine whether procedural and programmatic requirements are being met;
• Reviews of additional documents dealing with special education or civil rights within the district;
• Sends parents of students with disabilities a survey to solicit information regarding their experiences with the district’s implementation of special education programs, related services, and procedural requirements;
• Interviews of staff consistent with those criteria selected for onsite verification;
• Interviews parent advisory council (PAC) representatives and conducts other telephone interviews as requested by parents or members of the general public; and
• Visits a sample of classrooms and school facilities used in the delivery of programs and services to determine general levels of compliance with program requirements.

MA DESE collects Indicators 8, 11, 12, and 13 as part of a LEAs Tiered Focus Monitoring. For more information about these data collection activities, please see the Individual Indicator narratives. As part of MA DESE’s continuous improvement work, MA DESE has drafted updated monitoring procedures that have been shared with the public for comment. We anticipate these updated procedures to be implemented next school year. MA DESE continues to focus on improving integrated monitoring by using data to inform targeted monitoring and by using monitoring data to inform other areas of general supervision.

LEA DETERMINATIONS
In an effort to ensure that the MA DESE’s Special Education Accountability system is a transparent process focused on data that have a strong effect on outcomes for students with disabilities (SwD), the Department revised its Special Education Determination process in 2021. In making the 2022-2023 special education determinations, MA DESE assessed LEAs’ performance and compliance data, including data about SwD from the general accountability system, Tiered Focused Monitoring process, State complaints, and State Performance Plan/Annual Performance Reports.

A rubric was used to calculate the LEA Determination percentage and assign each LEA a determination category. The rubric included data points for the annual dropout rate and 5-year cohort graduation rate for students with disabilities; Public School Monitoring (PSM) compliance findings (including for Indicators 11, 12, and 13); Problem Resolution System (PRS) complaint findings; Indicators 4B, 9, and 10 compliance findings; a combined full inclusion rate for Indicators 5 and 6; and Significant Disproportionality status. Based on feedback from stakeholders, MA DESE has continued to improve the rubric to ensure this data driven approach appropriately identifies districts that need the most support from the Department to improve compliance and outcomes for students with disabilities For more information on how MA DESE uses these data and the Determination status for LEAs, see the Technical Assistance System.

**Technical Assistance System:**

**The mechanisms that the State has in place to ensure the timely delivery of high quality, evidence-based technical assistance and support to LEAs.**

MA DESE provides technical assistance to LEAs using data from the annual LEA determinations and works with LEAs to identify root causes for compliance and performance outcomes. It places particular emphasis on equitable education and services for students with disabilities with multiple intersecting identities (e.g., of color, English learner, low-income, LGBTQ+).

Additionally, MA DESE supports districts assigned the “Needs Assistance,” “Needs Intervention,” or “Needs Substantial Intervention” determination by offering targeted technical assistance related to special education. Coordinated assistance and intervention are provided from multiple offices, including the Special Education Planning and Policy office (SEPP), Office of Public School Monitoring (PSM), Statewide System of Support (SSOS), Office of School Turnaround (OST), and Office of Charter Schools & School Redesign (CSSRD). Assistance is tailored to meet each LEA’s needs, depending on the reasons for which it was identified as needing technical assistance or intervention.

MA DESE’s comprehensive systems of technical assistance (TA) and professional development (PD) are tied directly to local and statewide needs identified through the SPP/APR data collection, review processes, and the state’s accountability system. Central to this work is the State’s framework for district accountability and assistance: http://www.doe.mass.edu/accountability/. The framework creates a coherent structure for these activities and provides school and LEA leaders with common indicators and tools for assessing systems and practices, diagnosing challenges, and identifying appropriate interventions. Under the system, Massachusetts adopted accountability categories that define the progress that schools and LEAs are making and the types of support they may receive from MA DESE.

The SEPP, PSM, OST, CSSRD, and SSoS offices provide assistance and facilitate coordinated improvement planning in schools and districts identified by the accountability system as demonstrating performance gaps for students with disabilities. Staff from these offices collaborate to provide direct support for planning and for making connections to existing resources. Throughout the year SSoS convenes educators from across districts into networks to learn from each other and offer TA to districts through their Multi-Tiered System of Support (MTSS) Academies. These academies are designed to aid school and district teams with the implementation of tiered systems of instruction and support. Focus areas include Culturally Responsive Practices Leadership (CRPL), Inclusive Instruction through Universal Design for Learning (UDL), Literacy, Positive Behavior Interventions and Supports (PBIS), Social, Emotional, and Behavioral and Mental Health Systems (SEB), Systemic Student Support (S3), and Tiered Math. Any district is welcome to apply to these academies, but priority in FFY 2022 was given to districts in the bottom 10th percentile of the Accountability system who had “low performing” specific student subgroups and/or low high-school graduation rates.

MA DESE also provides a coordinated set of guidance documents, technical assistance, and support to LEAs working to improve results for students with IEPs. Specifically, the Department uses special education determinations, SPP/APR indicator data, compliance data, and other achievement data to tailor TA specifically to the needs of LEAs. Conversely, LEAs can and are encouraged to analyze local-level data and make requests for technical assistance based on their analyses. Some examples of TA and intervention available to all LEAs include Technical Assistance Advisories (https://www.doe.mass.edu/sped/advisories/default.html) and Frequently Asked Questions, (e.g., https://www.doe.mass.edu/sped/osep/determinations-faq.docx). For LEAs with a Special Education Determination of Needs Assistance or Needs Intervention, MA DESE provides direct, one-on-one TA to address the problems and create action plans for improvement, such as the Making Money Matter (M3) grant, which can be found at https://www.doe.mass.edu/turnaround/redesign/m3/. This work is done within all programmatic offices at MA DESE and in collaboration with other state agencies and national technical assistance and support centers, including the Early Childhood Technical Assistance (ECTA) Center, the IDEA Data Center (IDC), the Center for IDEA Fiscal Reporting (CIFR), the Positive Behavioral Interventions & Support (PBIS) Technical Assistance Center, the Center on the Social and Emotional Foundations for Early Learning, and the National Center for Systemic Improvement (NCSI).

Finally, MA DESE facilitates webinars for Special Education Directors and their staff on a monthly basis in which the State Director for Special Education, along with Directors from each of the Special Education units within the Department, provide important updates, assistance, and development offerings. During FFY2022, the Department began sharing with stakeholders, including school and district staff, the work that MA DESE was doing to improve General Supervision. These improvements included policy work and activities related to LEA implementation of IDEA provide districts with information regarding specific actions. These webinars are recorded and posted on the Special Education Planning and Policy website (https://www.doe.mass.edu/sped/). Regular special education bulletins are sent out to districts and the public that include important information and reminders related to the implementation of IDEA.

**Professional Development System:**

**The mechanisms the State has in place to ensure that service providers have the skills to effectively provide services that improve results for children with disabilities.**

MA DESE has a robust and comprehensive system of professional development (PD) for educators and service providers, designed to support and improve results for all students, including students with disabilities. MA DESE utilizes data from a variety of sources to determine the focus of professional development activities.

MA DESE provides four Special Education Leadership Institutes that focus on the key principles of state and federal priorities for student and educator success. The Institutes directly address one of the core strategies in DESE's Strategic Plan by promoting educator development. DESE aims to ensure that all students have access to highly skilled educators by supporting a cycle of continuous improvement and identifying opportunities to develop and retain highly effective educators. The Leadership Institutes include: 1) Experienced Special Education Director Leadership Institute, 2) New Special Education Director Leadership Institute, 3) Special Education Team Leaders Institute, and 4) Early Childhood Leadership Institute. MA DESE also offers a range of intensive professional development Academies designed to aid school and district teams with the implementation of tiered systems of instruction and support:1) Culturally Responsive Teaching Academy, 2) Culturally Responsive Practice and Leadership Academy, 3) Inclusive Instruction Academy, 4) Social Emotional, and Behavioral Academy, 5) Systemic Student Support Academy, 6) Tiered Literacy Academy, and 7) Tiered Math Academy.

MA DESE continues to emphasize the Deeper Learning initiative (https://www.doe.mass.edu/deeperlearning/). In this work, the Department partners with educators and leaders to provide professional development, coaching, guidance, tools, and resources, all on a foundation of educational equity. These partnerships, trainings, and resources are intended to cultivate critical consciousness, draw upon culturally sustaining practices, and develop an asset-based, intersectional lens in educators across the state. Furthering this work, in the Fall of 2022 MA DESE launched the Kaleidoscope Educator Network, which allows schools and districts to transform their existing use of high-quality instructional materials through the Deeper Learning practices and professional learning. This network includes finalists and semi-finalists from the State Teacher of the Year contest, as well as educators from districts across Massachusetts.

MA DESE has continued to update the Dyslexia Guidelines through the 2022-2023 school year and has offered opportunities to educators across the state to participate in Professional Development surrounding Dyslexia. Enrollment was open to all Massachusetts public school districts, charter schools, and collaboratives. Schools and districts were encouraged to enroll teams of 5 school and district staff who support students with dyslexia.

MA DESE continues to work to improve outcomes for students with disabilities via a collaborative, multi-stage initiative called the IEP Improvement Project (https://www.doe.mass.edu/sped/ImproveIEP/default.html). Through the IEP Improvement Project, the Department is updating all aspects of the IEP process from the initial student referral for evaluation and has rolled out a new IEP form (https://www.doe.mass.edu/sped/ImproveIEP/iep-form/), which schools and districts across the state will be using beginning either the 2023 school year or the fall of 2024. The Department released the new IEP form which is translated into 16 languages, an IEP Technical Guide, and offered several Training of Trainers convenings to train school leaders and educators on the new IEP form. The Department is in the process of updating other IEP-related forms and resources, offering additional Training of Trainers convenings, and preparing for a full implementation of the new IEP form during the school year 2024-2025.

MA DESE has continued to add to its tools and resources on IDEA Equitable Services (https://www.doe.mass.edu/sped/proshare/).

**Stakeholder Engagement:**

**The mechanisms for broad stakeholder engagement, including activities carried out to obtain input from, and build the capacity of, a diverse group of parents to support the implementation activities designed to improve outcomes, including target setting and any subsequent revisions to targets, analyzing data, developing improvement strategies, and evaluating progress.**

MA DESE is committed to a continuous system of engaging stakeholders to develop targets and set priorities for improvement in each of the areas reported in the SPP/APR and the SSIP.

The Special Education Advisory Panel (SEAP) and Special Education State Advisory Council (SAC) are comprised of parents, individuals with disabilities, educators, administrators, and representatives from state agencies, higher education, and other stakeholder groups. The members meet at least four times each school year to review data, discuss policy priorities, and identify unmet needs in the area of special education consistent with state law and IDEA Part B. At each meeting, both groups address and discuss various aspects of the SPP/APR and the State’s general supervision systems, as well as relevant policy matters. In the 2022-2023 school year, in addition to updates on performance and compliance results included in the SPP/APR, MA DESE discussed with the SEAP/SAC the definition of students with the most significant cognitive disabilities, a breakdown of LEA Determinations, revisions to the Educator Evaluation Rubric, revised Chapter 9 Dyslexia Guidelines, the Special Education Surrogate Parent Program, updates to the Tiered Focus Monitoring Parent Survey (Indicator 8), updates to the new IEP form, and trends identified by the Public School Monitoring (PSM) and Problem Resolution Systems (PRS) Offices. MA DESE is committed to keeping members of the SEAP and SAC up to date on processes and supports provided to LEAs in order to improve outcomes for students with disabilities. It will continue discussions around current data, longitudinal targets, historical rates of performance and compliance and the trajectory for improvement for each of the Indicators, and the effectiveness of focused improvement activities within the context of the state’s Results Driven Accountability framework.

The SAC is required by Massachusetts General Law (M.G.L. c. 15, § 1G https://malegislature.gov/Laws/GeneralLaws/PartI/TitleII/Chapter15/Section1G). Its purpose is to advise the Board of Elementary and Secondary Education and to make other programmatic recommendations it deems necessary to fulfill the goals established by the board.

The SEAP is required by IDEA (34 CFR §§ 300.167-300.169 https://www.ecfr.gov/current/title-34/subtitle-B/chapter-III/part-300#sg34.2.300\_1166.sg15). Its purpose is to advise the State Education Authority (SEA) of unmet needs within the State regarding the education of children with disabilities. The Panel comments publicly on proposed rules or regulations. Its advisory function to the SEA involves developing evaluations and reporting 618 data (IDEA data) to USED and creating corrective action plans to address findings in Federal monitoring reports under IDEA Part B. The Panel also advises the SEA in developing and implementing policies relating to the coordination of services for children with disabilities.

MA DESE has continued to emphasize its priority on expanding the agency’s capacity to solicit broad and diverse stakeholder input to set SPP/APR targets, analyze data, develop improvement strategies, and evaluate progress. In FFY 2022 MA DESE sought to continue developing stakeholder Indicator knowledge, a project that began in FFY 2020. MA DESE has created and continues to update a new SPP/APR website. Each of the 17 Indicators has its own dedicated web page or Quick Reference Guide (QRG), as well as PowerPoints and other relevant information or resources. All materials on the SPP/APR website are available in six languages that correspond to the most common languages spoken in Massachusetts: English, Spanish, Portuguese, Chinese, Vietnamese, and Haitian Creole. Narrated versions of each PowerPoint are also available in English on the YouTube page of MA DESE’s partner, the Federation for Children with Special Needs (the Massachusetts Parent Training and Information Center/PTIC). In FFY 2022 MA DESE hosted eight virtual information and feedback sessions to broaden stakeholder knowledge. Each meeting had a specific improvement strategy focus and also provided updates on data analysis and evaluation of progress for each Indicator. The large-group presentation on each topic was simultaneously translated from English into the other five languages.

MA DESE consults on a monthly or at least quarterly basis with the Massachusetts Administrators of Special Education (http://www.asepage.org/), Federation for Children with Special Needs (https://fcsn.org/), Massachusetts Advocates for Children (https://www.massadvocates.org/), Massachusetts Association of Approved Special Education Schools (https://maaps.org/), and Massachusetts Urban Special Education Leadership Collaborative (massurban.org)). In addition, the Massachusetts State Special Education Director at MA DESE gives monthly virtual presentations to statewide special education leaders on a wide array of special education compliance and performance topics. During all of these meetings, MA DESE solicits and receives significant feedback that informs the development of special education policy and guidance.

MA DESE works closely with other state agencies to provide supports to children with disabilities. The Department has developed a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) or has entered into an Interagency Service Agreement (ISA) with the Massachusetts Commission for the Blind (MCB), Massachusetts Rehabilitation Commission (MRC), Department of Public Health (DPH), Department of Early Education and Care (EEC), and Massachusetts Commission for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing (MCDHH). Additionally, these agencies provide a representative to serve on the MA Special Education Advisory Council and the MA Special Education Advisory Panel. The Department has established regular meetings with each of these agencies to strengthen collaborations and to monitor joint initiatives.

In its efforts to roll out the new IEP, MA DESE frequently engaged with stakeholders across the Commonwealth in a variety of roles to solicit feedback on the draft form that was released in the Spring of 2022. Stakeholder groups whose feedback was sought included various school groups, parent/family/advocacy organizations, and other State agencies.

As needed, MA DESE convenes stakeholder working groups throughout the year to provide focused input on specific projects and policy priorities. Among these focus groups were the Early Childhood Interagency Coordinating Council (which includes community members and state agency employees), a Statewide Systemic Improvement Plan (SSIP) leadership team and working group, a family engagement workgroup, an advisory group for the Dropout Prevention and Re-engagement Network, and secondary transition stakeholder groups. MA DESE also consults with educators, parents, advocates, and others on a regular basis to inform policy and practice.

MA DESE engages with stakeholders on the direction of Indicator 17, the State’s Systemic Improvement Plan (SSIP), at the state, district, classroom, and community levels. Stakeholders are provided with information about activities and goals, training events and embedded supports statewide, and the availability of resources to support and expand implementation. Those at the district and school levels participate in ongoing decision-making about the direction of the SSIP by providing feedback about the quality of events and supports, observed benefits for their own stakeholders, and the greatest needs to be able to move forward with implementation. Additional information is provided in the Indicator 17 narrative.

**Apply stakeholder engagement from introduction to all Part B results indicators (y/n)**

YES

**Number of Parent Members:**

188

**Parent Members Engagement:**

**Describe how the parent members of the State Advisory Panel, parent center staff, parents from local and statewide advocacy and advisory committees, and individual parents were engaged in setting targets, analyzing data, developing improvement strategies, and evaluating progress.**

MA DESE has a close and collaborative relationship with the Massachusetts Special Education Advisory Panel, which meets at least four times each school year to review data, discuss policy priorities, and identify unmet needs in the area of special education consistent with state law and IDEA Part B. Of the Panel’s thirty members, twelve are parents of students with disabilities. At every meeting, the group addresses various aspects of the SPP/APR and the State’s general supervision systems. For the FFY 2022 SPP/APR submission, MA DESE consulted the Panel on targets, data, improvement strategies, and progress over the course of six meetings.

The Federation for Children with Special Needs (“the Federation” or FCSN), which is the Massachusetts Parent Training and Information Center (PTIC), has a close relationship with MA DESE. Throughout the year, the two organizations connect at least monthly to plan continued statewide outreach and engagement with families regarding the SPP/APR. In FFY 2022 MA DESE and the Federation convened eight virtual stakeholder information and feedback sessions on SPP/APR Indicators, with interpretation in American Sign Language, Spanish, Portuguese, Haitian Creole, Vietnamese, and Mandarin. Families and stakeholders participated in Indicator presentations and panels discussing state-specific data on each Indicator. The discussions were led by staff from the two organizations, with stakeholder questions and feedback being addressed in whole-group format. These meetings did not just focus on the evaluation of progress and data analysis within each Indicator: they included discussions with parent members about what MA DESE can do to develop activities that will improve outcomes for students with disabilities. These discussions included what additional data points MA DESE should look at, what assistance and development MA DESE can offer to schools and districts, and how parents can become more engaged with MA DESE and their local schools and districts. Student-specific questions were always referred to the Special Education Help Line. Guiding questions were provided as a starting point for conversation.

MA DESE also regularly engages with local and statewide advocacy and advisory committees. In upcoming years, it will seek to expand its stakeholder engagement activities and make them a continuous process spread throughout the year to ensure that the agency is advised by a broad and deep cross-section of stakeholders who accurately represent the demographics of its student population.

**Activities to Improve Outcomes for Children with Disabilities:**

**The activities conducted to increase the capacity of diverse groups of parents to support the development of implementation activities designed to improve outcomes for children with disabilities.**

MA DESE is undertaking a complete transformation of its referral, evaluation, eligibility, and IEP development process guidance and tools. A major priority in this effort is to promote student and parent engagement through the creation of resources that are easy to understand and use. These will increase the capacity of diverse groups of parents to participate in the education system as well-informed partners who can fully engage in improvement activities. Through the “IEP Improvement Project,” MA DESE has made significant progress toward its goal: To improve outcomes for all students with disabilities by providing guidance, technical assistance, and tools on equitable processes to school and district professionals, families, and students so that all students with disabilities have meaningful access to the curriculum frameworks and life of the school.

Improvements to the IEP included a revision and a focus on:
1. Uplifting and centering family and student voices in the IEP process
2. Updating language in the forms to be accessible to a wide audience, especially students and families
3. Highlighting the importance of the Least Restrictive environment
4. Integrating post-secondary transition planning into the IEP form and process
5. Ensuring that Teams are using the IEP form to document, not drive the IEP process

After releasing a draft IEP document and a publicly available feedback survey, DESE completed targeted outreach to a broad range of stakeholders across the state, asking for feedback regarding the draft form. The results were compiled, summarized, and taken into consideration in subsequent updated drafts. DESE considers stakeholder feedback on all IEP forms and related guidance documents to be iterative in nature and ongoing. DESE has also actively partnered with the MA Administrators of Special Education, MA Advocates for Children, and Federation for Children with Special Needs to receive reviews of and specific, detailed feedback on drafts of forms and guidance documents.

The new IEP is now in its “finalized” form (https://www.doe.mass.edu/sped/ImproveIEP/iep-form/), however, MA DESE has made a commitment to ensuring that the form is kept up to date with any statutory or regulatory changes, and will continue to seek feedback as part of its continuous improvement efforts. Schools and districts across the Commonwealth began utilizing the new IEP form in the Fall of 2023 and will continue its adoption in the Fall of 2024.

MA DESE funds the Federation for Children with Special Needs (the Massachusetts PTIC) to conduct:

• Numerous parent workshops on special education topics
• Training for special education parent advisory council (SEPAC) leaders so that these state-mandated groups can participate in a well-informed way in the planning, development, and evaluation of each local education agency’s special education programming
• Train-the-Trainer for educators on the Massachusetts Family Engagement Framework (https://www.doe.mass.edu/sfs/family-engagement-framework.pdf), Massachusetts Family, School, and Community Partnership Fundamentals (https://www.doe.mass.edu/sfs/fscp-fundamentals.docx), and Positive Solutions (https://masfec.org/positive-solutions-for-educators-free-training/).

Since 2011, the Massachusetts Educator Evaluation Framework (https://www.doe.mass.edu/edeval/) has included Family and Community Engagement as one of the four professional standards against which all Massachusetts educator and administrator performance is measured. This means that each individual LEA and each individual educator and administrator in general and special education is individually and personally responsible for engaging families and supporting their participation in the schools and schooling. This accountability increases the capacity of diverse groups of parents, because educators and administrators are required to engage with them in meaningful ways, such as through culturally proficient, two-way communication around learning expectations and student support.

As part of MA DESE’s commitment to cultural responsiveness and diversity of the educator workforce, it is revising its Educator Evaluation Rubric to incorporate these practices within the Standards of Effective Teaching and Administrative Leadership. This will ensure that every student in Massachusetts has access to educators who nurture and cultivate their academic achievement, cultural competence, and sociopolitical awareness.

As an agency, MA DESE is committed to improving family engagement at the local and state levels. An internal MA DESE Family Engagement Work Group includes members who represent offices across the agency. MA DESE has also worked closely with the National Association for Family, School, and Community Engagement (NAFSCE), whose Family Engagement Coalition developed the Massachusetts Family Engagement Framework, tools, resources, and training. Of note is that the Framework; Massachusetts Family, School, and Community Partnership Fundamentals; and Train-the-Trainer are consistent across agencies.

**Soliciting Public Input:**

**The mechanisms and timelines for soliciting public input for setting targets, analyzing data, developing improvement strategies, and evaluating progress.**

During the 2022-2023 school year MA DESE built upon the work done in FFY 2020 and FFY 2021 by expanding its stakeholder engagement efforts. In conjunction with the Federation for Children with Special Needs (the Massachusetts Parent Training and Information Center/PTIC), it hosted eight sessions in which a broad and diverse group of stakeholders gathered together to provide input on the SPP/APR regarding targets, analyzing data, developing improvement strategies, and evaluating progress. MA DESE also continued to hold regular meetings with the Special Education Advisory Panel, the Massachusetts Administrators of Special Education, the FCSN, Massachusetts Advocates for Children, the Massachusetts Association of Approved Special Education Schools, the Massachusetts Urban Special Education Leadership Collaborative, and the Special Needs Advocacy Network. The Massachusetts State Special Education Director continued to give monthly virtual presentations to statewide special education leaders on a wide array of special education compliance and performance topics, using these meetings to solicit and receive significant input. MA DESE also continued to improve its website’s capacity to obtain public feedback. Throughout 2022-2023, MA DESE expanded outreach to additional groups that serve diverse populations who represent the demographics of its student population.

Mechanisms and timelines for additional Indicator-specific stakeholder engagement are discussed below under individual Indicators, specifically Indicators 7, 8, 14, and 17.

As part of MA DESE’s work on the IEP Improvement Project, it frequently sought public input. (A comprehensive, but not all-inclusive list of stakeholders is included in the Broad Stakeholder Input section; the activities from these meetings are discussed in the Activities to Improve Outcomes for Children with Disabilities section.)

The following activities occurred regarding the Draft IEP Form:
• Special Education Leaders (300+) were updated during monthly meetings regarding progress toward the development of resources and the Draft IEP;
• Feedback was sought from the public through a survey. Data from the survey were analyzed and patterns and trends collected and used to inform decisions regarding updates to the Draft Form;
• Focus groups representing a variety of special interest groups were convened to collect feedback on the Draft Form. The DESE staff thoroughly reviewed notes from these sessions; patterns and trends were collected and used to inform decisions regarding updates; and
• Multiple sections of the Draft IEP Form were updated and re-released based on the feedback described above.

**Making Results Available to the Public:**

**The mechanisms and timelines for making the results of the target setting, data analysis, development of the improvement strategies, and evaluation available to the public.**

MA DESE significantly improved its SPP/APR website during the 2022-2023 school year to publish framing questions, current and archived SPP/APRs, information and resources for each Indicator, and links to data displays. An updated SPP/APR webpage was posted in November 2022 (https://www.doe.mass.edu/sped/spp/maspp.html). These improvements will enhance the Department’s ability to make the results of FFY 2022 and future target setting, data analysis, development of the improvement strategies, and evaluation available to the public. MA DESE continues to improve the website and provide updated information on the Indicators as it becomes available.

MA DESE will continue to post on its website the FFY 2022 performance of each LEA located in the state on the targets in the SPP/APR as soon as practicable, but no later than 120 days following the state’s submission of its FFY 2021 APR. See narrative below for more information.

The Department will also continue to meet regularly throughout the year with the Special Education Advisory Panel to share and discuss Indicator data and improvement activities. The SEAP operates according to Massachusetts Open Meeting Law: agendas and minutes are posted, and members of the public are invited to attend meetings.

Lastly, MA DESE has continued development of District Data Displays for a number of Indicators, to provide schools and districts with a more in-depth breakdown of data collection activities and results. MA DESE hopes that these data displays will allow schools and districts to do a deep dive and analyze their data in order to make programmatic decisions that will not only allow for better data collection, but also have an impact on local decisions to improve outcomes for children with disabilities.

**Reporting to the Public**

**How and where the State reported to the public on the FFY 2021 performance of each LEA located in the State on the targets in the SPP/APR as soon as practicable, but no later than 120 days following the State’s submission of its FFY 2021 APR, as required by 34 CFR §300.602(b)(1)(i)(A); and a description of where, on its Web site, a complete copy of the State’s SPP/APR, including any revisions if the State has revised the targets that it submitted with its FFY 2021 APR in 2023, is available.**

Annually, MA DESE makes available the information contained in the state’s SPP/APR for review and discussion in a variety of inter- and intra-agency meetings and forums, as well as in communications with external stakeholders and interested parties. This information is the basis for reflection and planning and provides a longitudinal look at statewide performance in various areas.

MA DESE has publicly posted complete copies of the State’s FFY 2021 and previous SPP/APRs, as well as OSEP’s response to the state’s submissions, on its website at: http://www.doe.mass.edu/sped/spp/maspp.html.

MA DESE also publicly reports annually on LEA results on performance and compliance indicators. Data from FFY 2021 and the preceding ten years may be viewed through LEA and school-level reports on MA DESE’s website, including the targets for each SPP Indicator: https://profiles.doe.mass.edu/statereport/special\_education.aspx. Reports may be selected by LEA or school using the alphabetical drop-down menu on the top right of the webpage. FFY 2022 data will be posted at this location in the Winter/Spring of 2024 when all reports are available.

In accordance with 34 CFR § 300.160(d), MA DESE publicly reports data on the participation of students with IEPs in statewide assessments at the state, LEA, and school levels. State-level information is available on the assessment participation webpage: http://profiles.doe.mass.edu/statereport/participation.aspx. LEA-level information on the participation of students with IEPs in statewide assessments, with and without accommodations and including students who participate in the MCAS-Alt, may be accessed from the state-level page referenced above by clicking on the LEA name. An example of an LEA-level report is provided here: https://profiles.doe.mass.edu/mcas/participation.aspx?orgtypecode=5&linkid=26&fycode=2022&orgcode=00090000. Reports are selected by school year using the arrow button at the top left of the web page. Additional information about Indicator 3 public reporting can be found within the Indicator 3 narrative.

MA DESE publicly reports performance results for students with IEPs who take the MCAS-Alt in a separate state-level report found here: http://profiles.doe.mass.edu/statereport/mcas\_alt.aspx. Reports may be selected by type (district/school), school year, and subject by using the drop-down menu at the top of the page. LEA-level information on MCAS-Alt performance results may be accessed from the state-level page referenced above by clicking on the name of the LEA. An example of an LEA-level report is provided here: https://profiles.doe.mass.edu/mcas/achievement\_alt\_level.aspx?linkid=116&orgcode=00200000&orgtypecode=5&fycode=2022. Reports are selected by school year using the arrow button at the top left of the web page.

MA DESE ensures that it makes available assessment data for students with disabilities with the same frequency and in the same detail as it reports on the assessment of students without disabilities, consistent with 34 CFR 300.160(f). This information is now integrated into the assessment webpages referenced above at: http://profiles.doe.mass.edu/statereport/participation.aspx and http://profiles.doe.mass.edu/statereport/mcas\_alt.aspx.

MA DESE reports accountability data at the LEA and school levels: http://www.doe.mass.edu/accountability.

MA DESE also makes available information about progress, slippage, and related requirements through meetings with stakeholders and professional organizations, and through regional and statewide interest groups, some of which are facilitated by partner agencies and organizations.

## Intro - Prior FFY Required Actions

None

## Intro - OSEP Response

## Intro - Required Actions

# Indicator 1: Graduation

**Instructions and Measurement**

**Monitoring Priority:** FAPE in the LRE

**Results indicator:** Percent of youth with Individualized Education Programs (IEPs) exiting special education due to graduating with a regular high school diploma. (20 U.S.C. 1416 (a)(3)(A))

**Data Source**

Same data as used for reporting to the Department under section 618 of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), using the definitions in ED*Facts* file specification FS009.

**Measurement**

States must report a percentage using the number of youth with IEPs (ages 14-21) who exited special education due to graduating with a regular high school diploma in the numerator and the number of all youth with IEPs who exited high school (ages 14-21) in the denominator.

**Instructions**

*Sampling is not allowed.*

Data for this indicator are “lag” data. Describe the results of the State’s examination of the data for the year before the reporting year (e.g., for the FFY 2022 SPP/APR, use data from 2021-2022), and compare the results to the target.

Include in the denominator the following exiting categories: (a) graduated with a regular high school diploma; (b) graduated with a state-defined alternate diploma; (c) received a certificate; (d) reached maximum age; or (e) dropped out.

Do not include in the denominator the number of youths with IEPs who exited special education due to: (a) transferring to regular education; or (b) who moved but are known to be continuing in an educational program.

Provide a narrative that describes the conditions youth must meet in order to graduate with a regular high school diploma. If the conditions that youth with IEPs must meet in order to graduate with a regular high school diploma are different, please explain.

## 1 - Indicator Data

**Historical Data**

| **Baseline Year** | **Baseline Data** |
| --- | --- |
| 2019 | 73.94% |

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **FFY** | **2017** | **2018** | **2019** | **2020** | **2021** |
| Target >= | 88.00% | 72.36% | 73.36% | 76.33% | 77.33% |
| Data | 72.83% | 72.36% | 73.94% | 80.36% | 82.06% |

**Targets**

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **FFY** | **2022** | **2023** | **2024** | **2025** |
| Target >= | 78.33% | 79.33% | 80.33% | 81.33% |

**Targets: Description of Stakeholder Input**

MA DESE is committed to a continuous system of engaging stakeholders to develop targets and set priorities for improvement in each of the areas reported in the SPP/APR and the SSIP.

The Special Education Advisory Panel (SEAP) and Special Education State Advisory Council (SAC) are comprised of parents, individuals with disabilities, educators, administrators, and representatives from state agencies, higher education, and other stakeholder groups. The members meet at least four times each school year to review data, discuss policy priorities, and identify unmet needs in the area of special education consistent with state law and IDEA Part B. At each meeting, both groups address and discuss various aspects of the SPP/APR and the State’s general supervision systems, as well as relevant policy matters. In the 2022-2023 school year, in addition to updates on performance and compliance results included in the SPP/APR, MA DESE discussed with the SEAP/SAC the definition of students with the most significant cognitive disabilities, a breakdown of LEA Determinations, revisions to the Educator Evaluation Rubric, revised Chapter 9 Dyslexia Guidelines, the Special Education Surrogate Parent Program, updates to the Tiered Focus Monitoring Parent Survey (Indicator 8), updates to the new IEP form, and trends identified by the Public School Monitoring (PSM) and Problem Resolution Systems (PRS) Offices. MA DESE is committed to keeping members of the SEAP and SAC up to date on processes and supports provided to LEAs in order to improve outcomes for students with disabilities. It will continue discussions around current data, longitudinal targets, historical rates of performance and compliance and the trajectory for improvement for each of the Indicators, and the effectiveness of focused improvement activities within the context of the state’s Results Driven Accountability framework.

The SAC is required by Massachusetts General Law (M.G.L. c. 15, § 1G https://malegislature.gov/Laws/GeneralLaws/PartI/TitleII/Chapter15/Section1G). Its purpose is to advise the Board of Elementary and Secondary Education and to make other programmatic recommendations it deems necessary to fulfill the goals established by the board.

The SEAP is required by IDEA (34 CFR §§ 300.167-300.169 https://www.ecfr.gov/current/title-34/subtitle-B/chapter-III/part-300#sg34.2.300\_1166.sg15). Its purpose is to advise the State Education Authority (SEA) of unmet needs within the State regarding the education of children with disabilities. The Panel comments publicly on proposed rules or regulations. Its advisory function to the SEA involves developing evaluations and reporting 618 data (IDEA data) to USED and creating corrective action plans to address findings in Federal monitoring reports under IDEA Part B. The Panel also advises the SEA in developing and implementing policies relating to the coordination of services for children with disabilities.

MA DESE has continued to emphasize its priority on expanding the agency’s capacity to solicit broad and diverse stakeholder input to set SPP/APR targets, analyze data, develop improvement strategies, and evaluate progress. In FFY 2022 MA DESE sought to continue developing stakeholder Indicator knowledge, a project that began in FFY 2020. MA DESE has created and continues to update a new SPP/APR website. Each of the 17 Indicators has its own dedicated web page or Quick Reference Guide (QRG), as well as PowerPoints and other relevant information or resources. All materials on the SPP/APR website are available in six languages that correspond to the most common languages spoken in Massachusetts: English, Spanish, Portuguese, Chinese, Vietnamese, and Haitian Creole. Narrated versions of each PowerPoint are also available in English on the YouTube page of MA DESE’s partner, the Federation for Children with Special Needs (the Massachusetts Parent Training and Information Center/PTIC). In FFY 2022 MA DESE hosted eight virtual information and feedback sessions to broaden stakeholder knowledge. Each meeting had a specific improvement strategy focus and also provided updates on data analysis and evaluation of progress for each Indicator. The large-group presentation on each topic was simultaneously translated from English into the other five languages.

MA DESE consults on a monthly or at least quarterly basis with the Massachusetts Administrators of Special Education (http://www.asepage.org/), Federation for Children with Special Needs (https://fcsn.org/), Massachusetts Advocates for Children (https://www.massadvocates.org/), Massachusetts Association of Approved Special Education Schools (https://maaps.org/), and Massachusetts Urban Special Education Leadership Collaborative (massurban.org)). In addition, the Massachusetts State Special Education Director at MA DESE gives monthly virtual presentations to statewide special education leaders on a wide array of special education compliance and performance topics. During all of these meetings, MA DESE solicits and receives significant feedback that informs the development of special education policy and guidance.

MA DESE works closely with other state agencies to provide supports to children with disabilities. The Department has developed a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) or has entered into an Interagency Service Agreement (ISA) with the Massachusetts Commission for the Blind (MCB), Massachusetts Rehabilitation Commission (MRC), Department of Public Health (DPH), Department of Early Education and Care (EEC), and Massachusetts Commission for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing (MCDHH). Additionally, these agencies provide a representative to serve on the MA Special Education Advisory Council and the MA Special Education Advisory Panel. The Department has established regular meetings with each of these agencies to strengthen collaborations and to monitor joint initiatives.

In its efforts to roll out the new IEP, MA DESE frequently engaged with stakeholders across the Commonwealth in a variety of roles to solicit feedback on the draft form that was released in the Spring of 2022. Stakeholder groups whose feedback was sought included various school groups, parent/family/advocacy organizations, and other State agencies.

As needed, MA DESE convenes stakeholder working groups throughout the year to provide focused input on specific projects and policy priorities. Among these focus groups were the Early Childhood Interagency Coordinating Council (which includes community members and state agency employees), a Statewide Systemic Improvement Plan (SSIP) leadership team and working group, a family engagement workgroup, an advisory group for the Dropout Prevention and Re-engagement Network, and secondary transition stakeholder groups. MA DESE also consults with educators, parents, advocates, and others on a regular basis to inform policy and practice.

MA DESE engages with stakeholders on the direction of Indicator 17, the State’s Systemic Improvement Plan (SSIP), at the state, district, classroom, and community levels. Stakeholders are provided with information about activities and goals, training events and embedded supports statewide, and the availability of resources to support and expand implementation. Those at the district and school levels participate in ongoing decision-making about the direction of the SSIP by providing feedback about the quality of events and supports, observed benefits for their own stakeholders, and the greatest needs to be able to move forward with implementation. Additional information is provided in the Indicator 17 narrative.

**Prepopulated Data**

| **Source** | **Date** | **Description** | **Data** |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| SY 2021-22 Exiting Data Groups (EDFacts file spec FS009; Data Group 85) | 05/24/2023 | Number of youth with IEPs (ages 14-21) who exited special education by graduating with a regular high school diploma (a) | 9,801 |
| SY 2021-22 Exiting Data Groups (EDFacts file spec FS009; Data Group 85) | 05/24/2023 | Number of youth with IEPs (ages 14-21) who exited special education by graduating with a state-defined alternate diploma (b) |  |
| SY 2021-22 Exiting Data Groups (EDFacts file spec FS009; Data Group 85) | 05/24/2023 | Number of youth with IEPs (ages 14-21) who exited special education by receiving a certificate (c) | 225 |
| SY 2021-22 Exiting Data Groups (EDFacts file spec FS009; Data Group 85) | 05/24/2023 | Number of youth with IEPs (ages 14-21) who exited special education by reaching maximum age (d) | 506 |
| SY 2021-22 Exiting Data Groups (EDFacts file spec FS009; Data Group 85) | 05/24/2023 | Number of youth with IEPs (ages 14-21) who exited special education due to dropping out (e) | 1,651 |

**FFY 2022 SPP/APR Data**

| **Number of youth with IEPs (ages 14-21) who exited special education due to graduating with a regular high school diploma** | **Number of all youth with IEPs who exited special education (ages 14-21)**  | **FFY 2021 Data** | **FFY 2022 Target** | **FFY 2022 Data** | **Status** | **Slippage** |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| 9,801 | 12,183 | 82.06% | 78.33% | 80.45% | Met target | No Slippage |

**Graduation Conditions**

**Provide a narrative that describes the conditions youth must meet in order to graduate with a regular high school diploma.**

To earn a diploma from a public high school in Massachusetts, all students must:
1) Earn a Competency Determination (CD), which means achieving a specific level of proficiency on Grade 10 English Language Arts (ELA); Mathematics; and Science, Technology, and Engineering (STE) statewide assessments administered through the Massachusetts Comprehensive Assessment System (MCAS). Students may fulfill the CD requirements through the standard MCAS tests or by submitting an MCAS cohort appeal or MCAS competency portfolio, an alternative method of assessment that uses a collection of work samples to measure the educational performance of a small number of students who possess skills at or near grade level, but who cannot demonstrate those skills on the standard MCAS tests, even with accommodations, due to a significant disability; and
2) Meet the local graduation requirements for the LEA that is awarding the diploma.

**Are the conditions that youth with IEPs must meet to graduate with a regular high school diploma different from the conditions noted above? (yes/no)**

YES

**If yes, explain the difference in conditions that youth with IEPs must meet.**

In addition to the requirements stated above regarding the conditions youth must meet in order to graduate with a regular high school diploma, the conditions that youth with IEPs also includes:
3) To earn a diploma from a public high school in Massachusetts, a student with an IEP must also have received a free appropriate public education (FAPE), in addition to the two conditions described above. For further information, please see Administrative Advisory SPED 2018-2: Secondary Transition Services and Graduation with a High School Diploma, https://www.doe.mass.edu/sped/advisories/2018-2.html.

**Provide additional information about this indicator (optional)**

MA DESE notes that, while meeting its target, in 2022—the first full year of in-person education since the March 2020 shutdown—graduation rates slipped 1.61 percentage points from 2021. MA DESE is working with districts to explore new strategies and efforts to improve the graduation rate. Family engagement and chronic absenteeism are key areas of growth, with research supporting the value of engaging in these efforts.

## 1 - Prior FFY Required Actions

None

## 1 - OSEP Response

## 1 - Required Actions

# Indicator 2: Drop Out

**Instructions and Measurement**

Monitoring Priority: FAPE in the LRE

**Results indicator**: Percent of youth with IEPs who exited special education due to dropping out. (20 U.S.C. 1416 (a)(3)(A))

Data Source

Same data as used for reporting to the Department under section 618 of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), using the definitions in ED*Facts* file specification FS009.

Measurement

States must report a percentage using the number of youth with IEPs (ages 14-21) who exited special education due to dropping out in the numerator and the number of all youth with IEPs who exited special education (ages 14-21) in the denominator.

Instructions

*Sampling is not allowed.*

Data for this indicator are “lag” data. Describe the results of the State’s examination of the section 618 exiting data for the year before the reporting year (e.g., for the FFY 2022 SPP/APR, use data from 2021-2022), and compare the results to the target.

Include in the denominator the following exiting categories: (a) graduated with a regular high school diploma; (b) graduated with a

state-defined alternate diploma; (c) received a certificate; (d) reached maximum age; or (e) dropped out.

Do not include in the denominator the number of youths with IEPs who exited special education due to: (a) transferring to regular education; or (b) who moved but are known to be continuing in an educational program.

Provide a narrative that describes what counts as dropping out for all youth. Please explain if there is a difference between what counts as dropping out for all students and what counts as dropping out for students with IEPs.

## 2 - Indicator Data

**Historical Data**

| **Baseline Year** | **Baseline Data** |
| --- | --- |
| 2019 | 13.97% |

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **FFY** | **2017** | **2018** | **2019** | **2020** | **2021** |
| Target <= | 2.10% | 1.70% | 1.70% | 13.97% | 13.47% |
| Data | 3.29% | 3.36% | 3.43% | 10.38% | 11.38% |

**Targets**

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **FFY** | **2022** | **2023** | **2024** | **2025** |
| Target <= | 12.97% | 12.47% | 11.97% | 11.47% |

**Targets: Description of Stakeholder Input**

MA DESE is committed to a continuous system of engaging stakeholders to develop targets and set priorities for improvement in each of the areas reported in the SPP/APR and the SSIP.

The Special Education Advisory Panel (SEAP) and Special Education State Advisory Council (SAC) are comprised of parents, individuals with disabilities, educators, administrators, and representatives from state agencies, higher education, and other stakeholder groups. The members meet at least four times each school year to review data, discuss policy priorities, and identify unmet needs in the area of special education consistent with state law and IDEA Part B. At each meeting, both groups address and discuss various aspects of the SPP/APR and the State’s general supervision systems, as well as relevant policy matters. In the 2022-2023 school year, in addition to updates on performance and compliance results included in the SPP/APR, MA DESE discussed with the SEAP/SAC the definition of students with the most significant cognitive disabilities, a breakdown of LEA Determinations, revisions to the Educator Evaluation Rubric, revised Chapter 9 Dyslexia Guidelines, the Special Education Surrogate Parent Program, updates to the Tiered Focus Monitoring Parent Survey (Indicator 8), updates to the new IEP form, and trends identified by the Public School Monitoring (PSM) and Problem Resolution Systems (PRS) Offices. MA DESE is committed to keeping members of the SEAP and SAC up to date on processes and supports provided to LEAs in order to improve outcomes for students with disabilities. It will continue discussions around current data, longitudinal targets, historical rates of performance and compliance and the trajectory for improvement for each of the Indicators, and the effectiveness of focused improvement activities within the context of the state’s Results Driven Accountability framework.

The SAC is required by Massachusetts General Law (M.G.L. c. 15, § 1G https://malegislature.gov/Laws/GeneralLaws/PartI/TitleII/Chapter15/Section1G). Its purpose is to advise the Board of Elementary and Secondary Education and to make other programmatic recommendations it deems necessary to fulfill the goals established by the board.

The SEAP is required by IDEA (34 CFR §§ 300.167-300.169 https://www.ecfr.gov/current/title-34/subtitle-B/chapter-III/part-300#sg34.2.300\_1166.sg15). Its purpose is to advise the State Education Authority (SEA) of unmet needs within the State regarding the education of children with disabilities. The Panel comments publicly on proposed rules or regulations. Its advisory function to the SEA involves developing evaluations and reporting 618 data (IDEA data) to USED and creating corrective action plans to address findings in Federal monitoring reports under IDEA Part B. The Panel also advises the SEA in developing and implementing policies relating to the coordination of services for children with disabilities.

MA DESE has continued to emphasize its priority on expanding the agency’s capacity to solicit broad and diverse stakeholder input to set SPP/APR targets, analyze data, develop improvement strategies, and evaluate progress. In FFY 2022 MA DESE sought to continue developing stakeholder Indicator knowledge, a project that began in FFY 2020. MA DESE has created and continues to update a new SPP/APR website. Each of the 17 Indicators has its own dedicated web page or Quick Reference Guide (QRG), as well as PowerPoints and other relevant information or resources. All materials on the SPP/APR website are available in six languages that correspond to the most common languages spoken in Massachusetts: English, Spanish, Portuguese, Chinese, Vietnamese, and Haitian Creole. Narrated versions of each PowerPoint are also available in English on the YouTube page of MA DESE’s partner, the Federation for Children with Special Needs (the Massachusetts Parent Training and Information Center/PTIC). In FFY 2022 MA DESE hosted eight virtual information and feedback sessions to broaden stakeholder knowledge. Each meeting had a specific improvement strategy focus and also provided updates on data analysis and evaluation of progress for each Indicator. The large-group presentation on each topic was simultaneously translated from English into the other five languages.

MA DESE consults on a monthly or at least quarterly basis with the Massachusetts Administrators of Special Education (http://www.asepage.org/), Federation for Children with Special Needs (https://fcsn.org/), Massachusetts Advocates for Children (https://www.massadvocates.org/), Massachusetts Association of Approved Special Education Schools (https://maaps.org/), and Massachusetts Urban Special Education Leadership Collaborative (massurban.org)). In addition, the Massachusetts State Special Education Director at MA DESE gives monthly virtual presentations to statewide special education leaders on a wide array of special education compliance and performance topics. During all of these meetings, MA DESE solicits and receives significant feedback that informs the development of special education policy and guidance.

MA DESE works closely with other state agencies to provide supports to children with disabilities. The Department has developed a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) or has entered into an Interagency Service Agreement (ISA) with the Massachusetts Commission for the Blind (MCB), Massachusetts Rehabilitation Commission (MRC), Department of Public Health (DPH), Department of Early Education and Care (EEC), and Massachusetts Commission for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing (MCDHH). Additionally, these agencies provide a representative to serve on the MA Special Education Advisory Council and the MA Special Education Advisory Panel. The Department has established regular meetings with each of these agencies to strengthen collaborations and to monitor joint initiatives.

In its efforts to roll out the new IEP, MA DESE frequently engaged with stakeholders across the Commonwealth in a variety of roles to solicit feedback on the draft form that was released in the Spring of 2022. Stakeholder groups whose feedback was sought included various school groups, parent/family/advocacy organizations, and other State agencies.

As needed, MA DESE convenes stakeholder working groups throughout the year to provide focused input on specific projects and policy priorities. Among these focus groups were the Early Childhood Interagency Coordinating Council (which includes community members and state agency employees), a Statewide Systemic Improvement Plan (SSIP) leadership team and working group, a family engagement workgroup, an advisory group for the Dropout Prevention and Re-engagement Network, and secondary transition stakeholder groups. MA DESE also consults with educators, parents, advocates, and others on a regular basis to inform policy and practice.

MA DESE engages with stakeholders on the direction of Indicator 17, the State’s Systemic Improvement Plan (SSIP), at the state, district, classroom, and community levels. Stakeholders are provided with information about activities and goals, training events and embedded supports statewide, and the availability of resources to support and expand implementation. Those at the district and school levels participate in ongoing decision-making about the direction of the SSIP by providing feedback about the quality of events and supports, observed benefits for their own stakeholders, and the greatest needs to be able to move forward with implementation. Additional information is provided in the Indicator 17 narrative.

**Prepopulated Data**

| **Source** | **Date** | **Description** | **Data** |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| SY 2021-22 Exiting Data Groups (EDFacts file spec FS009; Data Group 85) | 05/24/2023 | Number of youth with IEPs (ages 14-21) who exited special education by graduating with a regular high school diploma (a) | 9,801 |
| SY 2021-22 Exiting Data Groups (EDFacts file spec FS009; Data Group 85) | 05/24/2023 | Number of youth with IEPs (ages 14-21) who exited special education by graduating with a state-defined alternate diploma (b) |  |
| SY 2021-22 Exiting Data Groups (EDFacts file spec FS009; Data Group 85) | 05/24/2023 | Number of youth with IEPs (ages 14-21) who exited special education by receiving a certificate (c) | 225 |
| SY 2021-22 Exiting Data Groups (EDFacts file spec FS009; Data Group 85) | 05/24/2023 | Number of youth with IEPs (ages 14-21) who exited special education by reaching maximum age (d) | 506 |
| SY 2021-22 Exiting Data Groups (EDFacts file spec FS009; Data Group 85) | 05/24/2023 | Number of youth with IEPs (ages 14-21) who exited special education due to dropping out (e) | 1,651 |

**FFY 2022 SPP/APR Data**

| **Number of youth with IEPs (ages 14-21) who exited special education due to dropping out** | **Number of all youth with IEPs who exited special education (ages 14-21)**  | **FFY 2021 Data** | **FFY 2022 Target** | **FFY 2022 Data** | **Status** | **Slippage** |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| 1,651 | 12,183 | 11.38% | 12.97% | 13.55% | Did not meet target | Slippage |

**Provide reasons for slippage, if applicable**

In addition to the impact of the first full-year of in-person instruction since Covid, another reason being examined is the correlation of previously reported chronic absence rates and the current dropout rate. Chronic absence is an indication that students are on a path towards dropping out. Understanding the root causes of why students are chronically absent will allow districts and schools to provide the right interventions and supports. DESE offers districts data training opportunities for teams to understand the types of data to review, where the data is located and how to use a cycle of inquiry to determine the appropriate interventions and supports and the efficacy of them.

**Provide a narrative that describes what counts as dropping out for all youth**

In Massachusetts, a dropout—regardless of disability status—is defined as a student in grades 9-12 enrolled in a public school who, prior to graduation, leaves school for reasons other than to transfer to another public school and who does not re-enroll before the October 1 reporting date. To calculate this rate, MA DESE uses dropout data obtained through the Student Information Management System (SIMS) October 1 enrollment report. Students who may have been reported as dropped out at the end of the previous year and then re-enroll prior to the October 1 reporting date are removed from the dropout count. MA DESE also removes from the data set any student who dropped out of high school but earned a GED/HISET certificate.

**Is there a difference in what counts as dropping out for youth with IEPs? (yes/no)**

NO

**If yes, explain the difference in what counts as dropping out for youth with IEPs.**

**Provide additional information about this indicator (optional)**

## 2 - Prior FFY Required Actions

None

## 2 - OSEP Response

## 2 - Required Actions

# Indicator 3A: Participation for Children with IEPs

**Instructions and Measurement**

**Monitoring Priority:** FAPE in the LRE

**Results indicator**: Participation and performance of children with IEPs on statewide assessments:

A. Participation rate for children with IEPs.

B. Proficiency rate for children with IEPs against grade level academic achievement standards.

C. Proficiency rate for children with IEPs against alternate academic achievement standards.

D. Gap in proficiency rates for children with IEPs and all students against grade level academic achievement standards.

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

**Data Source**

3A. Same data as used for reporting to the Department under Title I of the ESEA, using ED*Facts* file specifications FS185 and 188.

**Measurement**

A. Participation rate percent = [(# of children with IEPs participating in an assessment) divided by the (total # of children with IEPs enrolled during the testing window)]. Calculate separately for reading and math. Calculate separately for grades 4, 8, and high school. The participation rate is based on all children with IEPs, including both children with IEPs enrolled for a full academic year and those not enrolled for a full academic year.

**Instructions**

Describe the results of the calculations and compare the results to the targets. Provide the actual numbers used in the calculation.

Include information regarding where to find public reports of assessment participation and performance results, as required by 34 CFR §300.160(f), i.e., a link to the Web site where these data are reported.

Indicator 3A: Provide separate reading/language arts and mathematics participation rates for children with IEPs for each of the following grades: 4, 8, & high school. Account for ALL children with IEPs, in grades 4, 8, and high school, including children not participating in assessments and those not enrolled for a full academic year. Only include children with disabilities who had an IEP at the time of testing.

## 3A - Indicator Data

**Historical Data:**

| **Subject** | **Group**  | **Group Name**  | **Baseline Year**  | **Baseline Data** |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Reading | A | Grade 4 | 2020 | 95.33% |
| Reading | B | Grade 8 | 2020 | 90.28% |
| Reading | C | Grade HS | 2020 | 92.25% |
| Math | A | Grade 4 | 2020 | 95.21% |
| Math | B | Grade 8 | 2020 | 90.12% |
| Math | C | Grade HS | 2020 | 91.94% |

**Targets**

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Subject** | **Group** | **Group Name** | **2022** | **2023** | **2024** | **2025** |
| Reading | A >= | Grade 4 | 95.00% | 95.00%  | 95.00% | 95.00% |
| Reading | B >= | Grade 8 | 95.00% | 95.00% | 95.00% | 95.00% |
| Reading | C >= | Grade HS | 95.00% | 95.00% | 95.00% | 95.00% |
| Math | A >= | Grade 4 | 95.00% | 95.00% | 95.00% | 95.00% |
| Math | B >= | Grade 8 | 95.00% | 95.00% | 95.00% | 95.00% |
| Math | C >= | Grade HS | 95.00% | 95.00% | 95.00% | 95.00% |

**Targets: Description of Stakeholder Input**

MA DESE is committed to a continuous system of engaging stakeholders to develop targets and set priorities for improvement in each of the areas reported in the SPP/APR and the SSIP.

The Special Education Advisory Panel (SEAP) and Special Education State Advisory Council (SAC) are comprised of parents, individuals with disabilities, educators, administrators, and representatives from state agencies, higher education, and other stakeholder groups. The members meet at least four times each school year to review data, discuss policy priorities, and identify unmet needs in the area of special education consistent with state law and IDEA Part B. At each meeting, both groups address and discuss various aspects of the SPP/APR and the State’s general supervision systems, as well as relevant policy matters. In the 2022-2023 school year, in addition to updates on performance and compliance results included in the SPP/APR, MA DESE discussed with the SEAP/SAC the definition of students with the most significant cognitive disabilities, a breakdown of LEA Determinations, revisions to the Educator Evaluation Rubric, revised Chapter 9 Dyslexia Guidelines, the Special Education Surrogate Parent Program, updates to the Tiered Focus Monitoring Parent Survey (Indicator 8), updates to the new IEP form, and trends identified by the Public School Monitoring (PSM) and Problem Resolution Systems (PRS) Offices. MA DESE is committed to keeping members of the SEAP and SAC up to date on processes and supports provided to LEAs in order to improve outcomes for students with disabilities. It will continue discussions around current data, longitudinal targets, historical rates of performance and compliance and the trajectory for improvement for each of the Indicators, and the effectiveness of focused improvement activities within the context of the state’s Results Driven Accountability framework.

The SAC is required by Massachusetts General Law (M.G.L. c. 15, § 1G https://malegislature.gov/Laws/GeneralLaws/PartI/TitleII/Chapter15/Section1G). Its purpose is to advise the Board of Elementary and Secondary Education and to make other programmatic recommendations it deems necessary to fulfill the goals established by the board.

The SEAP is required by IDEA (34 CFR §§ 300.167-300.169 https://www.ecfr.gov/current/title-34/subtitle-B/chapter-III/part-300#sg34.2.300\_1166.sg15). Its purpose is to advise the State Education Authority (SEA) of unmet needs within the State regarding the education of children with disabilities. The Panel comments publicly on proposed rules or regulations. Its advisory function to the SEA involves developing evaluations and reporting 618 data (IDEA data) to USED and creating corrective action plans to address findings in Federal monitoring reports under IDEA Part B. The Panel also advises the SEA in developing and implementing policies relating to the coordination of services for children with disabilities.

MA DESE has continued to emphasize its priority on expanding the agency’s capacity to solicit broad and diverse stakeholder input to set SPP/APR targets, analyze data, develop improvement strategies, and evaluate progress. In FFY 2022 MA DESE sought to continue developing stakeholder Indicator knowledge, a project that began in FFY 2020. MA DESE has created and continues to update a new SPP/APR website. Each of the 17 Indicators has its own dedicated web page or Quick Reference Guide (QRG), as well as PowerPoints and other relevant information or resources. All materials on the SPP/APR website are available in six languages that correspond to the most common languages spoken in Massachusetts: English, Spanish, Portuguese, Chinese, Vietnamese, and Haitian Creole. Narrated versions of each PowerPoint are also available in English on the YouTube page of MA DESE’s partner, the Federation for Children with Special Needs (the Massachusetts Parent Training and Information Center/PTIC). In FFY 2022 MA DESE hosted eight virtual information and feedback sessions to broaden stakeholder knowledge. Each meeting had a specific improvement strategy focus and also provided updates on data analysis and evaluation of progress for each Indicator. The large-group presentation on each topic was simultaneously translated from English into the other five languages.

MA DESE consults on a monthly or at least quarterly basis with the Massachusetts Administrators of Special Education (http://www.asepage.org/), Federation for Children with Special Needs (https://fcsn.org/), Massachusetts Advocates for Children (https://www.massadvocates.org/), Massachusetts Association of Approved Special Education Schools (https://maaps.org/), and Massachusetts Urban Special Education Leadership Collaborative (massurban.org)). In addition, the Massachusetts State Special Education Director at MA DESE gives monthly virtual presentations to statewide special education leaders on a wide array of special education compliance and performance topics. During all of these meetings, MA DESE solicits and receives significant feedback that informs the development of special education policy and guidance.

MA DESE works closely with other state agencies to provide supports to children with disabilities. The Department has developed a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) or has entered into an Interagency Service Agreement (ISA) with the Massachusetts Commission for the Blind (MCB), Massachusetts Rehabilitation Commission (MRC), Department of Public Health (DPH), Department of Early Education and Care (EEC), and Massachusetts Commission for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing (MCDHH). Additionally, these agencies provide a representative to serve on the MA Special Education Advisory Council and the MA Special Education Advisory Panel. The Department has established regular meetings with each of these agencies to strengthen collaborations and to monitor joint initiatives.

In its efforts to roll out the new IEP, MA DESE frequently engaged with stakeholders across the Commonwealth in a variety of roles to solicit feedback on the draft form that was released in the Spring of 2022. Stakeholder groups whose feedback was sought included various school groups, parent/family/advocacy organizations, and other State agencies.

As needed, MA DESE convenes stakeholder working groups throughout the year to provide focused input on specific projects and policy priorities. Among these focus groups were the Early Childhood Interagency Coordinating Council (which includes community members and state agency employees), a Statewide Systemic Improvement Plan (SSIP) leadership team and working group, a family engagement workgroup, an advisory group for the Dropout Prevention and Re-engagement Network, and secondary transition stakeholder groups. MA DESE also consults with educators, parents, advocates, and others on a regular basis to inform policy and practice.

MA DESE engages with stakeholders on the direction of Indicator 17, the State’s Systemic Improvement Plan (SSIP), at the state, district, classroom, and community levels. Stakeholders are provided with information about activities and goals, training events and embedded supports statewide, and the availability of resources to support and expand implementation. Those at the district and school levels participate in ongoing decision-making about the direction of the SSIP by providing feedback about the quality of events and supports, observed benefits for their own stakeholders, and the greatest needs to be able to move forward with implementation. Additional information is provided in the Indicator 17 narrative.

**FFY 2022 Data Disaggregation from ED*Facts***

**Data Source:**

SY 2022-23 Assessment Data Groups - Reading (EDFacts file spec FS188; Data Group: 589)

**Date:**

01/10/2024

**Reading Assessment Participation Data by Grade (1)**

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Group** | **Grade 4** | **Grade 8** | **Grade HS** |
| a. Children with IEPs (2) | 14,872 | 14,588 | 13,703 |
| b. Children with IEPs in regular assessment with no accommodations (3) | 3,425 | 2,199 | 2,168 |
| c. Children with IEPs in regular assessment with accommodations (3) | 10,318 | 11,118 | 10,151 |
| d. Children with IEPs in alternate assessment against alternate standards  | 961 | 774 | 769 |

**Data Source:**

SY 2022-23 Assessment Data Groups - Math (EDFacts file spec FS185; Data Group: 588)

**Date:**

01/10/2024

**Math Assessment Participation Data by Grade**

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Group** | **Grade 4** | **Grade 8** | **Grade HS** |
| a. Children with IEPs (2) | 14,886 | 14,584 | 13,673 |
| b. Children with IEPs in regular assessment with no accommodations (3) | 2,563 | 1,920 | 1,981 |
| c. Children with IEPs in regular assessment with accommodations (3) | 11,197 | 11,401 | 10,248 |
| d. Children with IEPs in alternate assessment against alternate standards  | 969 | 780 | 779 |

(1) The children with IEPs who are English learners and took the ELP in lieu of the regular reading/language arts assessment are not included in the prefilled data in this indicator.

(2) The children with IEPs count excludes children with disabilities who were reported as exempt due to significant medical emergency in row a for all the prefilled data in this indicator.

(3) The term “regular assessment” is an aggregation of the following types of assessments, as applicable for each grade/ grade group: regular assessment based on grade-level achievement standards, advanced assessment, Innovative Assessment Demonstration Authority (IADA) pilot assessment, high school regular assessment I, high school regular assessment II, high school regular assessment III and locally-selected nationally recognized high school assessment in the prefilled data in this indicator.

**FFY 2022 SPP/APR Data: Reading Assessment**

| **Group** | **Group Name** | **Number of Children with IEPs Participating** | **Number of Children with IEPs** | **FFY 2021 Data** | **FFY 2022 Target** | **FFY 2022 Data** | **Status** | **Slippage** |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **A** | Grade 4 | 14,704 | 14,872 | 98.45% | 95.00% | 98.87% | Met target | No Slippage |
| **B** | Grade 8 | 14,091 | 14,588 | 96.16% | 95.00% | 96.59% | Met target | No Slippage |
| **C** | Grade HS | 13,088 | 13,703 | 95.47% | 95.00% | 95.51% | Met target | No Slippage |

**FFY 2022 SPP/APR Data: Math Assessment**

| **Group** | **Group Name** | **Number of Children with IEPs Participating** | **Number of Children with IEPs** | **FFY 2021 Data** | **FFY 2022 Target** | **FFY 2022 Data** | **Status** | **Slippage** |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **A** | Grade 4 | 14,729 | 14,886 | 98.55% | 95.00% | 98.95% | Met target | No Slippage |
| **B** | Grade 8 | 14,101 | 14,584 | 96.19% | 95.00% | 96.69% | Met target | No Slippage |
| **C** | Grade HS | 13,008 | 13,673 | 95.41% | 95.00% | 95.14% | Met target | No Slippage |

**Regulatory Information**

**The SEA, (or, in the case of a district-wide assessment, LEA) must make available to the public, and report to the public with the same frequency and in the same detail as it reports on the assessment of nondisabled children: (1) the number of children with disabilities participating in: (a) regular assessments, and the number of those children who were provided accommodations in order to participate in those assessments; and (b) alternate assessments aligned with alternate achievement standards; and (2) the performance of children with disabilities on regular assessments and on alternate assessments, compared with the achievement of all children, including children with disabilities, on those assessments. [20 U.S.C. 1412 (a)(16)(D); 34 CFR §300.160(f)]**

**Public Reporting Information**

**Provide links to the page(s) where you provide public reports of assessment results.**

Student Participation and Performance on Statewide Assessments (Indicator 3) Comprehensive reports on state and LEA performance are found at:
https://profiles.doe.mass.edu/mcas/participation.aspx?linkid=26&orgcode=00000000&fycode=2023&orgtypecode=0& and https://profiles.doe.mass.edu/statereport/participation.aspx

**Provide additional information about this indicator (optional)**

The 1993 Massachusetts Education Reform Law, M.G.L. c. 69, § 1I, mandates that all students educated with Massachusetts public funds participate in MCAS testing. MA DESE regularly updates its student participation requirements at http://www.doe.mass.edu/mcas/participation.html?section=gr3-8and10.

This report displays the most current data compared with the goals set by federal and state accountability requirements.

For more information, visit our Accountability Lists, Materials, and Tools website: http://www.doe.mass.edu/accountability/lists-tools/

## 3A - Prior FFY Required Actions

None

## 3A - OSEP Response

## 3A - Required Actions

# Indicator 3B: Proficiency for Children with IEPs (Grade Level Academic Achievement Standards)

**Instructions and Measurement**

**Monitoring Priority:** FAPE in the LRE

**Results indicator**: Participation and performance of children with IEPs on statewide assessments:

A. Participation rate for children with IEPs.

B. Proficiency rate for children with IEPs against grade level academic achievement standards.

C. Proficiency rate for children with IEPs against alternate academic achievement standards.

D. Gap in proficiency rates for children with IEPs and all students against grade level academic achievement standards.

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

**Data Source**

3B. Same data as used for reporting to the Department under Title I of the ESEA, using ED*Facts* file specifications FS175 and 178.

**Measurement**

B. Proficiency rate percent = [(# of children with IEPs scoring at or above proficient against grade level academic achievement standards) divided by the (total # of children with IEPs who received a valid score and for whom a proficiency level was assigned for the regular assessment)]. Calculate separately for reading and math. Calculate separately for grades 4, 8, and high school. The proficiency rate includes both children with IEPs enrolled for a full academic year and those not enrolled for a full academic year.

**Instructions**

Describe the results of the calculations and compare the results to the targets. Provide the actual numbers used in the calculation.

Include information regarding where to find public reports of assessment participation and performance results, as required by 34 CFR §300.160(f), i.e., a link to the Web site where these data are reported.

Indicator 3B: Proficiency calculations in this SPP/APR must result in proficiency rates for children with IEPs on the regular assessment in reading/language arts and mathematics assessments (separately) in each of the following grades: 4, 8, and high school, including both children with IEPs enrolled for a full academic year and those not enrolled for a full academic year. Only include children with disabilities who had an IEP at the time of testing.

## 3B - Indicator Data

**Historical Data:**

| **Subject** | **Group**  | **Group Name**  | **Baseline Year**  | **Baseline Data** |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Reading | A | Grade 4 | 2020 | 20.40% |
| Reading | B | Grade 8 | 2020 | 11.16% |
| Reading | C | Grade HS | 2020 | 26.99% |
| Math | A | Grade 4 | 2020 | 11.77% |
| Math | B | Grade 8 | 2020 | 7.24% |
| Math | C | Grade HS | 2020 | 15.41% |

**Targets**

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Subject** | **Group** | **Group Name** | **2022** | **2023** | **2024** | **2025** |
| Reading | A >= | Grade 4 | 22.00% | 23.00% | 24.00% | 25.00% |
| Reading | B >= | Grade 8 | 13.00% | 14.00% | 15.00% | 16.00% |
| Reading | C >= | Grade HS | 28.00% | 29.00% | 30.00% | 31.00% |
| Math | A >= | Grade 4 | 13.00% | 14.00% | 15.00% | 16.00% |
| Math | B >= | Grade 8 | 9.00% | 10.00% | 11.00% | 12.00% |
| Math | C >= | Grade HS | 17.00% | 18.00% | 19.00% | 20.00% |

**Targets: Description of Stakeholder Input**

MA DESE is committed to a continuous system of engaging stakeholders to develop targets and set priorities for improvement in each of the areas reported in the SPP/APR and the SSIP.

The Special Education Advisory Panel (SEAP) and Special Education State Advisory Council (SAC) are comprised of parents, individuals with disabilities, educators, administrators, and representatives from state agencies, higher education, and other stakeholder groups. The members meet at least four times each school year to review data, discuss policy priorities, and identify unmet needs in the area of special education consistent with state law and IDEA Part B. At each meeting, both groups address and discuss various aspects of the SPP/APR and the State’s general supervision systems, as well as relevant policy matters. In the 2022-2023 school year, in addition to updates on performance and compliance results included in the SPP/APR, MA DESE discussed with the SEAP/SAC the definition of students with the most significant cognitive disabilities, a breakdown of LEA Determinations, revisions to the Educator Evaluation Rubric, revised Chapter 9 Dyslexia Guidelines, the Special Education Surrogate Parent Program, updates to the Tiered Focus Monitoring Parent Survey (Indicator 8), updates to the new IEP form, and trends identified by the Public School Monitoring (PSM) and Problem Resolution Systems (PRS) Offices. MA DESE is committed to keeping members of the SEAP and SAC up to date on processes and supports provided to LEAs in order to improve outcomes for students with disabilities. It will continue discussions around current data, longitudinal targets, historical rates of performance and compliance and the trajectory for improvement for each of the Indicators, and the effectiveness of focused improvement activities within the context of the state’s Results Driven Accountability framework.

The SAC is required by Massachusetts General Law (M.G.L. c. 15, § 1G https://malegislature.gov/Laws/GeneralLaws/PartI/TitleII/Chapter15/Section1G). Its purpose is to advise the Board of Elementary and Secondary Education and to make other programmatic recommendations it deems necessary to fulfill the goals established by the board.

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MA DESE works closely with other state agencies to provide supports to children with disabilities. The Department has developed a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) or has entered into an Interagency Service Agreement (ISA) with the Massachusetts Commission for the Blind (MCB), Massachusetts Rehabilitation Commission (MRC), Department of Public Health (DPH), Department of Early Education and Care (EEC), and Massachusetts Commission for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing (MCDHH). Additionally, these agencies provide a representative to serve on the MA Special Education Advisory Council and the MA Special Education Advisory Panel. The Department has established regular meetings with each of these agencies to strengthen collaborations and to monitor joint initiatives.

In its efforts to roll out the new IEP, MA DESE frequently engaged with stakeholders across the Commonwealth in a variety of roles to solicit feedback on the draft form that was released in the Spring of 2022. Stakeholder groups whose feedback was sought included various school groups, parent/family/advocacy organizations, and other State agencies.

As needed, MA DESE convenes stakeholder working groups throughout the year to provide focused input on specific projects and policy priorities. Among these focus groups were the Early Childhood Interagency Coordinating Council (which includes community members and state agency employees), a Statewide Systemic Improvement Plan (SSIP) leadership team and working group, a family engagement workgroup, an advisory group for the Dropout Prevention and Re-engagement Network, and secondary transition stakeholder groups. MA DESE also consults with educators, parents, advocates, and others on a regular basis to inform policy and practice.

MA DESE engages with stakeholders on the direction of Indicator 17, the State’s Systemic Improvement Plan (SSIP), at the state, district, classroom, and community levels. Stakeholders are provided with information about activities and goals, training events and embedded supports statewide, and the availability of resources to support and expand implementation. Those at the district and school levels participate in ongoing decision-making about the direction of the SSIP by providing feedback about the quality of events and supports, observed benefits for their own stakeholders, and the greatest needs to be able to move forward with implementation. Additional information is provided in the Indicator 17 narrative.

**FFY 2022 Data Disaggregation from ED*Facts***

**Data Source:**

SY 2022-23 Assessment Data Groups - Reading (EDFacts file spec FS178; Data Group: 584)

**Date:**

01/10/2024

**Reading Assessment Proficiency Data by Grade (1)**

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Group** | **Grade 4** | **Grade 8** | **Grade HS** |
| a. Children with IEPs who received a valid score and a proficiency level was assigned for the regular assessment | 13,749 | 13,345 | 12,361 |
| b. Children with IEPs in regular assessment with no accommodations scored at or above proficient against grade level | 763 | 517 | 724 |
| c. Children with IEPs in regular assessment with accommodations scored at or above proficient against grade level | 951 | 1,146 | 2,174 |

**Data Source:**

SY 2022-23 Assessment Data Groups - Math (EDFacts file spec FS175; Data Group: 583)

**Date:**

01/10/2024

**Math Assessment Proficiency Data by Grade (1)**

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Group** | **Grade 4** | **Grade 8** | **Grade HS** |
| a. Children with IEPs who received a valid score and a proficiency level was assigned for the regular assessment | 13,735 | 13,310 | 12,214 |
| b. Children with IEPs in regular assessment with no accommodations scored at or above proficient against grade level | 959 | 428 | 597 |
| c. Children with IEPs in regular assessment with accommodations scored at or above proficient against grade level | 1,444 | 851 | 1,475 |

(1)The term “regular assessment” is an aggregation of the following types of assessments as applicable for each grade/ grade group: regular assessment based on grade-level achievement standards, advanced assessment, Innovative Assessment Demonstration Authority (IADA) pilot assessment, high school regular assessment I, high school regular assessment II, high school regular assessment III and locally-selected nationally recognized high school assessment in the prefilled data in this indicator.

**FFY 2022 SPP/APR Data: Reading Assessment**

| **Group** | **Group Name** | **Number of Children with IEPs Scoring At or Above Proficient Against Grade Level Academic Achievement Standards** | **Number of Children with IEPs who Received a Valid Score and for whom a Proficiency Level was Assigned for the Regular Assessment** | **FFY 2021 Data** | **FFY 2022 Target** | **FFY 2022 Data** | **Status** | **Slippage** |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **A** | Grade 4 | 1,714 | 13,749 | 11.39% | 22.00% | 12.47% | Did not meet target | No Slippage |
| **B** | Grade 8 | 1,663 | 13,345 | 10.07% | 13.00% | 12.46% | Did not meet target | No Slippage |
| **C** | Grade HS | 2,898 | 12,361 | 21.57% | 28.00% | 23.44% | Did not meet target | No Slippage |

**FFY 2022 SPP/APR Data: Math Assessment**

| **Group** | **Group Name** | **Number of Children with IEPs Scoring At or Above Proficient Against Grade Level Academic Achievement Standards** | **Number of Children with IEPs who Received a Valid Score and for whom a Proficiency Level was Assigned for the Regular Assessment** | **FFY 2021 Data** | **FFY 2022 Target** | **FFY 2022 Data** | **Status** | **Slippage** |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **A** | Grade 4 | 2,403 | 13,735 | 15.89% | 13.00% | 17.50% | Met target | No Slippage |
| **B** | Grade 8 | 1,279 | 13,310 | 8.66% | 9.00% | 9.61% | Met target | No Slippage |
| **C** | Grade HS | 2,072 | 12,214 | 15.64% | 17.00% | 16.96% | Did not meet target | No Slippage |

**Regulatory Information**

**The SEA, (or, in the case of a district-wide assessment, LEA) must make available to the public, and report to the public with the same frequency and in the same detail as it reports on the assessment of nondisabled children: (1) the number of children with disabilities participating in: (a) regular assessments, and the number of those children who were provided accommodations in order to participate in those assessments; and (b) alternate assessments aligned with alternate achievement standards; and (2) the performance of children with disabilities on regular assessments and on alternate assessments, compared with the achievement of all children, including children with disabilities, on those assessments. [20 U.S.C. 1412 (a)(16)(D); 34 CFR §300.160(f)]**

**Public Reporting Information**

**Provide links to the page(s) where you provide public reports of assessment results.**

Student Participation and Performance on Statewide Assessments (Indicator 3) Comprehensive reports on state and LEA performance are found at
https://profiles.doe.mass.edu/mcas/participation.aspx?linkid=26&orgcode=00000000&fycode=2023&orgtypecode=0& and https://profiles.doe.mass.edu/statereport/mcas.aspX

**Provide additional information about this indicator (optional)**

This report displays the most current data compared with the goals set by federal and state accountability requirements.

For more information, visit our Accountability Lists, Materials, and Tools website: http://www.doe.mass.edu/accountability/lists-tools/

## 3B - Prior FFY Required Actions

None

## 3B - OSEP Response

## 3B - Required Actions

# Indicator 3C: Proficiency for Children with IEPs (Alternate Academic Achievement Standards)

**Instructions and Measurement**

**Monitoring Priority:** FAPE in the LRE

**Results indicator:** Participation and performance of children with IEPs on statewide assessments:

A. Participation rate for children with IEPs.

B. Proficiency rate for children with IEPs against grade level academic achievement standards.

C. Proficiency rate for children with IEPs against alternate academic achievement standards.

D. Gap in proficiency rates for children with IEPs and all students against grade level academic achievement standards.

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

**Data Source**

3C. Same data as used for reporting to the Department under Title I of the ESEA, using ED*Facts* file specifications FS175 and 178.

**Measurement**

C. Proficiency rate percent = [(# of children with IEPs scoring at or above proficient against alternate academic achievement standards) divided by the (total # of children with IEPs who received a valid score and for whom a proficiency level was assigned for the alternate assessment)]. Calculate separately for reading and math. Calculate separately for grades 4, 8, and high school. The proficiency rate includes both children with IEPs enrolled for a full academic year and those not enrolled for a full academic year.

**Instructions**

Describe the results of the calculations and compare the results to the targets. Provide the actual numbers used in the calculation.

Include information regarding where to find public reports of assessment participation and performance results, as required by 34 CFR §300.160(f), i.e., a link to the Web site where these data are reported.

Indicator 3C: Proficiency calculations in this SPP/APR must result in proficiency rates for children with IEPs on the alternate assessment in reading/language arts and mathematics assessments (separately) in each of the following grades: 4, 8, and high school, including both children with IEPs enrolled for a full academic year and those not enrolled for a full academic year. Only include children with disabilities who had an IEP at the time

of testing.

## 3C - Indicator Data

**Historical Data:**

| **Subject** | **Group**  | **Group Name**  | **Baseline Year**  | **Baseline Data** |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Reading | A | Grade 4 | 2020 | 0.00% |
| Reading | B | Grade 8 | 2020 | 0.00% |
| Reading | C | Grade HS | 2020 | 0.00% |
| Math | A | Grade 4 | 2020 | 0.00% |
| Math | B | Grade 8 | 2020 | 0.00% |
| Math | C | Grade HS | 2020 | 0.00% |

**Targets**

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Subject** | **Group** | **Group Name** | **2022** | **2023** | **2024** | **2025** |
| Reading | A >= | Grade 4 | 47.00% | 48.00% | 49.00% | 50.00% |
| Reading | B >= | Grade 8 | 49.00% | 50.00% | 51.00% | 52.00% |
| Reading | C >= | Grade HS | 47.00% | 48.00% | 49.00% | 50.00% |
| Math | A >= | Grade 4 | 73.00% | 74.00% | 75.00% | 76.00% |
| Math | B >= | Grade 8 | 69.00% | 70.00% | 71.00% | 72.00% |
| Math | C >= | Grade HS | 67.00% | 68.00% | 69.00% | 70.00% |

**Targets: Description of Stakeholder Input**

MA DESE is committed to a continuous system of engaging stakeholders to develop targets and set priorities for improvement in each of the areas reported in the SPP/APR and the SSIP.

The Special Education Advisory Panel (SEAP) and Special Education State Advisory Council (SAC) are comprised of parents, individuals with disabilities, educators, administrators, and representatives from state agencies, higher education, and other stakeholder groups. The members meet at least four times each school year to review data, discuss policy priorities, and identify unmet needs in the area of special education consistent with state law and IDEA Part B. At each meeting, both groups address and discuss various aspects of the SPP/APR and the State’s general supervision systems, as well as relevant policy matters. In the 2022-2023 school year, in addition to updates on performance and compliance results included in the SPP/APR, MA DESE discussed with the SEAP/SAC the definition of students with the most significant cognitive disabilities, a breakdown of LEA Determinations, revisions to the Educator Evaluation Rubric, revised Chapter 9 Dyslexia Guidelines, the Special Education Surrogate Parent Program, updates to the Tiered Focus Monitoring Parent Survey (Indicator 8), updates to the new IEP form, and trends identified by the Public School Monitoring (PSM) and Problem Resolution Systems (PRS) Offices. MA DESE is committed to keeping members of the SEAP and SAC up to date on processes and supports provided to LEAs in order to improve outcomes for students with disabilities. It will continue discussions around current data, longitudinal targets, historical rates of performance and compliance and the trajectory for improvement for each of the Indicators, and the effectiveness of focused improvement activities within the context of the state’s Results Driven Accountability framework.

The SAC is required by Massachusetts General Law (M.G.L. c. 15, § 1G https://malegislature.gov/Laws/GeneralLaws/PartI/TitleII/Chapter15/Section1G). Its purpose is to advise the Board of Elementary and Secondary Education and to make other programmatic recommendations it deems necessary to fulfill the goals established by the board.

The SEAP is required by IDEA (34 CFR §§ 300.167-300.169 https://www.ecfr.gov/current/title-34/subtitle-B/chapter-III/part-300#sg34.2.300\_1166.sg15). Its purpose is to advise the State Education Authority (SEA) of unmet needs within the State regarding the education of children with disabilities. The Panel comments publicly on proposed rules or regulations. Its advisory function to the SEA involves developing evaluations and reporting 618 data (IDEA data) to USED and creating corrective action plans to address findings in Federal monitoring reports under IDEA Part B. The Panel also advises the SEA in developing and implementing policies relating to the coordination of services for children with disabilities.

MA DESE has continued to emphasize its priority on expanding the agency’s capacity to solicit broad and diverse stakeholder input to set SPP/APR targets, analyze data, develop improvement strategies, and evaluate progress. In FFY 2022 MA DESE sought to continue developing stakeholder Indicator knowledge, a project that began in FFY 2020. MA DESE has created and continues to update a new SPP/APR website. Each of the 17 Indicators has its own dedicated web page or Quick Reference Guide (QRG), as well as PowerPoints and other relevant information or resources. All materials on the SPP/APR website are available in six languages that correspond to the most common languages spoken in Massachusetts: English, Spanish, Portuguese, Chinese, Vietnamese, and Haitian Creole. Narrated versions of each PowerPoint are also available in English on the YouTube page of MA DESE’s partner, the Federation for Children with Special Needs (the Massachusetts Parent Training and Information Center/PTIC). In FFY 2022 MA DESE hosted eight virtual information and feedback sessions to broaden stakeholder knowledge. Each meeting had a specific improvement strategy focus and also provided updates on data analysis and evaluation of progress for each Indicator. The large-group presentation on each topic was simultaneously translated from English into the other five languages.

MA DESE consults on a monthly or at least quarterly basis with the Massachusetts Administrators of Special Education (http://www.asepage.org/), Federation for Children with Special Needs (https://fcsn.org/), Massachusetts Advocates for Children (https://www.massadvocates.org/), Massachusetts Association of Approved Special Education Schools (https://maaps.org/), and Massachusetts Urban Special Education Leadership Collaborative (massurban.org)). In addition, the Massachusetts State Special Education Director at MA DESE gives monthly virtual presentations to statewide special education leaders on a wide array of special education compliance and performance topics. During all of these meetings, MA DESE solicits and receives significant feedback that informs the development of special education policy and guidance.

MA DESE works closely with other state agencies to provide supports to children with disabilities. The Department has developed a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) or has entered into an Interagency Service Agreement (ISA) with the Massachusetts Commission for the Blind (MCB), Massachusetts Rehabilitation Commission (MRC), Department of Public Health (DPH), Department of Early Education and Care (EEC), and Massachusetts Commission for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing (MCDHH). Additionally, these agencies provide a representative to serve on the MA Special Education Advisory Council and the MA Special Education Advisory Panel. The Department has established regular meetings with each of these agencies to strengthen collaborations and to monitor joint initiatives.

In its efforts to roll out the new IEP, MA DESE frequently engaged with stakeholders across the Commonwealth in a variety of roles to solicit feedback on the draft form that was released in the Spring of 2022. Stakeholder groups whose feedback was sought included various school groups, parent/family/advocacy organizations, and other State agencies.

As needed, MA DESE convenes stakeholder working groups throughout the year to provide focused input on specific projects and policy priorities. Among these focus groups were the Early Childhood Interagency Coordinating Council (which includes community members and state agency employees), a Statewide Systemic Improvement Plan (SSIP) leadership team and working group, a family engagement workgroup, an advisory group for the Dropout Prevention and Re-engagement Network, and secondary transition stakeholder groups. MA DESE also consults with educators, parents, advocates, and others on a regular basis to inform policy and practice.

MA DESE engages with stakeholders on the direction of Indicator 17, the State’s Systemic Improvement Plan (SSIP), at the state, district, classroom, and community levels. Stakeholders are provided with information about activities and goals, training events and embedded supports statewide, and the availability of resources to support and expand implementation. Those at the district and school levels participate in ongoing decision-making about the direction of the SSIP by providing feedback about the quality of events and supports, observed benefits for their own stakeholders, and the greatest needs to be able to move forward with implementation. Additional information is provided in the Indicator 17 narrative.

**FFY 2022 Data Disaggregation from ED*Facts***

**Data Source:**

SY 2022-23 Assessment Data Groups - Reading (EDFacts file spec FS178; Data Group: 584)

**Date:**

01/10/2024

**Reading Assessment Proficiency Data by Grade**

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Group** | **Grade 4** | **Grade 8** | **Grade HS** |
| a. Children with IEPs who received a valid score and a proficiency level was assigned for the alternate assessment | 966 | 783 | 777 |
| b. Children with IEPs in alternate assessment against alternate standards scored at or above proficient | 0 | 0 | 0 |

**Data Source:**

SY 2022-23 Assessment Data Groups - Math (EDFacts file spec FS175; Data Group: 583)

**Date:**

01/10/2024

**Math Assessment Proficiency Data by Grade**

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Group** | **Grade 4** | **Grade 8** | **Grade HS** |
| a. Children with IEPs who received a valid score and a proficiency level was assigned for the alternate assessment | 967 | 779 | 774 |
| b. Children with IEPs in alternate assessment against alternate standards scored at or above proficient | 0 | 0 | 0 |

**FFY 2022 SPP/APR Data: Reading Assessment**

| **Group** | **Group Name** | **Number of Children with IEPs Scoring At or Above Proficient Against Alternate Academic Achievement Standards** | **Number of Children with IEPs who Received a Valid Score and for whom a Proficiency Level was Assigned for the Alternate Assessment** | **FFY 2021 Data** | **FFY 2022 Target** | **FFY 2022 Data** | **Status** | **Slippage** |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **A** | Grade 4 | 0 | 966 | 0.00% | 47.00% | 0.00% | Did not meet target | No Slippage |
| **B** | Grade 8 | 0 | 783 | 0.00% | 49.00% | 0.00% | Did not meet target | No Slippage |
| **C** | Grade HS | 0 | 777 | 0.00% | 47.00% | 0.00% | Did not meet target | No Slippage |

**FFY 2022 SPP/APR Data: Math Assessment**

| **Group** | **Group Name** | **Number of Children with IEPs Scoring At or Above Proficient Against Alternate Academic Achievement Standards** | **Number of Children with IEPs who Received a Valid Score and for whom a Proficiency Level was Assigned for the Alternate Assessment** | **FFY 2021 Data** | **FFY 2022 Target** | **FFY 2022 Data** | **Status** | **Slippage** |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **A** | Grade 4 | 0 | 967 | 0.00% | 73.00% | 0.00% | Did not meet target | No Slippage |
| **B** | Grade 8 | 0 | 779 | 0.00% | 69.00% | 0.00% | Did not meet target | No Slippage |
| **C** | Grade HS | 0 | 774 | 0.00% | 67.00% | 0.00% | Did not meet target | No Slippage |

**Regulatory Information**

**The SEA, (or, in the case of a district-wide assessment, LEA) must make available to the public, and report to the public with the same frequency and in the same detail as it reports on the assessment of nondisabled children: (1) the number of children with disabilities participating in: (a) regular assessments, and the number of those children who were provided accommodations in order to participate in those assessments; and (b) alternate assessments aligned with alternate achievement standards; and (2) the performance of children with disabilities on regular assessments and on alternate assessments, compared with the achievement of all children, including children with disabilities, on those assessments. [20 U.S.C. 1412 (a)(16)(D); 34 CFR §300.160(f)]**

**Public Reporting Information**

**Provide links to the page(s) where you provide public reports of assessment results.**

Student Participation and Performance on Statewide Assessments (Indicator 3) Comprehensive reports on state and LEA performance are found at
https://profiles.doe.mass.edu/mcas/participation.aspx?linkid=26&orgcode=00000000&fycode=2023&orgtypecode=0& and https://profiles.doe.mass.edu/statereport/mcas\_alt.aspx

**Provide additional information about this indicator (optional)**

It is important to note that in Massachusetts the highest possible score on the MCAS-Alt, the state's alternate assessment, is Progressing. Therefore, the Data for the "Number of Children with IEPs Scoring At or Above Proficient Against Alternate Academic Achievement Standards" is 'zero".

This report displays the most current data compared with the goals set by federal and state accountability requirements.

For more information, visit our Accountability Lists, Materials, and Tools website: http://www.doe.mass.edu/accountability/lists-tools/

## 3C - Prior FFY Required Actions

None

## 3C - OSEP Response

## 3C - Required Actions

# Indicator 3D: Gap in Proficiency Rates (Grade Level Academic Achievement Standards)

**Instructions and Measurement**

**Monitoring Priority:** FAPE in the LRE

**Results indicator**: Participation and performance of children with IEPs on statewide assessments:

A. Participation rate for children with IEPs.

B. Proficiency rate for children with IEPs against grade level academic achievement standards.

C. Proficiency rate for children with IEPs against alternate academic achievement standards.

D. Gap in proficiency rates for children with IEPs and all students against grade level academic achievement standards.

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

**Data Source**

3D. Same data as used for reporting to the Department under Title I of the ESEA, using ED*Facts* file specifications FS175 and 178.

**Measurement**

D. Proficiency rate gap = [(proficiency rate for children with IEPs scoring at or above proficient against grade level academic achievement standards for the 2022-2023 school year) subtracted from the (proficiency rate for all students scoring at or above proficient against grade level academic achievement standards for the 2022-2023 school year)]. Calculate separately for reading and math. Calculate separately for grades 4, 8, and high school. The proficiency rate includes all children enrolled for a full academic year and those not enrolled for a full academic year.

**Instructions**

Describe the results of the calculations and compare the results to the targets. Provide the actual numbers used in the calculation.

Include information regarding where to find public reports of assessment participation and performance results, as required by 34 CFR §300.160(f), i.e., a link to the Web site where these data are reported.

Indicator 3D: Gap calculations in this SPP/APR must result in the proficiency rate for children with IEPs were proficient against grade level academic achievement standards for the 2022-2023 school year compared to the proficiency rate for all students who were proficient against grade level academic achievement standards for the 2022-2023 school year. Calculate separately for reading/language arts and math in each of the following grades: 4, 8, and high school, including both children enrolled for a full academic year and those not enrolled for a full academic year. Only include children with disabilities who had an IEP at the time of testing.

## 3D - Indicator Data

**Historical Data:**

| **Subject** | **Group**  | **Group Name**  | **Baseline Year**  | **Baseline Data** |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Reading | A | Grade 4 | 2020 | 29.30 |
| Reading | B | Grade 8 | 2020 | 29.93 |
| Reading | C | Grade HS | 2020 | 37.57 |
| Math | A | Grade 4 | 2020 | 21.96 |
| Math | B | Grade 8 | 2020 | 25.24 |
| Math | C | Grade HS | 2020 | 37.28 |

**Targets**

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Subject** | **Group** | **Group Name** | **2022** | **2023** | **2024** | **2025** |
| Reading | A <= | Grade 4 | 28.90 | 28.40  | 27.90 | 27.40 |
| Reading | B <= | Grade 8 | 29.10 | 28.60 | 28.10 | 27.60 |
| Reading | C <= | Grade HS | 37.60 | 37.10 | 36.60 | 36.10 |
| Math | A <= | Grade 4 | 21.30 | 20.80 | 20.30 | 19.80 |
| Math | B <= | Grade 8 | 24.30 | 23.80 | 23.30 | 22.80 |
| Math | C <= | Grade HS | 36.70 | 36.20 | 35.70 | 35.20 |

**Targets: Description of Stakeholder Input**

MA DESE is committed to a continuous system of engaging stakeholders to develop targets and set priorities for improvement in each of the areas reported in the SPP/APR and the SSIP.

The Special Education Advisory Panel (SEAP) and Special Education State Advisory Council (SAC) are comprised of parents, individuals with disabilities, educators, administrators, and representatives from state agencies, higher education, and other stakeholder groups. The members meet at least four times each school year to review data, discuss policy priorities, and identify unmet needs in the area of special education consistent with state law and IDEA Part B. At each meeting, both groups address and discuss various aspects of the SPP/APR and the State’s general supervision systems, as well as relevant policy matters. In the 2022-2023 school year, in addition to updates on performance and compliance results included in the SPP/APR, MA DESE discussed with the SEAP/SAC the definition of students with the most significant cognitive disabilities, a breakdown of LEA Determinations, revisions to the Educator Evaluation Rubric, revised Chapter 9 Dyslexia Guidelines, the Special Education Surrogate Parent Program, updates to the Tiered Focus Monitoring Parent Survey (Indicator 8), updates to the new IEP form, and trends identified by the Public School Monitoring (PSM) and Problem Resolution Systems (PRS) Offices. MA DESE is committed to keeping members of the SEAP and SAC up to date on processes and supports provided to LEAs in order to improve outcomes for students with disabilities. It will continue discussions around current data, longitudinal targets, historical rates of performance and compliance and the trajectory for improvement for each of the Indicators, and the effectiveness of focused improvement activities within the context of the state’s Results Driven Accountability framework.

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MA DESE has continued to emphasize its priority on expanding the agency’s capacity to solicit broad and diverse stakeholder input to set SPP/APR targets, analyze data, develop improvement strategies, and evaluate progress. In FFY 2022 MA DESE sought to continue developing stakeholder Indicator knowledge, a project that began in FFY 2020. MA DESE has created and continues to update a new SPP/APR website. Each of the 17 Indicators has its own dedicated web page or Quick Reference Guide (QRG), as well as PowerPoints and other relevant information or resources. All materials on the SPP/APR website are available in six languages that correspond to the most common languages spoken in Massachusetts: English, Spanish, Portuguese, Chinese, Vietnamese, and Haitian Creole. Narrated versions of each PowerPoint are also available in English on the YouTube page of MA DESE’s partner, the Federation for Children with Special Needs (the Massachusetts Parent Training and Information Center/PTIC). In FFY 2022 MA DESE hosted eight virtual information and feedback sessions to broaden stakeholder knowledge. Each meeting had a specific improvement strategy focus and also provided updates on data analysis and evaluation of progress for each Indicator. The large-group presentation on each topic was simultaneously translated from English into the other five languages.

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MA DESE works closely with other state agencies to provide supports to children with disabilities. The Department has developed a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) or has entered into an Interagency Service Agreement (ISA) with the Massachusetts Commission for the Blind (MCB), Massachusetts Rehabilitation Commission (MRC), Department of Public Health (DPH), Department of Early Education and Care (EEC), and Massachusetts Commission for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing (MCDHH). Additionally, these agencies provide a representative to serve on the MA Special Education Advisory Council and the MA Special Education Advisory Panel. The Department has established regular meetings with each of these agencies to strengthen collaborations and to monitor joint initiatives.

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As needed, MA DESE convenes stakeholder working groups throughout the year to provide focused input on specific projects and policy priorities. Among these focus groups were the Early Childhood Interagency Coordinating Council (which includes community members and state agency employees), a Statewide Systemic Improvement Plan (SSIP) leadership team and working group, a family engagement workgroup, an advisory group for the Dropout Prevention and Re-engagement Network, and secondary transition stakeholder groups. MA DESE also consults with educators, parents, advocates, and others on a regular basis to inform policy and practice.

MA DESE engages with stakeholders on the direction of Indicator 17, the State’s Systemic Improvement Plan (SSIP), at the state, district, classroom, and community levels. Stakeholders are provided with information about activities and goals, training events and embedded supports statewide, and the availability of resources to support and expand implementation. Those at the district and school levels participate in ongoing decision-making about the direction of the SSIP by providing feedback about the quality of events and supports, observed benefits for their own stakeholders, and the greatest needs to be able to move forward with implementation. Additional information is provided in the Indicator 17 narrative.

**FFY 2022 Data Disaggregation from ED*Facts***

**Data Source:**

SY 2022-23 Assessment Data Groups - Reading (EDFacts file spec FS178; Data Group: 584)

**Date:**

01/10/2024

**Reading Assessment Proficiency Data by Grade (1)**

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Group** | **Grade 4** | **Grade 8** | **Grade HS** |
| a. All Students who received a valid score and a proficiency was assigned for the regular assessment | 64,642 | 67,559 | 69,806 |
| b. Children with IEPs who received a valid score and a proficiency was assigned for the regular assessment | 13,749 | 13,345 | 12,361 |
| c. All students in regular assessment with no accommodations scored at or above proficient against grade level | 24,790 | 27,906 | 37,683 |
| d. All students in regular assessment with accommodations scored at or above proficient against grade level | 1,241 | 1,932 | 3,423 |
| e. Children with IEPs in regular assessment with no accommodations scored at or above proficient against grade level | 763 | 517 | 724 |
| f. Children with IEPs in regular assessment with accommodations scored at or above proficient against grade level | 951 | 1,146 | 2,174 |

**Data Source:**

SY 2022-23 Assessment Data Groups - Math (EDFacts file spec FS175; Data Group: 583)

**Date:**

01/10/2024

**Math Assessment Proficiency Data by Grade (1)**

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Group** | **Grade 4** | **Grade 8** | **Grade HS** |
| a. All Students who received a valid score and a proficiency was assigned for the regular assessment | 64,676 | 67,472 | 69,381 |
| b. Children with IEPs who received a valid score and a proficiency was assigned for the regular assessment | 13,735 | 13,310 | 12,214 |
| c. All students in regular assessment with no accommodations scored at or above proficient against grade level | 27,105 | 24,074 | 32,178 |
| d. All students in regular assessment with accommodations scored at or above proficient against grade level | 2,408 | 1,686 | 2,683 |
| e. Children with IEPs in regular assessment with no accommodations scored at or above proficient against grade level | 959 | 428 | 597 |
| f. Children with IEPs in regular assessment with accommodations scored at or above proficient against grade level | 1,444 | 851 | 1,475 |

(1)The term “regular assessment” is an aggregation of the following types of assessments as applicable for each grade/ grade group: regular assessment based on grade-level achievement standards, advanced assessment, Innovative Assessment Demonstration Authority (IADA) pilot assessment, high school regular assessment I, high school regular assessment II, high school regular assessment III and locally-selected nationally recognized high school assessment in the prefilled data in this indicator.

**FFY 2022 SPP/APR Data: Reading Assessment**

| **Group** | **Group Name** | **Proficiency rate for children with IEPs scoring at or above proficient against grade level academic achievement standards**  | **Proficiency rate for all students scoring at or above proficient against grade level academic achievement standards**  | **FFY 2021 Data** | **FFY 2022 Target** | **FFY 2022 Data** | **Status** | **Slippage** |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **A** | Grade 4 | 12.47% | 40.27% | 27.57 | 28.90 | 27.80 | Met target | No Slippage |
| **B** | Grade 8 | 12.46% | 44.17% | 32.34 | 29.10 | 31.70 | Did not meet target | No Slippage |
| **C** | Grade HS | 23.44% | 58.89% | 37.25 | 37.60 | 35.44 | Met target | No Slippage |

**FFY 2022 SPP/APR Data: Math Assessment**

| **Group** | **Group Name** | **Proficiency rate for children with IEPs scoring at or above proficient against grade level academic achievement standards**  | **Proficiency rate for all students scoring at or above proficient against grade level academic achievement standards**  | **FFY 2021 Data** | **FFY 2022 Target** | **FFY 2022 Data** | **Status** | **Slippage** |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **A** | Grade 4 | 17.50% | 45.63% | 27.06 | 21.30 | 28.14 | Did not meet target | Slippage |
| **B** | Grade 8 | 9.61% | 38.18% | 28.04 | 24.30 | 28.57 | Did not meet target | No Slippage |
| **C** | Grade HS | 16.96% | 50.25% | 34.78 | 36.70 | 33.28 | Met target | No Slippage |

**Provide reasons for slippage for Group A, if applicable**

MA DESE believes that the slippage that occurred in Grade 4 Math can be attributed to the larger growth in the all student proficiency rate compared to students with disabilities proficiency rate. Overall, when factoring in the cancelation of the MCAS in March of 2020, due to the COVID-19 pandemic, and the 2021 administration being shortened, this has largely attributed to a decrease in the overall academic proficiency of all students since 2020. As the MCAS has now been administered in a full administration for two consecutive years, the proficiency rates are continuing to increase. When comparing data from the 2023 administration of the MCAS to the 2022 administration, the students with disability proficiency rate increased from a scaled score of 476 to 477 (a one point increase), but the all student proficiency rate increased by two points (496 in 2023 from 494 in 2022). For the 2023 administration of MCAS 17% of students scored at Exceeding or Meeting Expectations (proficient) and 45% of all students scored proficient, whereas in the 2022 administration 15% of students with disabilities scored proficient and 43% of all students scored proficient. The gain of the all student rate was larger than the gain of the students with disability rate. MA DESE is continuing to work across the Department to look at the proficiency rate for students with disabilities to ensure that the gap decreases across all groups and content areas.

**Provide additional information about this indicator (optional)**

This report displays the most current data compared with the goals set by federal and state accountability requirements.

## 3D - Prior FFY Required Actions

None

## 3D - OSEP Response

## 3D - Required Actions

# Indicator 4A: Suspension/Expulsion

**Instructions and Measurement**

**Monitoring Priority:** FAPE in the LRE

**Results Indicator:** Rates of suspension and expulsion:

A. Percent of local educational agencies (LEA) that have a significant discrepancy, as defined by the State, in the rate of suspensions and expulsions of greater than 10 days in a school year for children with IEPs; and

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

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

**Data Source**

State discipline data, including State’s analysis of State’s Discipline data collected under IDEA Section 618, where applicable. Discrepancy can be computed by either comparing the rates of suspensions and expulsions for children with IEPs to rates for nondisabled children within the LEA or by comparing the rates of suspensions and expulsions for children with IEPs among LEAs within the State.

**Measurement**

Percent = [(# of LEAs that meet the State-established n and/or cell size (if applicable) that have a significant discrepancy, as defined by the State, in the rates of suspensions and expulsions for more than 10 days during the school year of children with IEPs) divided by the (# of LEAs in the State that meet the State-established n and/or cell size (if applicable))] times 100.

Include State’s definition of “significant discrepancy.”

**Instructions**

If the State has established a minimum n and/or cell size requirement, the State may only include, in both the numerator and the denominator, LEAs that met that State-established n and/or cell size. If the State used a minimum n and/or cell size requirement, report the number of LEAs totally excluded from the calculation as a result of this requirement.

Describe the results of the State’s examination of the data for the year before the reporting year (e.g., for the FFY 2022 SPP/APR, use data from 2021-2022), including data disaggregated by race and ethnicity to determine if significant discrepancies, as defined by the State, are occurring in the rates of long-term suspensions and expulsions (more than 10 days during the school year) of children with IEPs, as required at 20 U.S.C. 1412(a)(22). The State’s examination must include one of the following comparisons:

--The rates of suspensions and expulsions for children with IEPs among LEAs within the State; or

--The rates of suspensions and expulsions for children with IEPs to rates of suspensions and expulsions for nondisabled children within the LEAs.

In the description, specify which method the State used to determine possible discrepancies and explain what constitutes those discrepancies.

Because the measurement table requires that the data examined for this indicator are lag year data, States should examine the section 618 data that was submitted by LEAs that were in operation during the school year before the reporting year. For example, if a State has 100 LEAs operating in the 2021-2022 school year, those 100 LEAs would have reported section 618 data in 2021-2022 on the number of children suspended/expelled. If the State then opens 15 new LEAs in 2022-2023, suspension/expulsion data from those 15 new LEAs would not be in the 2021-2022 section 618 data set, and therefore, those 15 new LEAs should not be included in the denominator of the calculation. States must use the number of LEAs from the year before the reporting year in its calculation for this indicator. For the FFY 2022 SPP/APR submission, States must use the number of LEAs reported in 2021-2022 (which can be found in the FFY 2021 SPP/APR introduction).

Indicator 4A: Provide the actual numbers used in the calculation (based upon LEAs that met the minimum n and/or cell size requirement, if applicable). If significant discrepancies occurred, describe how the State educational agency reviewed and, if appropriate, revised (or required the affected local educational agency to revise) its policies, procedures, and practices relating to the development and implementation of IEPs, the use of positive behavioral interventions and supports, and procedural safeguards, to ensure that such policies, procedures, and practices comply with applicable requirements.

Provide detailed information about the timely correction of child-specific and regulatory/systemic noncompliance as noted in OSEP’s response for the previous SPP/APR. If discrepancies occurred and the LEA with discrepancies had policies, procedures or practices that contributed to the significant discrepancy, as defined by the State, and that do not comply with requirements relating to the development and implementation of IEPs, the use of positive behavioral interventions and supports, and procedural safeguards, describe how the State ensured that such policies, procedures, and practices were revised to comply with applicable requirements consistent with OSEP QA 23-01, dated July 24, 2023.

If the State did not ensure timely correction of the previous noncompliance, provide information on the extent to which noncompliance was subsequently corrected (more than one year after identification). In addition, provide information regarding the nature of any continuing noncompliance, improvement activities completed (e.g., review of policies and procedures, technical assistance, training) and any enforcement actions that were taken.

If the State reported less than 100% compliance for the previous reporting period (e.g., for the FFY 2022 SPP/APR, the data for FFY 2021), and the State did not identify any findings of noncompliance, provide an explanation of why the State did not identify any findings of noncompliance.

## 4A - Indicator Data

**Historical Data**

| **Baseline Year** | **Baseline Data** |
| --- | --- |
| 2022 | 1.04% |

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **FFY** | **2017** | **2018** | **2019** | **2020** | **2021** |
| Target <= | 0.00% | 0.00% | 0.00% | 0.00% | 0.00% |
| Data | 1.36% | 1.08% | 1.06% | 1.06% | 0.27% |

**Targets**

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **FFY** | **2022** | **2023** | **2024** | **2025** |
| Target <= | 0.00% | 0.00% | 0.00% | 0.00% |

**Targets: Description of Stakeholder Input**

MA DESE is committed to a continuous system of engaging stakeholders to develop targets and set priorities for improvement in each of the areas reported in the SPP/APR and the SSIP.

The Special Education Advisory Panel (SEAP) and Special Education State Advisory Council (SAC) are comprised of parents, individuals with disabilities, educators, administrators, and representatives from state agencies, higher education, and other stakeholder groups. The members meet at least four times each school year to review data, discuss policy priorities, and identify unmet needs in the area of special education consistent with state law and IDEA Part B. At each meeting, both groups address and discuss various aspects of the SPP/APR and the State’s general supervision systems, as well as relevant policy matters. In the 2022-2023 school year, in addition to updates on performance and compliance results included in the SPP/APR, MA DESE discussed with the SEAP/SAC the definition of students with the most significant cognitive disabilities, a breakdown of LEA Determinations, revisions to the Educator Evaluation Rubric, revised Chapter 9 Dyslexia Guidelines, the Special Education Surrogate Parent Program, updates to the Tiered Focus Monitoring Parent Survey (Indicator 8), updates to the new IEP form, and trends identified by the Public School Monitoring (PSM) and Problem Resolution Systems (PRS) Offices. MA DESE is committed to keeping members of the SEAP and SAC up to date on processes and supports provided to LEAs in order to improve outcomes for students with disabilities. It will continue discussions around current data, longitudinal targets, historical rates of performance and compliance and the trajectory for improvement for each of the Indicators, and the effectiveness of focused improvement activities within the context of the state’s Results Driven Accountability framework.

The SAC is required by Massachusetts General Law (M.G.L. c. 15, § 1G https://malegislature.gov/Laws/GeneralLaws/PartI/TitleII/Chapter15/Section1G). Its purpose is to advise the Board of Elementary and Secondary Education and to make other programmatic recommendations it deems necessary to fulfill the goals established by the board.

The SEAP is required by IDEA (34 CFR §§ 300.167-300.169 https://www.ecfr.gov/current/title-34/subtitle-B/chapter-III/part-300#sg34.2.300\_1166.sg15). Its purpose is to advise the State Education Authority (SEA) of unmet needs within the State regarding the education of children with disabilities. The Panel comments publicly on proposed rules or regulations. Its advisory function to the SEA involves developing evaluations and reporting 618 data (IDEA data) to USED and creating corrective action plans to address findings in Federal monitoring reports under IDEA Part B. The Panel also advises the SEA in developing and implementing policies relating to the coordination of services for children with disabilities.

MA DESE has continued to emphasize its priority on expanding the agency’s capacity to solicit broad and diverse stakeholder input to set SPP/APR targets, analyze data, develop improvement strategies, and evaluate progress. In FFY 2022 MA DESE sought to continue developing stakeholder Indicator knowledge, a project that began in FFY 2020. MA DESE has created and continues to update a new SPP/APR website. Each of the 17 Indicators has its own dedicated web page or Quick Reference Guide (QRG), as well as PowerPoints and other relevant information or resources. All materials on the SPP/APR website are available in six languages that correspond to the most common languages spoken in Massachusetts: English, Spanish, Portuguese, Chinese, Vietnamese, and Haitian Creole. Narrated versions of each PowerPoint are also available in English on the YouTube page of MA DESE’s partner, the Federation for Children with Special Needs (the Massachusetts Parent Training and Information Center/PTIC). In FFY 2022 MA DESE hosted eight virtual information and feedback sessions to broaden stakeholder knowledge. Each meeting had a specific improvement strategy focus and also provided updates on data analysis and evaluation of progress for each Indicator. The large-group presentation on each topic was simultaneously translated from English into the other five languages.

MA DESE consults on a monthly or at least quarterly basis with the Massachusetts Administrators of Special Education (http://www.asepage.org/), Federation for Children with Special Needs (https://fcsn.org/), Massachusetts Advocates for Children (https://www.massadvocates.org/), Massachusetts Association of Approved Special Education Schools (https://maaps.org/), and Massachusetts Urban Special Education Leadership Collaborative (massurban.org)). In addition, the Massachusetts State Special Education Director at MA DESE gives monthly virtual presentations to statewide special education leaders on a wide array of special education compliance and performance topics. During all of these meetings, MA DESE solicits and receives significant feedback that informs the development of special education policy and guidance.

MA DESE works closely with other state agencies to provide supports to children with disabilities. The Department has developed a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) or has entered into an Interagency Service Agreement (ISA) with the Massachusetts Commission for the Blind (MCB), Massachusetts Rehabilitation Commission (MRC), Department of Public Health (DPH), Department of Early Education and Care (EEC), and Massachusetts Commission for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing (MCDHH). Additionally, these agencies provide a representative to serve on the MA Special Education Advisory Council and the MA Special Education Advisory Panel. The Department has established regular meetings with each of these agencies to strengthen collaborations and to monitor joint initiatives.

In its efforts to roll out the new IEP, MA DESE frequently engaged with stakeholders across the Commonwealth in a variety of roles to solicit feedback on the draft form that was released in the Spring of 2022. Stakeholder groups whose feedback was sought included various school groups, parent/family/advocacy organizations, and other State agencies.

As needed, MA DESE convenes stakeholder working groups throughout the year to provide focused input on specific projects and policy priorities. Among these focus groups were the Early Childhood Interagency Coordinating Council (which includes community members and state agency employees), a Statewide Systemic Improvement Plan (SSIP) leadership team and working group, a family engagement workgroup, an advisory group for the Dropout Prevention and Re-engagement Network, and secondary transition stakeholder groups. MA DESE also consults with educators, parents, advocates, and others on a regular basis to inform policy and practice.

MA DESE engages with stakeholders on the direction of Indicator 17, the State’s Systemic Improvement Plan (SSIP), at the state, district, classroom, and community levels. Stakeholders are provided with information about activities and goals, training events and embedded supports statewide, and the availability of resources to support and expand implementation. Those at the district and school levels participate in ongoing decision-making about the direction of the SSIP by providing feedback about the quality of events and supports, observed benefits for their own stakeholders, and the greatest needs to be able to move forward with implementation. Additional information is provided in the Indicator 17 narrative.

**FFY 2022 SPP/APR Data**

**Has the state established a minimum n/cell-size requirement? (yes/no)**

YES

**If yes, the State may only include, in both the numerator and the denominator, LEAs that met the State-established n/cell size. Report the number of LEAs excluded from the calculation as a result of the requirement.**

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| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Number of LEAs that have a significant discrepancy** | **Number of LEAs that met the State's minimum n/cell-size** | **FFY 2021 Data** | **FFY 2022 Target** | **FFY 2022 Data** | **Status** | **Slippage** |
| 1 | 96 | 0.27% | 0.00% | 1.04% | N/A | N/A |

**Choose one of the following comparison methodologies to determine whether significant discrepancies are occurring (34 CFR §300.170(a))**

Compare the rates of suspensions and expulsions of greater than 10 days in a school year for children with IEPs among LEAs in the State

**State’s definition of “significant discrepancy” and methodology**

MA DESE defines “significant discrepancy” and its methodology as: the number of districts that, who over two consecutive years, meet the threshold of five times the state’s rate of suspension and expulsion for more than 10 days of students with IEPs divided by the number of districts that met the minimum “n” and cell size multiplied by 100. The state has set a minimum n size of 30 students with disabilities enrolled in a district and a cell size of at least 3 students who have been suspended or expelled for greater than 10 days. MA DESE believes that these criteria and its methodology are reasonable due to the work undertaken revising the minimum n and cell sizes and threshold (see below for further explanation regarding the analysis taken to establish the threshold) in FFY2021 with input from state and local leaders and stakeholders across the Commonwealth.

The changes to the n and cell sizes were enacted in order to alleviate concerns from schools, districts, and stakeholder discussions that some districts were being unfairly identified for Indicator 4A on the basis of a single student being disciplined. Even before stakeholder input, MA DESE noticed a set of districts each year was identified based on a single student with a disability in each school year being suspended/expelled for greater than 10 days. MA DESE talked with special educators and special education school leaders in the LEAs that shared these concerns. These stakeholders stated that they were concerned with issues of inequity in their discipline data, being based on a single student per year often resulted in them having to participate in the PPP submission process and, due to limited time and bandwidth, this took away from other important equity work. After talking to these stakeholders, MA DESE decided that it wanted to make sure Indicator 4 served its purpose of identifying LEAs that have issues with inequities in the discipline while also balancing the concerns shared by LEAs (e.g. resources in LEAs were being used to complete PPP submissions instead of supporting students). Multiple thresholds were considered (2x, 3x, 5x, and 10x) the state rate and discussions took place between MA DESE, Technical Assistance providers, and stakeholders and the 5x (five times) the state rate was established, as it did not place undue burden on LEAs for having a single student being suspended or expelled, similar to the establishment of the minimum n and cell sizes.

Even with this work completed with internal groups and external stakeholders, MA DESE is continuing to review the criteria for significant discrepancy and to determine if any other changes should occur to the criteria for identification (specifically regarding the threshold) for Indicator 4A, so that we may be looking at as many LEAs as possible each year, and identify any potential discrepancies.

Districts who meet the minimum n and cell size criteria and have a discipline rate of five times the state rate for two consecutive years are found to have a significant discrepancy. Because of the data lag required for indicator 4 reporting, data is delayed and for FFY2022 and the data comes from SY 2020-2021 and SY 2021-2022. During school year 2020-2021 the overall state rate for suspension or expulsion for greater than 10 days for all students with IEPs was 0.00417%, and districts that suspended students with disabilities at five times this rate, 0.0208% were found to have a discrepancy in that year. For school year 20201-2022, the overall state rate for suspension or expulsion for greater than 10 days for all students with IEPs was 0.00633%, and districts that suspended students with disabilities at five times this rate, 0.03166% were found to have a discrepancy in that year.

For FFY2022 there was one school district (1.04% of LEAs that met the minimum n and cell size) that was identified as having a significant discrepancy. Discipline data are reported by the LEAs to MA DESE using the School Safety and Discipline Report (SSDR). The SSDR includes all incidents involving bullying, drug, violent, or crime-related offenses on school property and any other offenses that result in a disciplinary action that removes the student from the regular educational environment.

**Provide additional information about this indicator (optional)**

MA DESE believes that the reason for the change in data is due to the fact that both the minimum n and cell size established in FFY2021 were applied to this years reporting and analysis. In FFY2021, the minimum n size was applied to all LEAs, resulting in 375 LEAs being analyzed for significant discrepancies in disciplinary rates for students with disabilities. Applying the minimum cell size (established and discussed with Stakeholders) would have resulted in very few LEAs meeting both criteria due to the lag nature of this data and the COVID-19 impact affecting suspension and expulsion rates. Because of the application of both the minimum n and cell size to FFY2022 reporting, MA DESE is resetting the baseline to FFY2022 and intends to keep targets the same at 0% through FFYF2025 as we are committed to ensuring that there are no LEAs with a significant discrepancy in the suspension and expulsion rates of students with disabilities.

In FFY2022 the minimum n and cell size was applied and resulted in 96 LEAs being included in the analysis. MA DESE believes that the data reported is valid and reliable, and the data only changed due to the application of both the minimum n and cell size this year. For more information about the analysis, significant discrepancy, and other initiatives and reviews that MA DESE partakes in, please see the other sections in this narrative.

While 96 (24% of total LEAs in Massachusetts) LEAs were included in the Indicator 4A analysis and reporting, there were 178 LEAs (44.6% of total LEAs) that had zero, ‘0’, students with disabilities being suspended or expelled for greater than 10 days in SY2021-2022. Additionally, MA DESE conducts an additional review of an LEAs discipline rate and data for as part of another statewide initiative called Rethinking Discipline. The Rethinking Discipline initiative looks at discrepancies in discipline rates within LEAs and any identified LEAs are required to participate in a two-year cohort focused on looking at discipline policies and procedures, and LEAs are required to develop an Action Plan to address the root cause of any identified discrepancies.

**Review of Policies, Procedures, and Practices (completed in FFY 2022 using 2021-2022 data)**

**Provide a description of the review of policies, procedures, and practices relating to the development and implementation of IEPs, the use of positive behavioral interventions and supports, and procedural safeguards.**

MA DESE uses the same methodology for reviewing policies, practices, and procedures (PPPs) for LEAs identified as significant discrepancies in Indicators 4A and 4B.

Assessing the appropriateness of the PPPs regarding the development and implementation of IEPs, the use of positive behavioral and instructional interventions and supports, and procedural safeguards has been a coordinated and collaborative process among several offices at MA DESE. MA DESE verifies compliance of LEAs' PPPs through its monitoring review process, including special education monitoring criteria that address these focus areas. MA DESE also assesses corrective action reports and progress reports completed by LEAs in all other areas of identified noncompliance to assess whether the non-compliance contributed to the discrepancy in indicators 4A and 4B. Any deficiencies in the PPPs must be corrected by the LEA within one year from the date of notification and the LEA must submit evidence of the corrections to MA DESE for verification.

In this focused process. MA DESE verified that one LEA identified as having significant discrepancy through data analysis compliant with the IDEA but zero instances of noncompliance in relation to policies, practices, and procedures. Nonetheless, MA DESE will support their participation in Professional Learning (targeted assistance conversations with staff from the MA DESE Offices of Student and Family Support, Special Education Planning and Policy, and Charter Schools and School Redesign). This engagement includes a discussion of district-specific data, as well as information about successful strategies that LEAs have implemented and challenges they are facing related to student discipline practice to provide for reflection on policies, practices, and procedures in order to support students with IEPs and reduce the use of disciplinary removal.

The State DID NOT identify noncompliance with Part B requirements as a result of the review required by 34 CFR §300.170(b)

**Correction of Findings of Noncompliance Identified in FFY 2021**

| **Findings of Noncompliance Identified** | **Findings of Noncompliance Verified as Corrected Within One Year** | **Findings of Noncompliance Subsequently Corrected** | **Findings Not Yet Verified as Corrected** |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |

**Correction of Findings of Noncompliance Identified Prior to FFY 2021**

| **Year Findings of Noncompliance Were Identified** | **Findings of Noncompliance Not Yet Verified as Corrected as of FFY 2021 APR** | **Findings of Noncompliance Verified as Corrected** | **Findings Not Yet Verified as Corrected** |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
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## 4A - Prior FFY Required Actions

In the FFY 2022 SPP/APR, the State must explain how its methodology is reasonably designed to determine if significant discrepancies are occurring in the rate of suspensions and expulsions of greater than 10 days in a school year for children with IEPs, including how the State’s threshold for measuring significant discrepancy in the rate of long-term suspensions and expulsions is reasonably designed.

**Response to actions required in FFY 2021 SPP/APR**

See above sections for an explanation on the reasonableness of MA DESE’s methodology, including the minimum n and cell sizes and the threshold that is used. This work was done in conjunction with multiple stakeholder groups across the Commonwealth.

## 4A - OSEP Response

OSEP’s Required Actions in response to the State’s FFY 2021 SPP/APR required the State to explain, in its FFY 2022 SPP/APR, how its methodology is reasonably designed to determine if significant discrepancies are occurring in the rate of suspensions and expulsions of greater than 10 days in a school year for children with IEPs. OSEP appreciates the State reported it reviewed its methodology to determine if it is reasonably designed. However, OSEP notes that the State's revised methodology results in a threshold for measuring significant discrepancy in the rate of long-term suspension and expulsion rates of children with IEPs that falls above the median of thresholds used by all States.

## 4A - Required Actions

# Indicator 4B: Suspension/Expulsion

**Instructions and Measurement**

**Monitoring Priority:** FAPE in the LRE

**Compliance Indicator:** Rates of suspension and expulsion:

 A. Percent of local educational agencies (LEA) that have a significant discrepancy, as defined by the State, in the rate of suspensions and expulsions of greater than 10 days in a school year for children with IEPs; and

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

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

**Data Source**

State discipline data, including State’s analysis of State’s Discipline data collected under IDEA Section 618, where applicable. Discrepancy can be computed by either comparing the rates of suspensions and expulsions for children with IEPs to rates for nondisabled children within the LEA or by comparing the rates of suspensions and expulsions for children with IEPs among LEAs within the State.

**Measurement**

Percent = [(# of LEAs that meet the State-established n and/or cell size (if applicable) for one or more racial/ethnic groups that have: (a) a significant discrepancy, as defined by the State, by race or ethnicity, in the rates of suspensions and expulsions of more than 10 days during the school year of children with IEPs; and (b) policies, procedures or practices that contribute to the significant discrepancy, as defined by the State, and do not comply with requirements relating to the development and implementation of IEPs, the use of positive behavioral interventions and supports, and procedural safeguards) divided by the (# of LEAs in the State that meet the State-established n and/or cell size (if applicable) for one or more racial/ethnic groups)] times 100.

Include State’s definition of “significant discrepancy.”

**Instructions**

If the State has established a minimum n and/or cell size requirement, the State may only include, in both the numerator and the denominator, LEAs that met that State-established n and/or cell size. If the State used a minimum n and/or cell size requirement, report the number of LEAs totally excluded from the calculation as a result of this requirement.

Describe the results of the State’s examination of the data for the year before the reporting year (e.g., for the FFY 2022 SPP/APR, use data from 2021-2022), including data disaggregated by race and ethnicity to determine if significant discrepancies, as defined by the State, are occurring in the rates of long-term suspensions and expulsions (more than 10 days during the school year) of children with IEPs, as required at 20 U.S.C. 1412(a)(22). The State’s examination must include one of the following comparisons:

--The rates of suspensions and expulsions for children with IEPs among LEAs within the State; or

--The rates of suspensions and expulsions for children with IEPs to the rates of suspensions and expulsions for nondisabled children within the LEAs

In the description, specify which method the State used to determine possible discrepancies and explain what constitutes those discrepancies.

Because the measurement table requires that the data examined for this indicator are lag year data, States should examine the section 618 data that was submitted by LEAs that were in operation during the school year before the reporting year. For example, if a State has 100 LEAs operating in the 2021-2022 school year, those 100 LEAs would have reported section 618 data in 2021-2022 on the number of children suspended/expelled. If the State then opens 15 new LEAs in 2022-2023, suspension/expulsion data from those 15 new LEAs would not be in the 2021-2022 section 618 data set, and therefore, those 15 new LEAs should not be included in the denominator of the calculation. States must use the number of LEAs from the year before the reporting year in its calculation for this indicator. For the FFY 2022 SPP/APR submission, States must use the number of LEAs reported in 2021-2022 (which can be found in the FFY 2021 SPP/APR introduction).

Indicator 4B: Provide the following: (a) the number of LEAs that met the State-established n and/or cell size (if applicable) for one or more racial/ethnic groups that have a significant discrepancy, as defined by the State, by race or ethnicity, in the rates of long-term suspensions and expulsions (more than 10 days during the school year) for children with IEPs; and (b) the number of those LEAs in which policies, procedures or practices contribute to the significant discrepancy, as defined by the State, and do not comply with requirements relating to the development and implementation of IEPs, the use of positive behavioral interventions and supports, and procedural safeguards.

Provide detailed information about the timely correction of child-specific and regulatory/systemic noncompliance as noted in OSEP’s response for the previous SPP/APR. If discrepancies occurred and the LEA with discrepancies had policies, procedures or practices that contributed to the significant discrepancy, as defined by the State, and that do not comply with requirements relating to the development and implementation of IEPs, the use of positive behavioral interventions and supports, and procedural safeguards, describe how the State ensured that such policies, procedures, and practices were revised to comply with applicable requirements consistent with OSEP QA 23-01, dated July 24, 2023.

If the State did not ensure timely correction of the previous noncompliance, provide information on the extent to which noncompliance was subsequently corrected (more than one year after identification). In addition, provide information regarding the nature of any continuing noncompliance, improvement activities completed (e.g., review of policies and procedures, technical assistance, training) and any enforcement actions that were taken.

If the State reported less than 100% compliance for the previous reporting period (e.g., for the FFY 2022 SPP/APR, the data for FFY 2021), and the State did not identify any findings of noncompliance, provide an explanation of why the State did not identify any findings of noncompliance.

Targets must be 0% for 4B.

## 4B - Indicator Data

**Not Applicable**

**Select yes if this indicator is not applicable.**

NO

**Historical Data**

| **Baseline Year** | **Baseline Data** |
| --- | --- |
| 2022 | 0.00% |

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **FFY** | **2017** | **2018** | **2019** | **2020** | **2021** |
| Target | 0% | 0% | 0% | 0% | 0% |
| Data | 0.51% | 0.00% | 0.00% | 0.00% | 0.00% |

**Targets**

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **FFY** | **2022** | **2023** | **2024** | **2025** |
| Target | 0% | 0% | 0% | 0% |

**FFY 2022 SPP/APR Data**

**Has the state established a minimum n/cell-size requirement? (yes/no)**

YES

**If yes, the State may only include, in both the numerator and the denominator, LEAs that met the State-established n/cell size. Report the number of LEAs excluded from the calculation as a result of the requirement.**

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|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Number of LEAs that have a significant discrepancy, by race or ethnicity** | **Number of those LEAs that have policies, procedure or practices that contribute to the significant discrepancy and do not comply with requirements** | **Number of LEAs that met the State's minimum n/cell-size** | **FFY 2021 Data** | **FFY 2022 Target** | **FFY 2022 Data** | **Status** | **Slippage** |
| 0 | 0 | 74 | 0.00% | 0% | 0.00% | N/A | N/A |

**Choose one of the following comparison methodologies to determine whether significant discrepancies are occurring (34 CFR §300.170(a))**

Compare the rates of suspensions and expulsions of greater than 10 days in a school year for children with IEPs among LEAs in the State

**Were all races and ethnicities included in the review?**

YES

**State’s definition of “significant discrepancy” and methodology**

MA DESE’s definition of significant discrepancy in the rate of suspensions and expulsions (for greater than 10 days in a school year) of students with IEPs who are members of a specific racial/ethnic group is a suspension/ expulsion rate of five times the state rate for all students with IEPs for three consecutive years. During FFY2022 the state rate of all students with IEPs statewide who were suspended or expelled for greater than 10 days is 0.00063; five times the state rate is 0.00316 and were found to have a discrepancy in that year.

Therefore, LEAs met the State's definition of significant discrepancy if they:
• met the minimum “n” size of 10 students with IEPs in a particular racial/ethnic group;
• met the minimum “cell” size of 3 students with disabilities in a particular racial/ethnic group being suspended/expelled for more than 10 days
• suspended or expelled students, who are members of a particular racial/ethnic group, whose suspension/expulsion rates are more than five times the state rate (state rate is .00063, 5x = .00316) of students with IEPs for greater than 10 days over the course of the 2021-2022 school year; and
• met the required criteria for the prior two school years.

Discipline data are reported by LEAs to MA DESE using the School Safety and Discipline Report (SSDR). The SSDR includes all incidents involving bullying, drug, violent, or crime-related offenses on school property and any other offenses that result in a disciplinary action removing the student from the regular educational environment.

MA DESE believes that these criteria and its methodology is reasonable due to the work undertaken revising the minimum n and cell sizes in FFY2021 with input from state and local leaders and stakeholders across the Commonwealth. The changes to the n and cell sizes were enacted in order to alleviate concerns from schools, districts, and stakeholders that some districts were being unfairly identified for Indicator 4A on the basis of a single student being disciplined. Even before stakeholder input, MA DESE noticed a set of districts each year was identified based on a single student with a disability in each school year being suspended/expelled for greater than 10 days. MA DESE talked with special educators and special education school leaders in the LEAs that shared these concerns. These stakeholders stated that they were concerned with issues of inequity in their discipline data, being based on a single student per year often resulted in them having to participate in the PPP submission process and, due to limited time and bandwidth, this took away from other important equity work. After talking to these stakeholders, MA DESE decided that it wanted to make sure Indicator 4 served its purpose of identifying LEAs that have issues with inequities in the discipline while also balancing the concerns shared by LEAs (e.g. resources in LEAs were being used to complete PPP submissions instead of supporting students). Multiple thresholds were considered (2x, 3x, 5x, and 10x) the state rate and discussions took place between MA DESE, Technical Assistance providers, and stakeholders and the 5x (five times) the state rate was established, as it did not place undue burden on LEAs for having a single student being suspended or expelled, similar to the establishment of the minimum n size.

Even with this work completed with internal groups and external stakeholders, MA DESE is continuing to review the criteria for significant discrepancy and to determine if any other changes should occur to the criteria for identification (specifically regarding the threshold) for Indicator 4A, so that we may be looking at as many LEAs as possible each year, and identify any potential discrepancies.

**Provide additional information about this indicator (optional)**

In the narrative for the FFY2021 SPP/APR MA DESE stated that the minimum n and cell size were applied to the data that was analyzed. However, during initial analysis of the data, MA DESE realized that applying the minimum cell size would have resulted in very few LEAs meeting the criteria and no identification or monitoring would have occurred. For FFY2022 the lower number of LEAs is attributed to the correct application of the minimum n and cell size and these LEAs were included in the analysis for Indicator 4B. Because of the application of both the minimum n and cell size for FFY2022 reporting, MA DESE is resetting the baseline to FFY2022’s data.

There were 74 (18.5% of total LEAs in Massachusetts) LEAs were included in the Indicator 4B analysis and reporting, there were 204 LEAs (51.1% of total LEAs) that had zero, ‘0’, students with disabilities in any racial or ethnic group being suspended or expelled for greater than 10 days in SY2021-2022 and would not have been included in this analysis. Additionally, MA DESE conducts an additional review of an LEAs discipline rate and data for as part of another statewide initiative called Rethinking Discipline. The Rethinking Discipline initiative looks at discrepancies in discipline rates within LEAs and any identified LEAs are required to participate in a two-year cohort focused on looking at discipline policies and procedures, and LEAs are required to develop an Action Plan to address the root cause of any identified discrepancies.

**Review of Policies, Procedures, and Practices (completed in FFY 2022 using 2021-2022 data)**

**Provide a description of the review of policies, procedures, and practices relating to the development and implementation of IEPs, the use of positive behavioral interventions and supports, and procedural safeguards.**

MA DESE uses the same methodology for reviewing policies, practices, and procedures (PPPs) for LEAs identified as significant discrepancies in Indicators 4A and 4B.

Assessing the appropriateness of the PPPs regarding the development and implementation of IEPs, the use of positive behavioral and instructional interventions and supports, and procedural safeguards has been a coordinated and collaborative process among several offices at MA DESE. MA DESE verifies compliance of LEAs' PPPs through its monitoring review process, including special education monitoring criteria that address these focus areas. MA DESE also assesses corrective action reports and progress reports completed by LEAs in all other areas of identified noncompliance to assesses whether the non-compliance contributed to the discrepancy in indicators 4A and 4B. Any deficiencies in the PPPs must be corrected by the LEA within one year from the date of notification, and the LEA must submit evidence of the corrections to MA DESE for verification.

In this focused process. MA DESE verified that zero LEAs were identified (for 4B) as having significant discrepancies through data analysis compliant with the IDEA. If any had been identified, MA DESE would have supported their participation in Professional Learning (targeted assistance with staff from the MA DESE Offices of Student and Family Support, Special Education Planning and Policy, and Charter Schools and School Redesign) and other professional development offered by MA DESE for districts with concerns of possible inequities for students with disabilities. This engagement includes a discussion of district-specific data, as well as information about successful strategies that LEAs have implemented and challenges districts, are facing related to student discipline practice and to provide for reflection on policies, practices, and procedures in order to support students on IEPS and reduce the use of disciplinary removal.

The State DID NOT identify noncompliance with Part B requirements as a result of the review required by 34 CFR §300.170(b)

**Correction of Findings of Noncompliance Identified in FFY 2021**

| **Findings of Noncompliance Identified** | **Findings of Noncompliance Verified as Corrected Within One Year** | **Findings of Noncompliance Subsequently Corrected** | **Findings Not Yet Verified as Corrected** |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |

**Correction of Findings of Noncompliance Identified Prior to FFY 2021**

| **Year Findings of Noncompliance Were Identified** | **Findings of Noncompliance Not Yet Verified as Corrected as of FFY 2021 APR** | **Findings of Noncompliance Verified as Corrected** | **Findings Not Yet Verified as Corrected** |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
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## 4B - Prior FFY Required Actions

In the FFY 2022 SPP/APR, the State must explain how its methodology is reasonably designed to determine if significant discrepancies, by race or ethnicity, are occurring in the rate of suspensions and expulsions of greater than 10 days in a school year for children with IEPs, including how the State’s threshold for measuring significant discrepancy, by race or ethnicity, in the rate of long-term suspensions and expulsions is reasonably designed.

**Response to actions required in FFY 2021 SPP/APR**

See above sections for an explanation on the reasonableness of MA DESE’s methodology, including the minimum n and cell sizes and the threshold that is used. This work was done in conjunction with multiple stakeholder groups across the Commonwealth.

## 4B - OSEP Response

OSEP’s Required Actions in response to the State’s FFY 2021 SPP/APR required the State to explain, in its FFY 2022 SPP/APR, how its methodology is reasonably designed to determine if significant discrepancies, by race or ethnicity, are occurring in the rate of suspensions and expulsions of greater than 10 days in a school year for children with IEPs. OSEP appreciates the State reported it reviewed its methodology to determine if it is reasonably designed. However, OSEP notes that the State's revised methodology results in a threshold for measuring significant discrepancy in the rate of long-term suspension and expulsion rates of children with IEPs that falls above the median of thresholds used by all States.

## 4B- Required Actions

# Indicator 5: Education Environments (children 5 (Kindergarten) - 21)

**Instructions and Measurement**

**Monitoring Priority:** FAPE in the LRE

**Results indicator:** Percent of children with IEPs aged 5 who are enrolled in kindergarten and aged 6 through 21 served:

A. Inside the regular class 80% or more of the day;

B. Inside the regular class less than 40% of the day; and

C. In separate schools, residential facilities, or homebound/hospital placements.

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

**Data Source**

Same data as used for reporting to the Department under section 618 of the IDEA, using the definitions in ED*Facts* file specification FS002.

**Measurement**

 A. Percent = [(# of children with IEPs aged 5 who are enrolled in kindergarten and aged 6 through 21 served inside the regular class 80% or more of the day) divided by the (total # of students aged 5 who are enrolled in kindergarten and aged 6 through 21 with IEPs)] times 100.

 B. Percent = [(# of children with IEPs aged 5 who are enrolled in kindergarten and aged 6 through 21 served inside the regular class less than 40% of the day) divided by the (total # of students aged 5 who are enrolled in kindergarten and aged 6 through 21 with IEPs)] times 100.

 C. Percent = [(# of children with IEPs aged 5 who are enrolled in kindergarten and aged 6 through 21 served in separate schools, residential facilities, or homebound/hospital placements) divided by the (total # of students aged 5 who are enrolled in kindergarten and aged 6 through 21 with IEPs)]times 100.

**Instructions**

*Sampling from the State’s 618 data is not allowed.*

States must report five-year-old children with disabilities who are enrolled in kindergarten in this indicator. Five-year-old children with disabilities who are enrolled in preschool programs are included in Indicator 6.

Describe the results of the calculations and compare the results to the target.

If the data reported in this indicator are not the same as the State’s data reported under section 618 of the IDEA, explain.

## 5 - Indicator Data

**Historical Data**

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Part** | **Baseline**  | **FFY** | **2017** | **2018** | **2019** | **2020** | **2021** |
| A | 2020 | Target >= | 61.50% | 61.50% | 61.50% | 65.49% | 65.49% |
| A | 65.49% | Data | 63.83% | 65.02% | 65.55% | 65.49% | 66.16% |
| B | 2020 | Target <= | 14.40% | 14.30% | 14.30% | 13.32% | 13.32% |
| B | 13.32% | Data | 13.40% | 13.22% | 13.23% | 13.32% | 13.41% |
| C | 2020 | Target <= | 5.40% | 5.40% | 5.40% | 6.44% | 6.44% |
| C | 6.44% | Data | 6.86% | 6.57% | 6.44% | 6.44% | 6.08% |

**Targets**

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **FFY** | **2022** | **2023** | **2024** | **2025** |
| Target A >= | 65.49% | 65.49% | 67.49% | 67.99% |
| Target B <= | 13.32% | 13.32% | 12.92% | 12.82% |
| Target C <= | 6.44% | 6.44% | 6.04% | 5.94% |

**Targets: Description of Stakeholder Input**

MA DESE is committed to a continuous system of engaging stakeholders to develop targets and set priorities for improvement in each of the areas reported in the SPP/APR and the SSIP.

The Special Education Advisory Panel (SEAP) and Special Education State Advisory Council (SAC) are comprised of parents, individuals with disabilities, educators, administrators, and representatives from state agencies, higher education, and other stakeholder groups. The members meet at least four times each school year to review data, discuss policy priorities, and identify unmet needs in the area of special education consistent with state law and IDEA Part B. At each meeting, both groups address and discuss various aspects of the SPP/APR and the State’s general supervision systems, as well as relevant policy matters. In the 2022-2023 school year, in addition to updates on performance and compliance results included in the SPP/APR, MA DESE discussed with the SEAP/SAC the definition of students with the most significant cognitive disabilities, a breakdown of LEA Determinations, revisions to the Educator Evaluation Rubric, revised Chapter 9 Dyslexia Guidelines, the Special Education Surrogate Parent Program, updates to the Tiered Focus Monitoring Parent Survey (Indicator 8), updates to the new IEP form, and trends identified by the Public School Monitoring (PSM) and Problem Resolution Systems (PRS) Offices. MA DESE is committed to keeping members of the SEAP and SAC up to date on processes and supports provided to LEAs in order to improve outcomes for students with disabilities. It will continue discussions around current data, longitudinal targets, historical rates of performance and compliance and the trajectory for improvement for each of the Indicators, and the effectiveness of focused improvement activities within the context of the state’s Results Driven Accountability framework.

The SAC is required by Massachusetts General Law (M.G.L. c. 15, § 1G https://malegislature.gov/Laws/GeneralLaws/PartI/TitleII/Chapter15/Section1G). Its purpose is to advise the Board of Elementary and Secondary Education and to make other programmatic recommendations it deems necessary to fulfill the goals established by the board.

The SEAP is required by IDEA (34 CFR §§ 300.167-300.169 https://www.ecfr.gov/current/title-34/subtitle-B/chapter-III/part-300#sg34.2.300\_1166.sg15). Its purpose is to advise the State Education Authority (SEA) of unmet needs within the State regarding the education of children with disabilities. The Panel comments publicly on proposed rules or regulations. Its advisory function to the SEA involves developing evaluations and reporting 618 data (IDEA data) to USED and creating corrective action plans to address findings in Federal monitoring reports under IDEA Part B. The Panel also advises the SEA in developing and implementing policies relating to the coordination of services for children with disabilities.

MA DESE has continued to emphasize its priority on expanding the agency’s capacity to solicit broad and diverse stakeholder input to set SPP/APR targets, analyze data, develop improvement strategies, and evaluate progress. In FFY 2022 MA DESE sought to continue developing stakeholder Indicator knowledge, a project that began in FFY 2020. MA DESE has created and continues to update a new SPP/APR website. Each of the 17 Indicators has its own dedicated web page or Quick Reference Guide (QRG), as well as PowerPoints and other relevant information or resources. All materials on the SPP/APR website are available in six languages that correspond to the most common languages spoken in Massachusetts: English, Spanish, Portuguese, Chinese, Vietnamese, and Haitian Creole. Narrated versions of each PowerPoint are also available in English on the YouTube page of MA DESE’s partner, the Federation for Children with Special Needs (the Massachusetts Parent Training and Information Center/PTIC). In FFY 2022 MA DESE hosted eight virtual information and feedback sessions to broaden stakeholder knowledge. Each meeting had a specific improvement strategy focus and also provided updates on data analysis and evaluation of progress for each Indicator. The large-group presentation on each topic was simultaneously translated from English into the other five languages.

MA DESE consults on a monthly or at least quarterly basis with the Massachusetts Administrators of Special Education (http://www.asepage.org/), Federation for Children with Special Needs (https://fcsn.org/), Massachusetts Advocates for Children (https://www.massadvocates.org/), Massachusetts Association of Approved Special Education Schools (https://maaps.org/), and Massachusetts Urban Special Education Leadership Collaborative (massurban.org)). In addition, the Massachusetts State Special Education Director at MA DESE gives monthly virtual presentations to statewide special education leaders on a wide array of special education compliance and performance topics. During all of these meetings, MA DESE solicits and receives significant feedback that informs the development of special education policy and guidance.

MA DESE works closely with other state agencies to provide supports to children with disabilities. The Department has developed a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) or has entered into an Interagency Service Agreement (ISA) with the Massachusetts Commission for the Blind (MCB), Massachusetts Rehabilitation Commission (MRC), Department of Public Health (DPH), Department of Early Education and Care (EEC), and Massachusetts Commission for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing (MCDHH). Additionally, these agencies provide a representative to serve on the MA Special Education Advisory Council and the MA Special Education Advisory Panel. The Department has established regular meetings with each of these agencies to strengthen collaborations and to monitor joint initiatives.

In its efforts to roll out the new IEP, MA DESE frequently engaged with stakeholders across the Commonwealth in a variety of roles to solicit feedback on the draft form that was released in the Spring of 2022. Stakeholder groups whose feedback was sought included various school groups, parent/family/advocacy organizations, and other State agencies.

As needed, MA DESE convenes stakeholder working groups throughout the year to provide focused input on specific projects and policy priorities. Among these focus groups were the Early Childhood Interagency Coordinating Council (which includes community members and state agency employees), a Statewide Systemic Improvement Plan (SSIP) leadership team and working group, a family engagement workgroup, an advisory group for the Dropout Prevention and Re-engagement Network, and secondary transition stakeholder groups. MA DESE also consults with educators, parents, advocates, and others on a regular basis to inform policy and practice.

MA DESE engages with stakeholders on the direction of Indicator 17, the State’s Systemic Improvement Plan (SSIP), at the state, district, classroom, and community levels. Stakeholders are provided with information about activities and goals, training events and embedded supports statewide, and the availability of resources to support and expand implementation. Those at the district and school levels participate in ongoing decision-making about the direction of the SSIP by providing feedback about the quality of events and supports, observed benefits for their own stakeholders, and the greatest needs to be able to move forward with implementation. Additional information is provided in the Indicator 17 narrative.

**Prepopulated Data**

| **Source** | **Date** | **Description** | **Data** |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| SY 2022-23 Child Count/Educational Environment Data Groups (EDFacts file spec FS002; Data group 74) | 08/30/2023 | Total number of children with IEPs aged 5 (kindergarten) through 21 | 169,921 |
| SY 2022-23 Child Count/Educational Environment Data Groups (EDFacts file spec FS002; Data group 74) | 08/30/2023 | A. Number of children with IEPs aged 5 (kindergarten) through 21 inside the regular class 80% or more of the day | 113,033 |
| SY 2022-23 Child Count/Educational Environment Data Groups (EDFacts file spec FS002; Data group 74) | 08/30/2023 | B. Number of children with IEPs aged 5 (kindergarten) through 21 inside the regular class less than 40% of the day | 22,110 |
| SY 2022-23 Child Count/Educational Environment Data Groups (EDFacts file spec FS002; Data group 74) | 08/30/2023 | c1. Number of children with IEPs aged 5 (kindergarten) through 21 in separate schools | 9,553 |
| SY 2022-23 Child Count/Educational Environment Data Groups (EDFacts file spec FS002; Data group 74) | 08/30/2023 | c2. Number of children with IEPs aged 5 (kindergarten) through 21 in residential facilities | 807 |
| SY 2022-23 Child Count/Educational Environment Data Groups (EDFacts file spec FS002; Data group 74) | 08/30/2023 | c3. Number of children with IEPs aged 5 (kindergarten) through 21 in homebound/hospital placements | 680 |

**Select yes if the data reported in this indicator are not the same as the State’s data reported under section 618 of the IDEA.**

NO

**FFY 2022 SPP/APR Data**

| **Education Environments** | **Number of children with IEPs aged 5 (kindergarten) through 21 served** | **Total number of children with IEPs aged 5 (kindergarten) through 21** | **FFY 2021 Data** | **FFY 2022 Target** | **FFY 2022 Data** | **Status** | **Slippage** |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| A. Number of children with IEPs aged 5 (kindergarten) through 21 inside the regular class 80% or more of the day | 113,033 | 169,921 | 66.16% | 65.49% | 66.52% | Met target | No Slippage |
| B. Number of children with IEPs aged 5 (kindergarten) through 21 inside the regular class less than 40% of the day | 22,110 | 169,921 | 13.41% | 13.32% | 13.01% | Met target | No Slippage |
| C. Number of children with IEPs aged 5 (kindergarten) through 21 inside separate schools, residential facilities, or homebound/hospital placements [c1+c2+c3] | 11,040 | 169,921 | 6.08% | 6.44% | 6.50% | Did not meet target | Slippage |

| **Part** | **Reasons for slippage, if applicable** |
| --- | --- |
| **C** | For Indicator 5C, MA DESE is reporting a difference of +0.42 percentage points from the rate reported last year and a difference of +0.46 percentage points from the FFY 2022 target.MA DESE worked with LEAs to analyze local placement data; review local policies, procedures, and practices; and make system-level improvements to address underlying issues and expand and support inclusive opportunities for students with disabilities. MA DESE’s goal is to meet and exceed all the rigorous targets that were established with stakeholders for Indicator 5. The Department is also mindful of feedback from stakeholders, who represent students with the most significant needs and/or low-incidence disabilities, regarding the complexity of least restrictive environment (LRE); these stakeholders shared their concerns about the balance between IEP Teams’ responsibility to make individualized decisions and the possibility of incongruous pressure on LEAs to reach state-level targets. To better understand the extent of slippage, the state rate was compared to LEAs’ rates for separate schools, residential facilities, and homebound/hospital placement. LEAs with meaningful differences (i.e., plus/minus 3 percentage points) were identified for further data analysis. MA DESE also analyzed placement by student subgroup (e.g., race, disability type, first language, gender, income, age), type of town/city (e.g., urban, suburban, rural), type of school/district, and region of the state. MA DESE found patterns of over and under representation in out of district placements. For example, the data showed overrepresentation by some disability categories (i.e., autism, deaf-blind, emotional, hearing, intellectual, multiple disabilities, visual), all languages except English, and nonbinary gender. Additionally, some disability categories (i.e., development delay, orthopedic, other health impairment, specific learning disability, speech/language) are all underrepresented.  MA DESE believes there were a variety of reasons for changes in the data, including changes in programs, changes in the population being served, and/or the continuing impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic, which may include an increase in intensity of student needs. During one of the Stakeholder Engagement meetings focused on Educational Environments, MA DESE engaged in discussions with stakeholders and members of the discussion posited that a contributing factor to the state’s slippage may be an increase in parents deciding to engage in learning options such as homeschooling. |

**Provide additional information about this indicator (optional)**

In FFY 2022, a total of 136,771 (80.49%) of the students ages 5 (school age) through 21 served under IDEA, Part B, were educated in regular classrooms for at least 40% of the school day, with a significant majority served inside the regular class 80% or more of the day. MA DESE met and exceeded targets for Measurements A and B by +1.03 and -0.31 percentage points respectively.

Indicator 5 data are collected and validated through the Department’s Student Information Management System (SIMS); MA DESE Indicator 5 data are complete, accurate, and reliable. Impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic may have affected Indicator 5 performance, particularly Measurement C, as LEAs reported an increase in students’ academic, social, and emotional needs. Thus, MA DESE continues to anticipate shifts in future Indicator 5 performance data as IEP Teams address new and increased areas of disability-related needs. In FFY 2022, MA DESE continued to analyze Indicator 5 longitudinal performance to provide more clarity about the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on student placement needs.

## 5 - Prior FFY Required Actions

None

## 5 - OSEP Response

## 5 - Required Actions

# Indicator 6: Preschool Environments

**Instructions and Measurement**

**Monitoring Priority:** FAPE in the LRE

**Results indicator:** Percent of children with IEPs aged 3, 4, and aged 5 who are enrolled in a preschool program attending a:

A. Regular early childhood program and receiving the majority of special education and related services in the regular early childhood program; and

B. Separate special education class, separate school or residential facility.

 C. Receiving special education and related services in the home.

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

**Data Source**

Same data as used for reporting to the Department under section 618 of the IDEA, using the definitions in ED*Facts* file specification FS089.

**Measurement**

 A. Percent = [(# of children ages 3, 4, and 5 with IEPs attending a regular early childhood program and receiving the majority of special education and related services in the regular early childhood program) divided by the (total # of children ages 3, 4, and 5 with IEPs)] times 100.

 B. Percent = [(# of children ages 3, 4, and 5 with IEPs attending a separate special education class, separate school or residential facility) divided by the (total # of children ages 3, 4, and 5 with IEPs)] times 100.

 C. Percent = [(# of children ages 3, 4, and 5 with IEPs receiving special education and related services in the home) divided by the (total # of children ages 3, 4, and 5 with IEPs)] times 100.

**Instructions**

*Sampling from the State’s 618 data is not allowed.*

States must report five-year-old children with disabilities who are enrolled in preschool programs in this indicator. Five-year-old children with disabilities who are enrolled in kindergarten are included in Indicator 5.

States may choose to set one target that is inclusive of children ages 3, 4, and 5, or set individual targets for each age.

For Indicator 6C: States are not required to establish a baseline or targets if the number of children receiving special education and related services in the home is less than 10, regardless of whether the State chooses to set one target that is inclusive of children ages 3, 4, and 5, or set individual targets for each age. In a reporting period during which the number of children receiving special education and related services in the home reaches 10 or greater, States are required to develop baseline and targets and report on them in the corresponding SPP/APR.

For Indicator 6C: States may express their targets in a range (*e.g.*, 75-85%).

Describe the results of the calculations and compare the results to the target.

If the data reported in this indicator are not the same as the State’s data reported under IDEA section 618, explain.

## 6 - Indicator Data

**Not Applicable**

**Select yes if this indicator is not applicable.**

NO

**Historical Data (Inclusive) – 6A, 6B, 6C**

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Part** | **FFY** | **2017** | **2018** | **2019** | **2020** | **2021** |
| **A** | Target >= | 47.00% | 50.00% | 50.00% | 52.31% | 52.31% |
| **A** | Data | 54.41% | 54.76% | 54.78% | 52.31% | 50.45% |
| **B** | Target <= | 12.40% | 12.40% | 12.40% | 19.36% | 19.36% |
| **B** | Data | 16.80% | 16.19% | 17.03% | 19.36% | 19.95% |
| **C** | Target <= |  |  |  | 0.11%-0.13% | 0.11%-0.13% |
| **C** | Data |  |  |  | 0.13% | 0.13% |

**Targets: Description of Stakeholder Input**

MA DESE is committed to a continuous system of engaging stakeholders to develop targets and set priorities for improvement in each of the areas reported in the SPP/APR and the SSIP.

The Special Education Advisory Panel (SEAP) and Special Education State Advisory Council (SAC) are comprised of parents, individuals with disabilities, educators, administrators, and representatives from state agencies, higher education, and other stakeholder groups. The members meet at least four times each school year to review data, discuss policy priorities, and identify unmet needs in the area of special education consistent with state law and IDEA Part B. At each meeting, both groups address and discuss various aspects of the SPP/APR and the State’s general supervision systems, as well as relevant policy matters. In the 2022-2023 school year, in addition to updates on performance and compliance results included in the SPP/APR, MA DESE discussed with the SEAP/SAC the definition of students with the most significant cognitive disabilities, a breakdown of LEA Determinations, revisions to the Educator Evaluation Rubric, revised Chapter 9 Dyslexia Guidelines, the Special Education Surrogate Parent Program, updates to the Tiered Focus Monitoring Parent Survey (Indicator 8), updates to the new IEP form, and trends identified by the Public School Monitoring (PSM) and Problem Resolution Systems (PRS) Offices. MA DESE is committed to keeping members of the SEAP and SAC up to date on processes and supports provided to LEAs in order to improve outcomes for students with disabilities. It will continue discussions around current data, longitudinal targets, historical rates of performance and compliance and the trajectory for improvement for each of the Indicators, and the effectiveness of focused improvement activities within the context of the state’s Results Driven Accountability framework.

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In its efforts to roll out the new IEP, MA DESE frequently engaged with stakeholders across the Commonwealth in a variety of roles to solicit feedback on the draft form that was released in the Spring of 2022. Stakeholder groups whose feedback was sought included various school groups, parent/family/advocacy organizations, and other State agencies.

As needed, MA DESE convenes stakeholder working groups throughout the year to provide focused input on specific projects and policy priorities. Among these focus groups were the Early Childhood Interagency Coordinating Council (which includes community members and state agency employees), a Statewide Systemic Improvement Plan (SSIP) leadership team and working group, a family engagement workgroup, an advisory group for the Dropout Prevention and Re-engagement Network, and secondary transition stakeholder groups. MA DESE also consults with educators, parents, advocates, and others on a regular basis to inform policy and practice.

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**Targets**

**Please select if the State wants to set baseline and targets based on individual age ranges (i.e. separate baseline and targets for each age), or inclusive of all children ages 3, 4, and 5.**

Inclusive Targets

**Please select if the State wants to use target ranges for 6C.**

Target Range is used

Baselines for Inclusive Targets option (A, B, C)

| **Part** | **Baseline Year** | **Baseline Data** |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **A** | 2020 | 52.31% |
| **B** | 2020 | 19.36% |
| **C** | 2020 | 0.13% |

**Inclusive Targets – 6A, 6B**

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **FFY** | **2022** | **2023** | **2024** | **2025** |
| Target A >= | 52.31% | 52.31% | 53.36% | 54.41% |
| Target B <= | 19.36% | 19.36% | 18.02% | 16.68% |

**Inclusive Targets (with Target Ranges) – 6C**

| **FFY** | **2022 (low)** | **2022 (high)** | **2023 (low)** | **2023 (high)** | **2024 (low)** | **2024 (high)** | **2025 (low)** | **2025 (high)** |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Target C <= | 0.11% | 0.13% | 0.11% | 0.13% | 0.10% | 0.12% | 0.09% | 0.11% |

**Prepopulated Data**

**Data Source:**

SY 2022-23 Child Count/Educational Environment Data Groups (EDFacts file spec FS089; Data group 613)

**Date:**

08/30/2023

| **Description** | **3** | **4** | **5** | **3 through 5 - Total** |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Total number of children with IEPs | 4,773 | 6,549 | 862 | 12,184 |
| a1. Number of children attending a regular early childhood program and receiving the majority of special education and related services in the regular early childhood program | 2,364 | 3,310 | 444 | 6,118 |
| b1. Number of children attending separate special education class | 1,067 | 1,248 | 145 | 2,460 |
| b2. Number of children attending separate school | 39 | 57 | 15 | 111 |
| b3. Number of children attending residential facility | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| c1**.** Numberof children receiving special education and related services in the home | 6 | 7 | 0 | 13 |

**Select yes if the data reported in this indicator are not the same as the State’s data reported under section 618 of the IDEA.**

NO

**FFY 2022 SPP/APR Data - Aged 3 through 5**

| **Preschool Environments** | **Number of children with IEPs aged 3 through 5 served** | **Total number of children with IEPs aged 3 through 5** | **FFY 2021 Data** | **FFY 2022 Target** | **FFY 2022 Data** | **Status** | **Slippage** |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| A. A regular early childhood program and receiving the majority of special education and related services in the regular early childhood program | 6,118 | 12,184 | 50.45% | 52.31% | 50.21% | Did not meet target | No Slippage |
| B. Separate special education class, separate school or residential facility | 2,571 | 12,184 | 19.95% | 19.36% | 21.10% | Did not meet target | Slippage |

**FFY 2022 SPP/APR Data - Aged 3 through 5**

| **Preschool Environments** | **Number of children with IEPs aged 3 through 5 served** | **Total number of children with IEPs aged 3 through 5** | **FFY 2021 Data** | **FFY 2022 Target(low)** | **FFY 2022 Target(high)** | **FFY 2022 Data** | **Status** | **Slippage** |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| C. Home | 13 | 12,184 | 0.13% | 0.11% | 0.13% | 0.11% | Met target | No Slippage |

**Provide reasons for slippage for Group B aged 3 through 5, if applicable**

For Indicator 6B, MA DESE is reporting a difference of +1.15 percentage points from the rate reported last year and a difference of +1.74 percentage points from the FFY2022 target. MA DESE’s goal is to meet and exceed all the rigorous targets that were established with stakeholders, for Indicator 6. We are also mindful of feedback from our stakeholders, who represent students with the most significant needs and/or low incidence disabilities, regarding the complexity of least restrictive environment (LRE); these stakeholders shared their concerns about the balance between IEP Teams’ responsibility to make individualized decisions and the possibility of incongruous pressure on LEAs to reach state level targets.

To better understand the extent of slippage, the state rate was compared to LEAs’ rates for separate special education class, separate school or residential facility placement. LEAs with meaningful differences (i.e., plus/minus 3 percentage points) were identified for further data analysis. MA DESE also analyzed placement by student subgroup (e.g., race, disability type, first language, gender, income, age), type of town (e.g., urban, suburban, rural), type of school/district, and region of the state. MA DESE found patterns of over and under representation in separate placements. For example, the data showed overrepresentation in low income; some disability categories (i.e., autism, deaf-blind, hearing, intellectual, multiple disabilities, neurological, specific learning disability, visual); all race categories except multiracial and white; and in all languages except Chinese (not Cantonese or Mandarin), English, Gujarati, Spanish, and Tamil. Additionally, some disability categories (i.e., development delay, emotional, orthopedic, speech/language); non-low income; 35 out of 74+ languages, (e.g., Bahasa Indonesian, Shona); and the white race category are underrepresented.

MA DESE believes there were a variety of reasons for changes in the data including, changes in programs, changes in the population being served, and/or the continuing impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic - which may include an increase in intensity of student needs. Specifically, districts continued to report concerns about preschool students’ social-emotional and cognitive development (i.e., behavior challenges and language and learning delays) and students adjusting to classroom structure and norms. Additionally, parents continued to request separate special education placements given the smaller class size and higher teacher to student ratio such placements offer.

**Provide additional information about this indicator (optional)**

In FFY 2022, a total of 8,238 (67.61%) students ages 3, 4, and 5, and served under IDEA, Part B, were educated in general early childhood programs for at least part of the school day, with most of these students receiving the majority of their special education and related services in the inclusive environment. Additionally, MA DESE met the target for Measurement C.

Indicator 6 data are collected and validated through the Department’s Student Information Management System (SIMS); MA DESE Indicator 6 data are complete, accurate, and reliable. Impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic continued to affect Indicator 6 performance, particularly Measurement B, as LEAs reported an increase in students’ developmental, social, and emotional needs. Thus, MA DESE continues to anticipate shifts in future Indicator 6 performance data as IEP Teams address new and increased areas of disability-related needs. In FFY 2022, MA DESE continued to analyze Indicator 6 longitudinal performance to provide more clarity about the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on student placement needs. Additionally, MA DESE worked with LEAs to analyze local placement data; review local policies, procedures, and practices; and make system-level improvements to address underlying issues and expand and support inclusive opportunities for students with disabilities.

## 6 - Prior FFY Required Actions

None

## 6 - OSEP Response

## 6 - Required Actions

# Indicator 7: Preschool Outcomes

**Instructions and Measurement**

**Monitoring Priority:** FAPE in the LRE

**Results indicator:** Percent of preschool children aged 3 through 5 with IEPs who demonstrate improved:

A. Positive social-emotional skills (including social relationships);

B. Acquisition and use of knowledge and skills (including early language/ communication and early literacy); and

C. Use of appropriate behaviors to meet their needs.

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

**Data Source**

State selected data source.

**Measurement**

Outcomes:

A. Positive social-emotional skills (including social relationships);

B. Acquisition and use of knowledge and skills (including early language/communication and early literacy); and

C. Use of appropriate behaviors to meet their needs.

Progress categories for A, B and C:

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

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

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

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

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

**Summary Statements for Each of the Three Outcomes:**

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

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

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

**Measurement for Summary Statement 2**: Percent = [(# of preschool children reported in progress category (d) plus # of preschool children reported in progress category (e)) divided by (the total # of preschool children reported in progress categories (a) + (b) + (c) + (d) + (e))] times 100.

**Instructions**

Sampling of **children for assessment** is allowed. When sampling is used, submit a description of the sampling methodology outlining how the design will yield valid and reliable estimates. (See General Instructions on page 3 for additional instructions on sampling.)

In the measurement include, in the numerator and denominator, only children who received special education and related services for at least six months during the age span of three through five years.

Describe the results of the calculations and compare the results to the targets. States will use the progress categories for each of the three Outcomes to calculate and report the two Summary Statements. States have provided targets for the two Summary Statements for the three Outcomes (six numbers for targets for each FFY).

Report progress data and calculate Summary Statements to compare against the six targets. Provide the actual numbers and percentages for the five reporting categories for each of the three Outcomes.

In presenting results, provide the criteria for defining “comparable to same-aged peers.” If a State is using the Early Childhood Outcomes Center (ECO) Child Outcomes Summary (COS), then the criteria for defining “comparable to same-aged peers” has been defined as a child who has been assigned a score of 6 or 7 on the COS.

In addition, list the instruments and procedures used to gather data for this indicator, including if the State is using the ECO COS.

## 7 - Indicator Data

**Not Applicable**

**Select yes if this indicator is not applicable.**

NO

**Historical Data**

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Part** | **Baseline** | **FFY** | **2017** | **2018** | **2019** | **2020** | **2021** |
| A1 | 2022 | Target >= |  | 86.00% | 86.00% | 86.00% | 86.00% |
| A1 | 84.29% | Data | 85.61% | 85.17% | 82.44% | 80.09% | 85.75% |
| A2 | 2022 | Target >= |  | 50.00% | 50.00% | 50.00% | 50.00% |
| A2 | 40.12% | Data | 47.00% | 46.03% | 43.74% | 44.53% | 45.51% |
| B1 | 2022 | Target >= |  | 85.00% | 85.00% | 85.00% | 85.00% |
| B1 | 83.98% | Data | 84.90% | 83.56% | 84.20% | 82.19% | 84.63% |
| B2 | 2022 | Target >= |  | 49.00% | 49.00% | 49.00% | 49.00% |
| B2 | 43.36% | Data | 48.39% | 46.60% | 45.04% | 43.92% | 48.69% |
| C1 | 2022 | Target >= |  | 86.00% | 86.00% | 86.00% | 86.00% |
| C1 | 85.30% | Data | 85.51% | 86.17% | 84.43% | 83.47% | 84.92% |
| C2 | 2022 | Target >= |  | 63.00% | 63.00% | 63.00% | 63.00% |
| C2 | 50.88% | Data | 60.46% | 60.67% | 58.26% | 53.50% | 55.58% |

**Targets**

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **FFY** | **2022** | **2023** | **2024** | **2025** |
| Target A1 >= | 86.00% | 86.50% | 87.00% | 88.00% |
| Target A2 >= | 50.00% | 50.25% | 50.50% | 51.00% |
| Target B1 >= | 85.00% | 85.50% | 86.00% | 87.00% |
| Target B2 >= | 49.00% | 49.25% | 49.50% | 50.00% |
| Target C1 >= | 86.00% | 86.50% | 87.00% | 88.00% |
| Target C2 >= | 63.00% | 63.25% | 63.50% | 64.00% |

**Targets: Description of Stakeholder Input**

MA DESE is committed to a continuous system of engaging stakeholders to develop targets and set priorities for improvement in each of the areas reported in the SPP/APR and the SSIP.

The Special Education Advisory Panel (SEAP) and Special Education State Advisory Council (SAC) are comprised of parents, individuals with disabilities, educators, administrators, and representatives from state agencies, higher education, and other stakeholder groups. The members meet at least four times each school year to review data, discuss policy priorities, and identify unmet needs in the area of special education consistent with state law and IDEA Part B. At each meeting, both groups address and discuss various aspects of the SPP/APR and the State’s general supervision systems, as well as relevant policy matters. In the 2022-2023 school year, in addition to updates on performance and compliance results included in the SPP/APR, MA DESE discussed with the SEAP/SAC the definition of students with the most significant cognitive disabilities, a breakdown of LEA Determinations, revisions to the Educator Evaluation Rubric, revised Chapter 9 Dyslexia Guidelines, the Special Education Surrogate Parent Program, updates to the Tiered Focus Monitoring Parent Survey (Indicator 8), updates to the new IEP form, and trends identified by the Public School Monitoring (PSM) and Problem Resolution Systems (PRS) Offices. MA DESE is committed to keeping members of the SEAP and SAC up to date on processes and supports provided to LEAs in order to improve outcomes for students with disabilities. It will continue discussions around current data, longitudinal targets, historical rates of performance and compliance and the trajectory for improvement for each of the Indicators, and the effectiveness of focused improvement activities within the context of the state’s Results Driven Accountability framework.

The SAC is required by Massachusetts General Law (M.G.L. c. 15, § 1G https://malegislature.gov/Laws/GeneralLaws/PartI/TitleII/Chapter15/Section1G). Its purpose is to advise the Board of Elementary and Secondary Education and to make other programmatic recommendations it deems necessary to fulfill the goals established by the board.

The SEAP is required by IDEA (34 CFR §§ 300.167-300.169 https://www.ecfr.gov/current/title-34/subtitle-B/chapter-III/part-300#sg34.2.300\_1166.sg15). Its purpose is to advise the State Education Authority (SEA) of unmet needs within the State regarding the education of children with disabilities. The Panel comments publicly on proposed rules or regulations. Its advisory function to the SEA involves developing evaluations and reporting 618 data (IDEA data) to USED and creating corrective action plans to address findings in Federal monitoring reports under IDEA Part B. The Panel also advises the SEA in developing and implementing policies relating to the coordination of services for children with disabilities.

MA DESE has continued to emphasize its priority on expanding the agency’s capacity to solicit broad and diverse stakeholder input to set SPP/APR targets, analyze data, develop improvement strategies, and evaluate progress. In FFY 2022 MA DESE sought to continue developing stakeholder Indicator knowledge, a project that began in FFY 2020. MA DESE has created and continues to update a new SPP/APR website. Each of the 17 Indicators has its own dedicated web page or Quick Reference Guide (QRG), as well as PowerPoints and other relevant information or resources. All materials on the SPP/APR website are available in six languages that correspond to the most common languages spoken in Massachusetts: English, Spanish, Portuguese, Chinese, Vietnamese, and Haitian Creole. Narrated versions of each PowerPoint are also available in English on the YouTube page of MA DESE’s partner, the Federation for Children with Special Needs (the Massachusetts Parent Training and Information Center/PTIC). In FFY 2022 MA DESE hosted eight virtual information and feedback sessions to broaden stakeholder knowledge. Each meeting had a specific improvement strategy focus and also provided updates on data analysis and evaluation of progress for each Indicator. The large-group presentation on each topic was simultaneously translated from English into the other five languages.

MA DESE consults on a monthly or at least quarterly basis with the Massachusetts Administrators of Special Education (http://www.asepage.org/), Federation for Children with Special Needs (https://fcsn.org/), Massachusetts Advocates for Children (https://www.massadvocates.org/), Massachusetts Association of Approved Special Education Schools (https://maaps.org/), and Massachusetts Urban Special Education Leadership Collaborative (massurban.org)). In addition, the Massachusetts State Special Education Director at MA DESE gives monthly virtual presentations to statewide special education leaders on a wide array of special education compliance and performance topics. During all of these meetings, MA DESE solicits and receives significant feedback that informs the development of special education policy and guidance.

MA DESE works closely with other state agencies to provide supports to children with disabilities. The Department has developed a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) or has entered into an Interagency Service Agreement (ISA) with the Massachusetts Commission for the Blind (MCB), Massachusetts Rehabilitation Commission (MRC), Department of Public Health (DPH), Department of Early Education and Care (EEC), and Massachusetts Commission for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing (MCDHH). Additionally, these agencies provide a representative to serve on the MA Special Education Advisory Council and the MA Special Education Advisory Panel. The Department has established regular meetings with each of these agencies to strengthen collaborations and to monitor joint initiatives.

In its efforts to roll out the new IEP, MA DESE frequently engaged with stakeholders across the Commonwealth in a variety of roles to solicit feedback on the draft form that was released in the Spring of 2022. Stakeholder groups whose feedback was sought included various school groups, parent/family/advocacy organizations, and other State agencies.

As needed, MA DESE convenes stakeholder working groups throughout the year to provide focused input on specific projects and policy priorities. Among these focus groups were the Early Childhood Interagency Coordinating Council (which includes community members and state agency employees), a Statewide Systemic Improvement Plan (SSIP) leadership team and working group, a family engagement workgroup, an advisory group for the Dropout Prevention and Re-engagement Network, and secondary transition stakeholder groups. MA DESE also consults with educators, parents, advocates, and others on a regular basis to inform policy and practice.

MA DESE engages with stakeholders on the direction of Indicator 17, the State’s Systemic Improvement Plan (SSIP), at the state, district, classroom, and community levels. Stakeholders are provided with information about activities and goals, training events and embedded supports statewide, and the availability of resources to support and expand implementation. Those at the district and school levels participate in ongoing decision-making about the direction of the SSIP by providing feedback about the quality of events and supports, observed benefits for their own stakeholders, and the greatest needs to be able to move forward with implementation. Additional information is provided in the Indicator 17 narrative.

**FFY 2022 SPP/APR Data**

**Number of preschool children aged 3 through 5 with IEPs assessed**

3,923

**Outcome A: Positive social-emotional skills (including social relationships)**

| **Outcome A Progress Category** | **Number of children** | **Percentage of Children** |
| --- | --- | --- |
| a. Preschool children who did not improve functioning | 51 | 1.30% |
| b. Preschool children who improved functioning but not sufficient to move nearer to functioning comparable to same-aged peers | 492 | 12.54% |
| c. Preschool children who improved functioning to a level nearer to same-aged peers but did not reach it | 1,806 | 46.04% |
| d. Preschool children who improved functioning to reach a level comparable to same-aged peers | 1,107 | 28.22% |
| e. Preschool children who maintained functioning at a level comparable to same-aged peers | 467 | 11.90% |

| **Outcome A** | **Numerator** | **Denominator** | **FFY 2021 Data** | **FFY 2022 Target** | **FFY 2022 Data** | **Status** | **Slippage** |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| A1. Of those children who entered or exited the program below age expectations in Outcome A, the percent who substantially increased their rate of growth by the time they turned 6 years of age or exited the program. *Calculation:(c+d)/(a+b+c+d)* | 2,913 | 3,456 | 85.75% | 86.00% | 84.29% | N/A | N/A |
| A2. The percent of preschool children who were functioning within age expectations in Outcome A by the time they turned 6 years of age or exited the program. *Calculation: (d+e)/(a+b+c+d+e)* | 1,574 | 3,923 | 45.51% | 50.00% | 40.12% | N/A | N/A |

**Outcome B: Acquisition and use of knowledge and skills (including early language/communication)**

| **Outcome B Progress Category** | **Number of Children** | **Percentage of Children** |
| --- | --- | --- |
| a. Preschool children who did not improve functioning | 60 | 1.53% |
| b. Preschool children who improved functioning but not sufficient to move nearer to functioning comparable to same-aged peers | 488 | 12.44% |
| c. Preschool children who improved functioning to a level nearer to same-aged peers but did not reach it | 1,674 | 42.67% |
| d. Preschool children who improved functioning to reach a level comparable to same-aged peers | 1,199 | 30.56% |
| e. Preschool children who maintained functioning at a level comparable to same-aged peers | 502 | 12.80% |

| **Outcome B** | **Numerator** | **Denominator** | **FFY 2021 Data** | **FFY 2022 Target** | **FFY 2022 Data** | **Status** | **Slippage** |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| B1. Of those children who entered or exited the program below age expectations in Outcome B, the percent who substantially increased their rate of growth by the time they turned 6 years of age or exited the program. *Calculation: (c+d)/(a+b+c+d)* | 2,873 | 3,421 | 84.63% | 85.00% | 83.98% | N/A | N/A |
| B2. The percent of preschool children who were functioning within age expectations in Outcome B by the time they turned 6 years of age or exited the program. *Calculation: (d+e)/(a+b+c+d+e)* | 1,701 | 3,923 | 48.69% | 49.00% | 43.36% | N/A | N/A |

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

| **Outcome C Progress Category** | **Number of Children** | **Percentage of Children** |
| --- | --- | --- |
| a. Preschool children who did not improve functioning | 57 | 1.45% |
| b. Preschool children who improved functioning but not sufficient to move nearer to functioning comparable to same-aged peers | 417 | 10.63% |
| c. Preschool children who improved functioning to a level nearer to same-aged peers but did not reach it | 1,453 | 37.04% |
| d. Preschool children who improved functioning to reach a level comparable to same-aged peers | 1,297 | 33.06% |
| e. Preschool children who maintained functioning at a level comparable to same-aged peers | 699 | 17.82% |

| **Outcome C** | **Numerator** | **Denominator** | **FFY 2021 Data** | **FFY 2022 Target** | **FFY 2022 Data** | **Status** | **Slippage** |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| C1. Of those children who entered or exited the program below age expectations in Outcome C, the percent who substantially increased their rate of growth by the time they turned 6 years of age or exited the program.*Calculation:(c+d)/(a+b+c+d)*  | 2,750 | 3,224 | 84.92% | 86.00% | 85.30% | N/A | N/A |
| C2. The percent of preschool children who were functioning within age expectations in Outcome C by the time they turned 6 years of age or exited the program. *Calculation: (d+e)/(a+b+c+d+e)* | 1,996 | 3,923 | 55.58% | 63.00% | 50.88% | N/A | N/A |

**Does the State include in the numerator and denominator only children who received special education and related services for at least six months during the age span of three through five years? (yes/no)**

YES

| **Sampling Question** | **Yes / No** |
| --- | --- |
| Was sampling used?  | NO |

**Did you use the Early Childhood Outcomes Center (ECO) Child Outcomes Summary (COS) process? (yes/no)**

YES

**List the instruments and procedures used to gather data for this indicator.**

Districts collected child-level entry and exit COS data for preschool aged children (3–5 years of age) receiving special education services. MA DESE encourages districts to use assessment data from initial eligibility determinations when conducting COS entry ratings. In addition, it disseminates to districts guidance and resources from the Early Childhood Technical Assistance Center (ECTA) on how to complete the COS process. The 2022–23 school year marked the second year of using of the web-based ECOS database to assist districts in submitting data gathered through the COS process. The ECOS database is linked with the Student Information Management System (SIMS). All students identified in SIMS as receiving early childhood special education are populated in the ECOS database. Part 1 of the ECOS database includes fields for the date services started and entry ratings for the three child outcomes (i.e., positive social-emotional skills, acquisition and use of knowledge and skills, and use of appropriate behaviors to meet needs). For districts participating in Pyramid Model implementation through the SSIP, there is a field to indicate if the child was in a classroom that was implementing the Pyramid Model. Part 2 of the ECOS database includes fields for the date the child exited preschool special education, exit ratings, and progress questions for the three outcomes. Districts were required to complete all data entry by August 31, 2023. MA DESE and the external evaluator supported districts with data collection and submission through frequent communication and technical assistance (TA) on data entry, navigation of the new online database, and the COS process. MA DESE has also deployed a reporting feature within the ECOS database that allows district personnel to compare their district’s data to the overall statewide data and to examine Indicator 7 data for individual schools within their district.

**Provide additional information about this indicator (optional)**

DESE transitioned to an online system for data collection and, beginning in fall 2022, started requiring all districts to report Indicator 7 data for all preschool children with disabilities each year, thus ending the previous sampling model of data collection and beginning census data collection. As a result, the total number of usable Indicator 7 records increased from 651 in FFY 2017 to 3,923 in FFY 2022. The increase in data completeness may have resulted in a more accurate representation of the social and emotional outcomes of preschool children with disabilities in Massachusetts relative to prior years. FFY 20222 results show a decrease in the percentage of students in OSEP categories D (i.e., children who entered the program functioning below same-aged peers but caught up by exit) and E (i.e., children who were functioning like same aged peers at entry and exit) relative to FFY 2021. The differences between FFY22 and FFY21 Indicator 7 data were not meaningful for summary statement 1 across all 3 outcomes. In contrast, there was a meaningful decline across all 3 outcomes on summary statement 2 (p < 0.10). However, given the changes in data collection methods and the substantial increase in sample size, caution should be used when comparing the FFY 2022 results to prior years.

MA DESE and the external evaluator provided TA to 137 districts (49% of 281 districts required to report). Five districts failed to submit Indicator 7 data and an additional 13 districts did not submit any entry data, which could mean that either no new students enrolled in FFY 2022 or that the district certified the data that was already in ECOS from FFY 2021 but did not enter any data on new students. DESE and the external evaluator will continue to provide TA to districts in the next school year to ensure that all districts submit all required data.

The total number of complete entry and exit records collected from districts (n = 3,923) represents 36% of the three- to five-year-old child count from fall 2022 (N = 10,967). Although this is a marked increase from FFY 2021 (n = 2,105 records; N =10,397 students), 36%of the overall preschool special education population is still considerably below the national average of approximately 50%. Therefore, the child outcomes data may not accurately represent the actual outcomes of all students exiting preschool special education services in Massachusetts. Reasons for the lack of data completeness include the previous use of the statewide cohort model for Indicator 7 data collection and limited capacity within some districts to collect data for all students receiving preschool special education services. To address these issues, DESE will continue to provide individualized TA upon request to districts, send out regular communications about data reporting, and provide additional training and support in collaboration with the external evaluator.

The reporting feature in the ECOS database allows districts to easily access data visualizations showing comparisons of child outcomes at the school, district, and state levels. These reports also allow districts to compare child outcomes data across years and across schools within the district, which is likely to facilitate continuous improvement efforts.

For FFY22, DESE switched from using a cohort model for data collection to annual reporting for all districts. All districts that provide preschool special education services are now required to collect entry and exit data on all preschool children with disabilities and are required to report the data for children receiving = 6 months of service.

Data completeness increased this year with 3,923 usable records, an 86% increase from FFY21, which also saw a 60% increase from FFY20. The prior cohort model meant that some districts were not required to collect entry data for children who exited in FFY22. In other words, districts could not report child outcomes data for some children who exited preschool in FFY 22 because these children may have entered preschool in previous years when the district was not required to collect entry data due to the prior cohort model. As such, the total number of Indicator 7 records will continue to increase in the coming years. By FFY24, all districts should have complete entry and exit records for students who exit in the 2024–25 school year.

Due to the change in data collection methodology, MA DESE is resetting the baseline for Indicator 7 to FFY2022. This year’s data is no longer comparable to previous years, since data is now collected in a census model. DESE has continued to consult with Stakeholders throughout the year and has began discussions surrounding resetting targets. During these conversations MA DESE recommended (and with the agreement of Stakeholders and our Technical Assistance providers) keeping the targets the same and then establishing new targets for Indicator 7 when there is a more complete data set from all LEAs entering entry and exit ratings through census collection. Although, the entry of ratings have increased over the past two years, they are still below the national average. Therefore, MA DESE and Stakeholders feel that it is important to have a more complete data set (entry and exit ratings) from LEAs regarding Pre School Outcomes and we will have data for all LEAs next year which will help inform target setting. In a survey to Stakeholders, 83% of respondents were in agreement with MA DESE's recommendation. Stakeholders also responded that MA DESE should strive for more complete data collection and documentation to ensure an appropriate analysis of the progress of preschool outcomes before resetting targets. Stakeholders felt that the discussions and dialogue that MA DESE engaged in during FFY2022 kept them appropriately appraised of the situation and there was clear consensus that the census model of data collection will provide a broader set of data.

## 7 - Prior FFY Required Actions

None

## 7 - OSEP Response

The State has revised the baseline for this indicator, using data from FFY 2022, and OSEP accepts that revision.

## 7 - Required Actions

# Indicator 8: Parent involvement

**Instructions and Measurement**

**Monitoring Priority:** FAPE in the LRE

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

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

**Data Source**

State selected data source.

**Measurement**

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

**Instructions**

*Sampling****of parents from whom response is requested****is allowed.* *When sampling is used, submit a description of the sampling methodology outlining how the design will yield valid and reliable estimates. (See General Instructions on page 3 for additional instructions on sampling.)*

Describe the results of the calculations and compare the results to the target.

Provide the actual numbers used in the calculation.

If the State is using a separate data collection methodology for preschool children, the State must provide separate baseline data, targets, and actual target data or discuss the procedures used to combine data from school age and preschool data collection methodologies in a manner that is valid and reliable.

While a survey is not required for this indicator, a State using a survey must submit a copy of any new or revised survey with its SPP/APR.

Report the number of parents to whom the surveys were distributed and the number of respondent parents. The survey response rate is automatically calculated using the submitted data.

States must compare the response rate for the reporting year to the response rate for the previous year (e.g., in the FFY 2022 SPP/APR, compare the FFY 2022 response rate to the FFY 2021 response rate) and describe strategies that will be implemented which are expected to increase the response rate, particularly for those groups that are underrepresented.

The State must also analyze the response rate to identify potential nonresponse bias and take steps to reduce any identified bias and promote response from a broad cross-section of parents of children with disabilities.

Include in the State’s analysis the extent to which the demographics of the children for whom parents responded are representative of the demographics of children receiving special education services. States must consider race/ethnicity. In addition, the State’s analysis must also include at least one of the following demographics: age of the student, disability category, gender, geographic location, and/or another demographic category approved through the stakeholder input process.

States must describe the metric used to determine representativeness (e.g., +/- 3% discrepancy in the proportion of responders compared to target group).

If the analysis shows that the demographics of the children for whom parents responding are not representative of the demographics of children receiving special education services in the State, describe the strategies that the State will use to ensure that in the future the response data are representative of those demographics. In identifying such strategies, the State should consider factors such as how the State distributed the survey to parents (e.g., by mail, by e-mail, on-line, by telephone, in-person through school personnel), and how responses were collected.

States are encouraged to work in collaboration with their OSEP-funded parent centers in collecting data.

## 8 - Indicator Data

| **Question** | **Yes / No**  |
| --- | --- |
| Do you use a separate data collection methodology for preschool children?  | NO |

**Targets: Description of Stakeholder Input**

MA DESE is committed to a continuous system of engaging stakeholders to develop targets and set priorities for improvement in each of the areas reported in the SPP/APR and the SSIP.

The Special Education Advisory Panel (SEAP) and Special Education State Advisory Council (SAC) are comprised of parents, individuals with disabilities, educators, administrators, and representatives from state agencies, higher education, and other stakeholder groups. The members meet at least four times each school year to review data, discuss policy priorities, and identify unmet needs in the area of special education consistent with state law and IDEA Part B. At each meeting, both groups address and discuss various aspects of the SPP/APR and the State’s general supervision systems, as well as relevant policy matters. In the 2022-2023 school year, in addition to updates on performance and compliance results included in the SPP/APR, MA DESE discussed with the SEAP/SAC the definition of students with the most significant cognitive disabilities, a breakdown of LEA Determinations, revisions to the Educator Evaluation Rubric, revised Chapter 9 Dyslexia Guidelines, the Special Education Surrogate Parent Program, updates to the Tiered Focus Monitoring Parent Survey (Indicator 8), updates to the new IEP form, and trends identified by the Public School Monitoring (PSM) and Problem Resolution Systems (PRS) Offices. MA DESE is committed to keeping members of the SEAP and SAC up to date on processes and supports provided to LEAs in order to improve outcomes for students with disabilities. It will continue discussions around current data, longitudinal targets, historical rates of performance and compliance and the trajectory for improvement for each of the Indicators, and the effectiveness of focused improvement activities within the context of the state’s Results Driven Accountability framework.

The SAC is required by Massachusetts General Law (M.G.L. c. 15, § 1G https://malegislature.gov/Laws/GeneralLaws/PartI/TitleII/Chapter15/Section1G). Its purpose is to advise the Board of Elementary and Secondary Education and to make other programmatic recommendations it deems necessary to fulfill the goals established by the board.

The SEAP is required by IDEA (34 CFR §§ 300.167-300.169 https://www.ecfr.gov/current/title-34/subtitle-B/chapter-III/part-300#sg34.2.300\_1166.sg15). Its purpose is to advise the State Education Authority (SEA) of unmet needs within the State regarding the education of children with disabilities. The Panel comments publicly on proposed rules or regulations. Its advisory function to the SEA involves developing evaluations and reporting 618 data (IDEA data) to USED and creating corrective action plans to address findings in Federal monitoring reports under IDEA Part B. The Panel also advises the SEA in developing and implementing policies relating to the coordination of services for children with disabilities.

MA DESE has continued to emphasize its priority on expanding the agency’s capacity to solicit broad and diverse stakeholder input to set SPP/APR targets, analyze data, develop improvement strategies, and evaluate progress. In FFY 2022 MA DESE sought to continue developing stakeholder Indicator knowledge, a project that began in FFY 2020. MA DESE has created and continues to update a new SPP/APR website. Each of the 17 Indicators has its own dedicated web page or Quick Reference Guide (QRG), as well as PowerPoints and other relevant information or resources. All materials on the SPP/APR website are available in six languages that correspond to the most common languages spoken in Massachusetts: English, Spanish, Portuguese, Chinese, Vietnamese, and Haitian Creole. Narrated versions of each PowerPoint are also available in English on the YouTube page of MA DESE’s partner, the Federation for Children with Special Needs (the Massachusetts Parent Training and Information Center/PTIC). In FFY 2022 MA DESE hosted eight virtual information and feedback sessions to broaden stakeholder knowledge. Each meeting had a specific improvement strategy focus and also provided updates on data analysis and evaluation of progress for each Indicator. The large-group presentation on each topic was simultaneously translated from English into the other five languages.

MA DESE consults on a monthly or at least quarterly basis with the Massachusetts Administrators of Special Education (http://www.asepage.org/), Federation for Children with Special Needs (https://fcsn.org/), Massachusetts Advocates for Children (https://www.massadvocates.org/), Massachusetts Association of Approved Special Education Schools (https://maaps.org/), and Massachusetts Urban Special Education Leadership Collaborative (massurban.org)). In addition, the Massachusetts State Special Education Director at MA DESE gives monthly virtual presentations to statewide special education leaders on a wide array of special education compliance and performance topics. During all of these meetings, MA DESE solicits and receives significant feedback that informs the development of special education policy and guidance.

MA DESE works closely with other state agencies to provide supports to children with disabilities. The Department has developed a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) or has entered into an Interagency Service Agreement (ISA) with the Massachusetts Commission for the Blind (MCB), Massachusetts Rehabilitation Commission (MRC), Department of Public Health (DPH), Department of Early Education and Care (EEC), and Massachusetts Commission for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing (MCDHH). Additionally, these agencies provide a representative to serve on the MA Special Education Advisory Council and the MA Special Education Advisory Panel. The Department has established regular meetings with each of these agencies to strengthen collaborations and to monitor joint initiatives.

In its efforts to roll out the new IEP, MA DESE frequently engaged with stakeholders across the Commonwealth in a variety of roles to solicit feedback on the draft form that was released in the Spring of 2022. Stakeholder groups whose feedback was sought included various school groups, parent/family/advocacy organizations, and other State agencies.

As needed, MA DESE convenes stakeholder working groups throughout the year to provide focused input on specific projects and policy priorities. Among these focus groups were the Early Childhood Interagency Coordinating Council (which includes community members and state agency employees), a Statewide Systemic Improvement Plan (SSIP) leadership team and working group, a family engagement workgroup, an advisory group for the Dropout Prevention and Re-engagement Network, and secondary transition stakeholder groups. MA DESE also consults with educators, parents, advocates, and others on a regular basis to inform policy and practice.

MA DESE engages with stakeholders on the direction of Indicator 17, the State’s Systemic Improvement Plan (SSIP), at the state, district, classroom, and community levels. Stakeholders are provided with information about activities and goals, training events and embedded supports statewide, and the availability of resources to support and expand implementation. Those at the district and school levels participate in ongoing decision-making about the direction of the SSIP by providing feedback about the quality of events and supports, observed benefits for their own stakeholders, and the greatest needs to be able to move forward with implementation. Additional information is provided in the Indicator 17 narrative.

**Historical Data**

| **Baseline Year** | **Baseline Data** |
| --- | --- |
| 2018 | 89.00% |

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **FFY** | **2017** | **2018** | **2019** | **2020** | **2021** |
| Target >= | 86.00% | 86.50% | 89.50% | 89.00% | 89.00% |
| Data | 80.82% | 89.00% | 88.55% | 88.35% | 86.10% |

**Targets**

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **FFY** | **2022** | **2023** | **2024** | **2025** |
| Target >= | 89.50% | 90.00% | 90.50% | 91.00% |

**FFY 2022 SPP/APR Data**

| **Number of respondent parents who report schools facilitated parent involvement as a means of improving services and results for children with disabilities** | **Total number of respondent parents of children with disabilities** | **FFY 2021 Data** | **FFY 2022 Target** | **FFY 2022 Data** | **Status** | **Slippage** |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| 4,362 | 5,209 | 86.10% | 89.50% | 83.74% | Did not meet target | Slippage |

**Provide reasons for slippage, if applicable**

FFY2022 data indicates an overall decrease from 86.10% to 83.74%.

This year's data indicates a lower response rate of 70.74% with an agreement rate of 56.5% for one question compared to a response rate of 98.12% for the other four Indicator 8 questions. The question with the lowest response rate asks parents to identify whether the services provided in their child’s IEP support their special education needs. There may be a few reasons to explain this decrease.

First, parents may skip a question if they have trouble understanding what is being asked. The Parent Survey is provided in many languages, which may have presented an interpretation challenge for this particular question. Specifically, FFY2022 saw an increase in responses representing Asian students compared to previous years. MA DESE will carefully evaluate the wording and translations for the survey next year to ensure each question is easily understood by parents. Second, some parents may struggle to identify their child’s special education needs to effectively answer the Indicator 8 questions. For example, many parents may not understand how specific academic support services directly support their child’s education needs. Finally, there may have been a disconnect this year between how academic support services are provided and what the parents see related to their child’s IEP. This may be due to continued challenges for family engagement practices seen in FFY2021.

In previous years, the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic resulted in lower rates of family engagement that may still be evident in FFY2022 as districts work to rebound many parts of their efforts to reach families and students with disabilities. Due to an increase in staff turnover rates since the pandemic, staff may face difficult decisions regarding how to allocate their limited time. Due to staff limitations, it is likely that engaging families is a responsibility that has been neglected in many districts. While staff recognize that family engagement is as important to student outcomes as other responsibilities, engagement can seem less pressing when navigating a staffing crisis.

Additionally, the pandemic has also required districts to reallocate resources, and those decisions likely have affected the way that parents feel about the schools. Specifically, districts have sometimes reallocated resources to prioritize children with significant needs, particularly in response to staff shortages and as schools shift between virtual and in-person learning. As a result, families of children with fewer significant needs have seen changes in service delivery, which has been a source of tension for the districts. As the COVID crisis comes to an end, MA DESE will continue its work with districts to ensure meaningful service delivery to all children, which may increase the extent to which families feel supported by schools.\

MA DESE is mindful of the decrease in response rate by question and agreement from FFY2021 to FFY2022 and will address potential causes by considering the delivery of the Indicator 8 questions and potential engagement challenges in the districts.

**Since the State did not report preschool children separately, discuss the procedures used to combine data from school age and preschool surveys in a manner that is valid and reliable.**

In FFY2022, MA DESE collected Indicator 8 data as part of the Tiered Focus Monitoring process (TFM) through the Parent Survey. To facilitate access and response, MA DESE made the surveys available online, via mobile device, via email, or in hard copy. Information regarding the Parent Survey was sent by MA DESE to families of students with IEPs, ages 3-21, in the LEAs participating in TFM. Separate preschool surveys were not used; the questions used in the Parent Survey were developed to include families with children in Early Childhood Special Education (ECSE) and are appropriate for all populations. Among respondents who included their child’s grade level in FFY2022, 9.12% have preschool children.

**The number of parents to whom the surveys were distributed.**

49,839

**Percentage of respondent parents**

10.45%

**Response Rate**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **FFY** | **2021** | **2022** |
| Response Rate  | 6.60% | 10.45% |

**Describe the metric used to determine representativeness (e.g., +/- 3% discrepancy in the proportion of responders compared to target group).**

MA DESE uses statistical testing to identify whether the response rates of each group are representative of the statewide demographics of children with disabilities. Specifically, MA DESE used a Chi-Square Goodness of Fit test (with 95% confidence) to determine whether each distribution in aggregate was likely to match the statewide distribution. For example, MA DESE tested if, with 95% confidence, the gender responses from the sample matched the statewide demographics. When the Chi-Square statistic presented evidence that the distribution was not likely to come from the statewide population, MA DESE then conducted a one-sample z-test to compare each proportion to the statewide statistic, again using 95% confidence. For each proportion that was found to be statistically lower than the statewide population proportion, MA DESE concluded the specific group of students was underrepresented in their data.

**Include the State’s analyses of the extent to which the demographics of the children for whom parents responded are representative of the demographics of children receiving special education services. States must include race/ethnicity in their analysis. In addition, the State’s analysis must also include at least one of the following demographics: age of the student, disability category, gender, geographic location, and/or another demographic category approved through the stakeholder input process.**

The annual response rate is calculated by dividing the total number of survey responses by the total number of surveys distributed to families of students with IEPs served by the participating LEAs. Of the 49,839 surveys distributed to families, 5,209 were returned, resulting in a response rate of 10.45%. MA DESE recognizes that historically the response rate has been low. In FFY2022, MA DESE reviewed representativeness to determine who is not represented well in the responses. MA DESE continues to work within the TFM systems to increase the response rate in an effort to increase the representativeness. MA DESE’s partnership with the external vendor will also encourage response rates across the state by providing TA to districts about the importance of the survey and how to support families in completing the survey.

The Parent Survey administered through the TFM process includes optional questions in which families could voluntarily identify placement, gender, and race/ethnicity. The data collected from the FFY2022 survey responses were not entirely representative as compared to the statewide enrollment data of students with disabilities, as shown below.

Gender:
Statewide enrollment data of students with disabilities: Female: 35.5%; Male: 64.3%; and Non-Binary: 0.2%.
Survey responses from parents of students with disabilities: Female: 34.31%; Male: 64.47%; and Non-Binary: 1.22%. There was no gender identified from 112 parents.
Representativeness: A Chi-Square test of goodness of fit was conducted with 95% confidence level, and the data were found to be unrepresentative of the statewide distribution of gender for students with disabilities. Responses representing female students were underrepresented in the sample compared to the statewide population.

Race/Ethnicity:
Statewide enrollment data of students with disabilities: Multiracial: 4.4%; Hispanic/Latino: 26.2%; Black/African American: 10.8%; Asian 3.8%; Native American/Native Alaskan: 0.3%; Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander: 0.1%; and White: 54.5%.
Survey responses from parents of students with disabilities: Multiracial: 5.8%; Hispanic/Latino: 11.4%; Black/African American: 7.5%; Asian 4.8%; Native American/Native Alaskan: 0.8%; Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander: 0.1%; and White: 76.6%. There was no race/ethnicity identified from 361 parents.

Representativeness:
A Chi-Square test of goodness of fit was conducted with 95% confidence level, and the data were found to be unrepresentative of the statewide distribution of race/ethnicity for students with disabilities. Responses representing Black students and Hispanic students were underrepresented in the sample compared to the statewide population

Placement:
Using the TFM Parent Survey, the data collected regarding the placement/services of students with an IEP were not valid. Families were able to indicate multiple placement types for their child, which resulted in families identifying conflicting placements/services, such as full inclusion as well as being placed in a substantially separate setting. For FFY2023, MA DESE will revise this question so that parents will not be given the option to choose conflicting responses.

The demographics of the children for whom parents are responding are representative of the demographics of children receiving special education services. (yes/no)

NO

**If no, describe the strategies that the State will use to ensure that in the future the response data are representative of those demographics**

MA DESE collected Indicator 8 data in FFY2022 using a survey available to families in LEAs participating in the TFM process. To encourage the broadest representation of respondents, the survey was made available to all available families of students with IEPs in the participating LEAs. While the data are not fully representative of the race/ethnicity or gender of children with disabilities across the state, the data provide MA DESE a snapshot of the perceptions of families of children with disabilities regarding their levels of engagement. MA DESE continues to take specific steps to strengthen the representativeness of the data for FFY2023.

In FFY2022, demographic data demonstrate the progress MA DESE has made over the last year to collect a representative sample. Specifically, responses representing Asian students are now representative of the state population. In FFY2023, MA DESE will continue to consider the accessibility of the survey and ensure families are informed about their options to complete the TFM. For example, MA DESE will continue to offer the survey in multiple languages spoken throughout the state, increasing the probability that parents whose primary language is not English will complete the survey. While offering the survey in multiple languages, MA DESE will also review the survey questions to ensure they are adequately phrased for parent understanding. Additionally, the survey will continue to be provided via multiple input modalities, allowing families to complete the survey online, via mobile device, or as a printed survey.

In previous years, MA DESE provided districts with language they can use to inform families about the survey, its purpose and importance, and families’ options for completing the survey. Strengthening the messaging that is provided to families so that they understand the importance of their role in helping DESE set priorities and policies should increase the likelihood that parents will prioritize the survey and submit their responses. MA DESE and their external vendor also provided TA to districts about how to encourage responses. These efforts were continued in FFY2022 to encourage a representative sample.

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MA DESE will continue to utilize its family engagement partners to solicit responses in the upcoming year. At present, MA DESE works with the Federation for Children with Special Needs and the Massachusetts Statewide Family Engagement Center to develop resources, and to provide TA and trainings related to evidence-based family engagement practices, racial equity, and inclusion. Both partners can encourage families who attend trainings or other events to complete the survey as a way of providing feedback to the state about their engagement levels. In addition to encouraging responses, MA DESE will work with both partners as well as the special education advisory groups across the state to seek recommendations and implementation strategies to increase response rates from the identified underrepresented subgroups. By specifically encouraging responses from these underrepresented groups, MA DESE can strengthen the representativeness of the data.

**Describe strategies that will be implemented which are expected to increase the response rate year over year, particularly for those groups that are underrepresented.**

MA DESE recognizes that low response rates may indicate that all families of students with disabilities have not had the opportunity to share their voice through the TFM Parent Survey. As such, the Indicator 8 data may not accurately reflect the proportion of families statewide who perceive they are engaged by their school district. MA DESE is employing several strategies to increase response rates for future reporting.

As part of the TFM process, MA DESE hosts a parent information meeting for parents. At these meetings, parents are given information about the Parent Survey, and are encouraged to share this information with other parents of students with disabilities from their district. MA DESE will continue this process in FFY2023.

MA DESE makes the survey available in several formats to all families of students with IEPs, aged 3 through 21. Multiple input modalities allow for responses online, via mobile devices, and as a printed survey. Continuing this year, MA DESE offered the TFM translated into 14 different languages. Specifically, families can complete the TFM in English, Spanish, Portuguese (Brazil), Chinese (People’s Republic of China), Khmer, Arabic, Haitian-Creole, Somali, Vietnamese, Telugu, Russian, Swahili, Twi, and Turkish, reflecting the languages most frequently spoken by families in the state. If the survey is not readily available in a family’s home-language, the survey can be translated into other languages upon request by the parent.

MA DESE continues to work closely with its special education advisory groups to share information about Indicator 8 and the Parent Survey. MA DESE also works with the Special Education Advisory groups to gather feedback on setting targets and to discuss how the Indicator 8 data will be used. MA DESE works collaboratively with The Federation for Children with Special Needs to conduct stakeholder meetings with families to share data regarding response rates and agreement rates. Indicator 8 and Family Engagement will continue to be topics for discussion and feedback with the Special Education Advisory Groups and the Federation for Children with Special Needs. These opportunities for partnering with stakeholders will increase awareness of Indicator 8 and the TFM Parent Survey, therefore increasing response rates from parents.

In addition to developing partnerships with the advisory and advocacy groups, MA DESE hired a vendor (AnLar) to improve the Indicator 8 data collection process in order to increase the response rate and representativeness of those responses. This TA will focus on data-driven decision-making as well as providing districts with strategies to encourage families to provide responses to the TFM. MA DESE and the vendor will continue to focus on the diversity of responses to the TFM, ensuring families from various cultural and linguistic backgrounds are represented in the data.

**Describe the analysis** **of the response rate including any nonresponse bias that was identified, and the steps taken to reduce any identified bias and promote response from a broad cross section of parents of children with disabilities.**

A total of 49,839 Parent Surveys (school-age and preschool) were distributed to parents through the TFM process. A total of 5,209 surveys were completed and returned for a response rate of 10.45%.

The response rate, when coupled with demographic analyses of respondents, provides an understanding of the survey data and the effect of nonresponse bias. MA DESE recognizes the need to continue to improve upon the representativeness of the response group, including in the following areas:

The FFY2022 data regarding race/ethnicity indicate that responses from parents of students who are Hispanic/Latino and students who are Black/African American receiving special education services were underrepresented but did not significantly differ from other subgroup responses.

The FFY2022 data regarding gender indicate that responses from parents of students who are female were underrepresented but did not significantly differ from other subgroup responses.

To increase the representativeness of the data to the statewide demographic patterns of children with disabilities, MA DESE will continue to hold conversations about Indicator 8 and Family Engagement with the special education advisory groups and the Federation for Children with Special Needs. MA DESE will continue to seek recommendations and implementation strategies from various stakeholders to increase response rates from the identified underrepresented subgroups. Additionally, MA DESE data specialists will review the data collection process to make any updates to data collection, searching specifically for ways in which the data collection process may not encourage equal access to underrepresented groups. Finally, MA DESE in partnership with their external vendor, will provide TA to districts with recommendations to encourage responses from underrepresented groups. Districts will be provided with a data sheet informing them about the representativeness of their data in an effort to increase representativeness across the state and within specific districts.

These opportunities for partnering with community and district stakeholders will increase awareness of Indicator 8 and the TFM Parent Survey, as well as the importance of parents completing the survey, increasing response rates from parents of students with disabilities. MA DESE will continue to monitor nonresponse bias from parents of students who have been underrepresented.

| **Sampling Question** | **Yes / No** |
| --- | --- |
| Was sampling used?  | YES |
| If yes, has your previously approved sampling plan changed? | NO |

**Describe the sampling methodology outlining how the design will yield valid and reliable estimates.**

MA DESE uses an evidence-based TFM schedule to collect Indicator 8 data. In FFY2022, data were collected from 95 LEAs. The FFY2022 cohort reported Indicator 8 data using the Parent Survey administered through the TFM process.

The TFM schedule was designed to be representative of the state, including urban, suburban, rural, large, medium, and small LEAs, as well as the full range of LEA program and structure types available in Massachusetts, which includes charter schools, virtual schools, Career and Vocational Technical Education schools, and comprehensive schools. These LEAs serve a full range of student disability types and needs for services, such that the cohort is representative of the state as a whole.

To ensure the broadest representation of respondents, surveys are made available for all families of children with an IEP in LEAs participating in the identified TFM cohort. MA DESE incorporates Indicator 8 data collection activities into the TFM process as part of the TFM Parent Survey. The TFM system addresses the components of the General Supervision System through which the state provides oversight and general supervision of school districts on the implementation of legal requirements of IDEA and state special education and civil rights laws and regulations. During the first year of the three-year monitoring cycle, participating school districts participate in self-assessment activities in partnership with DESE, reviewing special education and civil rights documentation for all required elements and a representative sample of student records from across grade levels and disability categories. The outcome of this review and the reported SPP compliance data are used to determine the on-site monitoring activities that occur in the second year of the TFM cycle. During the on-site monitoring year, MA DESE and school districts collect the Parent Survey from parents of students with disabilities enrolled in the district. MA DESE reports the data annually in the SPP/APR and makes available specific district results on its website. MA DESE monitoring teams also follow up on survey results as part of the TFM assistance activities and provide technical assistance and resources to school districts to support increased response rates and promote increased parent engagement. The external consultant hired by MA DESE will also support districts by providing TA in conjunction with the monitoring teams.

The approved sampling plan, and the Tiered Focused Monitoring cycle used for Indicator 8, has been attached.

| **Survey Question** | **Yes / No** |
| --- | --- |
| Was a survey used?  | YES |
| If yes, is it a new or revised survey? | NO |
| If yes, provide a copy of the survey. |  |

**Provide additional information about this indicator (optional)**

MA DESE recognizes the importance of including all parent/guardian voices that responded to the Indicator 8 survey. This year, MA DESE included all survey respondents that “agreed” or “strongly agreed” with at least 60% of the questions they responded to. Additionally, by reviewing survey responses by question, MA DESE can target future survey revisions to increase the overall response rate.

## 8 - Prior FFY Required Actions

In the FFY 2022 SPP/APR, the State must report whether the FFY 2022 data are from a response group that is representative of the demographics of children receiving special education services, and, if not, the actions the State is taking to address this issue. The State must also include its analysis of the extent to which the demographics of the parents responding are representative of the demographics of children receiving special education services.

**Response to actions required in FFY 2021 SPP/APR**

In this APR, MA DESE discussed its plan to ensure the representativeness of Indicator 8 data to the demographics of children receiving special education services in Massachusetts. MA DESE will continue to collect and analyze data from respondents, noting when there are significant differences in the representativeness of respondent demographics. MA DESE will hold conversations with the special education advisory groups and the Federation of Children with Special Needs to collaborate on ways to ensure underrepresented groups are providing Indicator 8 data to the State. MA DESE will review its Tiered Focus Monitoring process, particularly noting ways to further engage families of children from underrepresented groups. Last, MA DESE and its external vendor will provide technical assistance to districts recommending ways to engage families of underrepresented groups and to increase the likelihood of receiving responses from these families.

## 8 - OSEP Response

## 8 - Required Actions

In the FFY 2023 SPP/APR, the State must report whether the FFY 2023 data are from a response group that is representative of the demographics of children receiving special education services, and, if not, the actions the State is taking to address this issue. The State must also include its analysis of the extent to which the response data are representative of the demographics of children receiving special education services.

OSEP notes that one or more of the Indicator 8 attachment(s) included in the State's FFY 2022 SPP/APR submission are not in compliance with Section 508 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended (Section 508), and will not be posted on the U.S. Department of Education's IDEA website. Therefore, the State must make the attachment(s) available to the public as soon as practicable, but no later than 120 days after the date of the determination letter.

# Indicator 9: Disproportionate Representation

**Instructions and Measurement**

**Monitoring Priority:** Disproportionality

**Compliance indicator**: 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))

**Data Source**

State’s analysis, based on State’s Child Count data collected under IDEA section 618, to determine if the disproportionate representation of racial and ethnic groups in special education and related services was the result of inappropriate identification.

**Measurement**

Percent = [(# of districts, that meet the State-established n and/or cell size (if applicable) for one or more racial/ethnic groups, 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 that meet the State-established n and/or cell size (if applicable) for one or more racial/ethnic groups)] times 100.

Include State’s definition of “disproportionate representation.” Please specify in your definition: 1) the calculation method(s) being used (i.e., risk ratio, weighted risk ratio, e-formula, etc.); and 2) the threshold at which disproportionate representation is identified. Also include, as appropriate, 3) the number of years of data used in the calculation; and 4) any minimum cell and/or n-sizes (i.e., risk numerator and/or risk denominator).

Based on its review of the 618 data for the reporting year, describe how the State made its annual determination as to whether the disproportionate representation it identified of racial and ethnic groups in special education and related services was the result of inappropriate identification as required by 34 CFR §§300.600(d)(3) and 300.602(a), e.g., using monitoring data; reviewing policies, practices and procedures. In determining disproportionate representation, analyze data, for each district, for all racial and ethnic groups in the district, or all racial and ethnic groups in the district that meet a minimum n and/or cell size set by the State. Report on the percent of districts in which disproportionate representation of racial and ethnic groups in special education and related services is the result of inappropriate identification, even if the determination of inappropriate identification was made after the end of the FFY 2022 reporting period (i.e., after June 30, 2023).

**Instructions**

Provide racial/ethnic disproportionality data for all children aged 5 who are enrolled in kindergarten and 6 through 21 served under IDEA, aggregated across all disability categories. Provide the actual numbers used in the calculation.

States are not required to report on underrepresentation.

If the State has established a minimum n and/or cell size requirement, the State may only include, in both the numerator and the denominator, districts that met that State-established n and/or cell size. If the State used a minimum n and/or cell size requirement, report the number of districts totally excluded from the calculation as a result of this requirement because the district did not meet the minimum n and/or cell size for any racial/ethnic group.

Consider using multiple methods in calculating disproportionate representation of racial and ethnic groups to reduce the risk of overlooking potential problems. Describe the method(s) used to calculate disproportionate representation.

Provide the number of districts that met the State-established n and/or cell size (if applicable) for one or more racial/ethnic groups identified with disproportionate representation of racial and ethnic groups in special education and related services and the number of those districts identified with disproportionate representation that is the result of inappropriate identification.

Targets must be 0%.

Provide detailed information about the timely correction of child-specific and regulatory/systemic noncompliance as noted in OSEP’s response for the previous SPP/APR. If the State did not ensure timely correction of the previous noncompliance, provide information on the extent to which noncompliance was subsequently corrected (more than one year after identification). In addition, provide information regarding the nature of any continuing noncompliance, improvement activities completed (e.g., review of policies and procedures, technical assistance, training) and any enforcement actions that were taken. If the State reported less than 100% compliance for the previous reporting period (e.g., for the FFY 2022 SPP/APR, the data for FFY 2021), and the State did not identify any findings of noncompliance, provide an explanation of why the State did not identify any findings of noncompliance.

## 9 - Indicator Data

**Not Applicable**

**Select yes if this indicator is not applicable.**

NO

**Historical Data**

| **Baseline Year** | **Baseline Data** |
| --- | --- |
| 2020 | 0.00% |

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **FFY** | **2017** | **2018** | **2019** | **2020** | **2021** |
| Target | 0% | 0% | 0% | 0% | 0% |
| Data | 0.00% | 0.00% | 0.00% | 0.00% | 0.00% |

**Targets**

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **FFY** | **2022** | **2023** | **2024** | **2025** |
| Target | 0% | 0% | 0% | 0% |

**FFY 2022 SPP/APR Data**

**Has the state established a minimum n and/or cell size requirement? (yes/no)**

YES

**If yes, the State may only include, in both the numerator and the denominator, districts that met the State-established n and/or cell size. Report the number of districts excluded from the calculation as a result of the requirement.**

5

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Number of districts with disproportionate representation of racial/ethnic groups in special education and related services** | **Number of districts with disproportionate representation of racial/ethnic groups in special education and related services that is the result of inappropriate identification** | **Number of districts that met the State's minimum n and/or cell size** | **FFY 2021 Data** | **FFY 2022 Target** | **FFY 2022 Data** | **Status** | **Slippage** |
| 1 | 1 | 394 | 0.00% | 0% | 0.25% | Did not meet target | Slippage |

**Provide reasons for slippage, if applicable**

For FFY2022, MA DESE's monitoring unit conducted a PPP review of the LEA identified, through data analysis, of having disproportionate representation in racial/ethnic groups in special education and related services. As a result of this review, a determination of non-compliance within the LEA Policies, Practices, and Procedures was found, thus the data showing an increase from the previous year when no non-compliance was identified. The Department found that various factors, such as lack of supports provided prior to referral, may have contributed to the noncompliance in the LEA and in turn may have contributed to the slippage.

**Were all races and ethnicities included in the review?**

YES

**Define “disproportionate representation.” Please specify in your definition: 1) the calculation method(s) being used (i.e., risk ratio, weighted risk ratio, e-formula, etc.); and 2) the threshold at which disproportionate representation is identified. Also include, as appropriate, 3) the number of years of data used in the calculation; and 4) any minimum cell and/or n-sizes (i.e., risk numerator and/or risk denominator).**

Massachusetts defines “disproportionate representation” using a calculation of weighted or alternate risk ratios and a review of the appropriateness of an LEA’s policies, practices, and procedures (PPPs) for identifying students as eligible for special education services.

MA DESE calculates a weighted or alternate risk ratio for each LEA, using a minimum cell size of 10 students with disabilities in each racial/ethnic group in every LEA. In LEAs in which there are at least 10 students with disabilities in both the racial/ethnic group and the comparison group, MA DESE uses a weighted risk ratio. In cases where there are fewer than 10 students in the comparison group, MA DESE employs the alternate risk ratio. A cell of fewer than 10, though removed from the calculation, is reviewed individually to see if data irregularities for specific racial and ethnic groups in the LEA would suggest disproportionate representation due to inappropriate identification. All cells of greater than 10 are retained in the data set and are used to calculate disproportionate representation. Once the calculation is made for each district, the weighted or alternate risk ratios are compared to the two previous years’ weighted or alternate risk ratios. LEAs are flagged if, for three consecutive years, they exhibit a weighted or alternate risk ratio of 3.0 or greater for possible over-representation. All LEAs 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, and communication with MA DESE about the identified disproportionate representation. If MA DESE determines that the PPPs are inappropriate or otherwise inconsistent with federal and state regulations and concludes that the PPPs likely caused the disproportionate representation, then the LEA is identified as having disproportionate representation due to inappropriate identification and is required to take corrective actions.

For the FFY 2022 analysis, Massachusetts used the October 1, 2022 enrollment and child count data that it collects from LEAs through its Student Information Management System (SIMS). Three hundred ninety-eight LEAs were in operation in Massachusetts in October 2022, and 394 met the State’s cell size requirement for at least one racial/ethnic group. One LEA, a charter school, was flagged for overrepresentation of both Hispanic students and African American/Black students.

**Describe how the State made its annual determination as to whether the disproportionate representation it identified of racial and ethnic groups in special education and related services was the result of inappropriate identification.**

If an LEA displays a weighted or alternate risk ratio that exceeds 3.0 for three consecutive years for any racial/ethnic group, MA DESE follows up to review the appropriateness of the LEA’s policies, practices, and procedures (PPPs). MA DESE requires the LEA to submit its PPPs regarding eligibility determination, along with any other data or information that may explain the pattern of disproportionate representation, including:

• LEA policies and practices regarding child find, student support teams, and special education referral and evaluation.
• Descriptions of tiered systems of support and/or other supports for struggling students in place within the LEA prior to referral for special education
• Information regarding the LEA’s collaboration with other organizations (sending districts, local Early Intervention providers, etc.), if applicable.
• Information regarding any training or support that the LEA provides staff around cultural competency.

MA DESE then reviews this information to determine whether the disproportionate representation is the result of inappropriate identification. For FFY2022, MA DESE, as a result of the PPP review and other supporting documentation, has determined that there is evidence of non-compliance in the identified LEA. MA DESE determined that while there is evidence of supports within the LEA prior to referral for special education services, there is not specific information that addresses the disproportionate identification of various racial/ethnic groups. While this factor may not be the one identifying reason of inappropriate identification, MA DESE has determined that it could be a contributing factor.

As a result of the LEA PPP review and finding of non-compliance, MA DESE operated under OSEP Guidance 23-01 to issue a letter of finding of non-compliance to the LEA within 90 days of the finding and will direct the LEA to partake in corrective action planning and revision of their PPP's to address the non-compliance. In the FFY2023 SPP/APR, MA DESE will provide detailed explanation of these activities and the resulting correction of the non-compliance.

**Provide additional information about this indicator (optional)**

**Correction of Findings of Noncompliance Identified in FFY 2021**

| **Findings of Noncompliance Identified** | **Findings of Noncompliance Verified as Corrected Within One Year** | **Findings of Noncompliance Subsequently Corrected** | **Findings Not Yet Verified as Corrected** |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |

**Correction of Findings of Noncompliance Identified Prior to FFY 2021**

| **Year Findings of Noncompliance Were Identified** | **Findings of Noncompliance Not Yet Verified as Corrected as of FFY 2021 APR** | **Findings of Noncompliance Verified as Corrected** | **Findings Not Yet Verified as Corrected** |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
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## 9 - Prior FFY Required Actions

None

## 9 - OSEP Response

## 9 - Required Actions

Because the State reported less than 100% compliance for FFY 2022 (greater than 0% actual target data for this indicator), the State must report on the status of correction of noncompliance identified in FFY 2022 for this indicator. The State must demonstrate, in the FFY 2023 SPP/APR, that the district identified in FFY 2022 with disproportionate representation of racial and ethnic groups in special education and related services that was the result of inappropriate identification is in compliance with the requirements in 34 C.F.R. §§ 300.111, 300.201, and 300.301 through 300.311, including that the State verified that each district with noncompliance: (1) is correctly implementing the specific regulatory requirement(s) (i.e., achieved 100% compliance) based on a review of updated data such as data subsequently collected through on-site monitoring or a State data system; and (2) has corrected each individual case of noncompliance, unless the child is no longer within the jurisdiction of the district, consistent with OSEP QA 23-01. In the FFY 2023 SPP/APR, the State must describe the specific actions that were taken to verify the correction.

If the State did not identify any findings of noncompliance in FFY 2022, although its FFY 2022 data reflect less than 100% compliance (greater than 0% actual target data for this indicator), provide an explanation of why the State did not identify any findings of noncompliance in FFY 2022.

# Indicator 10: Disproportionate Representation in Specific Disability Categories

**Instructions and Measurement**

**Monitoring Priority:** Disproportionality

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

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

**Data Source**

State’s analysis, based on State’s Child Count data collected under IDEA section 618, to determine if the disproportionate representation of racial and ethnic groups in specific disability categories was the result of inappropriate identification.

**Measurement**

Percent = [(# of districts, that meet the State-established n and/or cell size (if applicable) for one or more racial/ethnic groups, with disproportionate representation of racial and ethnic groups in specific disability categories that is the result of inappropriate identification) divided by the (# of districts in the State that meet the State-established n and/or cell size (if applicable) for one or more racial/ethnic groups)] times 100.

Include State’s definition of “disproportionate representation.” Please specify in your definition: 1) the calculation method(s) being used (i.e., risk ratio, weighted risk ratio, e-formula, etc.); and 2) the threshold at which disproportionate representation is identified. Also include, as appropriate, 3) the number of years of data used in the calculation; and 4) any minimum cell and/or n-sizes (i.e., risk numerator and/or risk denominator).

Based on its review of the section 618 data for the reporting year, describe how the State made its annual determination as to whether the disproportionate representation it identified of racial and ethnic groups in specific disability categories was the result of inappropriate identification as required by 34 CFR §§300.600(d)(3) and 300.602(a), (e.g., using monitoring data; reviewing policies, practices and procedures). In determining disproportionate representation, analyze data, for each district, for all racial and ethnic groups in the district, or all racial and ethnic groups in the district that meet a minimum n and/or cell size set by the State. Report on the percent of districts in which disproportionate representation of racial and ethnic groups in specific disability categories is the result of inappropriate identification, even if the determination of inappropriate identification was made after the end of the FFY 2022 reporting period (i.e., after June 30, 2023).

**Instructions**

Provide racial/ethnic disproportionality data for all children aged 5 who are enrolled in kindergarten and aged 6 through 21 served under IDEA. Provide these data at a minimum for children in the following six disability categories: intellectual disability, specific learning disabilities, emotional disturbance, speech or language impairments, other health impairments, and autism. If a State has identified disproportionate representation of racial and ethnic groups in specific disability categories other than these six disability categories, the State must include these data and report on whether the State determined that the disproportionate representation of racial and ethnic groups in specific disability categories was the result of inappropriate identification. Provide the actual numbers used in the calculation.

States are not required to report on underrepresentation.

If the State has established a minimum n and/or cell size requirement, the State may only include, in both the numerator and the denominator, districts that met that State-established n and/or cell size. If the State used a minimum n and/or cell size requirement, report the number of districts totally excluded from the calculation as a result of this requirement because the district did not meet the minimum n and/or cell size for any racial/ethnic group.

Consider using multiple methods in calculating disproportionate representation of racial and ethnic groups to reduce the risk of overlooking potential problems. Describe the method(s) used to calculate disproportionate representation.

Provide the number of districts that met the State-established n and/or cell size (if applicable) for one or more racial/ethnic groups identified with disproportionate representation of racial and ethnic groups in specific disability categories and the number of those districts identified with disproportionate representation that is the result of inappropriate identification.

Targets must be 0%.

Provide detailed information about the timely correction of child-specific and regulatory/systemic noncompliance as noted in OSEP’s response for the previous SPP/APR. If the State did not ensure timely correction of the previous noncompliance, provide information on the extent to which noncompliance was subsequently corrected (more than one year after identification). In addition, provide information regarding the nature of any continuing noncompliance, improvement activities completed (e.g., review of policies and procedures, technical assistance, training) and any enforcement actions that were taken.

If the State reported less than 100% compliance for the previous reporting period (e.g., for the FFY 2022 SPP/APR, the data for FFY 2021), and the State did not identify any findings of noncompliance, provide an explanation of why the State did not identify any findings of noncompliance.

## 10 - Indicator Data

**Not Applicable**

**Select yes if this indicator is not applicable.**

NO

**Historical Data**

| **Baseline Year** | **Baseline Data** |
| --- | --- |
| 2020 | 0.00% |

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **FFY** | **2017** | **2018** | **2019** | **2020** | **2021** |
| Target | 0% | 0% | 0% | 0% | 0% |
| Data | 0.00% | 0.00% | 0.00% | 0.00% | 0.00% |

**Targets**

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **FFY** | **2022** | **2023** | **2024** | **2025** |
| Target | 0% | 0% | 0% | 0% |

**FFY 2022 SPP/APR Data**

**Has the state established a minimum n and/or cell size requirement? (yes/no)**

YES

**If yes, the State may only include, in both the numerator and the denominator, districts that met the State-established n and/or cell size. Report the number of districts excluded from the calculation as a result of the requirement.**

43

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Number of districts with disproportionate representation of racial/ethnic groups in specific disability categories** | **Number of districts with disproportionate representation of racial/ethnic groups in specific disability categories that is the result of inappropriate identification** | **Number of districts that met the State's minimum n and/or cell size** | **FFY 2021 Data** | **FFY 2022 Target** | **FFY 2022 Data** | **Status** | **Slippage** |
| 4 | 4 | 356 | 0.00% | 0% | 1.12% | Did not meet target | Slippage |

**Provide reasons for slippage, if applicable**

For FFY2022, MA DESE's monitoring unit conducted a PPP review of the four LEAs identified, through data analysis, of having disproportionate representation in racial/ethnic groups in specific disability categories. As a result of this review, a determination of non-compliance within the LEA Policies, Practices, and Procedures was found, thus the data showing an increase from the previous year, when no non-compliance was identified. The Department found that various factors, such as lack of bilingual evaluations and lack of support provided prior to referral, may have contributed to the noncompliance in the four LEAs, and in turn may have contributed to the slippage.

**Were all races and ethnicities included in the review?**

YES

**Define “disproportionate representation.” Please specify in your definition: 1) the calculation method(s) being used (i.e., risk ratio, weighted risk ratio, e-formula, etc.); and 2) the threshold at which disproportionate representation is identified. Also include, as appropriate, 3) the number of years of data used in the calculation; and 4) any minimum cell and/or n-sizes (i.e., risk numerator and/or risk denominator).**

Massachusetts defines “disproportionate representation” using a calculation of weighted or alternate risk ratios and a review of the appropriateness of an LEA’s policies, practices, and procedures (PPPs) for identifying students as eligible for special education services.

MA DESE calculates a weighted or alternate risk ratio for every LEA in each of the six required disability categories (intellectual impairments, specific learning disabilities, emotional disturbance, speech/language impairments, other health impairments, autism) using a minimum cell size of 10 for each racial/ethnic disability group in every LEA. In LEAs in which there are at least 10 students with disabilities in both the racial/ethnic disability group and the comparison group, MA DESE uses a weighted risk ratio. In cases where there are fewer than 10 students in the comparison group, MA DESE employs the alternate risk ratio. Cells of fewer than 10, though removed from the calculation, are reviewed individually to see if data irregularities for specific racial and ethnic groups in these LEAs would suggest disproportionate representation. All cells of greater than 10 are retained in the data set and are used to calculate disproportionate representation. Once the calculation is made for each LEA, the weighted or alternate risk ratios are compared to the two previous years’ weighted or alternate risk ratios. LEAs are flagged if, for three consecutive years, they exhibit a weighted or alternate risk ratio of 4.0 or greater for possible over-representation.

All LEAs identified by way of this quantitative analysis are then subject to a review by LEA staff and MA DESE of the appropriateness of their PPPs for special education eligibility determination and disability identification, along with any other information that may explain the pattern of disproportionate representation. Upon review, if MA DESE identifies that the PPPs are inappropriate or otherwise inconsistent with federal and state regulations and concludes that the PPPs likely caused the disproportionate representation, then the LEA is identified as having disproportionate representation due to inappropriate identification and is required to take corrective action.

For the FFY 2022 analysis, Massachusetts used the October 1, 2022 enrollment and child count data that it collects from LEAs through its Student Information Management System (SIMS). Three hundred ninety-eight LEAs were in operation in Massachusetts in October 2022, and 43 LEAs did not have at least 10 students with disabilities in any racial/ethnic disability group, leaving 356 LEAs that met the state’s cell size requirement for at least one racial/ethnic disability group.

The four LEAs were flagged for the following reasons:
• One Charter School: Hispanic and Latino Students with Emotional Disabilities
• One School District: African American and Black Students with Specific Learning Disabilities
• One Charter School: Hispanic and Latino Students with Specific Learning Disabilities
• One School District: Hispanic and Latino Students with Communication Disabilities

**Describe how the State made its annual determination as to whether the disproportionate overrepresentation it identified of racial and ethnic groups in specific disability categories was the result of inappropriate identification.**

If an LEA displays a weighted or alternate risk ratio that exceeds 4.0 for three consecutive years for any racial/ethnic group in any disability area, MA DESE follows up to review the appropriateness of the LEA’s policies, practices, and procedures (PPPs). MA DESE requires the LEA to submit its PPPs regarding eligibility determination, along with any other data and information that may explain the pattern of disproportionate representation, including:

• LEA policies and practices regarding child find, student support teams, and special education referral and evaluation.
• Descriptions of tiered systems of support and/or other supports for struggling students in place within the LEA prior to referral for special education.
• Information regarding the LEA’s collaboration with other organizations (sending districts, local Early Intervention providers, etc.), if applicable.
• Information regarding any training or support that the LEA provides staff around cultural competency.

MA DESE then reviews this information to determine whether the disproportionate representation is the result of inappropriate identification. For FFY2022, MA DESE, as a result of the PPP review and other supporting documentation, has determined that there is evidence of non-compliance in all four of the identified LEAs. Various factors contributed to the identification of non-compliance, such as the lack of evidence of bilingual evaluations and that while there is evidence of within one LEA’s PPP's of supports prior to referral for special education services, there is not specific information that addresses the disproportionate identification of various racial/ethnic groups in specific disability categories. While these factor may not be the identifying reasons of inappropriate identification, MA DESE has determined that it could be a contributing factor.

As a result of the LEA PPP review and findings of non-compliance, MA DESE operated under OSEP Guidance 23-01 to issue letters of finding of non-compliance to the four LEAs within 90 days of the finding and direct them to partake in corrective action planning and revision of their PPP's to address the non-compliance. In the FFY2023 SPP/APR, MA DESE will provide detailed explanation of these activities and the resulting correction of the non-compliance.

**Provide additional information about this indicator (optional)**

**Correction of Findings of Noncompliance Identified in FFY 2021**

| **Findings of Noncompliance Identified** | **Findings of Noncompliance Verified as Corrected Within One Year** | **Findings of Noncompliance Subsequently Corrected** | **Findings Not Yet Verified as Corrected** |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |

**Correction of Findings of Noncompliance Identified Prior to FFY 2021**

| **Year Findings of Noncompliance Were Identified** | **Findings of Noncompliance Not Yet Verified as Corrected as of FFY 2021 APR** | **Findings of Noncompliance Verified as Corrected** | **Findings Not Yet Verified as Corrected** |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  |  |  |  |
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## 10 - Prior FFY Required Actions

None

## 10 - OSEP Response

## 10 - Required Actions

Because the State reported less than 100% compliance for FFY 2023 (greater than 0% actual target data for this indicator), the State must report on the status of correction of noncompliance identified in FFY 2022 for this indicator. The State must demonstrate, in the FFY 2023 SPP/APR, that the four districts identified in FFY 2022 with disproportionate representation of racial and ethnic groups in specific disability categories that was the result of inappropriate identification are in compliance with the requirements in 34 C.F.R. §§ 300.111, 300.201, and 300.301 through 300.311, including that the State verified that each district with noncompliance: (1) is correctly implementing the specific regulatory requirement(s) (i.e., achieved 100% compliance) based on a review of updated data such as data subsequently collected through on-site monitoring or a State data system; and (2) has corrected each individual case of noncompliance, unless the child is no longer within the jurisdiction of the district, consistent with OSEP QA 23-01. In the FFY 2023 SPP/APR, the State must describe the specific actions that were taken to verify the correction.

If the State did not identify any findings of noncompliance in FFY 2022, although its FFY 2022 data reflect less than 100% compliance (greater than 0% actual target data for this indicator), provide an explanation of why the State did not identify any findings of noncompliance in FFY 2022.

# Indicator 11: Child Find

**Instructions and Measurement**

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

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

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

**Data Source**

Data to be taken from State monitoring or State data system and must be based on actual, not an average, number of days. Indicate if the State has established a timeline and, if so, what is the State’s timeline for initial evaluations.

**Measurement**

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

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

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

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

**Instructions**

*If data are from State monitoring, describe the method used to select LEAs for monitoring. If data are from a State database, include data for the entire reporting year.*

Describe the results of the calculations and compare the results to the target. Describe the method used to collect these data, and if data are from the State’s monitoring, describe the procedures used to collect these data. Provide the actual numbers used in the calculation.

Note that under 34 CFR §300.301(d), the timeframe set for initial evaluation does not apply to a public agency if: (1) the parent of a child repeatedly fails or refuses to produce the child for the evaluation; or (2) a child enrolls in a school of another public agency after the timeframe for initial evaluations has begun, and prior to a determination by the child’s previous public agency as to whether the child is a child with a disability. States should not report these exceptions in either the numerator (b) or denominator (a). If the State-established timeframe provides for exceptions through State regulation or policy, describe cases falling within those exceptions and include in b.

Targets must be 100%.

Provide detailed information about the timely correction of child-specific and regulatory/systemic noncompliance as noted in OSEP’s response for the previous SPP/APR. If the State did not ensure timely correction of the previous noncompliance, provide information on the extent to which noncompliance was subsequently corrected (more than one year after identification). In addition, provide information regarding the nature of any continuing noncompliance, improvement activities completed (e.g., review of policies and procedures, technical assistance, training) and any enforcement actions that were taken.

If the State reported less than 100% compliance for the previous reporting period (e.g., for the FFY 2022 SPP/APR, the data for FFY 2021), and the State did not identify any findings of noncompliance, provide an explanation of why the State did not identify any findings of noncompliance.

## 11 - Indicator Data

**Historical Data**

| **Baseline Year** | **Baseline Data** |
| --- | --- |
| 2022 | 95.32% |

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **FFY** | **2017** | **2018** | **2019** | **2020** | **2021** |
| Target | 100% | 100% | 100% | 100% | 100% |
| Data | 96.50% | 91.69% | 97.28% | 93.49% | 88.38% |

**Targets**

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **FFY** | **2022** | **2023** | **2024** | **2025** |
| Target | 100% | 100% | 100% | 100% |

**FFY 2022 SPP/APR Data**

| **(a) Number of children for whom parental consent to evaluate was received** | **(b) Number of children whose evaluations were completed within 60 days (or State-established timeline)** | **FFY 2021 Data** | **FFY 2022 Target** | **FFY 2022 Data** | **Status** | **Slippage** |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| 1,324 | 1,262 | 88.38% | 100% | 95.32% | N/A | N/A |

**Number of children included in (a) but not included in (b)**

62

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

In FFY 2022, there were 62 students in 19 LEAs for whom initial evaluations were not completed within the state-established timeline of 45 school working days. The range of days beyond the state’s 45 school working day timeline was a minimum of 1 school working day and a maximum of 45 school working days. Out of the 62 records with noncompliance, 4.84% of records did not yet have eligibility determined at the time the data were collected.

Of the records with eligibility determined, on average those delays exceeded the state-established timeline by 9.53 school working days. MA DESE also analyzed the range of days beyond the timeline using the mean, median, and mode for the number of school working days beyond the 45-day timeline. The mean number of days beyond the 45-day timeline, as reported above, was 9.53 days, the median was 5 days beyond the 45-day timeline, and the mode was 1 day beyond the 45-day timeline.

LEA-related issues with scheduling and timing of evaluations, as well as staffing shortages, are not acceptable reasons for delay. Those records reporting these reasons for delay were determined to be noncompliant in the FFY 2022 data set. Of the delays reported in FFY 2022, 37.10% were attributed to insufficient staff availability; 29.03% to LEAs or schools having a scheduling conflict; 22.58% to lack of qualified staff (e.g., school psychologist); and 11.29% to LEAs’ not receiving evaluators’ reports on time.

**Indicate the evaluation timeline used:**

The State established a timeline within which the evaluation must be conducted

**What is the State’s timeline for initial evaluations? If the State-established timeframe provides for exceptions through State regulation or policy, describe cases falling within those exceptions and include in (b).**

MA DESE’s timeline for initial evaluations is 45 school working days. See 603 CMR 28.05(1): Special Education - Education Laws and Regulations (https://www.doe.mass.edu/lawsregs/603cmr28.html?section=05).

603 CMR 28.05: The Team Process and Development of the IEP states:

Within 45 school working days after receipt of a parent’s written consent to an initial evaluation or reevaluation, the school district shall: provide an evaluation; convene a Team meeting to review the evaluation data, determine whether the student requires special education and, if required, develop an IEP in accordance with state and federal laws; and provide the parents with two copies of the proposed IEP and proposed placement, except that the proposal of placement may be delayed according to the provisions of 603 CMR 28.06(2)(e); or, if the Team determines that the student is not eligible for special education, the school district shall send a written explanation of the finding that the student is not eligible. The evaluation assessments shall be completed within 30 school working days after receipt of parental consent for evaluation. Summaries of such assessments shall be completed so as to ensure their availability to parents at least two days prior to the Team meeting. If consent is received within 30 to 45 school working days before the end of the school year, the school district shall ensure that a Team meeting is scheduled so as to allow for the provision of a proposed IEP or written notice of the finding that the student is not eligible no later than 14 days after the end of the school year.

**What is the source of the data provided for this indicator?**

State monitoring

**Describe the method used to collect these data, and if data are from the State’s monitoring, describe the procedures used to collect these data.**

MA DESE collected Indicator 11 data through the Tiered Focused Monitoring (TFM) review process conducted by MA DESE’s Public School Monitoring Office (PSM). Please see the SPP/APR Introduction section for a detailed explanation of this process. When gathering data for this FFY 2022 submission, MA DESE conducted a two-step verification process in which data validation and clarification occurred when it contacted LEAs to explain their data reporting prior to issuing formal letters of finding alongside the required correction activities. This process resulted in 19 LEAs with findings of non-compliance. The 19 LEAs are currently developing and implementing their comprehensive corrective action plans and/or submitting subsequent data to the MA DESE to demonstrate compliance with regulatory requirements.

**Provide additional information about this indicator (optional)**

Of all the evaluations completed and reported in this FFY 2022 submission, 837 students were determined eligible for special education services, 476 students were determined not eligible for special education services, and 11 students did not yet have eligibility determined when the data were collected.

For FFY 2022, the baseline for Indicator 11 has been reset to FFY 2022, with this year’s compliance rate of 95.32% reflecting the new baseline data. Clarifications to the response options and reasons for delay (consistent with federal and state regulations) in the data collection tool used for state monitoring (data source), as well as revised guidance from MA DESE around this Indicator, resulted in data that will no longer be comparable to data reported in prior years, including the previous baseline year of FFY 2017. For this reason, MA DESE has updated the baseline to ensure that data will be comparable in subsequent years.

**Correction of Findings of Noncompliance Identified in FFY 2021**

| **Findings of Noncompliance Identified** | **Findings of Noncompliance Verified as Corrected Within One Year** | **Findings of Noncompliance Subsequently Corrected** | **Findings Not Yet Verified as Corrected** |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| 20 | 20 | 0 | 0 |

**FFY 2021 Findings of Noncompliance Verified as Corrected**

**Describe how the State verified that the source of noncompliance is correctly implementing the *regulatory requirements***

In its FFY 2021 SPP/APR, MA DESE made 20 findings of noncompliance for Indicator 11. MA DESE required each of the 20 LEAs with one or more of the 143 cases of noncompliance to assess the root cause(s) of noncompliance and to take corrective actions to amend policy or practice, and/or to develop and implement appropriate systems that ensure timelines are met and eligible students receive services in a timely manner. MA DESE verified that these corrective action activities occurred by reviewing documentation provided by the 20 LEAs. Additionally, MA DESE examined a second, supplementary data set submitted by each of the 20 LEAs and verified that each LEA was reporting 100% compliance with the regulatory requirements following the implementation of corrective action activities and within one year of issuing findings of noncompliance, consistent with OSEP QA 23-01.

Actions and/or activities LEAs engaged in to address noncompliance for FFY 2021 included the aforementioned completion of root cause analysis; creation of new initial evaluation protocols; adoption of new tracking tools to monitor timelines; training relevant staff on revised procedures for initial evaluations; periodic/monthly internal reviews to ensure compliance is sustained; weekly meetings with the Special Education Director, Evaluation Team Leaders and Special Education Coordinators to assess progress toward meeting timelines; and comprehensive review of the district’s policies, practices, and procedures for conducting bilingual special education evaluations.

**Describe how the State verified that each *individual case* of noncompliance was corrected**

The state verified that 100% of the individual cases of noncompliance in FFY 2021 were corrected within one year of issuing findings of noncompliance by examining corrective action reports and documentary evidence of correction of noncompliance, including subsequent data as appropriate. Each LEA was able to provide evidence that 100% of the evaluations had been completed for all students affected by the noncompliance, consistent with the OSEP QA 23-01.

**Correction of Findings of Noncompliance Identified Prior to FFY 2021**

| **Year Findings of Noncompliance Were Identified** | **Findings of Noncompliance Not Yet Verified as Corrected as of FFY 2021 APR** | **Findings of Noncompliance Verified as Corrected** | **Findings Not Yet Verified as Corrected** |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
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|  |  |  |  |

## 11 - Prior FFY Required Actions

Because the State reported less than 100% compliance for FFY 2021, the State must report on the status of correction of noncompliance identified in FFY 2021 for this indicator. When reporting on the correction of noncompliance, the State must report, in the FFY 2022 SPP/APR, that it has verified that each LEA with noncompliance identified in FFY 2021 for this indicator: (1) is correctly implementing the specific regulatory requirements (i.e., achieved 100% compliance) based on a review of updated data such as data subsequently collected through on-site monitoring or a State data system; and (2) has corrected each individual case of noncompliance, unless the child is no longer within the jurisdiction of the LEA, consistent with OSEP Memo 09-02. In the FFY 2022 SPP/APR, the State must describe the specific actions that were taken to verify the correction.

If the State did not identify any findings of noncompliance in FFY 2021, although its FFY 2021 data reflect less than 100% compliance, provide an explanation of why the State did not identify any findings of noncompliance in FFY 2021.

**Response to actions required in FFY 2021 SPP/APR**

See information on the correction of noncompliance for FFY 2021 reported above in the section “Correction of Findings of Noncompliance Identified in FFY 2021”.

## 11 - OSEP Response

The State has revised the baseline for this indicator, using data from FFY 2022, and OSEP accepts that revision.

## 11 - Required Actions

Because the State reported less than 100% compliance for FFY 2022, the State must report on the status of correction of noncompliance identified in FFY 2022 for this indicator. When reporting on the correction of noncompliance, the State must report, in the FFY 2023 SPP/APR, that it has verified that each LEA with noncompliance identified in FFY 2022 for this indicator: (1) is correctly implementing the specific regulatory requirements (i.e., achieved 100% compliance) based on a review of updated data such as data subsequently collected through on-site monitoring or a State data system; and (2) has corrected each individual case of noncompliance, unless the child is no longer within the jurisdiction of the LEA, consistent with OSEP QA 23-01. In the FFY 2023 SPP/APR, the State must describe the specific actions that were taken to verify the correction.

If the State did not identify any findings of noncompliance in FFY 2022, although its FFY 2022 data reflect less than 100% compliance, provide an explanation of why the State did not identify any findings of noncompliance in FFY 2022.

# Indicator 12: Early Childhood Transition

**Instructions and Measurement**

**Monitoring Priorit**y: Effective General Supervision Part B / Effective Transition

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

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

**Data Source**

Data to be taken from State monitoring or State data system.

**Measurement**

 a. # of children who have been served in Part C and referred to Part B for Part B eligibility determination.

 b. # of those referred determined to be NOT eligible and whose eligibility was determined prior to their third birthdays.

 c. # of those found eligible who have an IEP developed and implemented by their third birthdays.

 d. # of children for whom parent refusal to provide consent caused delays in evaluation or initial services or to whom exceptions under 34 CFR §300.301(d) applied.

 e. # of children determined to be eligible for early intervention services under Part C less than 90 days before their third birthdays.

 f. # of children whose parents chose to continue early intervention services beyond the child’s third birthday through a State’s policy under 34 CFR §303.211 or a similar State option.

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

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

**Instructions**

*If data are from State monitoring, describe the method used to select LEAs for monitoring. If data are from a State database, include data for the entire reporting year.*

Describe the results of the calculations and compare the results to the target. Describe the method used to collect these data and if data are from the State’s monitoring, describe the procedures used to collect these data. Provide the actual numbers used in the calculation.

Targets must be 100%.

Category f is to be used only by States that have an approved policy for providing parents the option of continuing early intervention services beyond the child’s third birthday under 34 CFR §303.211 or a similar State option.

Provide detailed information about the timely correction of child-specific and regulatory/systemic noncompliance as noted in OSEP’s response for the previous SPP/APR. If the State did not ensure timely correction of the previous noncompliance, provide information on the extent to which noncompliance was subsequently corrected (more than one year after identification). In addition, provide information regarding the nature of any continuing noncompliance, improvement activities completed (e.g., review of policies and procedures, technical assistance, training) and any enforcement actions that were taken.

If the State reported less than 100% compliance for the previous reporting period (e.g., for the FFY 2022 SPP/APR, the data for FFY 2021), and the State did not identify any findings of noncompliance, provide an explanation of why the State did not identify any findings of noncompliance.

## 12 - Indicator Data

**Not Applicable**

**Select yes if this indicator is not applicable.**

NO

**Historical Data**

| **Baseline Year** | **Baseline Data** |
| --- | --- |
| 2021 | 64.55% |

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **FFY** | **2017** | **2018** | **2019** | **2020** | **2021** |
| Target | 100% | 100% | 100% | 100% | 100% |
| Data | 92.12% | 82.93% | 72.45% | 57.58% | 64.55% |

**Targets**

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **FFY** | **2022** | **2023** | **2024** | **2025** |
| Target | 100% | 100% | 100% | 100% |

**FFY 2022 SPP/APR Data**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| a. Number of children who have been served in Part C and referred to Part B for Part B eligibility determination.  | 243 |
| b. Number of those referred determined to be NOT eligible and whose eligibility was determined prior to third birthday.  | 37 |
| c. Number of those found eligible who have an IEP developed and implemented by their third birthdays.  | 63 |
| d. Number for whom parent refusals to provide consent caused delays in evaluation or initial services or to whom exceptions under 34 CFR §300.301(d) applied.  | 98 |
| e. Number of children who were referred to Part C less than 90 days before their third birthdays.  | 11 |
| f. Number of children whose parents chose to continue early intervention services beyond the child’s third birthday through a State’s policy under 34 CFR §303.211 or a similar State option. | 0 |

| **Measure** | **Numerator (c)** | **Denominator (a-b-d-e-f)** | **FFY 2021 Data** | **FFY 2022 Target** | **FFY 2022 Data** | **Status** | **Slippage** |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Percent of children referred by Part C prior to age 3 who are found eligible for Part B, and who have an IEP developed and implemented by their third birthdays. | 63 | 97 | 64.55% | 100% | 64.95% | Did not meet target | No Slippage |

**Number of children who served in Part C and referred to Part B for eligibility determination that are not included in b, c, d, e, or f**

34

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

In FFY 2022, there were 34 children in 12 LEAs who were referred by Part C prior to age 3 who were either not eligible but did not have eligibility determined prior to their third birthdays or who were eligible but who did not have an IEP developed and implemented by their third birthdays. Of these 34 records, 29.41% of the children were determined not eligible after their third birthdays. The range of days between third birthdays and eligibility determination for children ultimately determined not eligible was 1 to 118 days. The average number of days between the third birthday and eligibility meeting in which children were found not eligible was 41.9 days. Of the 34 noncompliant records, 50% were children determined eligible who had IEPs implemented after their third birthdays. The range of days between third birthdays and eligibility determination for children ultimately determined not eligible was 9 to 119 days. The average number of days between the third birthday and eligibility meeting in which children were found not eligible was 65.35 days. The remaining 20.59% of noncompliant records were children determined eligible who did not have IEPs implemented at the time of data collection.

Of the delays reported in FFY 2022, 58.82% were attributed to delays due to district scheduling conflicts and 41.18% were attributed to delays due to insufficient staff availability to complete evaluations on time (excessive caseload).

**Attach PDF table (optional)**

**What is the source of the data provided for this indicator?**

State monitoring

**Describe the method used to collect these data, and if data are from the State’s monitoring, describe the procedures used to collect these data.**

FFY 2022 Indicator 12 data activities were managed by the MA DESE office of Public School Monitoring (PSM) as part of the Tiered Focused Monitoring (TFM) review process. Please see the SPP/APR Introduction section for a detailed explanation of this process. For Indicator 12 reporting, LEAs submitted information in the MA DESE web-based monitoring system for student records that included the following data points: date of child’s birthday, date of child’s third birthday, date of eligibility for Part C services, date of referral, date LEAs received referral from Part C Early Intervention (EI) programs, date of parent consent, date of evaluation, date of Eligibility/IEP Team meetings, date of IEP implementation, date when written consent for services was received, eligibility status, IEP implementation status, and information about reasons for delay, if any.

For the FFY 2022 reporting period, participating LEAs were required to report data and referrals from EI, eligibility determination, and IEP implementation for children turning three in January, February, and March of 2023.

**Provide additional information about this indicator (optional)**

Of all the evaluations completed in and reported in this FFY 2022 submission, 188 (77.37%) of children were deemed to be eligible for Part B special education services and 55 (22.63%) were deemed not eligible for Part B special education services.

**Correction of Findings of Noncompliance Identified in FFY 2021**

| **Findings of Noncompliance Identified** | **Findings of Noncompliance Verified as Corrected Within One Year** | **Findings of Noncompliance Subsequently Corrected** | **Findings Not Yet Verified as Corrected** |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| 15 | 15 | 0 | 0 |

**FFY 2021 Findings of Noncompliance Verified as Corrected**

**Describe how the State verified that the source of noncompliance is correctly implementing the *regulatory requirements***

In FFY 2022, MA DESE made 15 findings of noncompliance for Indicator 12. MA DESE required each of the 15 LEAs to take corrective actions to amend policy or practice and/or develop and implement appropriate systems that ensure that timelines are met and eligible students receive services in a timely manner. MA DESE verified that these activities occurred by reviewing supplemental documentation provided by the LEAs. Additionally, MA DESE examined a second, supplementary data set submitted by each LEA and verified that all 15 LEAs are now reporting 100% compliance with the regulatory requirements following the implementation of corrective action activities and within one year of issuing findings of noncompliance, consistent with OSEP QA 23-01.

The LEAs with noncompliance were required to create focused corrective action plans. Examples of actions in these LEA-created plans included: implementing an online referral process and revising LEA online tracking systems to capture all relevant information; creating immediate access for preschool program administrators and staff; creation of new bi-weekly preschool staff meetings to review tracking data and troubleshoot referrals and evaluations; creation of new monthly meetings of preschool administrators to review referrals and evaluations and discuss the efficacy of processes and procedures to ensure compliant timelines and immediate provision of services; trainings for EI evaluation team members; sending notices/materials to EI staff and LEA staff around Indicator 12 timelines; training on Indicator 12 timelines for staff, including LEA and school administrators; participation of a preschool special education administrator in Regional Collaborative Early Childhood meetings; and collaboration with an LEA’s Family Resource Center to get information to families.

**Describe how the State verified that each *individual case* of noncompliance was corrected**

MA DESE verified that 100% of the individual cases of noncompliance were corrected by examining the 15 LEAs’ subsequent data submissions, consistent with OSEP QA 23-01. These verification activities included requiring LEAs to submit the subsequent date of IEP implementation for noncompliant records, a subsequent corrective action report completed for LEAs with noncompliant records, and documentation of evidence of correction of individual records with noncompliance (using subsequent data as appropriate). Each LEA was able to provide evidence that each evaluation for those children affected by the noncompliance had been completed and, as appropriate, the IEP was implemented after the receipt of the signed IEP for the children affected by the noncompliance.

**Correction of Findings of Noncompliance Identified Prior to FFY 2021**

| **Year Findings of Noncompliance Were Identified** | **Findings of Noncompliance Not Yet Verified as Corrected as of FFY 2021 APR** | **Findings of Noncompliance Verified as Corrected** | **Findings Not Yet Verified as Corrected** |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
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## 12 - Prior FFY Required Actions

Because the State reported less than 100% compliance for FFY 2021, the State must report on the status of correction of noncompliance identified in FFY 2021 for this indicator. When reporting on the correction of noncompliance, the State must report, in the FFY 2022 SPP/APR, that it has verified that each LEA with noncompliance identified in FFY 2021 for this indicator: (1) is correctly implementing the specific regulatory requirements (i.e., achieved 100% compliance) based on a review of updated data such as data subsequently collected through on-site monitoring or a State data system; and (2) has corrected each individual case of noncompliance, unless the child is no longer within the jurisdiction of the LEA, consistent with OSEP Memo 09-02. In the FFY 2022 SPP/APR, the State must describe the specific actions that were taken to verify the correction.

If the State did not identify any findings of noncompliance in FFY 2021, although its FFY 2021 data reflect less than 100% compliance, provide an explanation of why the State did not identify any findings of noncompliance in FFY 2021.

**Response to actions required in FFY 2021 SPP/APR**

See information on the correction of noncompliance for FFY 2021 reported above in the section “Correction of Findings of Noncompliance Identified in FFY 2021”.

## 12 - OSEP Response

## 12 - Required Actions

Because the State reported less than 100% compliance for FFY 2022, the State must report on the status of correction of noncompliance identified in FFY 2022 for this indicator. When reporting on the correction of noncompliance, the State must report, in the FFY 2023 SPP/APR, that it has verified that each LEA with noncompliance identified in FFY 2022 for this indicator: (1) is correctly implementing the specific regulatory requirements (i.e., achieved 100% compliance) based on a review of updated data such as data subsequently collected through on-site monitoring or a State data system; and (2) has corrected each individual case of noncompliance, unless the child is no longer within the jurisdiction of the LEA, consistent with OSEP QA 23-01. In the FFY 2023 SPP/APR, the State must describe the specific actions that were taken to verify the correction.

If the State did not identify any findings of noncompliance in FFY 2022, although its FFY 2022 data reflect less than 100% compliance, provide an explanation of why the State did not identify any findings of noncompliance in FFY 2022.

# Indicator 13: Secondary Transition

**Instructions and Measurement**

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

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

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

**Data Source**

Data to be taken from State monitoring or State data system.

**Measurement**

Percent = [(# of youth with IEPs aged 16 and above with an IEP that includes appropriate measurable postsecondary goals that are annually updated and based upon an age appropriate transition assessment, transition services, including courses of study, that will reasonably enable the student to meet those postsecondary goals, and annual IEP goals related to the student’s transition services needs. There also must be evidence that the student was invited to the IEP Team meeting where transition services are to be discussed and evidence that, if appropriate, a representative of any participating agency 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) divided by the (# of youth with an IEP age 16 and above)] times 100.

If a State’s policies and procedures provide that public agencies must meet these requirements at an age younger than 16, the State may, but is not required to, choose to include youth beginning at that younger age in its data for this indicator. If a State chooses to do this, it must state this clearly in its SPP/APR and ensure that its baseline data are based on youth beginning at that younger age.

**Instructions**

*If data are from State monitoring, describe the method used to select LEAs for monitoring. If data are from a State database, include data for the entire reporting year.*

Describe the results of the calculations and compare the results to the target. Describe the method used to collect these data and if data are from the State’s monitoring, describe the procedures used to collect these data. Provide the actual numbers used in the calculation.

Targets must be 100%.

Provide detailed information about the timely correction of child-specific and regulatory/systemic noncompliance as noted in OSEP’s response for the previous SPP/APR. If the State did not ensure timely correction of the previous noncompliance, provide information on the extent to which noncompliance was subsequently corrected (more than one year after identification). In addition, provide information regarding the nature of any continuing noncompliance, improvement activities completed (e.g., review of policies and procedures, technical assistance, training) and any enforcement actions that were taken.

If the State reported less than 100% compliance for the previous reporting period (e.g., for the FFY 2022 SPP/APR, the data for FFY 2021), and the State did not identify any findings of noncompliance, provide an explanation of why the State did not identify any findings of noncompliance.

## 13 - Indicator Data

**Historical Data**

| **Baseline Year** | **Baseline Data** |
| --- | --- |
| 2017 | 97.09% |

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **FFY** | **2017** | **2018** | **2019** | **2020** | **2021** |
| Target | 100% | 100% | 100% | 100% | 100% |
| Data | 97.09% | 96.99% | 97.45% | 97.46% | 94.74% |

**Targets**

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **FFY** | **2022** | **2023** | **2024** | **2025** |
| Target | 100% | 100% | 100% | 100% |

**FFY 2022 SPP/APR Data**

| **Number of youth aged 16 and above with IEPs that contain each of the required components for secondary transition** | **Number of youth with IEPs aged 16 and above** | **FFY 2021 Data** | **FFY 2022 Target** | **FFY 2022 Data** | **Status** | **Slippage** |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| 1,714 | 1,759 | 94.74% | 100% | 97.44% | Did not meet target | No Slippage |

**What is the source of the data provided for this indicator?**

State monitoring

**Describe the method used to collect these data, and if data are from the State’s monitoring, describe the procedures used to collect these data.**

MA DESE collected Indicator 13 data through its Tiered Focused Monitoring (TFM) system, through which the indicator is integrated into LEAs’ comprehensive self-assessments on a six-year rotating cohort cycle. Please see the SPP/APR Introduction section for a detailed explanation of this monitoring process managed by the MA DESE office of Public School Monitoring (PSM).

Using the Massachusetts Postsecondary Transition Planning Checklist for Indicator 13, all LEAs in the cohort evaluated a representative sample of files for students aged 14-22 with IEPs and provided responses to the checklist in the web-based monitoring system managed by PSM.

| **Question** | **Yes / No** |
| --- | --- |
| Do the State’s policies and procedures provide that public agencies must meet these requirements at an age younger than 16?  | YES |
| If yes, did the State choose to include youth at an age younger than 16 in its data for this indicator and ensure that its baseline data are based on youth beginning at that younger age? | YES |
| If yes, at what age are youth included in the data for this indicator | 14 |

**Provide additional information about this indicator (optional)**

For FFY 2022, MA DESE identified 45 records with noncompliance, issued Indicator 13 findings for 9 LEAs with this noncompliance, and engaged with those LEAs in corrective activities such as those detailed below for FFY 2021. These corrections of noncompliance are consistent with the OSEP QA 23-01 and will entail the state’s verifying correction of individual instances of noncompliance (45 records) as well as verifying that the source of noncompliance (9 LEAs) is correctly implementing the regulatory requirements. MA DESE will report on the compliance status of these 9 LEAs in the FFY 2023 SPP/APR.

**Correction of Findings of Noncompliance Identified in FFY 2021**

| **Findings of Noncompliance Identified** | **Findings of Noncompliance Verified as Corrected Within One Year** | **Findings of Noncompliance Subsequently Corrected** | **Findings Not Yet Verified as Corrected** |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| 8 | 8 | 0 | 0 |

**FFY 2021 Findings of Noncompliance Verified as Corrected**

**Describe how the State verified that the source of noncompliance is correctly implementing the *regulatory requirements***

In its FFY 2021 APR, MA DESE made 8 findings of noncompliance for Indicator 13. MA DESE required each of the 8 LEAs that were the source of 92 individual cases of noncompliance to take corrective actions to amend policy or practice and/or to develop and implement systems that ensure appropriate and compliant postsecondary transition plans are in place for students ages 14-22. Through active communication to ensure oversight and through the submission of subsequent data documenting compliance, MA DESE verified that these corrective action plans were appropriate. LEA plans included elements such as conducting root cause analysis to determine the source of noncompliance; revising procedures and protocols for postsecondary transition plans; conducting staff training on postsecondary transition plans; establishing a regular schedule of staff training; and instituting periodic reviews of student records to verify compliance.

The 8 LEAs were also required to submit subsequent student records to demonstrate systemic compliance after completion of corrective actions and within one year of being issued findings of noncompliance. Through completion of both the corrective actions (verified as compliant and complete by the state) and demonstrated 100% compliance in review of subsequent student records, the state verified that all 8 LEAs that were the source of noncompliance are now correctly implementing the regulatory requirements (100% compliance), per OSEP QA 23-01.

**Describe how the State verified that each *individual case* of noncompliance was corrected**

MA DESE required each of the 8 LEAs with one or more of the 92 cases of noncompliance to reconvene IEP meetings for students whose records indicated noncompliance to ensure that these students now have 100% compliant transition planning and services. In the case of each reconvened meeting, LEAs submitted relevant documents to MA DESE so that compliance could be verified. (For example, if the Indicator 13 review indicated that the student had not been invited to their IEP meeting, the LEA submitted documentation of student invitation for the reconvened meeting; or if the Indicator 13 review indicated that the student lacked measurable annual IEP goals related to transition needs, then the LEA submitted to MA DESE the new IEP from the reconvened meeting, with compliant IEP goals.) Through these reviews of documentation from LEAs, the state has verified that all individual cases of noncompliance from FFY 2021 have been corrected and are now 100% compliant, consistent with OSEP QA 23-01.

**Correction of Findings of Noncompliance Identified Prior to FFY 2021**

| **Year Findings of Noncompliance Were Identified** | **Findings of Noncompliance Not Yet Verified as Corrected as of FFY 2021 APR** | **Findings of Noncompliance Verified as Corrected** | **Findings Not Yet Verified as Corrected** |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  |  |  |  |
|  |  |  |  |
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## 13 - Prior FFY Required Actions

Because the State reported less than 100% compliance for FFY 2021, the State must report on the status of correction of noncompliance identified in FFY 2021 for this indicator. When reporting on the correction of noncompliance, the State must report, in the FFY 2022 SPP/APR, that it has verified that each LEA with noncompliance identified in FFY 2021 for this indicator: (1) is correctly implementing the specific regulatory requirements (i.e., achieved 100% compliance) based on a review of updated data such as data subsequently collected through on-site monitoring or a State data system; and (2) has corrected each individual case of noncompliance, unless the child is no longer within the jurisdiction of the LEA, consistent with OSEP Memo 09-02. In the FFY 2022 SPP/APR, the State must describe the specific actions that were taken to verify the correction.

If the State did not identify any findings of noncompliance in FFY 2021, although its FFY 2021 data reflect less than 100% compliance, provide an explanation of why the State did not identify any findings of noncompliance in FFY 2021.

**Response to actions required in FFY 2021 SPP/APR**

See information on the correction of noncompliance for FFY 2021 reported above in the section “Correction of Findings of Noncompliance Identified in FFY 2021”.

## 13 - OSEP Response

## 13 - Required Actions

Because the State reported less than 100% compliance for FFY 2022, the State must report on the status of correction of noncompliance identified in FFY 2022 for this indicator. When reporting on the correction of noncompliance, the State must report, in the FFY 2023 SPP/APR, that it has verified that each LEA with noncompliance identified in FFY 2022 for this indicator: (1) is correctly implementing the specific regulatory requirements (i.e., achieved 100% compliance) based on a review of updated data such as data subsequently collected through on-site monitoring or a State data system; and (2) has corrected each individual case of noncompliance, unless the child is no longer within the jurisdiction of the LEA, consistent with OSEP QA 23-01. In the FFY 2023 SPP/APR, the State must describe the specific actions that were taken to verify the correction.

If the State did not identify any findings of noncompliance in FFY 2022, although its FFY 2022 data reflect less than 100% compliance, provide an explanation of why the State did not identify any findings of noncompliance in FFY 2022.

# Indicator 14: Post-School Outcomes

**Instructions and Measurement**

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

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

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

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

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

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

**Data Source**

State selected data source.

**Measurement**

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

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

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

**Instructions**

*Sampling****of youth who had IEPs and are no longer in secondary school****is allowed. When sampling is used, submit a description of the sampling methodology outlining how the design will yield valid and reliable estimates of the target population. (See General Instructions on page 3 for additional instructions on sampling.)*

Collect data by September 2023 on students who left school during 2021-2022, timing the data collection so that at least one year has passed since the students left school. Include students who dropped out during 2021-2022 or who were expected to return but did not return for the current school year. This includes all youth who had an IEP in effect at the time they left school, including those who graduated with a regular diploma or some other credential, dropped out, or aged out.

**I. *Definitions***

*Enrolled in higher education* as used in measures A, B, and C means youth have been enrolled on a full- or part-time basis in a community college (two-year program) or college/university (four or more year program) for at least one complete term, at any time in the year since leaving high school.

*Competitive employment* as used in measures B and C: States have two options to report data under “competitive employment”:

Option 1: Use the same definition as used to report in the FFY 2015 SPP/APR, i.e., competitive employment means that youth have worked for pay at or above the minimum wage in a setting with others who are nondisabled for a period of 20 hours a week for at least 90 days at any time in the year since leaving high school. This includes military employment.

Option 2: States report in alignment with the term “competitive integrated employment” and its definition, in section 7(5) of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended by Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA). For the purpose of defining the rate of compensation for students working on a “part-time basis” under this category, OSEP maintains the standard of 20 hours a week for at least 90 days at any time in the year since leaving high school. This definition applies to military employment.

*Enrolled in other postsecondary education or training* as used in measure C, means youth have been enrolled on a full- or part-time basis for at least 1 complete term at any time in the year since leaving high school in an education or training program (e.g., Job Corps, adult education, workforce development program, vocational technical school which is less than a two-year program).

*Some other employment* as used in measure C means youth have worked for pay or been self-employed for a period of at least 90 days at any time in the year since leaving high school. This includes working in a family business (e.g., farm, store, fishing, ranching, catering services).

**II. *Data Reporting***

States must describe the metric used to determine representativeness (e.g., +/- 3% discrepancy in the proportion of responders compared to target group).

Provide the total number of targeted youth in the sample or census.

Provide the actual numbers for each of the following mutually exclusive categories. The actual number of “leavers” who are:

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

 2. Competitively employed within one year of leaving high school (but not enrolled in higher education);

3. Enrolled in some other postsecondary education or training program within one year of leaving high school (but not enrolled in higher education or competitively employed);

4. In some other employment within one year of leaving high school (but not enrolled in higher education, some other postsecondary education or training program, or competitively employed).

“Leavers” should only be counted in one of the above categories, and the categories are organized hierarchically. So, for example, “leavers” who are enrolled in full- or part-time higher education within one year of leaving high school should only be reported in category 1, even if they also happen to be employed. Likewise, “leavers” who are not enrolled in either part- or full-time higher education, but who are competitively employed, should only be reported under category 2, even if they happen to be enrolled in some other postsecondary education or training program.

States must compare the response rate for the reporting year to the response rate for the previous year (e.g., in the FFY 2022 SPP/APR, compare the FFY 2022 response rate to the FFY 2021 response rate), and describe strategies that will be implemented which are expected to increase the response rate year over year, particularly for those groups that are underrepresented.

The State must also analyze the response rate to identify potential nonresponse bias and take steps to reduce any identified bias and promote response from a broad cross section of youth who are no longer in secondary school and had IEPs in effect at the time they left school.

**III. *Reporting on the Measures/Indicators***

Targets must be established for measures A, B, and C.

Measure A: For purposes of reporting on the measures/indicators, please note that any youth enrolled in an institution of higher education (that meets any definition of this term in the Higher Education Act (HEA)) within one year of leaving high school *must* be reported under measure A. This could include youth who also happen to be competitively employed, or in some other training program; however, the key outcome we are interested in here is enrollment in higher education.

Measure B: All youth reported under measure A should also be reported under measure B, in addition to all youth that obtain competitive employment within one year of leaving high school.

Measure C: All youth reported under measures A and B should also be reported under measure C, in addition to youth that are enrolled in some other postsecondary education or training program, or in some other employment.

Include the State’s analysis of the extent to which the response data are representative of the demographics of youth who are no longer in secondary school and had IEPs in effect at the time they left school. States must include race/ethnicity in their analysis. In addition, the State’s analysis must include at least one of the following demographics: disability category, gender, geographic location, and/or another demographic category approved through the stakeholder input process.

If the analysis shows that the response data are not representative of the demographics of youth who are no longer in secondary school and had IEPs in effect at the time they left school, describe the strategies that the State will use to ensure that in the future the response data are representative of those demographics. In identifying such strategies, the State should consider factors such as how the State collected the data.

## 14 - Indicator Data

**Historical Data**

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Measure** | **Baseline**  | **FFY** | **2017** | **2018** | **2019** | **2020** | **2021** |
| A | 2022 | Target >= | 53.00% | 50.20% | 50.40% | 40.00% | 42.00% |
| A | 36.85% | Data | 50.00% | 41.18% | 34.79% | 39.91% | 29.64% |
| B | 2022 | Target >= | 88.00% | 79.60% | 79.80% | 73.00% | 74.00% |
| B | 70.42% | Data | 79.37% | 70.88% | 56.55% | 72.26% | 71.23% |
| C | 2022 | Target >= | 95.00% | 87.30% | 87.50% | 79.00% | 80.00% |
| C | 77.02% | Data | 87.09% | 79.02% | 62.35% | 78.68% | 77.31% |

**FFY 2021 Targets**

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **FFY** | **2022** | **2023** | **2024** | **2025** |
| Target A >= | 44.00% | 46.00% | 48.00% | 50.00% |
| Target B >= | 75.00% | 76.00% | 77.00% | 78.00% |
| Target C >= | 81.00% | 82.00% | 83.00% | 84.00% |

**Targets: Description of Stakeholder Input**

MA DESE is committed to a continuous system of engaging stakeholders to develop targets and set priorities for improvement in each of the areas reported in the SPP/APR and the SSIP.

The Special Education Advisory Panel (SEAP) and Special Education State Advisory Council (SAC) are comprised of parents, individuals with disabilities, educators, administrators, and representatives from state agencies, higher education, and other stakeholder groups. The members meet at least four times each school year to review data, discuss policy priorities, and identify unmet needs in the area of special education consistent with state law and IDEA Part B. At each meeting, both groups address and discuss various aspects of the SPP/APR and the State’s general supervision systems, as well as relevant policy matters. In the 2022-2023 school year, in addition to updates on performance and compliance results included in the SPP/APR, MA DESE discussed with the SEAP/SAC the definition of students with the most significant cognitive disabilities, a breakdown of LEA Determinations, revisions to the Educator Evaluation Rubric, revised Chapter 9 Dyslexia Guidelines, the Special Education Surrogate Parent Program, updates to the Tiered Focus Monitoring Parent Survey (Indicator 8), updates to the new IEP form, and trends identified by the Public School Monitoring (PSM) and Problem Resolution Systems (PRS) Offices. MA DESE is committed to keeping members of the SEAP and SAC up to date on processes and supports provided to LEAs in order to improve outcomes for students with disabilities. It will continue discussions around current data, longitudinal targets, historical rates of performance and compliance and the trajectory for improvement for each of the Indicators, and the effectiveness of focused improvement activities within the context of the state’s Results Driven Accountability framework.

The SAC is required by Massachusetts General Law (M.G.L. c. 15, § 1G https://malegislature.gov/Laws/GeneralLaws/PartI/TitleII/Chapter15/Section1G). Its purpose is to advise the Board of Elementary and Secondary Education and to make other programmatic recommendations it deems necessary to fulfill the goals established by the board.

The SEAP is required by IDEA (34 CFR §§ 300.167-300.169 https://www.ecfr.gov/current/title-34/subtitle-B/chapter-III/part-300#sg34.2.300\_1166.sg15). Its purpose is to advise the State Education Authority (SEA) of unmet needs within the State regarding the education of children with disabilities. The Panel comments publicly on proposed rules or regulations. Its advisory function to the SEA involves developing evaluations and reporting 618 data (IDEA data) to USED and creating corrective action plans to address findings in Federal monitoring reports under IDEA Part B. The Panel also advises the SEA in developing and implementing policies relating to the coordination of services for children with disabilities.

MA DESE has continued to emphasize its priority on expanding the agency’s capacity to solicit broad and diverse stakeholder input to set SPP/APR targets, analyze data, develop improvement strategies, and evaluate progress. In FFY 2022 MA DESE sought to continue developing stakeholder Indicator knowledge, a project that began in FFY 2020. MA DESE has created and continues to update a new SPP/APR website. Each of the 17 Indicators has its own dedicated web page or Quick Reference Guide (QRG), as well as PowerPoints and other relevant information or resources. All materials on the SPP/APR website are available in six languages that correspond to the most common languages spoken in Massachusetts: English, Spanish, Portuguese, Chinese, Vietnamese, and Haitian Creole. Narrated versions of each PowerPoint are also available in English on the YouTube page of MA DESE’s partner, the Federation for Children with Special Needs (the Massachusetts Parent Training and Information Center/PTIC). In FFY 2022 MA DESE hosted eight virtual information and feedback sessions to broaden stakeholder knowledge. Each meeting had a specific improvement strategy focus and also provided updates on data analysis and evaluation of progress for each Indicator. The large-group presentation on each topic was simultaneously translated from English into the other five languages.

MA DESE consults on a monthly or at least quarterly basis with the Massachusetts Administrators of Special Education (http://www.asepage.org/), Federation for Children with Special Needs (https://fcsn.org/), Massachusetts Advocates for Children (https://www.massadvocates.org/), Massachusetts Association of Approved Special Education Schools (https://maaps.org/), and Massachusetts Urban Special Education Leadership Collaborative (massurban.org)). In addition, the Massachusetts State Special Education Director at MA DESE gives monthly virtual presentations to statewide special education leaders on a wide array of special education compliance and performance topics. During all of these meetings, MA DESE solicits and receives significant feedback that informs the development of special education policy and guidance.

MA DESE works closely with other state agencies to provide supports to children with disabilities. The Department has developed a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) or has entered into an Interagency Service Agreement (ISA) with the Massachusetts Commission for the Blind (MCB), Massachusetts Rehabilitation Commission (MRC), Department of Public Health (DPH), Department of Early Education and Care (EEC), and Massachusetts Commission for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing (MCDHH). Additionally, these agencies provide a representative to serve on the MA Special Education Advisory Council and the MA Special Education Advisory Panel. The Department has established regular meetings with each of these agencies to strengthen collaborations and to monitor joint initiatives.

In its efforts to roll out the new IEP, MA DESE frequently engaged with stakeholders across the Commonwealth in a variety of roles to solicit feedback on the draft form that was released in the Spring of 2022. Stakeholder groups whose feedback was sought included various school groups, parent/family/advocacy organizations, and other State agencies.

As needed, MA DESE convenes stakeholder working groups throughout the year to provide focused input on specific projects and policy priorities. Among these focus groups were the Early Childhood Interagency Coordinating Council (which includes community members and state agency employees), a Statewide Systemic Improvement Plan (SSIP) leadership team and working group, a family engagement workgroup, an advisory group for the Dropout Prevention and Re-engagement Network, and secondary transition stakeholder groups. MA DESE also consults with educators, parents, advocates, and others on a regular basis to inform policy and practice.

MA DESE engages with stakeholders on the direction of Indicator 17, the State’s Systemic Improvement Plan (SSIP), at the state, district, classroom, and community levels. Stakeholders are provided with information about activities and goals, training events and embedded supports statewide, and the availability of resources to support and expand implementation. Those at the district and school levels participate in ongoing decision-making about the direction of the SSIP by providing feedback about the quality of events and supports, observed benefits for their own stakeholders, and the greatest needs to be able to move forward with implementation. Additional information is provided in the Indicator 17 narrative.

**FFY 2022 SPP/APR Data**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Total number of targeted youth in the sample or census | 12,422 |
| Number of respondent youth who are no longer in secondary school and had IEPs in effect at the time they left school | 3,229 |
| Response Rate | 25.99% |
| 1. Number of respondent youth who enrolled in higher education within one year of leaving high school  | 1,190 |
| 2. Number of respondent youth who competitively employed within one year of leaving high school  | 1,084 |
| 3. Number of respondent youth enrolled in some other postsecondary education or training program within one year of leaving high school (but not enrolled in higher education or competitively employed) | 97 |
| 4. Number of respondent youth who are in some other employment within one year of leaving high school (but not enrolled in higher education, some other postsecondary education or training program, or competitively employed). | 116 |

| **Measure** | **Number of respondent youth** | **Number of respondent youth who are no longer in secondary school and had IEPs in effect at the time they left school** | **FFY 2021 Data** | **FFY 2022 Target** | **FFY 2022 Data** | **Status** | **Slippage** |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| A. Enrolled in higher education (1) | 1,190 | 3,229 | 29.64% | 44.00% | 36.85% | N/A | N/A |
| B. Enrolled in higher education or competitively employed within one year of leaving high school (1 +2) | 2,274 | 3,229 | 71.23% | 75.00% | 70.42% | N/A | N/A |
| C. Enrolled in higher education, or in some other postsecondary education or training program; or competitively employed or in some other employment (1+2+3+4) | 2,487 | 3,229 | 77.31% | 81.00% | 77.02% | N/A | N/A |

**Please select the reporting option your State is using:**

Option 1: Use the same definition as used to report in the FFY 2015 SPP/APR, i.e., competitive employment means that youth have worked for pay at or above the minimum wage in a setting with others who are nondisabled for a period of 20 hours a week for at least 90 days at any time in the year since leaving high school. This includes military employment.

**Response Rate**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **FFY** | **2021** | **2022** |
| Response Rate  | 33.67% | 25.99% |

**Describe the metric used to determine representativeness (e.g., +/- 3% discrepancy in the proportion of responders compared to target group).**

MA DESE used the Representativeness Calculator adapted from the NTACT-C and subpopulations were judged representative using the metric of plus or minus 3 percentage points.

**Include the State’s analyses of the extent to which the response data are representative of the demographics of youth who are no longer in secondary school and had IEPs in effect at the time they left school. States must include race/ethnicity in its analysis. In addition, the State’s analysis must include at least one of the following demographics: disability category, gender, geographic location, and/or another demographic category approved through the stakeholder input process.**

The proportion, as a percentage, that each group contributed to the Survey Pool and Respondent Pool were compared to assess if there were any differences of more than plus or minus 3.00%. This year’s analysis examines the following demographic subpopulations, selected with stakeholder input in FFY 2020. Seven out of the nine examined sub-populations are represented within the plus or minus 3.00 percentage point benchmark. There are two under-represented groups: Dropout at -5.56% and Economically Disadvantaged at -3.48%. These two groups typically experience more challenges once out of high school, and as such MA DESE expects that A, B, and C statewide are slightly lower than they would be if these two groups responded to the survey proportionally.

Additional Detail:
Specific Learning Disabilities -.62%
Emotional Disabilities -2.59%
Intellectual Disabilities +.23%
All Other Disabilities+2.98%: All disability groups were found to be representative (ranging from -.4% to +.4% except for Autism at +2.07%).
Female -.30%
Minority -2.16%
EL -1.04%
Dropout -5.56%
Economically Disadvantaged -3.48%

Note that these calculations examine one demographic characteristic category at a time and do not examine the interaction of the multiple characteristics that each of us possesses. One characteristic does not influence us in the absence of other characteristics. For example, when B14 engagement is disaggregated by Race/Ethnicity Minority Exiters are shown to engage below the state average rate of 77% and White Exiters above the state average.

Asian: n=82 respondents, at C=71%
Black or African American: n=384, C=71%
Hispanic: n=645, C=69%
Asian: n=82, C=71%
White: n=1,562, C=81%

Overall, half (50.5%) of the survey pool (n=12,442), and 47.0% of the Response Pool (n=1,517) is reported to be Economically Disadvantaged. The Statewide Response Group (n=3,229), reports meeting APR C=77% and NE=13%. Those enrolled as Economically Disadvantaged report meeting APR C=72.8% vs 80.8% for those not enrolled as Economically Disadvantaged. Unsurprisingly, Minority youth are significantly overrepresented among those Exiters identified as Economically Disadvantaged, 57% vs 41%.

**The response data is representative of the demographics of youth who are no longer in school and had IEPs in effect at the time they left school. (yes/no)**

NO

**If no, describe the strategies that the State will use to ensure that in the future the response data are representative of those demographics.**

To ensure representativeness and to reduce bias, MA DESE makes it clear to districts that all eligible former students should be included in the survey and uses strategies to help ensure that all former students have an equal opportunity to respond. Missing or inaccurate contact information makes it more difficult to collect Indicator 14 data from Exiters and their families. MA DESE expects that as districts transition to annual data collection and reporting, they will endeavor to ensure that up-to-date contact information is collected prior to a student’s school exit. MA DESE provides its districts with a sample “Contact Information Sheet” and encourages them to collect this information beginning in March of the exit year to be used the following summer when conducting data collection. Districts are also encouraged to verify students’ contact information regularly throughout the high school years.

Lack of familiarity with Indicator 14 and its importance sometimes causes Exiters or their family members to refuse to provide information about their experience since high school. MA DESE continues to remind districts that in addition to collecting up-to-date contact information, informing students and their families about Indicator 14 and telling them to expect, even look forward to, their former school staff contacting them about a year after they leave school to collect Indicator 14 information. MA DESE will continue to offer broad assistance webinars and offer individualized support to schools and districts on their data collection efforts.

MA DESE encourages districts to work with their dropout reengagement centers and to collaborate with staff conducting the Perkins post-school survey and recommends that former students be contacted by school staff who are familiar to them. In FFY 2022 staff were readily available to districts to troubleshoot methods of contacting Exiters and to provide guidance for best practices. Additionally, staff from both organizations provide continuous support to district staff throughout the surveying process. Districts receive regular updates from PIAR staff to let them know which individual former students have completed the survey. These are compiled into a weekly accounting, by district, and are provided to MA DESE to monitor statewide progress. MA DESE also sends regular reminders to all districts and provides additional personalized TA.

It is of concern to MA DESE that it continues to receive reports of higher-than-normal staff turnover among Special Education Administrators, including district-based Indicator 14 leads. Some of these new staff members may not have known about Indicator 14 data collection efforts, despite repeated emails and calls. MA DESE reminded all schools and districts to provide up-to-date contact information so that it could continue its outreach to assist with Indicator 14 data collection and ensure that all Exiters

MA DESE ensures that its survey is available in English, Spanish, Portuguese, and MA DESE continues to develop evidence-based practices and supports for LEAs, it is expected that LEAs will be able to reach most, if not all of their Exiters. This will help ensure that their respondents are representative of all Exiters for each reporting year.

**Describe strategies that will be implemented which are expected to increase the response rate year over year, particularly for those groups that are underrepresented.**

In the Spring of 2022, MA DESE began initial outreach to schools and districts through emails with detailed information to district staff regarding Indicator 14 data collection, along with Technical Assistance (TA) documents with information about how to prepare for and field the survey, as well as how to submit survey data on time. MA DESE publicizes Indicator 14 data collection through the agency’s special education listserv, in the agency’s online FAQs, and through regular statewide special education leader meetings. MA DESE hosted a “Indicator 14 Data Collection Kick Off Webinar” in May of 2023 to provide schools and districts with all the project information they would need. It emphasized that all eligible former students should be included in the survey and to use strategies to help ensure that all former students had an equal opportunity to respond. As mentioned in the section above, the survey is available in six languages and in electronic and paper format.

This was the first year that MA DESE collected Indicator 14 data in a census rather than using a 4-cohort sampling plan. The Department anticipated that schools and districts would need to adjust their resources to respond to collecting data every year. Last year it created a District Data Display that provided districts with a local report with response rates, engagement numbers and types, and demographic information in order to review and consider systemic changes in not only data collection methods, but also programmatic decisions at the local level that will support students’ post–high school success. These reports are now a permanent part of the reporting process and will be provided to all districts with respondents to the Indicator 14 Post–High School Survey. MA DESE conducted several assistance webinars for all districts this year to support their collection efforts. It is committed to working with districts, especially those with low response rates, and is asking for them to develop and implement action plans in order to increase their response rates for next reporting year.

MA DESE expects its Indicator 14 response rate to increase over time. A slight temporary decrease may occur at the start that can be attributed to the move from a sample model with approximately 70 schools and districts collecting Indicator 14 data to a full-scale adoption by over 300 schools and districts. MA DESE remains committed in its plans to provide TA regarding best practices for outreach for all districts when it comes to Indicator 14 data collection.

**Describe the analysis of the response rate including any nonresponse bias that was identified, and the steps taken to reduce any identified bias and promote response from a broad cross section of youth who are no longer in secondary school and had IEPs in effect at the time they left school.**

Analysis by staff at PIAR suggests that the statewide engagement reported is actually higher than all Exiter experience. Ensuring that all subpopulations are proportionally represented while increasing the overall response rate will result in more accurate statistical estimations of post–high school engagement.

| **Sampling Question** | **Yes / No** |
| --- | --- |
| Was sampling used?  | NO |
| **Survey Question** | **Yes / No** |
| Was a survey used?  | YES |
| If yes, is it a new or revised survey? | NO |

**Provide additional information about this indicator (optional)**

Beginning in FFY2021 MA DESE began conversations with Stakeholders regarding upcoming changes to the data collection methodology for Indicator 14. Frequent communication occurred regarding what the changes would mean. During FFY2022, MA DESE met with Stakeholder Groups twice after Indicator 14 data collection had ended. These meetings involved discussions around the analysis of the data for Indicator 14 for the current year compared to previous years. Due to the change from a sampling method to census collection for FFY 2022, MA DESE proposed two options to Stakeholders regarding the targets for Indicator 14 through FFY 2025. Stakeholders were presented with two options: keeping targets as is, established in FFY2020, or resetting the targets to the targets from FFY2020 and using a 2% yearly increase for Measure A, and a 1% yearly increase for both Measure B and C. Stakeholder groups collectively felt that keeping targets as they are set ambitious and rigorous expectations for post-school outcomes for students with disabilities and decided not to change targets. However, the baseline for Indicator 14 is being reset to FFY 2022 so that data in upcoming years will be comparable due to the change in collecting data through a census model.

## 14 - Prior FFY Required Actions

In the FFY 2022 SPP/APR, the State must report whether the FFY 2022 data are representative of the demographics of youth who are no longer in secondary school and had IEPs in effect at the time they left school, and, if not, the actions the State is taking to address this issue. The State must also include its analysis of the extent to which the response data are representative of the demographics of youth who are no longer in secondary school and had IEPs in effect at the time they left school.

**Response to actions required in FFY 2021 SPP/APR**

Please see the above sections on the representativeness of the demographics of you who are no longer in secondary school and had IEPs in effect at the time they left school regarding the actions MA DESE is taking to address the issue.

## 14 - OSEP Response

The State has revised the baseline for this indicator, using data from FFY 2022, and OSEP accepts that revision.

## 14 - Required Actions

In the FFY 2023 SPP/APR, the State must report whether the FFY 2023 data are representative of the demographics of youth who are no longer in secondary school and had IEPs in effect at the time they left school, and, if not, the actions the State is taking to address this issue. The State must also include its analysis of the extent to which the response data are representative of the demographics of youth who are no longer in secondary school and had IEPs in effect at the time they left school.

# Indicator 15: Resolution Sessions

**Instructions and Measurement**

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

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

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

**Data Source**

Data collected under section 618 of the IDEA (IDEA Part B Dispute Resolution Survey in the ED*Facts* Metadata and Process System (E*MAPS*)).

**Measurement**

Percent = (3.1(a) divided by 3.1) times 100.

**Instructions**

*Sampling is not allowed.*

Describe the results of the calculations and compare the results to the target.

States are not required to establish baseline or targets if the number of resolution sessions is less than 10. In a reporting period when the number of resolution sessions reaches 10 or greater, develop baseline and targets and report on them in the corresponding SPP/APR.

States may express their targets in a range (e.g., 75-85%).

If the data reported in this indicator are not the same as the State’s data under IDEA section 618, explain.

States are not required to report data at the LEA level.

## 15 - Indicator Data

Select yes to use target ranges

Target Range is used

**Prepopulated Data**

| **Source** | **Date** | **Description** | **Data** |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| SY 2022-23 EMAPS IDEA Part B Dispute Resolution Survey; Section C: Due Process Complaints | 11/15/2023 | 3.1 Number of resolution sessions | 30 |
| SY 2022-23 EMAPS IDEA Part B Dispute Resolution Survey; Section C: Due Process Complaints | 11/15/2023 | 3.1(a) Number resolution sessions resolved through settlement agreements | 16 |

**Select yes if the data reported in this indicator are not the same as the State’s data reported under section 618 of the IDEA.**

NO

**Targets: Description of Stakeholder Input**

MA DESE is committed to a continuous system of engaging stakeholders to develop targets and set priorities for improvement in each of the areas reported in the SPP/APR and the SSIP.

The Special Education Advisory Panel (SEAP) and Special Education State Advisory Council (SAC) are comprised of parents, individuals with disabilities, educators, administrators, and representatives from state agencies, higher education, and other stakeholder groups. The members meet at least four times each school year to review data, discuss policy priorities, and identify unmet needs in the area of special education consistent with state law and IDEA Part B. At each meeting, both groups address and discuss various aspects of the SPP/APR and the State’s general supervision systems, as well as relevant policy matters. In the 2022-2023 school year, in addition to updates on performance and compliance results included in the SPP/APR, MA DESE discussed with the SEAP/SAC the definition of students with the most significant cognitive disabilities, a breakdown of LEA Determinations, revisions to the Educator Evaluation Rubric, revised Chapter 9 Dyslexia Guidelines, the Special Education Surrogate Parent Program, updates to the Tiered Focus Monitoring Parent Survey (Indicator 8), updates to the new IEP form, and trends identified by the Public School Monitoring (PSM) and Problem Resolution Systems (PRS) Offices. MA DESE is committed to keeping members of the SEAP and SAC up to date on processes and supports provided to LEAs in order to improve outcomes for students with disabilities. It will continue discussions around current data, longitudinal targets, historical rates of performance and compliance and the trajectory for improvement for each of the Indicators, and the effectiveness of focused improvement activities within the context of the state’s Results Driven Accountability framework.

The SAC is required by Massachusetts General Law (M.G.L. c. 15, § 1G https://malegislature.gov/Laws/GeneralLaws/PartI/TitleII/Chapter15/Section1G). Its purpose is to advise the Board of Elementary and Secondary Education and to make other programmatic recommendations it deems necessary to fulfill the goals established by the board.

The SEAP is required by IDEA (34 CFR §§ 300.167-300.169 https://www.ecfr.gov/current/title-34/subtitle-B/chapter-III/part-300#sg34.2.300\_1166.sg15). Its purpose is to advise the State Education Authority (SEA) of unmet needs within the State regarding the education of children with disabilities. The Panel comments publicly on proposed rules or regulations. Its advisory function to the SEA involves developing evaluations and reporting 618 data (IDEA data) to USED and creating corrective action plans to address findings in Federal monitoring reports under IDEA Part B. The Panel also advises the SEA in developing and implementing policies relating to the coordination of services for children with disabilities.

MA DESE has continued to emphasize its priority on expanding the agency’s capacity to solicit broad and diverse stakeholder input to set SPP/APR targets, analyze data, develop improvement strategies, and evaluate progress. In FFY 2022 MA DESE sought to continue developing stakeholder Indicator knowledge, a project that began in FFY 2020. MA DESE has created and continues to update a new SPP/APR website. Each of the 17 Indicators has its own dedicated web page or Quick Reference Guide (QRG), as well as PowerPoints and other relevant information or resources. All materials on the SPP/APR website are available in six languages that correspond to the most common languages spoken in Massachusetts: English, Spanish, Portuguese, Chinese, Vietnamese, and Haitian Creole. Narrated versions of each PowerPoint are also available in English on the YouTube page of MA DESE’s partner, the Federation for Children with Special Needs (the Massachusetts Parent Training and Information Center/PTIC). In FFY 2022 MA DESE hosted eight virtual information and feedback sessions to broaden stakeholder knowledge. Each meeting had a specific improvement strategy focus and also provided updates on data analysis and evaluation of progress for each Indicator. The large-group presentation on each topic was simultaneously translated from English into the other five languages.

MA DESE consults on a monthly or at least quarterly basis with the Massachusetts Administrators of Special Education (http://www.asepage.org/), Federation for Children with Special Needs (https://fcsn.org/), Massachusetts Advocates for Children (https://www.massadvocates.org/), Massachusetts Association of Approved Special Education Schools (https://maaps.org/), and Massachusetts Urban Special Education Leadership Collaborative (massurban.org)). In addition, the Massachusetts State Special Education Director at MA DESE gives monthly virtual presentations to statewide special education leaders on a wide array of special education compliance and performance topics. During all of these meetings, MA DESE solicits and receives significant feedback that informs the development of special education policy and guidance.

MA DESE works closely with other state agencies to provide supports to children with disabilities. The Department has developed a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) or has entered into an Interagency Service Agreement (ISA) with the Massachusetts Commission for the Blind (MCB), Massachusetts Rehabilitation Commission (MRC), Department of Public Health (DPH), Department of Early Education and Care (EEC), and Massachusetts Commission for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing (MCDHH). Additionally, these agencies provide a representative to serve on the MA Special Education Advisory Council and the MA Special Education Advisory Panel. The Department has established regular meetings with each of these agencies to strengthen collaborations and to monitor joint initiatives.

In its efforts to roll out the new IEP, MA DESE frequently engaged with stakeholders across the Commonwealth in a variety of roles to solicit feedback on the draft form that was released in the Spring of 2022. Stakeholder groups whose feedback was sought included various school groups, parent/family/advocacy organizations, and other State agencies.

As needed, MA DESE convenes stakeholder working groups throughout the year to provide focused input on specific projects and policy priorities. Among these focus groups were the Early Childhood Interagency Coordinating Council (which includes community members and state agency employees), a Statewide Systemic Improvement Plan (SSIP) leadership team and working group, a family engagement workgroup, an advisory group for the Dropout Prevention and Re-engagement Network, and secondary transition stakeholder groups. MA DESE also consults with educators, parents, advocates, and others on a regular basis to inform policy and practice.

MA DESE engages with stakeholders on the direction of Indicator 17, the State’s Systemic Improvement Plan (SSIP), at the state, district, classroom, and community levels. Stakeholders are provided with information about activities and goals, training events and embedded supports statewide, and the availability of resources to support and expand implementation. Those at the district and school levels participate in ongoing decision-making about the direction of the SSIP by providing feedback about the quality of events and supports, observed benefits for their own stakeholders, and the greatest needs to be able to move forward with implementation. Additional information is provided in the Indicator 17 narrative.

**Historical Data**

| **Baseline Year** | **Baseline Data** |
| --- | --- |
| 2005 | 48.00% |

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **FFY** | **2017** | **2018** | **2019** | **2020** | **2021** |
| Target >= | 48.00% - 58.00% | 48.00% - 75.00% | 48.00%-75.00% | 48.00%-75.00% | 48.00%-75.00% |
| Data | 53.85% | 70.83% | 25.00% | 100.00% | 47.83% |

**Targets**

| **FFY** | 2022 (low) | 2022 (high) | 2023 (low) | 2023 (high) | 2024 (low) | 2024 (high) | 2025 (low) | 2025 (high) |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Target >= | 48.00% | 75.00% | 48.00% | 75.00% | 48.00% | 75.00% | 48.00% | 75.00% |

**FFY 2022 SPP/APR Data**

| **3.1(a) Number resolutions sessions resolved through settlement agreements** | **3.1 Number of resolutions sessions** | **FFY 2021 Data** | FFY 2022 Target (low) | FFY 2022 Target (high) | FFY 2022 Data | **Status** | **Slippage** |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| 16 | 30 | 47.83% | 48.00% | 75.00% | 53.33% | Met target | No Slippage |

**Provide additional information about this indicator (optional)**

## 15 - Prior FFY Required Actions

None

## 15 - OSEP Response

## 15 - Required Actions

# Indicator 16: Mediation

**Instructions and Measurement**

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

**Results indicator:** Percent of mediations held that resulted in mediation agreements.

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

**Data Source**

Data collected under section 618 of the IDEA (IDEA Part B Dispute Resolution Survey in the ED*Facts* Metadata and Process System (E*MAPS*)).

**Measurement**

Percent = (2.1(a)(i) + 2.1(b)(i)) divided by 2.1) times 100.

**Instructions**

*Sampling is not allowed.*

Describe the results of the calculations and compare the results to the target.

States are not required to establish baseline or targets if the number of mediations is less than 10. In a reporting period when the number of mediations reaches 10 or greater, develop baseline and targets and report on them in the corresponding SPP/APR.

States may express their targets in a range (e.g., 75-85%).

If the data reported in this indicator are not the same as the State’s data under IDEA section 618, explain.

States are not required to report data at the LEA level.

## 16 - Indicator Data

**Select yes to use target ranges**

Target Range is used

**Prepopulated Data**

| **Source** | **Date** | **Description** | **Data** |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| SY 2022-23 EMAPS IDEA Part B Dispute Resolution Survey; Section B: Mediation Requests | 11/15/2023 | 2.1 Mediations held | 646 |
| SY 2022-23 EMAPS IDEA Part B Dispute Resolution Survey; Section B: Mediation Requests | 11/15/2023 | 2.1.a.i Mediations agreements related to due process complaints | 22 |
| SY 2022-23 EMAPS IDEA Part B Dispute Resolution Survey; Section B: Mediation Requests | 11/15/2023 | 2.1.b.i Mediations agreements not related to due process complaints | 525 |

**Select yes if the data reported in this indicator are not the same as the State’s data reported under section 618 of the IDEA.**

NO

**Targets: Description of Stakeholder Input**

MA DESE is committed to a continuous system of engaging stakeholders to develop targets and set priorities for improvement in each of the areas reported in the SPP/APR and the SSIP.

The Special Education Advisory Panel (SEAP) and Special Education State Advisory Council (SAC) are comprised of parents, individuals with disabilities, educators, administrators, and representatives from state agencies, higher education, and other stakeholder groups. The members meet at least four times each school year to review data, discuss policy priorities, and identify unmet needs in the area of special education consistent with state law and IDEA Part B. At each meeting, both groups address and discuss various aspects of the SPP/APR and the State’s general supervision systems, as well as relevant policy matters. In the 2022-2023 school year, in addition to updates on performance and compliance results included in the SPP/APR, MA DESE discussed with the SEAP/SAC the definition of students with the most significant cognitive disabilities, a breakdown of LEA Determinations, revisions to the Educator Evaluation Rubric, revised Chapter 9 Dyslexia Guidelines, the Special Education Surrogate Parent Program, updates to the Tiered Focus Monitoring Parent Survey (Indicator 8), updates to the new IEP form, and trends identified by the Public School Monitoring (PSM) and Problem Resolution Systems (PRS) Offices. MA DESE is committed to keeping members of the SEAP and SAC up to date on processes and supports provided to LEAs in order to improve outcomes for students with disabilities. It will continue discussions around current data, longitudinal targets, historical rates of performance and compliance and the trajectory for improvement for each of the Indicators, and the effectiveness of focused improvement activities within the context of the state’s Results Driven Accountability framework.

The SAC is required by Massachusetts General Law (M.G.L. c. 15, § 1G https://malegislature.gov/Laws/GeneralLaws/PartI/TitleII/Chapter15/Section1G). Its purpose is to advise the Board of Elementary and Secondary Education and to make other programmatic recommendations it deems necessary to fulfill the goals established by the board.

The SEAP is required by IDEA (34 CFR §§ 300.167-300.169 https://www.ecfr.gov/current/title-34/subtitle-B/chapter-III/part-300#sg34.2.300\_1166.sg15). Its purpose is to advise the State Education Authority (SEA) of unmet needs within the State regarding the education of children with disabilities. The Panel comments publicly on proposed rules or regulations. Its advisory function to the SEA involves developing evaluations and reporting 618 data (IDEA data) to USED and creating corrective action plans to address findings in Federal monitoring reports under IDEA Part B. The Panel also advises the SEA in developing and implementing policies relating to the coordination of services for children with disabilities.

MA DESE has continued to emphasize its priority on expanding the agency’s capacity to solicit broad and diverse stakeholder input to set SPP/APR targets, analyze data, develop improvement strategies, and evaluate progress. In FFY 2022 MA DESE sought to continue developing stakeholder Indicator knowledge, a project that began in FFY 2020. MA DESE has created and continues to update a new SPP/APR website. Each of the 17 Indicators has its own dedicated web page or Quick Reference Guide (QRG), as well as PowerPoints and other relevant information or resources. All materials on the SPP/APR website are available in six languages that correspond to the most common languages spoken in Massachusetts: English, Spanish, Portuguese, Chinese, Vietnamese, and Haitian Creole. Narrated versions of each PowerPoint are also available in English on the YouTube page of MA DESE’s partner, the Federation for Children with Special Needs (the Massachusetts Parent Training and Information Center/PTIC). In FFY 2022 MA DESE hosted eight virtual information and feedback sessions to broaden stakeholder knowledge. Each meeting had a specific improvement strategy focus and also provided updates on data analysis and evaluation of progress for each Indicator. The large-group presentation on each topic was simultaneously translated from English into the other five languages.

MA DESE consults on a monthly or at least quarterly basis with the Massachusetts Administrators of Special Education (http://www.asepage.org/), Federation for Children with Special Needs (https://fcsn.org/), Massachusetts Advocates for Children (https://www.massadvocates.org/), Massachusetts Association of Approved Special Education Schools (https://maaps.org/), and Massachusetts Urban Special Education Leadership Collaborative (massurban.org)). In addition, the Massachusetts State Special Education Director at MA DESE gives monthly virtual presentations to statewide special education leaders on a wide array of special education compliance and performance topics. During all of these meetings, MA DESE solicits and receives significant feedback that informs the development of special education policy and guidance.

MA DESE works closely with other state agencies to provide supports to children with disabilities. The Department has developed a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) or has entered into an Interagency Service Agreement (ISA) with the Massachusetts Commission for the Blind (MCB), Massachusetts Rehabilitation Commission (MRC), Department of Public Health (DPH), Department of Early Education and Care (EEC), and Massachusetts Commission for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing (MCDHH). Additionally, these agencies provide a representative to serve on the MA Special Education Advisory Council and the MA Special Education Advisory Panel. The Department has established regular meetings with each of these agencies to strengthen collaborations and to monitor joint initiatives.

In its efforts to roll out the new IEP, MA DESE frequently engaged with stakeholders across the Commonwealth in a variety of roles to solicit feedback on the draft form that was released in the Spring of 2022. Stakeholder groups whose feedback was sought included various school groups, parent/family/advocacy organizations, and other State agencies.

As needed, MA DESE convenes stakeholder working groups throughout the year to provide focused input on specific projects and policy priorities. Among these focus groups were the Early Childhood Interagency Coordinating Council (which includes community members and state agency employees), a Statewide Systemic Improvement Plan (SSIP) leadership team and working group, a family engagement workgroup, an advisory group for the Dropout Prevention and Re-engagement Network, and secondary transition stakeholder groups. MA DESE also consults with educators, parents, advocates, and others on a regular basis to inform policy and practice.

MA DESE engages with stakeholders on the direction of Indicator 17, the State’s Systemic Improvement Plan (SSIP), at the state, district, classroom, and community levels. Stakeholders are provided with information about activities and goals, training events and embedded supports statewide, and the availability of resources to support and expand implementation. Those at the district and school levels participate in ongoing decision-making about the direction of the SSIP by providing feedback about the quality of events and supports, observed benefits for their own stakeholders, and the greatest needs to be able to move forward with implementation. Additional information is provided in the Indicator 17 narrative.

**Historical Data**

| **Baseline Year** | **Baseline Data** |
| --- | --- |
| 2005 | 83.40% |

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **FFY** | **2017** | **2018** | **2019** | **2020** | **2021** |
| Target >= | 77.00% - 87.00% | 77.00% - 87.00% | 77.00%-87.00% | 77.00%-87.00% | 77.00%-87.00% |
| Data | 85.29% | 82.87% | 83.23% | 78.57% | 82.50% |

**Targets**

| **FFY** | 2022 (low) | 2022 (high) | 2023 (low) | 2023 (high) | 2024 (low) | 2024 (high) | 2025 (low) | 2025 (high) |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Target >= | 77.00% | 87.00% | 77.00% | 87.00% | 77.00% | 87.00% | 77.00% | 87.00% |

**FFY 2022 SPP/APR Data**

| **2.1.a.i Mediation agreements related to due process complaints** | **2.1.b.i Mediation agreements not related to due process complaints** | **2.1 Number of mediations held** | **FFY 2021 Data** | **FFY 2022 Target (low)** | **FFY 2022 Target (high)** | **FFY 2022 Data** | **Status** | **Slippage** |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| 22 | 525 | 646 | 82.50% | 77.00% | 87.00% | 84.67% | Met target | No Slippage |

**Provide additional information about this indicator (optional)**

## 16 - Prior FFY Required Actions

None

## 16 - OSEP Response

## 16 - Required Actions

# Indicator 17: State Systemic Improvement Plan

**Instructions and Measurement**

**Monitoring Priority:** General Supervision

The State’s SPP/APR includes a State Systemic Improvement Plan (SSIP) that meets the requirements set forth for this indicator.

**Measurement**

The State’s SPP/APR includes an SSIP that is a comprehensive, ambitious, yet achievable multi-year plan for improving results for children with disabilities. The SSIP includes each of the components described below.

**Instructions**

**Baseline Data*:*** The State must provide baseline data that must be expressed as a percentage and which is aligned with the State-identified Measurable Result(s) (SiMR) for Children with Disabilities.

**Targets*:*** In its FFY 2020 SPP/APR, due February 1, 2022, the State must provide measurable and rigorous targets (expressed as percentages) for each of the six years from FFY 2020 through FFY 2025. The State’s FFY 2025 target must demonstrate improvement over the State’s baseline data.

**Updated Data:** In its FFYs 2020 through FFY 2025 SPPs/APRs, due February 2022 through February 2027, the State must provide updated data for that specific FFY (expressed as percentages) and that data must be aligned with the State-identified Measurable Result(s) Children with Disabilities. In its FFYs 2020 through FFY 2025 SPPs/APRs, the State must report on whether it met its target.

Overview of the Three Phases of the SSIP

It is of the utmost importance to improve results for children with disabilities by improving educational services, including special education and related services. Stakeholders, including parents of children with disabilities, local educational agencies, the State Advisory Panel, and others, are critical participants in improving results for children with disabilities and should be included in developing, implementing, evaluating, and revising the SSIP and included in establishing the State’s targets under Indicator 17. The SSIP should include information about stakeholder involvement in all three phases.

*Phase I: Analysis:*

- Data Analysis;

- Analysis of State Infrastructure to Support Improvement and Build Capacity;

- State-identified Measurable Result(s) for Children with Disabilities;

- Selection of Coherent Improvement Strategies; and

- Theory of Action.

*Phase II: Plan* (which, is in addition to the Phase I content (including any updates)) outlined above):

- Infrastructure Development;

- Support for local educational agency (LEA) Implementation of Evidence-Based Practices; and

- Evaluation.

*Phase III: Implementation and Evaluation* (which, is in addition to the Phase I and Phase II content (including any updates)) outlined above):

- Results of Ongoing Evaluation and Revisions to the SSIP.

**Specific Content of Each Phase of the SSIP**

Refer to FFY 2013-2015 Measurement Table for detailed requirements of Phase I and Phase II SSIP submissions.

Phase III should only include information from Phase I or Phase II if changes or revisions are being made by the State and/or if information previously required in Phase I or Phase II was not reported.

***Phase III: Implementation and Evaluation***

In Phase III, the State must, consistent with its evaluation plan described in Phase II, assess and report on its progress implementing the SSIP. This includes: (A) data and analysis on the extent to which the State has made progress toward and/or met the State-established short-term and long-term outcomes or objectives for implementation of the SSIP and its progress toward achieving the State-identified Measurable Result(s) for Children with Disabilities (SiMR); (B) the rationale for any revisions that were made, or that the State intends to make, to the SSIP as the result of implementation, analysis, and evaluation; and (C) a description of the meaningful stakeholder engagement. If the State intends to continue implementing the SSIP without modifications, the State must describe how the data from the evaluation support this decision.

A. Data Analysis

As required in the Instructions for the Indicator/Measurement, in its FFYs 2020 through 2025 SPPs/APRs, the State must report data for that specific FFY (expressed as actual numbers and percentages) that are aligned with the SiMR. The State must report on whether the State met its target. In addition, the State may report on any additional data (e.g., progress monitoring data) that were collected and analyzed that would suggest progress toward the SiMR. States using a subset of the population from the indicator (e.g., a sample, cohort model) should describe how data are collected and analyzed for the SiMR if that was not described in Phase I or Phase II of the SSIP.

B. Phase III Implementation, Analysis and Evaluation

The State must provide a narrative or graphic representation, (e.g., a logic model) of the principal activities, measures and outcomes that were implemented since the State’s last SSIP submission (i.e., February 1, 2023). The evaluation should align with the theory of action described in Phase I and the evaluation plan described in Phase II. The State must describe any changes to the activities, strategies, or timelines described in Phase II and include a rationale or justification for the changes. If the State intends to continue implementing the SSIP without modifications, the State must describe how the data from the evaluation support this decision.

The State must summarize the infrastructure improvement strategies that were implemented, and the short-term outcomes achieved, including the measures or rationale used by the State and stakeholders to assess and communicate achievement. Relate short-term outcomes to one or more areas of a systems framework (e.g., governance, data, finance, accountability/monitoring, quality standards, professional development and/or technical assistance) and explain how these strategies support system change and are necessary for: (a) achievement of the SiMR; (b) sustainability of systems improvement efforts; and/or (c) scale-up. The State must describe the next steps for each infrastructure improvement strategy and the anticipated outcomes to be attained during the next fiscal year (e.g., for the FFY 2022 APR, report on anticipated outcomes to be obtained during FFY 2023, i.e., July 1, 2023-June 30, 2024).

The State must summarize the specific evidence-based practices that were implemented and the strategies or activities that supported their selection and ensured their use with fidelity. Describe how the evidence-based practices, and activities or strategies that support their use, are intended to impact the SiMR by changing program/district policies, procedures, and/or practices, teacher/provider practices (e.g., behaviors), parent/caregiver outcomes, and/or child outcomes. Describe any additional data (e.g., progress monitoring data) that was collected to support the on-going use of the evidence-based practices and inform decision-making for the next year of SSIP implementation.

C. Stakeholder Engagement

The State must describe the specific strategies implemented to engage stakeholders in key improvement efforts and how the State addressed concerns, if any, raised by stakeholders through its engagement activities.

Additional Implementation Activities

The State should identify any activities not already described that it intends to implement in the next fiscal year (e.g., for the FFY 2022 APR, report on activities it intends to implement in FFY 2023, i.e., July 1, 2023-June 30, 2024) including a timeline, anticipated data collection and measures, and expected outcomes that are related to the SiMR. The State should describe any newly identified barriers and include steps to address these barriers.

## 17 - Indicator Data

**Section A: Data Analysis**

**What is the State-identified Measurable Result (SiMR)?**

The SiMR is the percentage of preschool children ages 3–5 with IEPs [individualized education programs] who demonstrate improved positive social-emotional skills (including social relationships). The SiMR is aligned with the MA SSIP Theory of Action and is assessed using statewide results for child-level data collected through the Child Outcomes Summary (COS) process. Results are analyzed according to two summary statements: Summary Statement 1: Of those preschool children who entered the preschool program below age expectations in Outcome A, the percentage who substantially increased their rate of growth by the time they turned 6 or exited the program, and Summary Statement 2: The percentage of preschool children who were functioning within age expectations in Outcome A by age 6 or exited from the program.

**Has the SiMR changed since the last SSIP submission? (yes/no)**

NO

**Is the State using a subset of the population from the indicator (*e.g.*, a sample, cohort model)? (yes/no)**

NO

**Is the State’s theory of action new or revised since the previous submission? (yes/no)**

YES

**Please provide a description of the changes and updates to the theory of action.**

MA DESE updated the wording of the SSIP theory of action to include its focus on diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI), cultural responsiveness, trauma-informed care, and equitable access to resources and supports.

**Please provide a link to the current theory of action.**

https://www.doe.mass.edu/sped/spp/maspp.html

**Progress toward the SiMR**

**Please provide the data for the specific FFY listed below (expressed as actual number and percentages)*.***

**Select yes if the State uses two targets for measurement. (yes/no)**

YES

**Historical Data**

| **Part** | **Baseline Year** | **Baseline Data** |
| --- | --- | --- |
| A | 2017 | 85.61% |
| B | 2017 | 47.00% |

**Targets**

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **FFY** | **Current Relationship** | **2022** | **2023** | **2024** | **2025** |
| Target A | Data must be greater than or equal to the target | 86.00% | 86.50% | 87.00% | 88.00% |
| Target B | Data must be greater than or equal to the target | 50.00% | 50.25% | 50.50% | 51.00% |

**FFY 2022 SPP/APR Data**

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Part** | For Part A, the numerator is the sum of all children in Indicator 7 OSEP Progress Categories c and d. For Part B, the numerator is the sum of all children in Indicator 7 OSEP Progress Categories d and e. | For Part A, the denominator is the sum of all children in Indicator 7 OSEP Progress Categories a, b, c, and d. For Part B, the denominator is the sum of all children in all Indicator 7 OSEP Progress Categories a through e.  | FFY 2021 Data | FFY 2022 Target | FFY 2022 Data | **Status** | **Slippage** |
| A | 2,913 | 3,456 | 85.75% | 86.00% | 84.29% | Did not meet target | Slippage |
| B | 1,574 | 3,923 | 45.51% | 50.00% | 40.12% | Did not meet target | Slippage |

**Provide reasons for A slippage, if applicable**

There was a 1.47 percentage point slippage for Part A (i.e., summary statement 1). MA DESE transitioned to an online system for data collection and, beginning in fall 2022, started requiring all districts to report Indicator 7 data for all preschool children with disabilities each year. As a result, the total number of usable Indicator 7 records increased from 651 in FFY 2017 to 3,923 in FFY 2022. The increase in data completeness may have resulted in a more accurate representation of the social and emotional outcomes of preschool children with disabilities in Massachusetts relative to prior years. Given the changes in data collection methods and the substantial increase in sample size, caution should be used when comparing the FFY 2022 results to those of prior years. For Part A1, the slippage is due to the slightly higher percentage of children in OSEP category B (i.e., children who improved functioning but did not change their developmental trajectory) and the slight decrease in the percentage of children in category D (i.e., children who entered the program functioning below same-aged peers but caught up by exit) relative to FFY 2021.These results point to the need to improve the use of evidence-based practices to support the social and emotional outcomes of preschool children with disabilities.

**Provide reasons for B slippage, if applicable**

There was a 5.39 percentage point slippage for Part B (i.e., summary statement 2). DESE transitioned to an online system for data collection and, beginning in fall 2022, started requiring all districts to report Indicator 7 data for all preschool children with disabilities each year. As a result, the total number of usable Indicator 7 records has increased from 651 in FFY 2017 to 3,923 in FFY 2022. The increase in data completeness may have resulted in a more accurate representation of the social and emotional outcomes of preschool children with disabilities in Massachusetts relative to prior years. Given the changes in data collection methods and the substantial increase in sample size, caution should be used when comparing the FFY 2022 results to those of prior years. For Part A2, the slippage is due to the decrease in the percentage of students in OSEP categories D (i.e., children who entered the program functioning below same-aged peers but caught up by exit) and E (i.e., children who were functioning like same aged peers at entry and exit) relative to FFY 2021.

**Provide the data source for the FFY 2022 data.**

Indicator 7 child-level data were collected through the Child Outcomes Summary (COS) process. Districts submit data using a newly developed statewide database, the Early Childhood Outcomes Summary (ECOS). Results were analyzed according to two summary statements: Summary Statement 1: Of those preschool children who entered the preschool program below age expectations in Outcome A, the percentage who substantially increased their rate of growth by the time they turned 6 or exited the program, and Summary Statement 2: The percentage of preschool children who were functioning within age expectations in Outcome A by age 6 or exited from the program.

**Please describe how data are collected and analyzed for the SiMR**.

The SiMR is assessed using statewide results for Indicator 7: Preschool Outcomes, Outcome A. Districts collected child-level entry and exit COS data for preschool aged children (3–5 years of age) receiving special education services. Districts submit data using a newly developed statewide database, the Early Childhood Outcomes Summary (ECOS) database. Districts were required to complete data entry by August 31, 2023. MA DESE and the external evaluator supported districts with data collection and submission through frequent communication and technical assistance (TA). For FFY 2022, this included TA on data entry, navigation of the new online database, and the COS process. MA DESE has also developed a reporting feature within ECOS that allows districts to compare their data to the statewide results.

After the data collection deadline, the external evaluator identified records meeting OSEP-established criteria, including: student exited during the 2022–23 school year, received services for at least 6 months, has exit data, was 3 years old when services started, and was 5 years old at exit (defined as 6 years minus 1 day). The external evaluator then ran a check on OSEP progress category calculations using the Early Childhood Technical Assistance (ECTA) Center algorithm (https://ectacenter.org/eco/assets/pdfs/Summary\_of\_Rules\_COSF\_to\_OSEP\_8-9-07.pdf) to ensure accuracy and, upon verification, analyzed the counts of each progress category. Finally, the external evaluator used the ECTA Center Summary Statement Calculator (https://ectacenter.org/eco/assets/xls/SummaryStatementCalculator.xls) to calculate the summary statements and the ECTA Center Meaningful Differences Calculator (https://ectacenter.org/eco/assets/xls/MeaningfulDifferencesCalculator.xlsx) to compare FFY 2022 summary statements with FFY 2021 summary statements.

**Optional: Has the State collected additional data *(i.e., benchmark, CQI, survey)* that demonstrates progress toward the SiMR? (yes/no)**

YES

**Describe any additional data collected by the State to assess progress toward the SiMR.**

The external evaluator collected survey data from Pyramid Model district leadership teams, external coaches, teachers, and training participants. Surveys included items asking participants to reflect on the perceived benefits of Pyramid Model implementation on the social and emotional outcomes of children with disabilities. Results from these surveys are discussed below.

In addition, the external evaluator analyzed fidelity of implementation data from the Early Childhood Benchmarks of Quality (EC-BOQ). Data from this self-rating tool were submitted by external coaches supporting Pyramid Model leadership teams. EC-BOQ results are discussed below.

**Did the State identify any general data quality concerns, unrelated to COVID-19, that affected progress toward the SiMR during the reporting period? (yes/no)**

YES

**Describe any data quality issues, unrelated to COVID-19, specific to the SiMR data and include actions taken to address data quality concerns.**

MA DESE identified two data quality issues specific to the SiMR data:

Lack of data completeness. While DESE has greatly improved the completeness of Indicator 7 data, increasing the total number of records by 86% between FFY 2021 and FFY 2022, lack of data completeness remains a data quality issue. The total number of complete entry and exit records collected from districts (n?= 3,923) represents only 36% of the three-to-five-year-old child count from fall 2022 (N?= 10,967). Therefore, the child outcomes data collected for the SiMR may not accurately represent the actual outcomes of all students exiting preschool special education services in Massachusetts. Reasons for the lack of data completeness include transitioning away from a statewide cohort model for Indicator 7 data collection and limited capacity within some districts to collect data for all students receiving preschool special education services. To address these issues, DESE will continue to provide individualized TA to districts, send out regular communications about data reporting throughout the year, and provide additional training and support in collaboration with the external evaluator.

Need for additional training on the COS Process. Through TA requests and conversations with districts, DESE has identified a continued need for additional training and TA for districts on collecting child outcomes data through the COS process. DESE is working on providing additional supports, training, and guidance for districts. DESE is also planning on updating guidance materials and providing additional universal supports on COS data collection processes. In addition, the newly developed ECOS database supports valid ratings because it includes edit checks that produce error messages to alert the user of data entry issues, such as “impossible” combinations of ratings and exit progress question answers.

**Did the State identify any data quality concerns directly related to the COVID-19 pandemic during the reporting period? (yes/no)**

NO

**Section B: Implementation, Analysis and Evaluation**

**Please provide a link to the State’s current evaluation plan.**

https://www.doe.mass.edu/sped/spp/maspp.html

**Is the State’s evaluation plan new or revised since the previous submission? (yes/no)**

YES

**If yes, provide a description of the changes and updates to the evaluation plan.**

In collaboration with the external evaluator, MA DESE updated the evaluation plan to better align with project priorities and more clearly highlight the connections among project activities and intended outcomes. For example, the updated evaluation plan includes new evaluation questions focused on the integration of diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) principles, cultural responsiveness, and family involvement within SSIP. For each evaluation question, the evaluation plan highlights related short-, medium-, or long-term outcomes, activities and outputs, and data sources. While there are some changes to the questions and format of the evaluation plan, many of the activities, evaluation questions, and data sources in the new evaluation plan remain the same in as the previous plan.

**If yes, describe a rationale or justification for the changes to the SSIP evaluation plan.**

The previous evaluation plan was developed in 2020 in collaboration with MA DESE’s previous external evaluator and did not include evaluation questions related to DEI, cultural responsiveness, or family involvement. Given that these topics are priorities for MA DESE, the team decided to update the evaluation plan to better reflect these priorities.

**Provide a summary of each infrastructure improvement strategy implemented in the reporting period:**

Pyramid Model External Coaching: MA DESE continues to collaborate with the Pyramid Model Consortium (PMC) to provide district staff with coaching and training to support Pyramid Model implementation at the local level. During the 2022–23 school year, there were 37 districts receiving Pyramid Model coaching from PMC external coaches. External coaches support Pyramid Model leadership teams and guide personnel in all aspects of Pyramid Model implementation, with the goal of gradually fading support as leadership teams establish processes that can be sustained locally. External coaches provide a wide range of services, including supporting the formation and functioning of district Pyramid Model leadership teams, using data for continuous program improvement, and developing professional development systems.

Pyramid Model Statewide Training: In addition to external coaching, PMC offered virtual statewide professional learning opportunities to support Pyramid Model implementation. The statewide trainings include topics such as Practice-Based Coaching (PBC) for internal coaches who support teaching staff, the Teaching Pyramid Observation Tool (TPOT) reliability training, Prevent-Teach-Reinforce for Young Children, devoted to intensive intervention strategies, and the Behavior Incident Report (BIR) System, which guides participants in learning about the decision-making process using the BIR. Districts also have access to foundational Pyramid Model practice trainings. These trainings are facilitated by the external coach or by using the online ePyramid Modules through the Massachusetts learning management system for self-paced learning. In addition, the 10th annual Pyramid Model statewide summit, Together We Belong: Embracing Inclusion for Every Child and Family, was held virtually in October and November 2023. The event featured Dr. Jackie Joseph, who shared strategies for increasing belonging, family partnerships, and inclusionary practices.

ECOS Database: During FFY 2022, MA DESE enhanced the ECOS database, which was newly deployed in FFY 2021. The ECOS database replaced the Microsoft Excel SmartForms previously used by districts to gather Indicator 7 data. The ECOS database offers a reporting feature that allows districts to access and use their Indicator 7 data, including data for individual schools, to guide continuous improvement efforts to support the social-emotional outcomes of preschool children with IEPs. MA DESE and the external evaluator provided a range of TA to support districts’ use of ECOS, including refining existing guidance documents and providing individualized support. In October 2022, MA DESE provided a webinar detailing Indicator 7 data entry procedures in the new database. The external evaluator provided a webinar in April 2023 to SSIP district personnel to share resources and recommendations on establishing policies and procedures for COS data collection and entry into ECOS. Districts began entering data into the ECOS database for FFY 2022 in November 2022 and were required to finalize data entry by August 31, 2023.

**Describe the short-term or intermediate outcomes achieved for each infrastructure improvement strategy during the reporting period including the measures or rationale used by the State and stakeholders to assess and communicate achievement. Please relate short-term outcomes to one or more areas of a systems framework (e.g., governance, data, finance, accountability/monitoring, quality standards, professional development and/or technical assistance) and explain how these strategies support system change and are necessary for: (a) achievement of the SiMR; (b) sustainability of systems improvement efforts; and/or (c) scale-up.**

Pyramid Model External Coaching: Short-term and intermediate outcomes achieved for Pyramid Model External Coaching include improved fidelity of implementation of Pyramid Model practices at the program and classroom levels and improved capacity to implement Pyramid Model practices. During the 2022–23 school year, 37 school districts participated in Pyramid Model external coaching. External coaching most frequently focused on supporting Pyramid Model leadership teams, including activities such as assisting the team leader in planning meetings, supporting the EC-BOQ process, and assisting leaders with planning professional development for staff. Data from the EC-BOQ indicate that on average, districts perceived that they have made progress on key indicators of program-wide Pyramid Model implementation. The greatest growth across time has been in establishing Program-wide Expectations, followed by Establishing the Leadership Team and Procedures for Responding to Challenging Behavior. In addition, a total of 52 classroom observations (using the TPOT) were submitted by 15 participating districts during the 2022–23 school year. These data describe the extent to which teachers are using evidence-based practices that align with the Pyramid Model. Results from the 52 classroom observations indicate that teachers were largely using effective practices (81% “Yes” responses), with relatively few instances of practices that are inconsistent with the Pyramid Model (“Red Flags” observed?= 14). In addition, perception data from the External Coach Survey indicated that about half (48.4%) of participating districts were strongly engaged in the SSIP, a fifth were moderately engaged, and the remaining third had more limited engagement. This breakdown appears to represent a substantial improvement from 2022, with a doubling of the number of districts in the “Very Strong” engagement category. Pyramid Model external coaching supports the professional development and quality standards components of a systems framework. Job-embedded coaching supports preschool educators with implementing Pyramid Model practices with fidelity, which will ultimately lead to improved outcomes for children with disabilities (i.e., achievement of the SiMR).

Pyramid Model Statewide Training: Short-term and intermediate outcomes achieved for Pyramid Model Statewide Training include improved participant knowledge and skills. Post-event surveys indicated that individuals who participated in statewide trainings reported gains in knowledge and skills in Pyramid Model content and implementation strategies and found the events to be high in quality, relevance, and usefulness. For example, across events, 96% of respondents (n?= 33) reported that the quality of the training was excellent or very good and 88% reported that the training was very useful or extremely useful. The statewide Pyramid Model trainings support the professional development component of a systems framework and are necessary supports for personnel to implement the Pyramid Model with fidelity, which will ultimately lead to improved outcomes for children with disabilities (i.e., achievement of the SiMR).

ECOS Database: Short-term and intermediate outcomes achieved for the ECOS database include improved district personnel knowledge and skills, increased data completeness, and improved infrastructure for data use. Results from the post-event survey following the ECOS webinar in October 2022 indicate that 88% of respondents (n?= 78) agreed or strongly agreed that they felt better prepared to enter data into the ECOS database, while 91% agreed or strongly agreed that they will use the information from the webinar to establish a system for Indicator 7 reporting. Data completeness increased this year to 3,923 usable records. In addition, the reporting feature in ECOS allows districts to easily access data visualizations showing comparisons of child outcomes at the school, district, and state levels. These reports also allow districts to compare child outcomes data across years and across schools within the district, which is likely to facilitate continuous improvement efforts. The efforts to develop and improve ECOS align with the data system component of a systems framework. By improving policies and practice for data collection, management, and use, MA DESE has increased the completeness and quality of Indicator 7 data and supported districts in using their data for program improvement.

**Did the State implement any new (newly identified) infrastructure improvement strategies during the reporting period? (yes/no)**

NO

**Provide a summary of the next steps for each infrastructure improvement strategy and the anticipated outcomes to be attained during the next reporting period.**

Pyramid Model External Coaching: MA DESE and PMC will continue to provide external coaching to support districts with Pyramid Model implementation. During the 2023–24 school year, coaches will continue to build the capacity of district personnel in all areas of Pyramid Model implementation, including supporting Leadership Teams with developing effective meeting processes, establishing professional learning plans, and enhancing collaboration with families. As highlighted in coaching logs and surveys, one area of focus for many districts is establishing the capacity to provide internal coaching to classroom teachers. External coaches have supported districts with developing a range of practice-based coaching models, including peer and group coaching models. PMC and external coaches will continue to provide training and support to build internal coaching capacity in participating districts. During the next reporting period, anticipated outcomes include increased engagement and commitment of SSIP districts in implementing Pyramid Model practices with fidelity, increased collection and use of data to drive continuous improvement, and improved coaching and professional development infrastructure.

Pyramid Model Statewide Training: MA DESE and PMC will continue to provide virtual statewide trainings during the 2023–24 school year. Trainings scheduled include sessions focused on practice-based coaching, strategies to prevent challenging behaviors and to promote inclusion of children with disabilities, and sessions focused on collection and use of data. Sessions range in duration from two to six hours and are facilitated by national experts in Pyramid Model implementation. During the next reporting period, anticipated outcomes include increased knowledge and skills of training participants.

ECOS database: MA DESE will continue to improve the usability of the ECOS database and deployed a reporting feature to allow users to access child outcomes data in a range of accessible formats, including data visualizations. Districts can compare school and district data with state averages for each outcome for FFY 2021 and FFY 2022. MA DESE and the external evaluator will continue to support districts with entering data within the ECOS database and using the data for program improvement. In addition, MA DESE will continue to make improvements to the database to enhance overall usability. During the next reporting period, anticipated outcomes include improved data completeness, increased access to child outcomes data, and enhanced use of child outcomes data among district personnel.

**List the selected evidence-based practices implement in the reporting period:**

The MA SSIP is designed to improve social-emotional outcomes for preschool children with disabilities. Massachusetts selected the implementation of the Pyramid Model for Promoting Social Emotional Competence in Infants and Young Children (Pyramid Model) as its evidence-based practice (EBP) to achieve this goal.

Practice-based coaching (PBC) is a core feature of Pyramid Model implementation and is an evidence-based approach to coaching in early childhood settings.

**Provide a summary of each evidence-based practices.**

The Pyramid Model is a research-based framework supporting the implementation of EBPs in early childhood education settings. Tier 1 universal practices focus on responsive and nurturing relationships, including relationships with families, and supportive environments that promote children’s engagement. Tier 2 practices include targeted social-emotional supports in areas such as friendship skills, problem solving, and anger management. Tier 3 practices are intensive and individualized to support children with persistent behavior challenges. An effective workforce provides the foundation for the framework and is supported by the systems and policies needed to ensure that the workforce can adopt and sustain the Pyramid Model EBPs.

At the classroom level, key practice areas of the Pyramid Model, as described in the TPOT, include: (1) schedules, routines, and activities; (2) appropriate transitions between activities; (3) engaging in supportive conversations with children; (4) promoting children’s engagement; (5) providing directions; (6) collaborative teaming; (7) teaching behavior expectations; (8) teaching social skills and emotional competencies; (9) teaching friendship skills; (10) teaching children to express emotions; (11) teaching problem solving; (12) interventions for persistent challenging behavior; (13) connecting with families; and (14) supporting family use of the Pyramid Model.

At the district/program level, key practice areas of the Pyramid Model, as described in the EC-BOQ, include: (1) Establish Leadership Teams, (2) Staff Buy-In, (3) Family Engagement, (4) Program-Wide Expectations, (5) Professional Development and Staff Support Plan, (6) Procedures for Responding to Challenging Behavior, and (7) Monitoring Implementation and Outcomes.

PBC is a cyclical process for guiding practitioners’ use of evidence-based practices for promoting positive child outcomes and includes collaborative partnerships, shared goals and action planning, focused observations, and reflections and feedback.

**Provide a summary of how each evidence-based practice and activities or strategies that support its use, is intended to impact the SiMR by changing program/district policies, procedures, and/or practices, teacher/provider practices (e.g. behaviors), parent/caregiver outcomes, and/or child /outcomes.**

Implementation of the Pyramid Model at the classroom level is intended to promote positive child outcomes by building children’s social-emotional competence and reducing challenging behaviors. When educators implement these evidence-based practices with fidelity, they create nurturing relationships and supportive, inclusive environments that promote positive social-emotional outcomes in young children. In addition, the model includes targeted and explicit teaching of social and emotional competencies, and intensive intervention to address persistent adult-identified behavior challenges. Pyramid Model practices also promote inclusion for children with disabilities, which is associated with positive social outcomes for all children, including children with disabilities. Because of these practices, implementation of the Pyramid Model is intended to increase the number of children making greater than expected progress in social and emotional skills, thereby affecting the SiMR.

Professional development and ongoing coaching for teachers is a necessary support for successful implementation of Pyramid Model EBPs. At the district/program level, Pyramid Model implementation focuses on creating the conditions that promote this implementation in schools and classrooms. District leadership teams build the infrastructure and capacity of personnel to implement Pyramid Model EBPs. Professional development and ongoing coaching for leadership teams ensures that districts establish the necessary capacity to facilitate Pyramid Model implementation in schools and classrooms. The ongoing use of data to guide decision making at the classroom, school, and district levels supports the effective implementation of Pyramid Model EBPs that will lead to improved social-emotional outcomes for children with disabilities.

The Pyramid Model framework is a key component of the MA SSIP Theory of Action. As state and interagency early childhood special education (ECSE) initiatives support the scale-up of implementation of Pyramid Model EBPs, ECSE programs will have access to high-quality PD and develop leadership teams that use data to guide improvements. In turn, as staff implement EPBs and continue to engage families, classroom-level activities will move toward greater fidelity to the model. Therefore, by building local capacity and using data for continuous improvement, social-emotional outcomes for preschool children with disabilities will improve.

**Describe the data collected to monitor fidelity of implementation and to assess practice change.**

The EC-BOQ tracks the achievement of program-related implementation goals required for fidelity of implementation and sustainability. Members of district leadership teams collaboratively assess program-wide implementation of the Pyramid Model across seven critical elements. From May 2022 to May 2023, 24 (77%) of the 31 district leadership teams representing the 37 participating districts submitted the EC-BOQ. The data submitted ranged from the first EC-BOQ submitted by a district to the seventh EC-BOQ submitted since the 2018–19 school year. The highest ratings were for Establishing Leadership Team, Program-wide Expectations, and Procedures for Responding to Challenging Behavior. All critical elements averaged a 1 or higher, meaning partially in place, except for Monitoring Implementation and Outcomes. Nineteen of the 24 districts submitting an EC-BOQ reported that some critical elements were at least partially in place, with most of these districts (17 of 19) having two or more critical elements in place. Ten districts reported at least one critical element as being fully in place. To assess growth across time, the external evaluator identified 18 districts with at least two complete EC-BOQs, with the first one completed prior to the 2022–23 school year (defined as before May 1, 2022), and the last one in the 2022–23 school year. Among the 18 districts, the first EC-BOQs were completed in the 2018–19 school year by 16 district teams, in the 2020–21 school year by one district team, and in 2021–22 by one district team. The external evaluator calculated the average of each critical element across sites at each time point. The greatest growth across time has been in Program-wide Expectations, followed by Establishing the Leadership Team and Procedures for Responding to Challenging Behavior. There was no change for Monitoring Implementation and Outcomes, which also received the lowest average score for both the first and last EC-BOQs. Overall, districts had six of the seven critical elements at least partially in place (average rating =?1) in 2022–23, compared with only two when they first submitted the EC-BOQ.

A total of 52 TPOTs were submitted by 15 participating districts during the 2022–23 school year. The indicators with the highest percentage of “Yes” responses were Collaborative Teaming (90.87% Yes), Supportive Communication with Children (90.54% Yes), and Promoting Children’s Engagement (89.49% Yes). The indicators with the lowest percentage of “Yes” responses were Teaching Behavior Expectations (55% Yes), Teaching Problem Solving (62% Yes), and Teaching Social Skills (73% Yes). Across these 52 TPOTs there were a total of 14 Red Flags observed, with “Majority of day is teacher-directed” being the most frequently observed Red Flag. Overall, these results indicate that the 52 teachers observed were largely using effective practices, with relatively few instances of practices that are inconsistent with the Pyramid Model.

**Describe any additional data (e.g. progress monitoring) that was collected that supports the decision to continue the ongoing use of each evidence-based practice.**

The Leadership Team Survey asked leadership team members to indicate if their team met regularly and consisted of at least two active members. Seventy-five percent (21 out of 28) of the sites responding indicated that their leadership team met regularly; 18% (5 out of 28) indicated that their leadership teams did not meet regularly, and 7% (2 out of 28) disagreed about whether regular team meetings had occurred. This finding demonstrates an increase in the number of participating sites with regular team meetings from the previous year. The survey also asked respondents to report on their team’s progress in completing action plan components. A total of 18 districts reported on specific elements of their action plans, indicating whether each element had been included and then progress made in addressing steps related to the element. Action plan areas showing the most consistent progress focused on the leadership team and staff or “Program Expectations.” In these areas, half or more of leadership teams rated progress as either “Moderate” or “Significant.”

The Teacher Survey included a self-rating of 11 areas associated with the TPOT Key Practices scale. Teachers used a six-point scale from 0 to 5—where 5 indicated “implementation fidelity”—to rate each skill area before the initiative and April 2023. Teachers indicated confidence in their growth since they began the Pyramid Model initiative, with an overall average rating of 4.3. These results represent the 93 teachers from 24 districts who responded to the survey. The largest areas of self-reported growth were “supporting family use of the Pyramid Model practices,” “teaching behavior expectations,” and “teaching social skills and emotional competencies.”

**Provide a summary of the next steps for each evidence-based practices and the anticipated outcomes to be attained during the next reporting period.**

MA DESE will continue to collaborate with PMC to provide Pyramid Model coaching and training for participating districts. MA DESE and PMC are providing districts with foundational and targeted training and supporting the functioning of Pyramid Model leadership teams. In addition, PMC external coaches are supporting districts with establishing systems for practice-based coaching and building the capacity of internal coaches. Several districts are using the SSIP to focus on increasing educators’ knowledge of inclusionary practices and developing the skills needed to successfully serve children with disabilities in the least restrictive environment. To align with this focus, PMC is offering a four-part training series titled “Targeted Strategies for Successful Inclusion of Children with Disabilities”.

**Does the State intend to continue implementing the SSIP without modifications? (yes/no)**

YES

**If yes, describe how evaluation data support the decision to implement without any modifications to the SSIP.**

Fidelity of implementation data from the 2022–23 school year demonstrates that districts are making progress in establishing effective systems and processes for sustaining Pyramid Model implementation and that teachers are making progress in their use of evidence-based Pyramid Model practices. Data from the External Coach and Leadership Team Surveys suggest that more districts are engaged in Pyramid Model implementation and are devoting time and resources implementing Pyramid Model practices. Teachers reported that they have increased their use of effective practices because of participating in SSIP professional learning. Further, MA DESE has supported districts with increasing the completeness of child outcomes data and in building infrastructure for collecting and using child outcomes data.

**Section C: Stakeholder Engagement**

Description of Stakeholder Input

MA DESE is committed to a continuous system of engaging stakeholders to develop targets and set priorities for improvement in each of the areas reported in the SPP/APR and the SSIP.

The Special Education Advisory Panel (SEAP) and Special Education State Advisory Council (SAC) are comprised of parents, individuals with disabilities, educators, administrators, and representatives from state agencies, higher education, and other stakeholder groups. The members meet at least four times each school year to review data, discuss policy priorities, and identify unmet needs in the area of special education consistent with state law and IDEA Part B. At each meeting, both groups address and discuss various aspects of the SPP/APR and the State’s general supervision systems, as well as relevant policy matters. In the 2022-2023 school year, in addition to updates on performance and compliance results included in the SPP/APR, MA DESE discussed with the SEAP/SAC the definition of students with the most significant cognitive disabilities, a breakdown of LEA Determinations, revisions to the Educator Evaluation Rubric, revised Chapter 9 Dyslexia Guidelines, the Special Education Surrogate Parent Program, updates to the Tiered Focus Monitoring Parent Survey (Indicator 8), updates to the new IEP form, and trends identified by the Public School Monitoring (PSM) and Problem Resolution Systems (PRS) Offices. MA DESE is committed to keeping members of the SEAP and SAC up to date on processes and supports provided to LEAs in order to improve outcomes for students with disabilities. It will continue discussions around current data, longitudinal targets, historical rates of performance and compliance and the trajectory for improvement for each of the Indicators, and the effectiveness of focused improvement activities within the context of the state’s Results Driven Accountability framework.

The SAC is required by Massachusetts General Law (M.G.L. c. 15, § 1G https://malegislature.gov/Laws/GeneralLaws/PartI/TitleII/Chapter15/Section1G). Its purpose is to advise the Board of Elementary and Secondary Education and to make other programmatic recommendations it deems necessary to fulfill the goals established by the board.

The SEAP is required by IDEA (34 CFR §§ 300.167-300.169 https://www.ecfr.gov/current/title-34/subtitle-B/chapter-III/part-300#sg34.2.300\_1166.sg15). Its purpose is to advise the State Education Authority (SEA) of unmet needs within the State regarding the education of children with disabilities. The Panel comments publicly on proposed rules or regulations. Its advisory function to the SEA involves developing evaluations and reporting 618 data (IDEA data) to USED and creating corrective action plans to address findings in Federal monitoring reports under IDEA Part B. The Panel also advises the SEA in developing and implementing policies relating to the coordination of services for children with disabilities.

MA DESE has continued to emphasize its priority on expanding the agency’s capacity to solicit broad and diverse stakeholder input to set SPP/APR targets, analyze data, develop improvement strategies, and evaluate progress. In FFY 2022 MA DESE sought to continue developing stakeholder Indicator knowledge, a project that began in FFY 2020. MA DESE has created and continues to update a new SPP/APR website. Each of the 17 Indicators has its own dedicated web page or Quick Reference Guide (QRG), as well as PowerPoints and other relevant information or resources. All materials on the SPP/APR website are available in six languages that correspond to the most common languages spoken in Massachusetts: English, Spanish, Portuguese, Chinese, Vietnamese, and Haitian Creole. Narrated versions of each PowerPoint are also available in English on the YouTube page of MA DESE’s partner, the Federation for Children with Special Needs (the Massachusetts Parent Training and Information Center/PTIC). In FFY 2022 MA DESE hosted eight virtual information and feedback sessions to broaden stakeholder knowledge. Each meeting had a specific improvement strategy focus and also provided updates on data analysis and evaluation of progress for each Indicator. The large-group presentation on each topic was simultaneously translated from English into the other five languages.

MA DESE consults on a monthly or at least quarterly basis with the Massachusetts Administrators of Special Education (http://www.asepage.org/), Federation for Children with Special Needs (https://fcsn.org/), Massachusetts Advocates for Children (https://www.massadvocates.org/), Massachusetts Association of Approved Special Education Schools (https://maaps.org/), and Massachusetts Urban Special Education Leadership Collaborative (massurban.org)). In addition, the Massachusetts State Special Education Director at MA DESE gives monthly virtual presentations to statewide special education leaders on a wide array of special education compliance and performance topics. During all of these meetings, MA DESE solicits and receives significant feedback that informs the development of special education policy and guidance.

MA DESE works closely with other state agencies to provide supports to children with disabilities. The Department has developed a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) or has entered into an Interagency Service Agreement (ISA) with the Massachusetts Commission for the Blind (MCB), Massachusetts Rehabilitation Commission (MRC), Department of Public Health (DPH), Department of Early Education and Care (EEC), and Massachusetts Commission for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing (MCDHH). Additionally, these agencies provide a representative to serve on the MA Special Education Advisory Council and the MA Special Education Advisory Panel. The Department has established regular meetings with each of these agencies to strengthen collaborations and to monitor joint initiatives.

In its efforts to roll out the new IEP, MA DESE frequently engaged with stakeholders across the Commonwealth in a variety of roles to solicit feedback on the draft form that was released in the Spring of 2022. Stakeholder groups whose feedback was sought included various school groups, parent/family/advocacy organizations, and other State agencies.

As needed, MA DESE convenes stakeholder working groups throughout the year to provide focused input on specific projects and policy priorities. Among these focus groups were the Early Childhood Interagency Coordinating Council (which includes community members and state agency employees), a Statewide Systemic Improvement Plan (SSIP) leadership team and working group, a family engagement workgroup, an advisory group for the Dropout Prevention and Re-engagement Network, and secondary transition stakeholder groups. MA DESE also consults with educators, parents, advocates, and others on a regular basis to inform policy and practice.

MA DESE engages with stakeholders on the direction of Indicator 17, the State’s Systemic Improvement Plan (SSIP), at the state, district, classroom, and community levels. Stakeholders are provided with information about activities and goals, training events and embedded supports statewide, and the availability of resources to support and expand implementation. Those at the district and school levels participate in ongoing decision-making about the direction of the SSIP by providing feedback about the quality of events and supports, observed benefits for their own stakeholders, and the greatest needs to be able to move forward with implementation. Additional information is provided in the Indicator 17 narrative.

In fall 2022, DESE conducted a series of listening sessions with districts participating in Pyramid Model implementation to learn more about district strengths and areas for improvement regarding Pyramid Model implementation and needed supports from DESE. As a result of the listening sessions, DESE is working with PMC to provide more targeted TA and PD around the identified needs and areas for improvement.

 **Describe the specific strategies implemented to engage stakeholders in key improvement efforts.**

In collaboration with the external evaluator, MA DESE conducted focus groups in March 2023 with Pyramid Model leadership team members from participating districts. The focus group goals were to understand challenges faced by districts in establishing internal coaching capacity and identify successful strategies for enhancing capacity. Participants included leadership team members from eight districts. Results of the focus groups were shared with MA DESE and PMC to inform coaching and training activities with districts. The external evaluator will conduct additional focus groups with Pyramid Model leadership team members during the 2023–24 school year.

MA DESE has strategically engaged district and school stakeholders in Indicator 7 child outcomes data collection. DESE presented a webinar in October 2022 on how to use the ECOS database and the process for collecting and submitting Indicator 7 data. As part of the registration for the webinar and during the event itself, registrants posed questions to be addressed during the session. MA DESE and the external evaluator plan to provide an additional Indicator 7 webinar during the 2023–24 school year.

In FFY 2022, the Pyramid Model State Leadership Team (SLT) met bimonthly to collaborate on statewide efforts and provide feedback on the progress of Pyramid Model implementation. The SLT continues to collaborate on statewide planning to extend the reach and support for Pyramid Model implementation. The SLT includes members from MA DESE, the Massachusetts Department of Early Education and Care, UMass Boston, Massachusetts Department of Public Health (DPH), Head Start, and program and district leadership team members. It will continue to meet bimonthly during the 2023–24 school year. In addition, several SLT topic-specific workgroups will meet in alternating months.

The District Leadership Team Survey and external coach collaboration are key avenues for engaging district and school personnel in SSIP improvement efforts. Feedback from surveys is shared with MA DESE leadership and external coaches regularly share feedback from districts via the monthly coaching log and regular coaching meetings. This feedback is used by coaches and project leaders to guide continuous improvement of Pyramid Model coaching and training. The external evaluator will conduct the next District Leadership Team Survey in February 2024.

**Were there any concerns expressed by stakeholders during engagement activities? (yes/no)**

NO

**Additional Implementation Activities**

**List any activities not already described that the State intends to implement in the next fiscal year that are related to the SiMR.**

N/A

**Provide a timeline, anticipated data collection and measures, and expected outcomes for these activities that are related to the SiMR.**

N/A

**Describe any newly identified barriers and include steps to address these barriers.**

MA DESE has identified a need for increased training for district personnel regarding the COS process. It plans to collaborate with the external evaluator and TA providers from ECTA to develop a plan to provide districts with the requested foundational training and support.

**Provide additional information about this indicator (optional).**

## 17 - Prior FFY Required Actions

None

## 17 - OSEP Response

## 17 - Required Actions

# Certification

**Instructions**

**Choose the appropriate selection and complete all the certification information fields. Then click the "Submit" button to submit your APR.**

**Certify**

**I certify that I am the Chief State School Officer of the State, or his or her designee, and that the State's submission of its IDEA Part B State Performance Plan/Annual Performance Report is accurate.**

**Select the certifier’s role:**

Designated by the Chief State School Officer to certify

**Name and title of the individual certifying the accuracy of the State's submission of its IDEA Part B State Performance Plan/Annual Performance Report.**

**Name:**

Jamie Camacho

**Title:**

Director of Special Education Planning and Policy

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**Submitted on:**

04/22/24 8:46:26 AM