

STATE PERFORMANCE PLAN / ANNUAL PERFORMANCE REPORT: PART B

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

**For reporting on
FFY 2020**

Montana



PART B DUE February 1, 2022

**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

Additional information related to data collection and reporting

Number of Districts in your State/Territory during reporting year

400

General Supervision System:

The systems that are in place to ensure that IDEA Part B requirements are met, e.g., monitoring, dispute resolution, etc.

The Montana comprehensive system of general supervision includes multiple components: A review of each Individual with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) Part B applicant's policies and procedures; the application, allocation, distribution, fiscal risk assessment, and accountability of special education funds; and formal complaints, due process hearings, mediation, and an Early Assistance Program. The special education and legal units track data to ensure required compliance and/or corrections are made. Continuous improvement, based on each Local Education Agency's (LEA) five-year comprehensive plan, is reported by LEAs annually and tracked through the Accreditation Unit.

Compliance Monitoring

The Office of Public Instruction (OPI) reviews individual student records to verify processes and procedures meet IDEA and Montana requirements. Compliance monitoring activities consist of: review of individual student records; review of district policy, practices, and procedures; virtual records review and/or site visits, when appropriate; and communication with teachers and specialists.

All identified noncompliance is recorded, verified, and accounted for through a process of notification of all identified noncompliance; required correction of all identified noncompliance within the 1 year timeline; district submission of up-dated data verifying 100 percent post-monitoring compliant policy, practice, and procedure; timely issuance of findings; completion of required technical assistance and professional development activities; and the issuance of a final report to the district upon completion of all required compliance monitoring requirements.

Each LEA is monitored on a five-year cycle. State Operated or State Funded programs are monitored on a three-year cycle. Records for review are selected and a standard record review protocol is used. If an LEA completes the correction of each instance of noncompliance and provides the OPI with sufficient additional records to verify ongoing evidence of compliance, no finding is issued. This practice is based on guidance provided by OSEP in the FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS REGARDING IDENTIFICATION AND CORRECTION OF NONCOMPLIANCE AND REPORTING ON CORRECTION IN THE STATE PERFORMANCE PLAN (SPP)/ANNUAL PERFORMANCE REPORT (APR) document. In the process for determination of findings, the OPI considers the following: (1) if the noncompliance was extensive or found in only a small percentage of files; (2) if the noncompliance showed a denial of a basic right under the IDEA; and (3) if the noncompliance represents an isolated incident or reflects a long-standing failure to meet requirements. When data indicates evidence of sustained post-monitoring compliance is necessary, the OPI requires the district to obtain additional training and/or submit additional evidence of sustained compliance. The same verification procedures are used for all noncompliance.

During the last LEA monitoring cycle, the state identified 18 instances of non-compliance that were not related to any of the SPP/APR indicators. These instances were verified using both prongs of the verification process described in the Office of Special Education Programs's (OSEP) 09-02 Memorandum and subsequent OSEP guidance. Of the 18 instances, all of them were corrected within the one-year timeline.

IDEA Part B Program - Fiscal

The special education unit oversees the application, allocation and distribution of approximately \$80 million of state and federal special education funds, ensures the accountability for the use of those funds, and oversees all related IDEA grant reporting and requirements. The fiscal manager reviews and approves the applications for the IDEA funds, determines if expenditures are allowable, and collaborates to set the special education rates for state appropriations. District eligibility for funds is determined through state and federal fiscal effort maintenance requirements. This unit oversees the distribution of IDEA discretionary funds to support programs that are a specific need area as identified in the APR and is responsible for submitting the IDEA Annual Application for Funds and all related grant reporting and fiscal requirements.

Early Assistance Program

The Early Assistance Program (EAP) provides technical assistance to help parents, adult students, guardians, school district staff, advocates and other members of the special education community understand the requirements of IDEA, or implementing Montana laws. The EAP provides informal dispute resolution for special education issues relating to a student's free and appropriate public education, any violation of Part B of the IDEA or implementing Montana laws. The intention is to resolve special education disagreements amicably, with the lowest level of third-party involvement as possible. In addition to the EAP, there are several other dispute resolution options available under the IDEA, including: Individualized Education Program (IEP) facilitation, mediation, state administrative complaints, due process hearings, and expedited due process hearings. These options are administered and overseen by the EAP staff in collaboration with special education staff.

Data and Accountability

The Data and Accountability staff oversee the collection, analysis and reporting of all special education data required for federal and state reporting purposes. The staff provides technical assistance and support to local district staff in the management of student data related to special education. The staff also provide technical assistance to LEAs for the Special Education module of our statewide student information system and works with the system vendor to ensure compliance with state and federal regulations. The state has entered into contractual relationships with technical assistance centers to increase technical support in improving performance.

Federal Differentiating Monitoring Report

In Montana's Differentiated Monitoring Report for FFY2019, Montana was found to need a universal level of support for the Results, Compliance, and Fiscal areas, and intensive support for the State Systemic Improvement Plan (SSIP) area. Factors leading to the Intensive level of engagement for the SSIP included failure to report specific stakeholder involvement and evidence-based practices. Staffing was altered to allow one position to assume specific improvement activities with targeted schools in coordination with agency-wide efforts for improvement under the State's Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) plan and accreditation standards. This position is responsible for working with targeted districts and OPI divisions to coordinate program participation in various initiatives throughout the office, work with the target districts on infrastructure analysis and data analysis of their systems, assist the districts in identifying evidence based practices and improvement activities to support the State identified Measureable Results (SiMR) goal. More details on this are included in the SSIP section. The spring 2020 stakeholder meeting was canceled due to COVID-19. However, Special Education staff worked with NCSI staff to update the Theory of Action, Evaluation questions, and narrative of the SSIP to include the missing information for the April 2020 submission.

Technical Assistance System:

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

The Special Education Unit is organized into five work units that have specific functions and provide technical assistance related to those functions. These units include: School Improvement, Continuing Education and Technical Assistance, Data and Accountability, IDEA Part B, and Early Learning.

The School Improvement/compliance monitoring unit provides both broad and specific technical assistance and training related to all aspects of the special education process, proper use and documentation of records, and student specific issues. General technical assistance training is regularly scheduled, and specific LEA technical assistance is provided whenever requested or required. Annually, trainings are provided across the state for novice teachers on compliance and the implementation of IDEA, and for more experienced teachers, training on current hot topics are provided. Topics are determined based on monitoring data, frequently asked questions from the field, and anything the state special education director feels is a hot topic (nationally or locally).

Technical assistance is also provided to ensure timely correction of all identified noncompliance and training is given related to such non-compliance. The Continuing Education and Technical Assistance (CETA) unit is responsible for implementing several major training initiatives for the OPI that focus on instructional practices and interventions. The CETA unit activities are expanded upon in the Professional Development section.

The Data and Accountability unit provides LEA's technical assistance for all data entry and reporting for required state and federal special education reporting purposes. Training is conducted via phone, Zoom, TEAMS and in person for each data collection, depending on the needs of the LEAs. Again, technical assistance training is regularly scheduled, and specific LEA technical assistance is provided whenever requested.

The IDEA Part B Program unit provides technical assistance to LEA's in applying for, using, and accounting of state and federal special education funds. Assistance is also provided in developing and implementing program narratives, interlocal agreements, and special education procedures. This unit also completes the state's annual application for IDEA funds.

Technical assistance and updates are regularly provided to directors of special education at conferences and regional Montana Council of Administrators of Special Education (MCASE) meetings. In addition, OPI professional staff have areas of professional expertise that is available to LEA's, at request, for technical assistance and/or training. Such expertise includes former special education teachers with knowledge from preschool classrooms, special education classrooms and inclusion; former Speech/Language Pathologists, Mandt trainers, and former classroom teachers. In addition, the OPI hires local LEA staff as short term workers to provide training as needed. Starting in the fall of 2020 the special education staff provided monthly special education Community of Practice on various topics and hold monthly director calls to discuss current issues in special education & state updates.

Montana currently works with several federal Technical Assistance Providers and participates in federal grants which include: National Center for Systemic Improvement (NCSI), the Center on Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports (PBIS), Early Childhood Technical Assistance (ECTA), Center for the Integration of IDEA Data (CIID), and the IDEA Data Center (IDC).

Working with staff from the Technical Assistance for Excellence in Special Education (TAESE), the OPI has facilitated the Montana Higher Education Consortium (HEC) for nineteen years. The HEC continues to bring together faculty from each of the colleges and universities in Montana with teacher preparation programs to learn, discuss, and stay abreast of special education topics and issues across the state. This group has worked to provide greater standardization of the teacher training programs in Montana and has worked together to improve pre-service training programs. This group is also analyzing dispositions of teacher candidates and how to support them, resulting in better prepared educators.

TAESE also provides technical assistance to the state through facilitating a large stakeholder meetings, conducting stakeholder input activities, and compiling and analyzing input. In addition, TAESE provides specific orientation training to Montana's State Special Education Advisory Panel, special education data collection and analysis of Indicator 8, Comprehensive System of Personnel Development (CSPD), TASK12 Educational Interpreters Performance Assessment (EIPA), Dispute Resolution in Special Education (DRSE) workgroups, Northern Plains Law Conference and other technical assistance as needed.

Montana has been a member of the Results-Based Accountability Cross-State Learning Collaborative through NCSI. Based on the state's general supervision responsibilities, we are evaluating our monitoring process and data to improve our assessment of special education program effectiveness at the LEA level. This, then, will drive not only the focus of our program reviews and monitoring, but also the scope of those activities. The purpose of this work is to better identify and meet the individual unique needs of each Montana LEA as they work to improve the outcomes for students with disabilities.

All initiatives across the OPI have been developed to include evidence-based practices. Montana's Multi-Tiered Systems of Supports (MTSS) initiative, for example, is based on the research and program developed by the Center on PBIS, an OSEP Technical Assistance Center. Montana's model for our State Systemic Improvement Plan (SSIP) implementation is premised on the commitment to target and focus on existing supports already in place throughout the State Education Agency (SEA). These major initiatives were all developed under strict planning, research, stakeholder involvement, and based on known evidence-based practices that produce positive results.

The division's 619 Coordinator worked with the ECTA center to improve Indicator 6, Preschool Least Restrictive Environment (LRE), Indicator 7, Preschool Outcomes, and Indicator 12, Early Childhood Transition. The 619 Coordinator participates in calls regarding how inclusion looks in rural states and participates in inclusion webinars presented by ECTA and OSEP.

The Early Learning Unit Manager worked with Waterford to support the UPSTART program in Montana. This is a free online program for four-year-old children who are unserved or underserved. We currently have 370 families of four-year-old children registered. UPSTART focuses on reading, math and science with some focus on social and emotional as well.

The Part B Data Manager continues working with the Center for the Integration of IDEA Data (CIID), and other OPI staff to utilize the Generate system for EdFacts reporting as well as participated in, and presented on, various webinars presented by both CIID and the IDEA Data Center (IDC). After attending various IDC webinars, the Data Manager worked with LEAs to ensure that they clearly understood the requirements for reporting Exiting data. The secondary transition specialist also attended webinars designed to help increase compliance with the Indicator 13 requirements, and updated the Secondary Transition technical assistance (TA) information available on the OPI website.

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.

Professional development is provided through multiple areas in the special education department. The Continuing Education and Technical Assistance (CETA) and the School Improvement unit's leadership and staff have integrated responsibilities.

Montana's CSPD is comprised of regional professional development offerings, the State Personnel Development Grant (SPDG), MTSS, the Montana Autism Education Project (MAEP), and the HEC. The CSPD Regions are providers of "just in time" professional development. The current structure consists of five (5) regional councils that analyze the alignment between the data in the APR and the professional development activities offered in each region. The CSPD regions provide trainings for parents, special educators, general educators, and paraprofessionals to ensure access to the general education curriculum. The OPI provides reports to the CSPD councils that include data on the State Performance Plan (SPP)/Annual Performance Report (APR) indicators, trends in monitoring findings, results of the statewide CSPD Training Needs Survey and ESSA identifications. Based on analysis of the data for a given region, the regional council identifies training needs for the region and provides the OPI with a description of which indicator(s) each professional development activity addresses. This process focuses the professional development activities offered throughout Montana on improving the results for students related to each SPP/APR indicator. The number of professional development opportunities provided by the CSPD regions was 109, with 2,752 attendees.

Through the SPDG, Montana has long supported tiered systems approaches through MTSS initiatives. Montana was awarded another 5-year grant starting in November of 2020. This grant will allow Montana to continue to improve the MTSS system and implementation across the state. This new grant's focus is to improve and expand professional development and coaching support focused on data-analytic problem solving at the systems level and improve the management structured at the state, regional, district and building levels. The grant will allow professional development autonomy to districts allowing them access to professional development based on their individual needs. During this first year of the grant, the focus has been on training, coaching, developing materials, and working on online courses (Teacher Learning Hub). Beginning in the fall of 2021 training and supports will be piloted in Regions 1 and will move into Region 2 and 3 beginning in the fall of 2022 and expanding to other regions in subsequent years.. During the five years of the grant, additional courses will be added to the Teacher Learning Hub, the MTSS Webpage will continue to be improved, and professional development opportunities will be provided through the CSPD regions.

In 2019-2020 the work focused on the development of a MTSS Webpage to include links to online courses, resources, and materials. These tools serve to support schools in implementing MTSS and are supplemented with face-to-face trainings and direct consultation. In response to the needs of secondary schools, an annual High School Forum was held addressing the use of a multi-tiered framework around academics, behavior, and mental health, drop-out prevention, attendance, student engagement, the Early Warning System and Family Engagement. In 2019-20, twenty high schools participated with 91 participants.

The Special Education Unit staff collaborated with the Division of Indian Education and other OPI staff on the development and delivery of professional development related to the unique needs of Montana's American Indian students. Through the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) Grant, training on Restorative Practice was provided face-to-face in the fall of 2019. Follow-up training in a Train-the-Trainer model was provided in the fall of 2020. Agency staff continue to provide TA to schools involved in implementing Restorative Practice within their buildings and/or districts. As with all students, data on American Indian students with disabilities who have dropped out of school is analyzed and shared with the Division of Indian Education and the Board of Public Education. Special Education staff analyzed data on American Indian students with disabilities for the Indian Education staff to facilitate in designing activities to decrease the dropout rates of American Indian students.

Training activities for general education personnel continue to be supported by the regional CSPDs, SPDG, and IDEA funds to provide them with skill sets to respond to the needs of students with disabilities in the regular education classroom. A significant professional development activity that was canceled in 2020 was the annual Summer Institute due to the COVID pandemic. The Summer Institute has been extremely successful in providing general education personnel the skills necessary to implement positive supports in the regular education setting. The Summer Institute planning committee is fully engaged in planning for a 2022 in person institute.

The MAEP has continued to provide on-site and virtual consultations regarding individual children as well as broader training opportunities at the LEA, regional, and state-wide levels to improve the LEA's ability to respond to the challenging behaviors and other instructional needs of children with autism and other low-incidence disabilities.

Student-specific technical assistance activities include observations of students and discussion with current staff; review of student Individualized Education Plans (IEPs) with technical assistance on developing comprehensive autism services; and consultations on the development of behavioral intervention and communication strategies. Professional development activities include providing training in communication strategies; Tier 2/3 behavior intervention strategies; providing training on effective components of programs for students with autism; and the identification of students with autism. Through the use of in-person and virtual trainings, the MAEP has expanded the number and variety of the trainings it offers to Montana special education teachers, paraeducators, speech-language providers and general education staff.

The Montana HEC is a unique community of practice that has brought together general and special education faculty members from all teacher training programs in the state of Montana. Very few SEAs in the country engage and involve their Institutions of Higher Education (IHEs) with improvement efforts. In Montana, there is a direct connection with the IHE, the CSPDs, and the special education advisory panel. In the past three years, the IHEs have been involved in a larger stakeholder group of around 100 participants that have provided feedback to the OPI on the Montana SSIP. The HEC has become involved with, and assisted Montana with their large-scale initiatives and systems change efforts. The HEC has met twice a year for the past nineteen years, in the spring and fall, to discuss critical issues and share ideas relating to teacher training programs. The meetings have created a strong partnership and collaboration between faculty members at the teacher training programs. The universities and colleges in Montana benefit from the information they receive from the OPI.

Broad Stakeholder Input:

The mechanisms for soliciting broad stakeholder input on the State's targets in the SPP/APR and any subsequent revisions that the State has made to those targets, and the development and implementation of Indicator 17, the State's Systemic Improvement Plan (SSIP).

Discussions and Stakeholder input of the SPP, APR, SSIP, and Results Driven Accountability (RDA)/Results Based Accountability (RBA) began in 2013 with our State Special Education Advisory Panel. The Panel is fully vested and broadly representative of Montana. Additionally, many of the panel members as well as SEA staff serve in other agency or organization leadership positions or on advisory groups in the disability community. This enables MT to draw insight and advice from a broad group of stakeholders with an understanding of Montana's unique needs, strengths, and potential weaknesses.

Other stakeholder groups we sponsor and/or engage include:

- Our CSPD includes both regional and state councils that regularly meet to assess APR data and to evaluate professional development priorities and results.
- The OPI School Mental Health coordinator worked collaboratively with the Children's Mental Health Bureau at the Department of Public Health and Human Services (DPHHS) to facilitate the provision of mental health services in schools through Comprehensive School and Community Treatment services (CSCT).
- The OPI staff has developed productive working relationships with other Montana Agencies that serve youth and adults with disabilities. OPI staff participate as members of advisory councils for early childhood, vocational rehabilitation, juvenile justice, developmental disabilities, the state independent living council and the mental health divisions of the DPHHS. These connections have allowed the OPI staff to build strong working relationships with other agencies, which has resulted in multiple collaborative projects that have strengthened the commitments of all involved to working with Montana's youth to facilitate smooth transitions from birth to adulthood.
- Working with staff from TAASE, the OPI has facilitated the MontanaHEC for nineteen years. The HEC continues to be a part of CSPD and brings together members of faculty from each of the colleges and universities teacher prep programs in Montana. Participation in the consortium is strong and includes faculty members from each of the public and private colleges in Montana. This group has worked to provide greater standardization of the teacher training programs in Montana and has worked together to improve pre-service training programs.
- The OPI staff is involved in an additional coalition to engage in discussion and activity with our Parent Training Information center, Montana Empowerment Center and Disability Rights Montana (DRM). The MEC is available to assist Montana families in obtaining appropriate education for their children; improve education results for all children; train and inform parents and their professionals who work with their children; empower families to be the decision-makers for their children; and, develop collaboration with organizations and agencies that serve children and youth with disabilities.
- The OPI staff is also highly engaged with the Schools Administrators of Montana (SAM) which include affiliates for Superintendents, Principals, Special Education Administrators, and Information Technology (IT) Directors. This partnership allows us to respond quickly to needs expressed in the field by school staff. We also provide SAM with a grant to help fund the Montana Recruitment Project. This program focuses on recruiting hard to fill positions such as speech/language pathologists, special education teachers, occupational therapists, and school psychologists for our districts throughout Montana.

Annually, the SEA brings together representatives from these stakeholder groups for a joint meeting facilitated by TAASE. This meeting gathers over 80 front-line stakeholders together to share up-dates of issues and gather input from a comprehensive representation of the Montana disability community, families and parents of children and students with and without disabilities. For the past six years, the topic has been Montana's SSIP and activities have been conducted to solicit both general and specific stakeholder input. During the spring 2021 meeting, the state presented on the new SPP/APR package to begin facilitating gathering feedback.

The SEA internal stakeholder work continues particularly through the ESEA comprehensive and targeted schools taskforces. These taskforces were created to 1) provide cohesive supports for the development and implementation of a system wide continuous improvement plan across all areas of need for the identified comprehensive school and 2) Support schools identified as targeted by bringing together OPI staff with deep knowledge of struggling student groups to develop a range of improvement activities. These task forces include membership from all program divisions of the agency. Given that our LEAs on Native American reservations will comprise our lowest performing schools, the overall agency, the task force and the SSIP are aligned.

The comprehensive task force identifies and examines barriers that exist in our professional relationships with Indian schools. Barriers in the districts, and in the agency, were identified and analyzed. This began an assessment of interagency collaboration and professional relationships. Common ground was found for improved methodologies in our approach to districts, our analysis of district data and community, tribal, and cultural conditions, district capacities, and how better to target and support improvement efforts. As a result, SSIP improvement activities are now supported and reinforced through cross-divisional coordinated efforts. The Student Support Services division has also been heavily involved in the development of Montana's ESSA state plan.

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

YES

Number of Parent Members:

12

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.

The OPI has a strong relationship with the MEC. Montana utilized that relationship to reach out to parents across the state to participate in the stakeholder feedback survey. There was also representation from the MEC at numerous State Advisory Panel meetings through the 2020-2021 school year and at the Joint Stakeholder meeting held in May 2021.

The State Advisory Panel has a diverse group of participants and parents from across the state of Montana. They meet four times a year, and each meeting includes an opportunity for feedback on the various information that is presented to them at the meeting. The information presented and discussions can be found on the Advisory Panel webpage (<https://opi.mt.gov/Educators/School-Climate-Student-Wellness/Special-Education/Special-Education-Advisory-Panel>) in the Meeting Minutes for the individual meetings, or in the Annual Report which is a compilation of the minutes from each meeting and a description of the action items taken by the panel through the year.

Montana created a survey to gather stakeholder input on the indicator targets and improvement activities. This survey was distributed to stakeholders via list serves at the OPI, the MEC, and DRM. It was provided to the Advisory Panel and Special Education Directors as well. The first few questions on the survey were designed to gather demographic data of the taker – role (parent, teacher, director, public, etc), were they the parent of a student with a

disability, and race/ethnicity. The survey presented current and trend data for each indicator that needed to have baseline and/or targets set. There was a description of what the indicator was measuring, and options for the stakeholder to choose for baseline/target setting. The survey also asked for information on what activities were currently happening that were having a positive impact on the indicator, and which were having a negative impact. Lastly, the stakeholder was asked to provide ideas on new activities the OPI could engage in if the stakeholder had any to provide.

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.

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Soliciting Public Input:

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

The revised SPP/APR was initially presented to the Joint Stakeholder meeting in May 2021. At that meeting, small groups were asked to discuss various indicators and give feedback on the activities currently being done by OPI (what was working, what was not), and to give ideas about other activities the OPI could engage in to improve outcomes for students with disabilities. In fall 2021, the OPI launched a survey giving information on each of the indicators that needed to have baseline and/or targets set. The survey asked the respondents to give feedback on a variety of options for baseline and/or targets for those indicators. They were also given the opportunity to tell the OPI what activities were positively impacting each indicator, and which were negatively impacting each indicator. The survey was distributed to the State Advisory Panel, the mailing list for the MEC, the mailing list for DRM, the School Administrators of Montana (SAM), local Special Education Directors, special education teachers, general education teachers, and was posted on the OPI website. The survey is no longer available for the FFY2020 APR.

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.

The results of the target setting, data analysis, and development of the improvement activities were presented to the Special Education Advisory Panel at its January 2022 meeting. They will be posted to the OPI Website (<https://opi.mt.gov/Educators/School-Climate-Student-Wellness/Special-Education/Special-Education-Annual-Performance-Report>) as a part of the Annual Performance Report posting by June 1, 2022.

Reporting to the Public

How and where the State reported to the public on the FFY 2019 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 2019 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 revision if the State has revised the targets that it submitted with its FFY 2019 APR in 2021, is available.

The February 1, 2022, Montana Annual Performance Report and revised State Performance Plan (including the State Systemic Improvement Plan) will be made available to the public via the OPI Web site (<https://opi.mt.gov/Educators/School-Climate-Student-Wellness/Special-Education/Special-Education-Annual-Performance-Report>) by no later than June 1, 2022. An electronic announcement of the report with links to the Montana Annual Performance Report will be sent to the authorized representatives of the LEAs, directors of special education, the parent training and information center, Disability Rights Montana, and to state and regional CSPD Council members.

Reporting to the Public on the Performance of each LEA

In accordance with section 616(b)(2)(C)(ii)(I) of IDEA, the OPI will report annually to the public on the performance of each local educational agency (LEA) on the targets in the State Performance Plan. The report on performance of LEAs will be made available to the public on the OPI Web site (<https://gems.opi.mt.gov/school-district-data>) no later than June 1, 2022. The OPI will not report information on performance to the public that would result in the disclosure of personally identifiable information about individual children or data that is insufficient to yield statistically reliable information.

To access the reports from the link above:

1. select the District Profile option.
2. Select a district from the list on the right side.
3. Click on the Program & Course Offerings tab above the district list.
4. Select the Special Education District Performance Report
5. When you select that button, you will be at the report, looking at the relevant district for the prior FY.
6. To review a different year, select the desired year from the drop down in the upper left of the screen.

Please note these reports may take a few minutes to load.

The GEMS platform is built to be used with Safari, Firefox, Chrome, and Edge. It will not work with older versions of Internet Explorer as it is no longer supported by Microsoft. Occasionally, an error report is received that the PowerBI will not load. If that happens, wait a couple minutes and refresh the page.

Intro - Prior FFY Required Actions

The State has not publicly reported on the FFY 2018 (July 1, 2018-June 30, 2019) and FFY 2017 (July 1, 2017-June 30, 2018) performance of each LEA located in the State on the targets in the State's performance plan as required by section 616(b)(2)(C)(ii)(I) of IDEA. With its FFY 2020 SPP/APR, the State must provide a Web link demonstrating that the State reported to the public on the performance of each LEA located in the State on the targets in the SPP/APR for FFY 2018 and FFY 2017. In addition, the State must report with its FFY 2020 SPP/APR, how and where the State reported to the public on the FFY 2019 performance of LEA located in the State on the targets in the SPP/APR.

The State's IDEA Part B determination for both 2020 and 2021 is Needs Assistance. In the State's 2021 determination letter, the Department advised the State of available sources of technical assistance, including OSEP-funded technical assistance centers, and required the State to work with appropriate entities. The Department directed the State to determine the results elements and/or compliance indicators, and improvement strategies, on which it will focus its use of available technical assistance, in order to improve its performance. The State must report, with its FFY 2020 SPP/APR submission, due February 1, 2022, on: (1) the technical assistance sources from which the State received assistance; and (2) the actions the State took as a result of that technical assistance.

Response to actions required in FFY 2019 SPP/APR

The OPI has been working to update and move its Statewide Longitudinal Data System (SLDS) to a new platform for the last 3 years. As a part of that, links that were provided to OSEP in prior APRs were broken. That has now been corrected and the data can be found at:
<https://gems.opi.mt.gov/school-district-data>.

To access the reports from the link above, select the District Profile option. Select a district from the list on the right side, and then click on the Program & Course Offerings tab above the district list. Select the Special Education button, the bottom button will then say "Special Education District Performance Report", and when you select that button, you will be at the report, looking at the relevant district for the prior FY. Please note these reports may take a few minutes to load.

The technical assistance that was accessed and utilized is discussed in the TA section of the Introduction.

Intro - OSEP Response

The State's determinations for both 2020 and 2021 were Needs Assistance. Pursuant to section 616(e)(1) of the IDEA and 34 C.F.R. § 300.604(a), OSEP's June 24, 2021 determination letter informed the State that it must report with its FFY 2020 SPP/APR submission, due February 1, 2022, on: (1) the technical assistance sources from which the State received assistance; and (2) the actions the State took as a result of that technical assistance. The State provided the required information.

Intro - Required Actions

The State's IDEA Part B determination for both 2021 and 2022 is Needs Assistance. In the State's 2022 determination letter, the Department advised the State of available sources of technical assistance, including OSEP-funded technical assistance centers, and required the State to work with appropriate entities. The Department directed the State to determine the results elements and/or compliance indicators, and improvement strategies, on which it will focus its use of available technical assistance, in order to improve its performance. The State must report, with its FFY 2021 SPP/APR submission, due February 1, 2023, on: (1) the technical assistance sources from which the State received assistance; and (2) the actions the State took as a result of that technical assistance.

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 EDFacts 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 2020 SPP/APR, use data from 2019-2020), and compare the results to the target. Provide the actual numbers used in the calculation.

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
2020	78.65%

FFY	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019
Target >=	81.40%	81.60%	81.80%	82.00%	82.90%
Data	75.23%	77.75%	76.76%	76.53%	78.03%

Targets

FFY	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025
Target >=	76.00%	77.00%	78.00%	79.00%	80.00%	80.00%

Targets: Description of Stakeholder Input

Discussions and Stakeholder input of the SPP, APR, SSIP, and Results Driven Accountability (RDA)/Results Based Accountability (RBA) began in 2013 with our State Special Education Advisory Panel. The Panel is fully vested and broadly representative of Montana. Additionally, many of the panel members as well as SEA staff serve in other agency or organization leadership positions or on advisory groups in the disability community. This enables MT to draw insight and advice from a broad group of stakeholders with an understanding of Montana's unique needs, strengths, and potential weaknesses.

Other stakeholder groups we sponsor and/or engage include:

- Our CSPD includes both regional and state councils that regularly meet to assess APR data and to evaluate professional development priorities and results.
- The OPI School Mental Health coordinator worked collaboratively with the Children's Mental Health Bureau at the Department of Public Health and Human Services (DPHHS) to facilitate the provision of mental health services in schools through Comprehensive School and Community Treatment services (CSCT).
- The OPI staff has developed productive working relationships with other Montana Agencies that serve youth and adults with disabilities. OPI staff participate as members of advisory councils for early childhood, vocational rehabilitation, juvenile justice, developmental disabilities, the state independent living council and the mental health divisions of the DPHHS. These connections have allowed the OPI staff to build strong working relationships with other agencies, which has resulted in multiple collaborative projects that have strengthened the commitments of all involved to working with Montana's youth to facilitate smooth transitions from birth to adulthood.
- Working with staff from TAESE, the OPI has facilitated the MontanaHEC for nineteen years. The HEC continues to be a part of CSPD and brings together members of faculty from each of the colleges and universities teacher prep programs in Montana. Participation in the consortium is strong and includes faculty members from each of the public and private colleges in Montana. This group has worked to provide greater standardization of the teacher training programs in Montana and has worked together to improve pre-service training programs.
- The OPI staff is involved in an additional coalition to engage in discussion and activity with our Parent Training Information center, Montana Empowerment Center and Disability Rights Montana (DRM). The MEC is available to assist Montana families in obtaining appropriate education for their children; improve education results for all children; train and inform parents and their professionals who work with their children; empower families to be the decision-makers for their children; and, develop collaboration with organizations and agencies that serve children and youth with disabilities.
- The OPI staff is also highly engaged with the Schools Administrators of Montana (SAM) which include affiliates for Superintendents, Principals, Special

Education Administrators, and Information Technology (IT) Directors. This partnership allows us to respond quickly to needs expressed in the field by school staff. We also provide SAM with a grant to help fund the Montana Recruitment Project. This program focuses on recruiting hard to fill positions such as speech/language pathologists, special education teachers, occupational therapists, and school psychologists for our districts throughout Montana.

Annually, the SEA brings together representatives from these stakeholder groups for a joint meeting facilitated by TAEESE. This meeting gathers over 80 front-line stakeholders together to share up-dates of issues and gather input from a comprehensive representation of the Montana disability community, families and parents of children and students with and without disabilities. For the past six years, the topic has been Montana's SSIP and activities have been conducted to solicit both general and specific stakeholder input. During the spring 2021 meeting, the state presented on the new SPP/APR package to begin facilitating gathering feedback.

The SEA internal stakeholder work continues particularly through the ESEA comprehensive and targeted schools taskforces. These taskforces were created to 1) provide cohesive supports for the development and implementation of a system wide continuous improvement plan across all areas of need for the identified comprehensive school and 2) Support schools identified as targeted by bringing together OPI staff with deep knowledge of struggling student groups to develop a range of improvement activities. These task forces include membership from all program divisions of the agency. Given that our LEAs on Native American reservations will comprise our lowest performing schools, the overall agency, the task force and the SSIP are aligned.

The comprehensive task force identifies and examines barriers that exist in our professional relationships with Indian schools. Barriers in the districts, and in the agency, were identified and analyzed. This began an assessment of interagency collaboration and professional relationships. Common ground was found for improved methodologies in our approach to districts, our analysis of district data and community, tribal, and cultural conditions, district capacities, and how better to target and support improvement efforts. As a result, SSIP improvement activities are now supported and reinforced through cross-divisional coordinated efforts. The Student Support Services division has also been heavily involved in the development of Montana's ESSA state plan.

Prepopulated Data

Source	Date	Description	Data
SY 2019-20 Exiting Data Groups (EDFacts file spec FS009; Data Group 85)	05/26/2021	Number of youth with IEPs (ages 14-21) who exited special education by graduating with a regular high school diploma (a)	851
SY 2019-20 Exiting Data Groups (EDFacts file spec FS009; Data Group 85)	05/26/2021	Number of youth with IEPs (ages 14-21) who exited special education by graduating with a state-defined alternate diploma (b)	0
SY 2019-20 Exiting Data Groups (EDFacts file spec FS009; Data Group 85)	05/26/2021	Number of youth with IEPs (ages 14-21) who exited special education by receiving a certificate (c)	0
SY 2019-20 Exiting Data Groups (EDFacts file spec FS009; Data Group 85)	05/26/2021	Number of youth with IEPs (ages 14-21) who exited special education by reaching maximum age (d)	1
SY 2019-20 Exiting Data Groups (EDFacts file spec FS009; Data Group 85)	05/26/2021	Number of youth with IEPs (ages 14-21) who exited special education due to dropping out (e)	230

FFY 2020 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 2019 Data	FFY 2020 Target	FFY 2020 Data	Status	Slippage
851	1,082	78.03%	76.00%	78.65%	N/A	N/A

Graduation Conditions

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

The Montana Board of Public Education has set the following as the minimum graduation requirements for all Montana students. Each local school board has the option to add additional requirements and most choose to add more rigorous requirements that all students in their district must meet. In some cases, this may result in a special education student needing to spend more than 4 years working towards their high school diploma. It also creates a barrier to graduation for students who transfer to or from one Montana High School to another with more rigorous graduation standards.

10.55.905 : GRADUATION REQUIREMENTS - Administrative Rules of the State of Montana

10.55.905 GRADUATION REQUIREMENTS

(1) As a minimum, a school district's requirements for graduation shall include a total of 20 units of study that enable all students to meet the content standards and content-specific grade-level learning progressions.

(2) In order to meet the content and performance standards, the following 13 units shall be part of the 20 units required for all students to graduate:

- (a) 4 units of English language arts;
- (b) 2 units of mathematics;
- (c) 2 units of social studies;
- (d) 2 units of science;
- (e) 1 unit of health enhancement, with 1/2 unit each year for two years;
- (f) 1 unit of arts; and
- (g) 1 unit of career and technical education.

(3) Units of credit earned in any Montana high school accredited by the Board of Public Education shall be accepted by all Montana high schools.

(4) In accordance with the policies of the local board of trustees, students may be graduated from high school with less than four years enrollment.

History: 20-2-114, MCA; IMP, 20-2-121, 20-3-106, 20-7-101, MCA; NEW, 1989 MAR p. 342, Eff. 7/1/89; AMD, 1998 MAR p. 2707, Eff. 10/9/98; AMD, 2000 MAR p. 3340, Eff. 12/8/00; AMD, 2012 MAR p. 2042, Eff. 7/1/13.

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)

NO

Provide additional information about this indicator (optional)

Montana has chosen to set the baseline year for this indicator to the SY2019-2020 data – the data that should be reported in the FFY2020 APR due to the required one year lag for this indicator. This was based on stakeholder feedback.

1 - Prior FFY Required Actions

None

1 - OSEP Response

The State has revised the baseline for this indicator, using data from FFY 2020, and OSEP accepts that revision

The State provided targets for FFYs 2020 through 2025 for this indicator, and OSEP accepts those targets.

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

OPTION 1:

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

OPTION 2 (For FFY 2020 ONLY):

Use same data source and measurement that the State used to report in its FFY 2010 SPP/APR that was submitted on February 1, 2012.

Measurement

OPTION 1:

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.

OPTION 2 (For FFY 2020 ONLY):

Use same data source and measurement that the State used to report in its FFY 2010 SPP/APR that was submitted on February 1, 2012.

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 2020 SPP/APR, use data from 2019-2020), and compare the results to the target.

With the FFY 2020 SPP/APR, due February 1, 2022, States may use either option 1 or 2. States using Option 2 must provide the actual numbers used in the calculation.

OPTION 1:

Use 618 exiting data for the year before the reporting year (e.g., for the FFY 2020 SPP/APR, use data from 2019-2020). 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.

OPTION 2:

Use the annual event school dropout rate for students leaving a school in a single year determined in accordance with the National Center for Education Statistic's Common Core of Data.

If the State has made or proposes to make changes to the data source or measurement under Option 2, when compared to the information reported in its FFY 2010 SPP/APR submitted on February 1, 2012, the State should include a justification as to why such changes are warranted.

Options 1 and 2:

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.

Beginning with the FFY 2021 SPP/APR, due February 1, 2023, States must report data using Option 1 (i.e., the same data as used for reporting to the Department under section 618 of the IDEA). Option 2 will not be available beginning with the FFY 2021 SPP/APR.

2 - Indicator Data

Historical Data

Baseline Year	Baseline Data
2020	21.26%

FFY	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019
Target <=	3.50%	3.50%	3.40%	3.40%	3.40%
Data	3.63%	3.42%	3.72%	3.16%	3.81%

Targets

FFY	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025
Target <=	21.26%	21.16%	21.06%	20.96%	20.86%	20.76%

Targets: Description of Stakeholder Input

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- Working with staff from TAASE, the OPI has facilitated the MontanaHEC for nineteen years. The HEC continues to be a part of CSPD and brings together members of faculty from each of the colleges and universities teacher prep programs in Montana. Participation in the consortium is strong and includes faculty members from each of the public and private colleges in Montana. This group has worked to provide greater standardization of the teacher training programs in Montana and has worked together to improve pre-service training programs.
- The OPI staff is involved in an additional coalition to engage in discussion and activity with our Parent Training Information center, Montana Empowerment Center and Disability Rights Montana (DRM). The MEC is available to assist Montana families in obtaining appropriate education for their children; improve education results for all children; train and inform parents and their professionals who work with their children; empower families to be the decision-makers for their children; and, develop collaboration with organizations and agencies that serve children and youth with disabilities.
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The SEA internal stakeholder work continues particularly through the ESEA comprehensive and targeted schools taskforces. These taskforces were created to 1) provide cohesive supports for the development and implementation of a system wide continuous improvement plan across all areas of need for the identified comprehensive school and 2) Support schools identified as targeted by bringing together OPI staff with deep knowledge of struggling student groups to develop a range of improvement activities. These task forces include membership from all program divisions of the agency. Given that our LEAs on Native American reservations will comprise our lowest performing schools, the overall agency, the task force and the SSIP are aligned.

The comprehensive task force identifies and examines barriers that exist in our professional relationships with Indian schools. Barriers in the districts, and in the agency, were identified and analyzed. This began an assessment of interagency collaboration and professional relationships. Common ground was found for improved methodologies in our approach to districts, our analysis of district data and community, tribal, and cultural conditions, district capacities, and how better to target and support improvement efforts. As a result, SSIP improvement activities are now supported and reinforced through cross-divisional coordinated efforts. The Student Support Services division has also been heavily involved in the development of Montana's ESSA state plan.

Please indicate the reporting option used on this indicator

Option 1

Prepopulated Data

Source	Date	Description	Data
SY 2019-20 Exiting Data Groups (EDFacts file spec FS009; Data Group 85)	05/26/2021	Number of youth with IEPs (ages 14-21) who exited special education by graduating with a regular high school diploma (a)	851
SY 2019-20 Exiting Data Groups (EDFacts file spec FS009; Data Group 85)	05/26/2021	Number of youth with IEPs (ages 14-21) who exited special education by graduating with a state-defined alternate diploma (b)	0
SY 2019-20 Exiting Data Groups (EDFacts file spec FS009; Data Group 85)	05/26/2021	Number of youth with IEPs (ages 14-21) who exited special education by receiving a certificate (c)	0
SY 2019-20 Exiting Data Groups (EDFacts file spec FS009; Data Group 85)	05/26/2021	Number of youth with IEPs (ages 14-21) who exited special education by reaching maximum age (d)	1
SY 2019-20 Exiting Data Groups (EDFacts file spec FS009; Data Group 85)	05/26/2021	Number of youth with IEPs (ages 14-21) who exited special education due to dropping out (e)	230

FFY 2020 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 2019 Data	FFY 2020 Target	FFY 2020 Data	Status	Slippage
230	1,082	3.81%	21.26%	21.26%	N/A	N/A

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

Dropouts are the count of individuals who:

were enrolled in school on the date of the previous year October enrollment count or at some time during the previous school year and were not enrolled on the date of the current school year October count,

or

were not enrolled at the beginning of the previous school year but were expected to enroll and did not re-enroll during the year, "no show", and were not enrolled on the date of the current school year October count,

and

have not graduated from high school or completed a state or district-approved high school educational program,

and

have not transferred to another school, been temporarily absent due to a school-recognized illness or suspension, or died.

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)

Montana has chosen to set the baseline year for this indicator to the SY2019-2020 data – the data that should be reported in the FFY2020 APR due to the required one year lag for this indicator. This was based on stakeholder feedback.

2 - Prior FFY Required Actions

None

2 - OSEP Response

The State has revised the baseline for this indicator, using data from FFY 2020, but OSEP cannot accept that revision because the State did not provide an explanation for the revision as required by the measurement table.

OSEP cannot accept the State's FFYs 2020-2025 targets for this indicator because OSEP cannot determine whether the State's end target for FFY 2025 reflects improvement over the State's baseline data, given that the State's revised baseline cannot be accepted, as noted above. The State must ensure its FFY 2025 target reflects improvement.

2 - Required Actions

The State has revised the baseline using data from FFY 2020, but OSEP cannot accept the because there is no explanation for the revision. With the FFY 2021 SPP/APR, the State must provide an explanation for the baseline revision for this indicator, and ensure that its FFY 2025 target reflects improvement over baseline.

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 EDFacts 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	2018	96.71%
Reading	B	Grade 8	2018	93.65%
Reading	C	Grade HS	2018	81.38%
Math	A	Grade 4	2018	70.53%
Math	B	Grade 8	2018	92.75%
Math	C	Grade HS	2018	85.68%

Targets

Subject	Group	Group Name	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025
Reading	A >=	Grade 4	95.00%	95.00%	95.00%	95.00%	95.00%	95.00%
Reading	B >=	Grade 8	95.00%	95.00%	95.00%	95.00%	95.00%	95.00%
Reading	C >=	Grade HS	95.00%	95.00%	95.00%	95.00%	95.00%	95.00%
Math	A >=	Grade 4	95.00%	95.00%	95.00%	95.00%	95.00%	95.00%
Math	B >=	Grade 8	95.00%	95.00%	95.00%	95.00%	95.00%	95.00%
Math	C >=	Grade HS	95.00%	95.00%	95.00%	95.00%	95.00%	95.00%

Targets: Description of Stakeholder Input

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FFY 2020 Data Disaggregation from EDFacts

Data Source:

SY 2020-21 Assessment Data Groups - Reading (EDFacts file spec FS188; Data Group: 589)

Date:

03/30/2022

Reading Assessment Participation Data by Grade

Group	Grade 4	Grade 8	Grade HS
a. Children with IEPs*	1,515	1,363	1,082
b. Children with IEPs in regular assessment with no accommodations	756	691	748
c. Children with IEPs in regular assessment with accommodations	614	503	0
d. Children with IEPs in alternate assessment against alternate standards	91	84	94

Data Source:

SY 2020-21 Assessment Data Groups - Math (EDFacts file spec FS185; Data Group: 588)

Date:

03/30/2022

Math Assessment Participation Data by Grade

Group	Grade 4	Grade 8	Grade HS
a. Children with IEPs*	1,515	1,363	1,082
b. Children with IEPs in regular assessment with no accommodations	585	462	770
c. Children with IEPs in regular assessment with accommodations	781	695	0
d. Children with IEPs in alternate assessment against alternate standards	91	83	91

*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.

FFY 2020 SPP/APR Data: Reading Assessment

Group	Group Name	Number of Children with IEPs Participating	Number of Children with IEPs	FFY 2019 Data	FFY 2020 Target	FFY 2020 Data	Status	Slippage
A	Grade 4	1,461	1,515		95.00%	96.44%	Met target	N/A
B	Grade 8	1,278	1,363		95.00%	93.76%	Did not meet target	N/A
C	Grade HS	842	1,082		95.00%	77.82%	Did not meet target	N/A

FFY 2020 SPP/APR Data: Math Assessment

Group	Group Name	Number of Children with IEPs Participating	Number of Children with IEPs	FFY 2019 Data	FFY 2020 Target	FFY 2020 Data	Status	Slippage
A	Grade 4	1,457	1,515		95.00%	96.17%	Met target	N/A
B	Grade 8	1,240	1,363		95.00%	90.98%	Did not meet target	N/A
C	Grade HS	861	1,082		95.00%	79.57%	Did not meet target	N/A

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.

Special Education Assessment Participation data can be found at <https://opi.mt.gov/Educators/School-Climate-Student-Wellness/Special-Education/IDEA-Data>.

Provide additional information about this indicator (optional)

Montana has chosen to set baseline for this indicator as FFY2018. Stakeholders were presented with the option of choosing either FFY2018 or FFY2020 as the baseline year, and overwhelmingly chose the FFY2018 data. Stakeholders felt that the FFY2018 data was more representative of the

actual assessment data when it is not being affected by COVID. COVID has impacted our FFY2020 data because fewer students are enrolled – both overall and in special education, which lowers the numbers of students participating in our assessments. The long term effect of COVID on participation rates cannot be determined at this time.

3A - Prior FFY Required Actions

None

3A - OSEP Response

The State has revised the baseline for this indicator, using data from FFY 2018, and OSEP accepts that revision.

The State provided targets for FFYs 2020 through 2025 for this indicator, and OSEP accepts those targets.

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 EDFacts 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	2018	17.18%
Reading	B	Grade 8	2018	10.50%
Reading	C	Grade HS	2018	5.71%
Math	A	Grade 4	2018	15.17%
Math	B	Grade 8	2018	5.74%
Math	C	Grade HS	2018	4.76%

Targets

Subject	Group	Group Name	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025
Reading	A >=	Grade 4	17.20%	17.30%	17.40%	17.50%	17.60%	17.70%
Reading	B >=	Grade 8	10.50%	10.60%	10.70%	10.80%	10.90%	11.00%
Reading	C >=	Grade HS	5.70%	5.80%	5.90%	6.00%	6.10%	6.20%
Math	A >=	Grade 4	15.20%	15.30%	15.40%	15.50%	15.60%	15.70%
Math	B >=	Grade 8	5.70%	5.80%	5.90%	6.00%	6.10%	6.20%
Math	C >=	Grade HS	4.80%	4.90%	5.00%	5.10%	5.20%	5.30%

Targets: Description of Stakeholder Input

Discussions and Stakeholder input of the SPP, APR, SSIP, and Results Driven Accountability (RDA)/Results Based Accountability (RBA) began in 2013 with our State Special Education Advisory Panel. The Panel is fully vested and broadly representative of Montana. Additionally, many of the panel members as well as SEA staff serve in other agency or organization leadership positions or on advisory groups in the disability community. This enables MT to draw insight and advice from a broad group of stakeholders with an understanding of Montana's unique needs, strengths, and potential weaknesses.

Other stakeholder groups we sponsor and/or engage include:

- Our CSPD includes both regional and state councils that regularly meet to assess APR data and to evaluate professional development priorities and results.
- The OPI School Mental Health coordinator worked collaboratively with the Children's Mental Health Bureau at the Department of Public Health and

Human Services (DPHHS) to facilitate the provision of mental health services in schools through Comprehensive School and Community Treatment services (CSCT).

- The OPI staff has developed productive working relationships with other Montana Agencies that serve youth and adults with disabilities. OPI staff participate as members of advisory councils for early childhood, vocational rehabilitation, juvenile justice, developmental disabilities, the state independent living council and the mental health divisions of the DPHHS. These connections have allowed the OPI staff to build strong working relationships with other agencies, which has resulted in multiple collaborative projects that have strengthened the commitments of all involved to working with Montana's youth to facilitate smooth transitions from birth to adulthood.
- Working with staff from TAESE, the OPI has facilitated the MontanaHEC for nineteen years. The HEC continues to be a part of CSPD and brings together members of faculty from each of the colleges and universities teacher prep programs in Montana. Participation in the consortium is strong and includes faculty members from each of the public and private colleges in Montana. This group has worked to provide greater standardization of the teacher training programs in Montana and has worked together to improve pre-service training programs.
- The OPI staff is involved in an additional coalition to engage in discussion and activity with our Parent Training Information center, Montana Empowerment Center and Disability Rights Montana (DRM). The MEC is available to assist Montana families in obtaining appropriate education for their children; improve education results for all children; train and inform parents and their professionals who work with their children; empower families to be the decision-makers for their children; and, develop collaboration with organizations and agencies that serve children and youth with disabilities.
- The OPI staff is also highly engaged with the Schools Administrators of Montana (SAM) which include affiliates for Superintendents, Principals, Special Education Administrators, and Information Technology (IT) Directors. This partnership allows us to respond quickly to needs expressed in the field by school staff. We also provide SAM with a grant to help fund the Montana Recruitment Project. This program focuses on recruiting hard to fill positions such as speech/language pathologists, special education teachers, occupational therapists, and school psychologists for our districts throughout Montana.

Annually, the SEA brings together representatives from these stakeholder groups for a joint meeting facilitated by TAESE. This meeting gathers over 80 front-line stakeholders together to share up-dates of issues and gather input from a comprehensive representation of the Montana disability community, families and parents of children and students with and without disabilities. For the past six years, the topic has been Montana's SSIP and activities have been conducted to solicit both general and specific stakeholder input. During the spring 2021 meeting, the state presented on the new SPP/APR package to begin facilitating gathering feedback.

The SEA internal stakeholder work continues particularly through the ESEA comprehensive and targeted schools taskforces. These taskforces were created to 1) provide cohesive supports for the development and implementation of a system wide continuous improvement plan across all areas of need for the identified comprehensive school and 2) Support schools identified as targeted by bringing together OPI staff with deep knowledge of struggling student groups to develop a range of improvement activities. These task forces include membership from all program divisions of the agency. Given that our LEAs on Native American reservations will comprise our lowest performing schools, the overall agency, the task force and the SSIP are aligned.

The comprehensive task force identifies and examines barriers that exist in our professional relationships with Indian schools. Barriers in the districts, and in the agency, were identified and analyzed. This began an assessment of interagency collaboration and professional relationships. Common ground was found for improved methodologies in our approach to districts, our analysis of district data and community, tribal, and cultural conditions, district capacities, and how better to target and support improvement efforts. As a result, SSIP improvement activities are now supported and reinforced through cross-divisional coordinated efforts. The Student Support Services division has also been heavily involved in the development of Montana's ESSA state plan.

FFY 2020 Data Disaggregation from EDFacts

Data Source:

SY 2020-21 Assessment Data Groups - Reading (EDFacts file spec FS178; Data Group: 584)

Date:

03/03/2022

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 regular assessment	1,370	1,194	748
b. Children with IEPs in regular assessment with no accommodations scored at or above proficient against grade level	167	98	46
c. Children with IEPs in regular assessment with accommodations scored at or above proficient against grade level	81	42	0

Data Source:

SY 2020-21 Assessment Data Groups - Math (EDFacts file spec FS175; Data Group: 583)

Date:

03/03/2022

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 regular assessment	1,366	1,157	770
b. Children with IEPs in regular assessment with no accommodations scored at or above proficient against grade level	121	40	20
c. Children with IEPs in regular assessment with accommodations scored at or above proficient against grade level	58	12	0

FFY 2020 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 2019 Data	FFY 2020 Target	FFY 2020 Data	Status	Slippage
A	Grade 4	248	1,370		17.20%	18.10%	Met target	N/A
B	Grade 8	140	1,194		10.50%	11.73%	Met target	N/A
C	Grade HS	46	748		5.70%	6.15%	Met target	N/A

FFY 2020 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 2019 Data	FFY 2020 Target	FFY 2020 Data	Status	Slippage
A	Grade 4	179	1,366		15.20%	13.10%	Did not meet target	N/A
B	Grade 8	52	1,157		5.70%	4.49%	Did not meet target	N/A
C	Grade HS	20	770		4.80%	2.60%	Did not meet target	N/A

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.

Montana publicly reports Assessment proficiency data on its GEMS website (<https://gems.opi.mt.gov/student-data>). This is the public data store and reporting platform used for all data within the OPI. Once on this page:

1. Select desired group to review: Math, ELA, and Science Assessments Dashboard (Grade High School) or Math, ELA, and Science Assessments Dashboard (Grades 3-8)

2. Click the down arrow to select special education status to view proficiency levels for children with disabilities

3. Click the labeled buttons to see student proficiency and participation

4. Use the dropdown menus to select a school year, county/district/school, subject area, assessment taken, and grade level

Currently, there is not a way to review this data at the school level, but that is being developed. The GEMS system is undergoing a complete re-design to meet the requirements of the most recent Statewide Longitudinal Data Systems grant received by the state of Montana. While Montana works to complete the requirements for the re-design to ensure compliance with 34 CFR 300.160(f), Montana is redirecting the public to review data on the OSEP IDEA Section 618 State Level Data Files Part B Assessment page (<https://data.ed.gov/dataset/idea-section-618-state-level-data-files-part-b-assessment/resources>).

Provide additional information about this indicator (optional)

Montana has chosen to set baseline for this indicator as FFY2018. Stakeholders were presented with the option of choosing either FFY2018 or FFY2020 as the baseline year, and overwhelmingly chose the FFY2018 data. Stakeholders felt that the FFY2018 data was more representative of the actual assessment data when it is not being affected by COVID. For the FFY2019 school year, all Montana students were virtual learners from March to the end of the school year. Many of those students continued in a virtual learning environment for at least a part of the FFY2020 school year. The virtual environment made it more difficult for students to participate in the assessment, which then also impacts the proficiency rates.

3B - Prior FFY Required Actions

None

3B - OSEP Response

The State has revised the baseline for this indicator, using data from FFY 2018, and OSEP accepts that revision.

The State provided targets for FFYs 2020 through 2025 for this indicator, and OSEP accepts those targets.

The State did not provide a Web link demonstrating that the State reported publicly on the performance of children with disabilities on statewide assessments with the same frequency and in the same detail as it reports on the assessments of nondisabled children, as required by 34 C.F.R. § 300.160(f). Specifically, the State has not reported, compared with the achievement of all children, including children with disabilities, the performance results of children with disabilities on regular assessments at the State, district and school levels. The failure to publicly report as required under 34 C.F.R. § 300.160(f) is noncompliance.

3B - Required Actions

Within 90 days of the receipt of the State's 2022 determination letter, the State must provide to OSEP a Web link that demonstrates that it has reported, for FFY 2020, to the public, on the statewide assessments of children with disabilities in accordance with 34 C.F.R. § 300.160(f). In addition, OSEP reminds the State that in the FFY 2021 SPP/APR, the State must include a Web link that demonstrates compliance with 34 C.F.R. § 300.160(f) for FFY 2021.

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 EDFacts file specifications FS175 and 178.

Measurement

C. Proficiency rate percent = $[(\# \text{ of children with IEPs scoring at or above proficient against alternate academic achievement standards}) \div (\text{total } \# \text{ of children with IEPs who received a valid score and for whom a proficiency level was assigned for the alternate assessment})]$. 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	2018	48.33%
Reading	B	Grade 8	2018	41.75%
Reading	C	Grade HS	2018	51.11%
Math	A	Grade 4	2018	50.85%
Math	B	Grade 8	2018	45.63%
Math	C	Grade HS	2018	43.33%

Targets

Subject	Group	Group Name	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025
Reading	A >=	Grade 4	48.50%	48.60%	48.70%	48.80%	48.90%	50.00%
Reading	B >=	Grade 8	41.80%	41.90%	42.00%	42.10%	42.20%	42.30%
Reading	C >=	Grade HS	51.20%	51.30%	51.40%	51.50%	51.60%	51.70%
Math	A >=	Grade 4	51.00%	51.10%	51.20%	51.30%	51.40%	51.50%
Math	B >=	Grade 8	45.80%	45.90%	46.00%	46.10%	46.20%	46.30%
Math	C >=	Grade HS	43.50%	43.60%	43.70%	43.80%	43.90%	44.00%

Targets: Description of Stakeholder Input

Discussions and Stakeholder input of the SPP, APR, SSIP, and Results Driven Accountability (RDA)/Results Based Accountability (RBA) began in 2013 with our State Special Education Advisory Panel. The Panel is fully vested and broadly representative of Montana. Additionally, many of the panel members as well as SEA staff serve in other agency or organization leadership positions or on advisory groups in the disability community. This enables MT to draw insight and advice from a broad group of stakeholders with an understanding of Montana's unique needs, strengths, and potential weaknesses.

Other stakeholder groups we sponsor and/or engage include:

- Our CSPD includes both regional and state councils that regularly meet to assess APR data and to evaluate professional development priorities and results.
- The OPI School Mental Health coordinator worked collaboratively with the Children's Mental Health Bureau at the Department of Public Health and Human Services (DPHHS) to facilitate the provision of mental health services in schools through Comprehensive School and Community Treatment services (CSCT).
- The OPI staff has developed productive working relationships with other Montana Agencies that serve youth and adults with disabilities. OPI staff participate as members of advisory councils for early childhood, vocational rehabilitation, juvenile justice, developmental disabilities, the state independent living council and the mental health divisions of the DPHHS. These connections have allowed the OPI staff to build strong working relationships with other agencies, which has resulted in multiple collaborative projects that have strengthened the commitments of all involved to working with Montana's youth to facilitate smooth transitions from birth to adulthood.
- Working with staff from TAESE, the OPI has facilitated the MontanaHEC for nineteen years. The HEC continues to be a part of CSPD and brings together members of faculty from each of the colleges and universities teacher prep programs in Montana. Participation in the consortium is strong and includes faculty members from each of the public and private colleges in Montana. This group has worked to provide greater standardization of the teacher training programs in Montana and has worked together to improve pre-service training programs.
- The OPI staff is involved in an additional coalition to engage in discussion and activity with our Parent Training Information center, Montana Empowerment Center and Disability Rights Montana (DRM). The MEC is available to assist Montana families in obtaining appropriate education for their children; improve education results for all children; train and inform parents and their professionals who work with their children; empower families to be the decision-makers for their children; and, develop collaboration with organizations and agencies that serve children and youth with disabilities.
- The OPI staff is also highly engaged with the Schools Administrators of Montana (SAM) which include affiliates for Superintendents, Principals, Special Education Administrators, and Information Technology (IT) Directors. This partnership allows us to respond quickly to needs expressed in the field by school staff. We also provide SAM with a grant to help fund the Montana Recruitment Project. This program focuses on recruiting hard to fill positions such as speech/language pathologists, special education teachers, occupational therapists, and school psychologists for our districts throughout Montana.

Annually, the SEA brings together representatives from these stakeholder groups for a joint meeting facilitated by TAESE. This meeting gathers over 80 front-line stakeholders together to share up-dates of issues and gather input from a comprehensive representation of the Montana disability community, families and parents of children and students with and without disabilities. For the past six years, the topic has been Montana's SSIP and activities have been conducted to solicit both general and specific stakeholder input. During the spring 2021 meeting, the state presented on the new SPP/APR package to begin facilitating gathering feedback.

The SEA internal stakeholder work continues particularly through the ESEA comprehensive and targeted schools taskforces. These taskforces were created to 1) provide cohesive supports for the development and implementation of a system wide continuous improvement plan across all areas of need for the identified comprehensive school and 2) Support schools identified as targeted by bringing together OPI staff with deep knowledge of struggling student groups to develop a range of improvement activities. These task forces include membership from all program divisions of the agency. Given that our LEAs on Native American reservations will comprise our lowest performing schools, the overall agency, the task force and the SSIP are aligned.

The comprehensive task force identifies and examines barriers that exist in our professional relationships with Indian schools. Barriers in the districts, and in the agency, were identified and analyzed. This began an assessment of interagency collaboration and professional relationships. Common ground was found for improved methodologies in our approach to districts, our analysis of district data and community, tribal, and cultural conditions, district capacities, and how better to target and support improvement efforts. As a result, SSIP improvement activities are now supported and reinforced through cross-divisional coordinated efforts. The Student Support Services division has also been heavily involved in the development of Montana's ESSA state plan.

FFY 2020 Data Disaggregation from EDFacts

Data Source:

SY 2020-21 Assessment Data Groups - Reading (EDFacts file spec FS178; Data Group: 584)

Date:

03/03/2022

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	91	84	94
b. Children with IEPs in alternate assessment against alternate standards scored at or above proficient	42	34	56

Data Source:

Date:

03/03/2022

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	91	83	91
b. Children with IEPs in alternate assessment against alternate standards scored at or above proficient	53	39	49

FFY 2020 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 2019 Data	FFY 2020 Target	FFY 2020 Data	Status	Slippage
A	Grade 4	42	91		48.50%	46.15%	Did not meet target	N/A
B	Grade 8	34	84		41.80%	40.48%	Did not meet target	N/A
C	Grade HS	56	94		51.20%	59.57%	Met target	N/A

FFY 2020 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 2019 Data	FFY 2020 Target	FFY 2020 Data	Status	Slippage
A	Grade 4	53	91		51.00%	58.24%	Met target	N/A
B	Grade 8	39	83		45.80%	46.99%	Met target	N/A
C	Grade HS	49	91		43.50%	53.85%	Met target	N/A

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.

Montana publicly reports Assessment proficiency data on its GEMS website (<https://gems.opi.mt.gov/student-data>). This is the public data store and reporting platform used for all data within the OPI. Once on this page:

1. Select desired group to review: Math, ELA, and Science Assessments Dashboard (Grade High School) or Math, ELA, and Science Assessments Dashboard (Grades 3-8)
2. Click the down arrow to select special education status to view proficiency levels for children with disabilities
3. Click the labeled buttons to see student proficiency and participation

4. Use the dropdown menus to select a school year, county/district/school, subject area, assessment taken, and grade level. Currently, there is not a way to review this data at the school level, but that is being developed. The GEMS system is undergoing a complete re-design to meet the requirements of the most recent Statewide Longitudinal Data Systems grant received by the state of Montana. While Montana works to complete the requirements for the re-design to ensure compliance with 34 CFR 300.160(f), Montana is redirecting the public to review data on the OSEP IDEA Section 618 State Level Data Files Part B Assessment page (<https://data.ed.gov/dataset/idea-section-618-state-level-data-files-part-b-assessment/resources>).

Provide additional information about this indicator (optional)

Montana has chosen to set baseline for this indicator as FFY2018. Stakeholders were presented with the option of choosing either FFY2018 or FFY2020 as the baseline year, and overwhelmingly chose the FFY2018 data. Stakeholders felt that the FFY2018 data was more representative of the actual assessment data when it is not being affected by COVID. For the FFY2019 school year, all Montana students were virtual learners from March to the end of the school year. Many of those students continued in a virtual learning environment for at least a part of the FFY2020 school year. The virtual environment made it more difficult for students to participate in the assessment, which then also impacts the proficiency rates.

3C - Prior FFY Required Actions

None

3C - OSEP Response

The State has revised the baseline for this indicator, using data from FFY 2018, and OSEP accepts that revision.

The State provided targets for FFYs 2020 through 2025 for this indicator, and OSEP accepts those targets.

The State did not provide a Web link demonstrating that the State reported publicly on the performance of children with disabilities on statewide assessments with the same frequency and in the same detail as it reports on the assessments of nondisabled children, as required by 34 C.F.R. § 300.160(f). Specifically, the State has not reported, compared with the achievement of all children, including children with disabilities, the performance results of children with disabilities on alternate assessments based on alternate academic achievement standards, at the State, district and school levels. The failure to publicly report as required under 34 C.F.R. § 300.160(f) is noncompliance.

3C - Required Actions

Within 90 days of the receipt of the State's 2022 determination letter, the State must provide to OSEP a Web link that demonstrates that it has reported, for FFY 2020, to the public, on the statewide assessments of children with disabilities in accordance with 34 C.F.R. § 300.160(f). In addition, OSEP reminds the State that in the FFY 2021 SPP/APR, the State must include a Web link that demonstrates compliance with 34 C.F.R. § 300.160(f) for FFY 2021.

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 EDFacts 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 2020-2021 school year) subtracted from the (proficiency rate for all students scoring at or above proficient against grade level academic achievement standards for the 2020-2021 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 2020-2021 school year compared to the proficiency rate for all students who were proficient against grade level academic achievement standards for the 2020-2021 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	2018	30.12
Reading	B	Grade 8	2018	37.29
Reading	C	Grade HS	2018	40.54
Math	A	Grade 4	2018	30.20
Math	B	Grade 8	2018	30.65
Math	C	Grade HS	2018	28.85

Targets

Subject	Group	Group Name	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025
Reading	A <=	Grade 4	30.12	30.02	29.92	29.82	29.72	26.20
Reading	B <=	Grade 8	37.29	37.19	37.09	36.99	36.89	36.79
Reading	C <=	Grade HS	40.54	40.44	40.34	40.24	40.14	40.04
Math	A <=	Grade 4	30.20	30.10	30.00	29.90	29.80	29.70
Math	B <=	Grade 8	30.65	30.55	30.45	30.35	30.25	30.15
Math	C <=	Grade HS	28.85	28.75	28.65	28.55	28.45	28.35

Targets: Description of Stakeholder Input

Discussions and Stakeholder input of the SPP, APR, SSIP, and Results Driven Accountability (RDA)/Results Based Accountability (RBA) began in 2013 with our State Special Education Advisory Panel. The Panel is fully vested and broadly representative of Montana. Additionally, many of the panel members as well as SEA staff serve in other agency or organization leadership positions or on advisory groups in the disability community. This enables MT to draw insight and advice from a broad group of stakeholders with an understanding of Montana's unique needs, strengths, and potential weaknesses.

Other stakeholder groups we sponsor and/or engage include:

- Our CSPD includes both regional and state councils that regularly meet to assess APR data and to evaluate professional development priorities and results.
- The OPI School Mental Health coordinator worked collaboratively with the Children's Mental Health Bureau at the Department of Public Health and Human Services (DPHHS) to facilitate the provision of mental health services in schools through Comprehensive School and Community Treatment services (CSCT).
- The OPI staff has developed productive working relationships with other Montana Agencies that serve youth and adults with disabilities. OPI staff participate as members of advisory councils for early childhood, vocational rehabilitation, juvenile justice, developmental disabilities, the state independent living council and the mental health divisions of the DPHHS. These connections have allowed the OPI staff to build strong working relationships with other agencies, which has resulted in multiple collaborative projects that have strengthened the commitments of all involved to working with Montana's youth to facilitate smooth transitions from birth to adulthood.
- Working with staff from TAESE, the OPI has facilitated the MontanaHEC for nineteen years. The HEC continues to be a part of CSPD and brings together members of faculty from each of the colleges and universities teacher prep programs in Montana. Participation in the consortium is strong and includes faculty members from each of the public and private colleges in Montana. This group has worked to provide greater standardization of the teacher training programs in Montana and has worked together to improve pre-service training programs.
- The OPI staff is involved in an additional coalition to engage in discussion and activity with our Parent Training Information center, Montana Empowerment Center and Disability Rights Montana (DRM). The MEC is available to assist Montana families in obtaining appropriate education for their children; improve education results for all children; train and inform parents and their professionals who work with their children; empower families to be the decision-makers for their children; and, develop collaboration with organizations and agencies that serve children and youth with disabilities.
- The OPI staff is also highly engaged with the Schools Administrators of Montana (SAM) which include affiliates for Superintendents, Principals, Special Education Administrators, and Information Technology (IT) Directors. This partnership allows us to respond quickly to needs expressed in the field by school staff. We also provide SAM with a grant to help fund the Montana Recruitment Project. This program focuses on recruiting hard to fill positions such as speech/language pathologists, special education teachers, occupational therapists, and school psychologists for our districts throughout Montana.

Annually, the SEA brings together representatives from these stakeholder groups for a joint meeting facilitated by TAESE. This meeting gathers over 80 front-line stakeholders together to share up-dates of issues and gather input from a comprehensive representation of the Montana disability community, families and parents of children and students with and without disabilities. For the past six years, the topic has been Montana's SSIP and activities have been conducted to solicit both general and specific stakeholder input. During the spring 2021 meeting, the state presented on the new SPP/APR package to begin facilitating gathering feedback.

The SEA internal stakeholder work continues particularly through the ESEA comprehensive and targeted schools taskforces. These taskforces were created to 1) provide cohesive supports for the development and implementation of a system wide continuous improvement plan across all areas of need for the identified comprehensive school and 2) Support schools identified as targeted by bringing together OPI staff with deep knowledge of struggling student groups to develop a range of improvement activities. These task forces include membership from all program divisions of the agency. Given that our LEAs on Native American reservations will comprise our lowest performing schools, the overall agency, the task force and the SSIP are aligned.

The comprehensive task force identifies and examines barriers that exist in our professional relationships with Indian schools. Barriers in the districts, and in the agency, were identified and analyzed. This began an assessment of interagency collaboration and professional relationships. Common ground was found for improved methodologies in our approach to districts, our analysis of district data and community, tribal, and cultural conditions, district capacities, and how better to target and support improvement efforts. As a result, SSIP improvement activities are now supported and reinforced through cross-divisional coordinated efforts. The Student Support Services division has also been heavily involved in the development of Montana's ESSA state plan.

FFY 2020 Data Disaggregation from EDFacts

Data Source:

SY 2020-21 Assessment Data Groups - Reading (EDFacts file spec FS178; Data Group: 584)

Date:

03/03/2022

Reading Assessment Proficiency Data by Grade

Group	Grade 4	Grade 8	Grade HS
a. All Students who received a valid score and a proficiency was assigned for the regular assessment	10,354	10,279	8,683
b. Children with IEPs who received a valid score and a proficiency was assigned for the regular assessment	1,370	1,194	748
c. All students in regular assessment with no accommodations scored at or above proficient against grade level	4,683	4,869	3,923
d. All students in regular assessment with accommodations scored at or above proficient against grade level	96	55	0
e. Children with IEPs in regular assessment with no accommodations scored at or above proficient against grade level	167	98	46

f. Children with IEPs in regular assessment with accommodations scored at or above proficient against grade level	81	42	0
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Data Source:

SY 2020-21 Assessment Data Groups - Math (EDFacts file spec FS175; Data Group: 583)

Date:

03/03/2022

Math Assessment Proficiency Data by Grade

Group	Grade 4	Grade 8	Grade HS
a. All Students who received a valid score and a proficiency was assigned for the regular assessment	10,319	10,028	8,760
b. Children with IEPs who received a valid score and a proficiency was assigned for the regular assessment	1,366	1,157	770
c. All students in regular assessment with no accommodations scored at or above proficient against grade level	3,998	3,115	2,373
d. All students in regular assessment with accommodations scored at or above proficient against grade level	110	25	0
e. Children with IEPs in regular assessment with no accommodations scored at or above proficient against grade level	121	40	20
f. Children with IEPs in regular assessment with accommodations scored at or above proficient against grade level	58	12	0

FFY 2020 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 2019 Data	FFY 2020 Target	FFY 2020 Data	Status	Slippage
A	Grade 4	18.10%	46.16%		30.12	28.05	Met target	N/A
B	Grade 8	11.73%	47.90%		37.29	36.18	Met target	N/A
C	Grade HS	6.15%	45.18%		40.54	39.03	Met target	N/A

FFY 2020 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 2019 Data	FFY 2020 Target	FFY 2020 Data	Status	Slippage
A	Grade 4	13.10%	39.81%		30.20	26.71	Met target	N/A
B	Grade 8	4.49%	31.31%		30.65	26.82	Met target	N/A
C	Grade HS	2.60%	27.09%		28.85	24.49	Met target	N/A

Provide additional information about this indicator (optional)

The Montana OPI, based the review of data and stakeholder input, is establishing the baseline using data from the 2018-2019, FFY2018, statewide testing. The 2018-2019 school year represents the most recent data that was not impacted by the COVID-19 health crisis. The OPI and stakeholders considered and rejected the use of the FFY2020 data as the baseline due to the impacts of COVID-19 on the data and that it is not a true representation of the proficiency gap between special education and general education students.

The data used for the calculation was taken directly from the EDFacts files FS175 (Math Proficiency) and FS178 (Reading Proficiency) that were submitted to USED by the OPI in December 2019. The calculation was done in the following manner:

Calculation 1:

All students percent proficient = $\frac{[(\text{all students in regular assessment with no accommodations scored at or above proficient against grade level} + \text{all students in regular assessment with accommodations scored at or above proficient against grade level}) / \text{All students who received a valid score and a proficiency was assigned for the regular assessment}]}{100}$.

Calculation 2:

Special Education Students percent proficient: $\frac{[(\text{Children with IEPs in regular assessment with no accommodations scored at or above proficient against grade level} + \text{Children with IEPs in regular assessment with accommodations scored at or above proficient against grade level}) / \text{Children with IEPs who received a valid score and a proficiency was assigned for the regular assessment}]}{100}$.

Calculation 3:

All students percent proficient – Special Education students percent proficient

3D - Prior FFY Required Actions

None

3D - OSEP Response

The State has established the baseline for this indicator, using data from FFY 2018 and OSEP accepts that baseline.

The State provided targets for FFYs 2020 through 2025 for this indicator, and OSEP accepts those targets.

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 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 2020 SPP/APR, use data from 2019-2020), 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 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 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 2019-2020 school year, those 100 LEAs would have reported 618 data in 2019-2020 on the number of children suspended/expelled. If the State then opens 15 new LEAs in 2020-2021, suspension/expulsion data from those 15 new LEAs would not be in the 2019-2020 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 2020 SPP/APR submission, States must use the number of LEAs reported in 2019-2020 (which can be found in the FFY 2019 SPP/APR introduction).

Indicator 4A: Provide the actual numbers used in the calculation (based upon districts 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 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) Memorandum 09-02, dated October 17, 2008.

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, etc.) 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 2020 SPP/APR, the data for FFY 2019), 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
2016	0.00%

FFY	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019
Target <=	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%
Data	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%		

Targets

FFY	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025
Target ≤	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%

Targets: Description of Stakeholder Input

Discussions and Stakeholder input of the SPP, APR, SSIP, and Results Driven Accountability (RDA)/Results Based Accountability (RBA) began in 2013 with our State Special Education Advisory Panel. The Panel is fully vested and broadly representative of Montana. Additionally, many of the panel members as well as SEA staff serve in other agency or organization leadership positions or on advisory groups in the disability community. This enables MT to draw insight and advice from a broad group of stakeholders with an understanding of Montana's unique needs, strengths, and potential weaknesses.

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- Working with staff from TAEESE, the OPI has facilitated the MontanaHEC for nineteen years. The HEC continues to be a part of CSPD and brings together members of faculty from each of the colleges and universities teacher prep programs in Montana. Participation in the consortium is strong and includes faculty members from each of the public and private colleges in Montana. This group has worked to provide greater standardization of the teacher training programs in Montana and has worked together to improve pre-service training programs.
- The OPI staff is involved in an additional coalition to engage in discussion and activity with our Parent Training Information center, Montana Empowerment Center and Disability Rights Montana (DRM). The MEC is available to assist Montana families in obtaining appropriate education for their children; improve education results for all children; train and inform parents and their professionals who work with their children; empower families to be the decision-makers for their children; and, develop collaboration with organizations and agencies that serve children and youth with disabilities.
- The OPI staff is also highly engaged with the Schools Administrators of Montana (SAM) which include affiliates for Superintendents, Principals, Special Education Administrators, and Information Technology (IT) Directors. This partnership allows us to respond quickly to needs expressed in the field by school staff. We also provide SAM with a grant to help fund the Montana Recruitment Project. This program focuses on recruiting hard to fill positions such as speech/language pathologists, special education teachers, occupational therapists, and school psychologists for our districts throughout Montana.

Annually, the SEA brings together representatives from these stakeholder groups for a joint meeting facilitated by TAEESE. This meeting gathers over 80 front-line stakeholders together to share up-dates of issues and gather input from a comprehensive representation of the Montana disability community, families and parents of children and students with and without disabilities. For the past six years, the topic has been Montana's SSIP and activities have been conducted to solicit both general and specific stakeholder input. During the spring 2021 meeting, the state presented on the new SPP/APR package to begin facilitating gathering feedback.

The SEA internal stakeholder work continues particularly through the ESEA comprehensive and targeted schools taskforces. These taskforces were created to 1) provide cohesive supports for the development and implementation of a system wide continuous improvement plan across all areas of need for the identified comprehensive school and 2) Support schools identified as targeted by bringing together OPI staff with deep knowledge of struggling student groups to develop a range of improvement activities. These task forces include membership from all program divisions of the agency. Given that our LEAs on Native American reservations will comprise our lowest performing schools, the overall agency, the task force and the SSIP are aligned.

The comprehensive task force identifies and examines barriers that exist in our professional relationships with Indian schools. Barriers in the districts, and in the agency, were identified and analyzed. This began an assessment of interagency collaboration and professional relationships. Common ground was found for improved methodologies in our approach to districts, our analysis of district data and community, tribal, and cultural conditions, district capacities, and how better to target and support improvement efforts. As a result, SSIP improvement activities are now supported and reinforced through cross-divisional coordinated efforts. The Student Support Services division has also been heavily involved in the development of Montana's ESSA state plan.

FFY 2020 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 2019 Data	FFY 2020 Target	FFY 2020 Data	Status	Slippage
0	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))

The rates of suspensions and expulsions of greater than 10 days in a school year for children with IEPs in each LEA compared to the rates for nondisabled children in the same LEA

State's definition of "significant discrepancy" and methodology

State Definition of Significant Discrepancy

An LEA is determined to have a significant discrepancy if, given a minimum N of 10, an LEA demonstrates a statistical difference in long-term suspension and expulsion rates for students with disabilities when compared to the long-term suspension and expulsion rates for students without disabilities, within a 99 percent confidence interval.

Montana conducted a review of LEA long-term suspension and expulsion rates for students with disabilities to determine if a significant discrepancy occurred within an LEA. To do this, the rates of long-term suspensions and expulsions of students with disabilities are compared to the rates of long-term suspension and expulsion rates of nondisabled students within each LEA. Using a test of the difference between proportions as the methodology for identifying significant discrepancy, an LEA is determined to have a significant discrepancy if, given a minimum N of 10, an LEA demonstrates a statistical difference in long-term suspension and expulsion rates for students with disabilities when compared to the long-term suspension and expulsion rates for students without disabilities, within a 99 percent confidence interval. The minimum N of 10 is applied to the numerator of this equation - that is, if an LEA does not have at least 10 students with disabilities who had a long-term suspension or expulsion, the data is not reviewed for that LEA.

As noted in OSEP's Part B Indicator Measurement Table, data used in the state's examination is from the 2019-2020 school year, resulting in a one-year data lag for this indicator.

Montana did not have any districts that met the minimum "n" for this indicator.

Provide additional information about this indicator (optional)

Review of Policies, Procedures, and Practices (completed in FFY 2020 using 2019-2020 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.

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 2019

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 2019

Year Findings of Noncompliance Were Identified	Findings of Noncompliance Not Yet Verified as Corrected as of FFY 2019 APR	Findings of Noncompliance Verified as Corrected	Findings Not Yet Verified as Corrected

4A - Prior FFY Required Actions

None

4A - OSEP Response

The State provided targets for FFYs 2020 through 2025 for this indicator, and OSEP accepts those targets.

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 2020 SPP/APR, use data from 2019-2020), 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 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 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 2019-2020 school year, those 100 LEAs would have reported 618 data in 2019-2020 on the number of children suspended/expelled. If the State then opens 15 new LEAs in 2020-2021, suspension/expulsion data from those 15 new LEAs would not be in the 2019-2020 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 2020 SPP/APR submission, States must use the number of LEAs reported in 2019-2020 (which can be found in the FFY 2019 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 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 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) Memorandum 09-02, dated October 17, 2008.

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, etc.) 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 2020 SPP/APR, the data for FFY 2019), 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
2016	0.00%

FFY	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019
Target	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%
Data	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%		

Targets

FFY	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025
Target	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%

FFY 2020 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 2019 Data	FFY 2020 Target	FFY 2020 Data	Status	Slippage
0	0	0		0%		N/A	N/A

Were all races and ethnicities included in the review?

YES

State's definition of "significant discrepancy" and methodology

An LEA is determined to have a significant discrepancy if, given a minimum N of 10, an LEA demonstrates a statistical difference in long-term (greater than 10 days) suspension and expulsion rates, by race or ethnicity, for students with disabilities when compared to the long-term suspension and expulsion rates for all students without disabilities.

Montana conducted a review of LEA long-term suspension and expulsion rates for students with disabilities to determine if a significant discrepancy occurred within an LEA. To do this, the rates of long-term suspensions and expulsions of students with disabilities are compared to the rates of long-term suspension and expulsion rates of non-disabled students within each LEA. Using a test of the difference between proportions as the methodology for identifying significant discrepancy, an LEA is determined to have a significant discrepancy if, given a minimum N of 10, an LEA demonstrates a statistical difference in long-term suspension and expulsion rates for students with disabilities when compared to the long-term suspension and expulsion rates for students without disabilities, within a 99 percent confidence interval. The minimum N of 10 is applied to the numerator of this equation - that is, if an LEA does not have at least 10 students with disabilities who had a long-term suspension or expulsion in a particular racial/ethnic category, the data is not reviewed for that LEA.

As noted in OSEP's Part B Indicator Measurement Table, data used in the state's examination is from the 2019-2020 school year, resulting in a one-year data lag for this indicator.

Provide additional information about this indicator (optional)

Review of Policies, Procedures, and Practices (completed in FFY 2020 using 2019-2020 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.

No significant discrepancies were found, so no review of policies, procedures, and practices occurred

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 2019

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 2019

Year Findings of Noncompliance Were Identified	Findings of Noncompliance Not Yet Verified as Corrected as of FFY 2019 APR	Findings of Noncompliance Verified as Corrected	Findings Not Yet Verified as Corrected

4B - Prior FFY Required Actions

None

4B - OSEP Response**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 EDFacts file specification FS002.

Measurement

- A. Percent = $\left[\frac{\text{(\# of children with IEPs aged 5 who are enrolled in kindergarten and aged 6 through 21 served inside the regular class 80\% or more of the day)}}{\text{(total \# of students aged 5 who are enrolled in kindergarten and aged 6 through 21 with IEPs)}}\right] \times 100$.
- B. Percent = $\left[\frac{\text{(\# of children with IEPs aged 5 who are enrolled in kindergarten and aged 6 through 21 served inside the regular class less than 40\% of the day)}}{\text{(total \# of students aged 5 who are enrolled in kindergarten and aged 6 through 21 with IEPs)}}\right] \times 100$.
- C. Percent = $\left[\frac{\text{(\# of children with IEPs aged 5 who are enrolled in kindergarten and aged 6 through 21 served in separate schools, residential facilities, or homebound/hospital placements)}}{\text{(total \# of students aged 5 who are enrolled in kindergarten and aged 6 through 21 with IEPs)}}\right] \times 100$.

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	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019
A	2019	Target >=	52.20%	52.30%	52.40%	52.50%	
A	53.10%	Data	46.96%	47.72%	49.51%	51.08%	53.10%
B	2019	Target <=	11.20%	11.10%	11.10%	11.10%	
B	10.67%	Data	12.02%	12.28%	11.32%	10.78%	10.67%
C	2019	Target <=	1.50%	1.40%	1.40%	1.40%	
C	1.54%	Data	1.49%	1.07%	1.06%	1.35%	1.54%

Targets

FFY	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025
Target A >=	52.50%	52.60%	52.70%	52.80%	52.90%	53.20%
Target B <=	11.10%	11.00%	10.90%	10.80%	10.70%	10.60%
Target C <=	1.40%	1.30%	1.20%	1.10%	1.00%	0.90%

Targets: Description of Stakeholder Input

Discussions and Stakeholder input of the SPP, APR, SSIP, and Results Driven Accountability (RDA)/Results Based Accountability (RBA) began in 2013 with our State Special Education Advisory Panel. The Panel is fully vested and broadly representative of Montana. Additionally, many of the panel members as well as SEA staff serve in other agency or organization leadership positions or on advisory groups in the disability community. This enables MT to draw insight and advice from a broad group of stakeholders with an understanding of Montana's unique needs, strengths, and potential weaknesses.

Other stakeholder groups we sponsor and/or engage include:

- Our CSPD includes both regional and state councils that regularly meet to assess APR data and to evaluate professional development priorities and results.
- The OPI School Mental Health coordinator worked collaboratively with the Children's Mental Health Bureau at the Department of Public Health and Human Services (DPHHS) to facilitate the provision of mental health services in schools through Comprehensive School and Community Treatment services (CSCT).
- The OPI staff has developed productive working relationships with other Montana Agencies that serve youth and adults with disabilities. OPI staff participate as members of advisory councils for early childhood, vocational rehabilitation, juvenile justice, developmental disabilities, the state independent living council and the mental health divisions of the DPHHS. These connections have allowed the OPI staff to build strong working

relationships with other agencies, which has resulted in multiple collaborative projects that have strengthened the commitments of all involved to working with Montana's youth to facilitate smooth transitions from birth to adulthood.

- Working with staff from TAESE, the OPI has facilitated the MontanaHEC for nineteen years. The HEC continues to be a part of CSPD and brings together members of faculty from each of the colleges and universities teacher prep programs in Montana. Participation in the consortium is strong and includes faculty members from each of the public and private colleges in Montana. This group has worked to provide greater standardization of the teacher training programs in Montana and has worked together to improve pre-service training programs.
- The OPI staff is involved in an additional coalition to engage in discussion and activity with our Parent Training Information center, Montana Empowerment Center and Disability Rights Montana (DRM). The MEC is available to assist Montana families in obtaining appropriate education for their children; improve education results for all children; train and inform parents and their professionals who work with their children; empower families to be the decision-makers for their children; and, develop collaboration with organizations and agencies that serve children and youth with disabilities.
- The OPI staff is also highly engaged with the Schools Administrators of Montana (SAM) which include affiliates for Superintendents, Principals, Special Education Administrators, and Information Technology (IT) Directors. This partnership allows us to respond quickly to needs expressed in the field by school staff. We also provide SAM with a grant to help fund the Montana Recruitment Project. This program focuses on recruiting hard to fill positions such as speech/language pathologists, special education teachers, occupational therapists, and school psychologists for our districts throughout Montana.

Annually, the SEA brings together representatives from these stakeholder groups for a joint meeting facilitated by TAESE. This meeting gathers over 80 front-line stakeholders together to share up-dates of issues and gather input from a comprehensive representation of the Montana disability community, families and parents of children and students with and without disabilities. For the past six years, the topic has been Montana's SSIP and activities have been conducted to solicit both general and specific stakeholder input. During the spring 2021 meeting, the state presented on the new SPP/APR package to begin facilitating gathering feedback.

The SEA internal stakeholder work continues particularly through the ESEA comprehensive and targeted schools taskforces. These taskforces were created to 1) provide cohesive supports for the development and implementation of a system wide continuous improvement plan across all areas of need for the identified comprehensive school and 2) Support schools identified as targeted by bringing together OPI staff with deep knowledge of struggling student groups to develop a range of improvement activities. These task forces include membership from all program divisions of the agency. Given that our LEAs on Native American reservations will comprise our lowest performing schools, the overall agency, the task force and the SSIP are aligned.

The comprehensive task force identifies and examines barriers that exist in our professional relationships with Indian schools. Barriers in the districts, and in the agency, were identified and analyzed. This began an assessment of interagency collaboration and professional relationships. Common ground was found for improved methodologies in our approach to districts, our analysis of district data and community, tribal, and cultural conditions, district capacities, and how better to target and support improvement efforts. As a result, SSIP improvement activities are now supported and reinforced through cross-divisional coordinated efforts. The Student Support Services division has also been heavily involved in the development of Montana's ESSA state plan.

Prepopulated Data

Source	Date	Description	Data
SY 2020-21 Child Count/Educational Environment Data Groups (EDFacts file spec FS002; Data group 74)	07/07/2021	Total number of children with IEPs aged 5 (kindergarten) through 21	18,286
SY 2020-21 Child Count/Educational Environment Data Groups (EDFacts file spec FS002; Data group 74)	07/07/2021	A. Number of children with IEPs aged 5 (kindergarten) through 21 inside the regular class 80% or more of the day	9,984
SY 2020-21 Child Count/Educational Environment Data Groups (EDFacts file spec FS002; Data group 74)	07/07/2021	B. Number of children with IEPs aged 5 (kindergarten) through 21 inside the regular class less than 40% of the day	1,853
SY 2020-21 Child Count/Educational Environment Data Groups (EDFacts file spec FS002; Data group 74)	07/07/2021	c1. Number of children with IEPs aged 5 (kindergarten) through 21 in separate schools	171
SY 2020-21 Child Count/Educational Environment Data Groups (EDFacts file spec FS002; Data group 74)	07/07/2021	c2. Number of children with IEPs aged 5 (kindergarten) through 21 in residential facilities	55
SY 2020-21 Child Count/Educational Environment Data Groups (EDFacts file spec FS002; Data group 74)	07/07/2021	c3. Number of children with IEPs aged 5 (kindergarten) through 21 in homebound/hospital placements	22

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 2020 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 2019 Data	FFY 2020 Target	FFY 2020 Data	Status	Slippage
A. Number of children with IEPs aged 5 (kindergarten) through 21 inside the regular class 80% or more of the day	9,984	18,286	53.10%	52.50%	54.60%	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	1,853	18,286	10.67%	11.10%	10.13%	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]	248	18,286	1.54%	1.40%	1.36%	Met target	No Slippage

Provide additional information about this indicator (optional)

5 - Prior FFY Required Actions

None

5 - OSEP Response

The State provided targets for FFYs 2020 through 2025 for this indicator, and OSEP accepts those targets.

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 EDFacts file specification FS089.

Measurement

- A. Percent = $\left[\frac{\text{(\# of children ages 3, 4, and 5 with IEPs attending a regular early childhood program and receiving the majority of special education and related services in the regular early childhood program)}}{\text{(total \# of children ages 3, 4, and 5 with IEPs)}} \times 100 \right]$
- B. Percent = $\left[\frac{\text{(\# of children ages 3, 4, and 5 with IEPs attending a separate special education class, separate school or residential facility)}}{\text{(total \# of children ages 3, 4, and 5 with IEPs)}} \times 100 \right]$
- C. Percent = $\left[\frac{\text{(\# of children ages 3, 4, and 5 with IEPs receiving special education and related services in the home)}}{\text{(total \# of children ages 3, 4, and 5 with IEPs)}} \times 100 \right]$

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 – 6A, 6B

Part	FFY	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019
A	Target >=	45.00%	45.00%	45.10%	45.10%	
A	Data	43.72%	43.31%	40.54%	40.53%	29.99%
B	Target <=	27.60%	27.60%	27.50%	27.50%	
B	Data	26.76%	27.81%	32.23%	34.67%	44.32%

Targets: Description of Stakeholder Input

Discussions and Stakeholder input of the SPP, APR, SSIP, and Results Driven Accountability (RDA)/Results Based Accountability (RBA) began in 2013 with our State Special Education Advisory Panel. The Panel is fully vested and broadly representative of Montana. Additionally, many of the panel members as well as SEA staff serve in other agency or organization leadership positions or on advisory groups in the disability community. This enables MT to draw insight and advice from a broad group of stakeholders with an understanding of Montana's unique needs, strengths, and potential weaknesses.

Other stakeholder groups we sponsor and/or engage include:

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with Montana's youth to facilitate smooth transitions from birth to adulthood.

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The SEA internal stakeholder work continues particularly through the ESEA comprehensive and targeted schools taskforces. These taskforces were created to 1) provide cohesive supports for the development and implementation of a system wide continuous improvement plan across all areas of need for the identified comprehensive school and 2) Support schools identified as targeted by bringing together OPI staff with deep knowledge of struggling student groups to develop a range of improvement activities. These task forces include membership from all program divisions of the agency. Given that our LEAs on Native American reservations will comprise our lowest performing schools, the overall agency, the task force and the SSIP are aligned.

The comprehensive task force identifies and examines barriers that exist in our professional relationships with Indian schools. Barriers in the districts, and in the agency, were identified and analyzed. This began an assessment of interagency collaboration and professional relationships. Common ground was found for improved methodologies in our approach to districts, our analysis of district data and community, tribal, and cultural conditions, district capacities, and how better to target and support improvement efforts. As a result, SSIP improvement activities are now supported and reinforced through cross-divisional coordinated efforts. The Student Support Services division has also been heavily involved in the development of Montana's ESSA state plan.

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 not used

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

Part	Baseline Year	Baseline Data
A	2019	29.99%
B	2019	44.32%
C		

Inclusive Targets – 6A, 6B

FFY	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025
Target A >=	45.10%	45.20%	45.30%	45.50%	45.50%	45.60%
Target B <=	27.50%	27.40%	27.30%	27.20%	27.10%	27.00%

Inclusive Targets – 6C

FFY	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025
Target C <=						

Prepopulated Data

Data Source:

SY 2020-21 Child Count/Educational Environment Data Groups (EDFacts file spec FS089; Data group 613)

Date:

Description	3	4	5	3 through 5 - Total
Total number of children with IEPs	233	535	102	870
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	49	169	28	246
b1. Number of children attending separate special education class	131	240	33	404
b2. Number of children attending separate school	7	5	2	14
b3. Number of children attending residential facility	0	0	0	0
c1. Number of children receiving special education and related services in the home	1	5	2	8

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 2020 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 2019 Data	FFY 2020 Target	FFY 2020 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	246	870	29.99%	45.10%	28.28%	Did not meet target	Slippage
B. Separate special education class, separate school or residential facility	418	870	44.32%	27.50%	48.05%	Did not meet target	Slippage
C. Home	8	870			0.92%	N/A	N/A

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

Montana has a small population of children ages 3 through 5 and not enrolled in Kindergarten. For FFY2019, there were only 1,047 children, and for FFY2020 that number dropped to 870. Likewise, the number of children attending a regular early childhood program and receiving their special education and related services in that classroom dropped from 314 to 246. The COVID 19 pandemic caused closures of private preschools, daycares, and other early childhood programs – some temporarily, some permanently. The change to work locations for parents (being able to work from home) also resulted in children not being enrolled in regular early childhood programs. For some of those children that did continue in a regular early childhood program, the delivery of services changed – they no longer received services in that classroom. Many parents also opted to forego services during the pandemic.

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

Montana has a small population of children ages 3 through 5 and not enrolled in Kindergarten. For FFY2019, there were only 1,047 children, and for FFY2020 that number dropped to 870. Likewise, the number of children being served in a separate special education class, a separate school, or a residential facility dropped from 464 to 414. The COVID 19 pandemic caused closures of many school districts, which meant that their special education preschools were also closed. When the LEAs reopened, many parents chose not to send their children back.

Provide additional information about this indicator (optional)

6 - Prior FFY Required Actions

None

6 - OSEP Response

The State provided targets for FFYs 2020 through 2025 for Indicators 6A and 6B and OSEP accepts those targets.

The State reported fewer than ten children receiving special education and related services in the home in FFY 2020. The State is not required to provide targets for Indicator 6C until any fiscal year in which ten or more children receive special education and related services in the home.

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 2 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	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019
A1	2008	Target >=	76.70%	76.80%	76.90%	77.00%	77.00%
A1	61.40%	Data	79.20%	80.65%	84.62%	76.19%	80.00%
A2	2008	Target >=	75.20%	75.30%	75.40%	75.50%	75.50%

A2	59.20%	Data	71.04%	77.50%	63.49%	64.43%	68.11%
B1	2008	Target >=	80.70%	80.80%	80.90%	81.00%	81.00%
B1	70.30%	Data	78.37%	84.00%	85.00%	85.23%	84.48%
B2	2008	Target >=	58.20%	58.30%	58.40%	58.50%	58.50%
B2	31.60%	Data	53.85%	55.83%	50.40%	50.52%	58.38%
C1	2008	Target >=	75.60%	75.70%	75.80%	75.90%	75.90%
C1	58.10%	Data	76.34%	80.95%	82.35%	76.23%	79.46%
C2	2008	Target >=	75.60%	75.70%	75.80%	75.90%	75.90%
C2	64.10%	Data	69.06%	80.00%	63.10%	64.43%	70.27%

Targets

FFY	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025
Target A1 >=	77.00%	77.10%	77.20%	77.30%	77.40%	77.50%
Target A2 >=	75.50%	75.60%	75.70%	75.80%	75.90%	76.00%
Target B1 >=	81.00%	81.10%	81.20%	81.30%	81.40%	81.50%
Target B2 >=	58.50%	58.60%	58.70%	58.80%	58.90%	59.00%
Target C1 >=	75.90%	76.00%	76.10%	76.20%	76.30%	76.40%
Target C2 >=	75.90%	76.00%	76.10%	76.20%	76.30%	76.40%

Targets: Description of Stakeholder Input

Discussions and Stakeholder input of the SPP, APR, SSIP, and Results Driven Accountability (RDA)/Results Based Accountability (RBA) began in 2013 with our State Special Education Advisory Panel. The Panel is fully vested and broadly representative of Montana. Additionally, many of the panel members as well as SEA staff serve in other agency or organization leadership positions or on advisory groups in the disability community. This enables MT to draw insight and advice from a broad group of stakeholders with an understanding of Montana's unique needs, strengths, and potential weaknesses.

Other stakeholder groups we sponsor and/or engage include:

- Our CSPD includes both regional and state councils that regularly meet to assess APR data and to evaluate professional development priorities and results.
- The OPI School Mental Health coordinator worked collaboratively with the Children's Mental Health Bureau at the Department of Public Health and Human Services (DPHHS) to facilitate the provision of mental health services in schools through Comprehensive School and Community Treatment services (CSCT).
- The OPI staff has developed productive working relationships with other Montana Agencies that serve youth and adults with disabilities. OPI staff participate as members of advisory councils for early childhood, vocational rehabilitation, juvenile justice, developmental disabilities, the state independent living council and the mental health divisions of the DPHHS. These connections have allowed the OPI staff to build strong working relationships with other agencies, which has resulted in multiple collaborative projects that have strengthened the commitments of all involved to working with Montana's youth to facilitate smooth transitions from birth to adulthood.
- Working with staff from TAEESE, the OPI has facilitated the MontanaHEC for nineteen years. The HEC continues to be a part of CSPD and brings together members of faculty from each of the colleges and universities teacher prep programs in Montana. Participation in the consortium is strong and includes faculty members from each of the public and private colleges in Montana. This group has worked to provide greater standardization of the teacher training programs in Montana and has worked together to improve pre-service training programs.
- The OPI staff is involved in an additional coalition to engage in discussion and activity with our Parent Training Information center, Montana Empowerment Center and Disability Rights Montana (DRM). The MEC is available to assist Montana families in obtaining appropriate education for their children; improve education results for all children; train and inform parents and their professionals who work with their children; empower families to be the decision-makers for their children; and, develop collaboration with organizations and agencies that serve children and youth with disabilities.
- The OPI staff is also highly engaged with the Schools Administrators of Montana (SAM) which include affiliates for Superintendents, Principals, Special Education Administrators, and Information Technology (IT) Directors. This partnership allows us to respond quickly to needs expressed in the field by school staff. We also provide SAM with a grant to help fund the Montana Recruitment Project. This program focuses on recruiting hard to fill positions such as speech/language pathologists, special education teachers, occupational therapists, and school psychologists for our districts throughout Montana.

Annually, the SEA brings together representatives from these stakeholder groups for a joint meeting facilitated by TAEESE. This meeting gathers over 80 front-line stakeholders together to share up-dates of issues and gather input from a comprehensive representation of the Montana disability community, families and parents of children and students with and without disabilities. For the past six years, the topic has been Montana's SSIP and activities have been conducted to solicit both general and specific stakeholder input. During the spring 2021 meeting, the state presented on the new SPP/APR package to begin facilitating gathering feedback.

The SEA internal stakeholder work continues particularly through the ESEA comprehensive and targeted schools taskforces. These taskforces were

created to 1) provide cohesive supports for the development and implementation of a system wide continuous improvement plan across all areas of need for the identified comprehensive school and 2) Support schools identified as targeted by bringing together OPI staff with deep knowledge of struggling student groups to develop a range of improvement activities. These task forces include membership from all program divisions of the agency. Given that our LEAs on Native American reservations will comprise our lowest performing schools, the overall agency, the task force and the SSIP are aligned.

The comprehensive task force identifies and examines barriers that exist in our professional relationships with Indian schools. Barriers in the districts, and in the agency, were identified and analyzed. This began an assessment of interagency collaboration and professional relationships. Common ground was found for improved methodologies in our approach to districts, our analysis of district data and community, tribal, and cultural conditions, district capacities, and how better to target and support improvement efforts. As a result, SSIP improvement activities are now supported and reinforced through cross-divisional coordinated efforts. The Student Support Services division has also been heavily involved in the development of Montana's ESSA state plan.

FFY 2020 SPP/APR Data

Number of preschool children aged 3 through 5 with IEPs assessed

134

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	0	0.00%
b. Preschool children who improved functioning but not sufficient to move nearer to functioning comparable to same-aged peers	11	8.21%
c. Preschool children who improved functioning to a level nearer to same-aged peers but did not reach it	27	20.15%
d. Preschool children who improved functioning to reach a level comparable to same-aged peers	44	32.84%
e. Preschool children who maintained functioning at a level comparable to same-aged peers	52	38.81%

Outcome A	Numerator	Denominator	FFY 2019 Data	FFY 2020 Target	FFY 2020 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. <i>Calculation: (c+d)/(a+b+c+d)</i>	71	82	80.00%	77.00%	86.59%	Met target	No Slippage
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. <i>Calculation: (d+e)/(a+b+c+d+e)</i>	96	134	68.11%	75.50%	71.64%	Did not meet target	No Slippage

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	0	0.00%
b. Preschool children who improved functioning but not sufficient to move nearer to functioning comparable to same-aged peers	23	17.16%
c. Preschool children who improved functioning to a level nearer to same-aged peers but did not reach it	36	26.87%
d. Preschool children who improved functioning to reach a level comparable to same-aged peers	66	49.25%
e. Preschool children who maintained functioning at a level comparable to same-aged peers	9	6.72%

Outcome B	Numerator	Denominator	FFY 2019 Data	FFY 2020 Target	FFY 2020 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. <i>Calculation:</i> $(c+d)/(a+b+c+d)$	102	125	84.48%	81.00%	81.60%	Met target	No Slippage
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. <i>Calculation:</i> $(d+e)/(a+b+c+d+e)$	75	134	58.38%	58.50%	55.97%	Did not meet target	Slippage

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	0	0.00%
b. Preschool children who improved functioning but not sufficient to move nearer to functioning comparable to same-aged peers	13	9.70%
c. Preschool children who improved functioning to a level nearer to same-aged peers but did not reach it	29	21.64%
d. Preschool children who improved functioning to reach a level comparable to same-aged peers	41	30.60%
e. Preschool children who maintained functioning at a level comparable to same-aged peers	51	38.06%

Outcome C	Numerator	Denominator	FFY 2019 Data	FFY 2020 Target	FFY 2020 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. <i>Calculation:</i> $(c+d)/(a+b+c+d)$	70	83	79.46%	75.90%	84.34%	Met target	No Slippage
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. <i>Calculation:</i> $(d+e)/(a+b+c+d+e)$	92	134	70.27%	75.90%	68.66%	Did not meet target	Slippage

Part	Reasons for slippage, if applicable
B2	Montana has a very small n size for this indicator. A change of just one or two children will cause a decrease in the overall percentage. For FFY2019, there were 108 out of 185 students who were functioning within age expectations by the time they turned 6 years of age or exited the program. For FFY2020, that number was 75 out of 134.
C2	Montana has a very small n size for this indicator. A change of just one or two children will cause a decrease in the overall percentage. For FFY2019, there were 130 out of 185 students who were functioning within age expectations by the time they turned 6 years of age or exited the program. For FFY2020, that number was 92 out of 134.

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 Form (COS) process? (yes/no)

YES

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

Montana uses a standardized required editor-based reporting form to collect entering and exiting preschool outcomes data. The form is included in our state-wide student data system special education module along with all other special education required forms. The Part B data manager runs a report to collect the data.

Provide additional information about this indicator (optional)

7 - Prior FFY Required Actions

None

7 - OSEP Response

The State provided targets for FFYs 2020 through 2025 for this indicator, and OSEP accepts those targets.

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 2 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 2020 SPP/APR, compare the FFY 2020 response rate to the FFY 2019 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 should consider categories such as race/ethnicity, age of student, disability category, and geographic location in the State.

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.

Beginning with the FFY 2021 SPP/APR, due February 1, 2023, when reporting 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.

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

Discussions and Stakeholder input of the SPP, APR, SSIP, and Results Driven Accountability (RDA)/Results Based Accountability (RBA) began in 2013 with our State Special Education Advisory Panel. The Panel is fully vested and broadly representative of Montana. Additionally, many of the panel members as well as SEA staff serve in other agency or organization leadership positions or on advisory groups in the disability community. This enables MT to draw insight and advice from a broad group of stakeholders with an understanding of Montana's unique needs, strengths, and potential weaknesses.

Other stakeholder groups we sponsor and/or engage include:

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- The OPI School Mental Health coordinator worked collaboratively with the Children's Mental Health Bureau at the Department of Public Health and Human Services (DPHHS) to facilitate the provision of mental health services in schools through Comprehensive School and Community Treatment services (CSCT).
- The OPI staff has developed productive working relationships with other Montana Agencies that serve youth and adults with disabilities. OPI staff participate as members of advisory councils for early childhood, vocational rehabilitation, juvenile justice, developmental disabilities, the state independent living council and the mental health divisions of the DPHHS. These connections have allowed the OPI staff to build strong working relationships with other agencies, which has resulted in multiple collaborative projects that have strengthened the commitments of all involved to working with Montana's youth to facilitate smooth transitions from birth to adulthood.
- Working with staff from TAESE, the OPI has facilitated the MontanaHEC for nineteen years. The HEC continues to be a part of CSPD and brings together members of faculty from each of the colleges and universities teacher prep programs in Montana. Participation in the consortium is strong and includes faculty members from each of the public and private colleges in Montana. This group has worked to provide greater standardization of the

teacher training programs in Montana and has worked together to improve pre-service training programs.

- The OPI staff is involved in an additional coalition to engage in discussion and activity with our Parent Training Information center, Montana Empowerment Center and Disability Rights Montana (DRM). The MEC is available to assist Montana families in obtaining appropriate education for their children; improve education results for all children; train and inform parents and their professionals who work with their children; empower families to be the decision-makers for their children; and, develop collaboration with organizations and agencies that serve children and youth with disabilities.
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The SEA internal stakeholder work continues particularly through the ESEA comprehensive and targeted schools taskforces. These taskforces were created to 1) provide cohesive supports for the development and implementation of a system wide continuous improvement plan across all areas of need for the identified comprehensive school and 2) Support schools identified as targeted by bringing together OPI staff with deep knowledge of struggling student groups to develop a range of improvement activities. These task forces include membership from all program divisions of the agency. Given that our LEAs on Native American reservations will comprise our lowest performing schools, the overall agency, the task force and the SSIP are aligned.

The comprehensive task force identifies and examines barriers that exist in our professional relationships with Indian schools. Barriers in the districts, and in the agency, were identified and analyzed. This began an assessment of interagency collaboration and professional relationships. Common ground was found for improved methodologies in our approach to districts, our analysis of district data and community, tribal, and cultural conditions, district capacities, and how better to target and support improvement efforts. As a result, SSIP improvement activities are now supported and reinforced through cross-divisional coordinated efforts. The Student Support Services division has also been heavily involved in the development of Montana's ESSA state plan.

Historical Data

Baseline Year	Baseline Data
2005	65.50%

FFY	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019
Target >=	70.20%	70.30%	70.40%	70.50%	70.50%
Data	71.09%	66.96%	74.00%	73.88%	79.05%

Targets

FFY	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025
Target >=	70.50%	70.60%	70.70%	70.80%	70.90%	71.00%

FFY 2020 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 2019 Data	FFY 2020 Target	FFY 2020 Data	Status	Slippage
256	349	79.05%	70.50%	73.35%	Met target	No Slippage

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.

Parents of students with disabilities, including preschool students, are given an opportunity to complete the survey. As in previous years, in FFY2020, the survey was given to parents at the annual IEP meeting, parent-teacher conferences, and community functions; in many cases it was also sent via mail. This personalized distribution method ensured all parents received the survey; furthermore, school staff personally encouraged the parents to complete the survey. Parents of students at all grade levels, including preschool, received and were encouraged to respond to the survey.

The number of parents to whom the surveys were distributed.

3,036

Percentage of respondent parents

11.50%

Response Rate

FFY	2019	2020
Response Rate	15.83%	11.50%

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

Montana has partnered with the Montana Empowerment Center (MEC), the OSEP funded PTI Center for Montana, to send out the surveys. Montana will be working with the MEC to reach out to districts and parents to encourage completion of the survey. The SSIP Coordinator will work with the SSIP Target Schools that are scheduled to be surveyed to ensure they understand the requirements and to help them reach out to their parents to encourage completion of the survey. Montana is also looking into the possibility of creating an online survey option in future years.

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.

Nonresponse bias measures the differences in opinions between respondents and non-respondents in meaningful ways, such as the positivity of responses. A few things can be examined to determine nonresponse bias. One is the overall response rate. The higher the response rate, the less likely nonresponse bias will occur. Our response rate is 12%, which is the lower than we would like. It is possible that those parents who did not respond are different in some meaningful way in their level of positivity from those who did respond. Thus, we proceeded with the next two ways for examining nonresponse bias.

Second, the representativeness of the responses can be examined. We describe this in the next section where we state: The State used statistical significance testing to determine if one group was over- or under-represented based on their response rate. Although significant differences were found in response rates by disability, race/ethnicity, and age of the child, the actual responses of these different groups of parents showed no significant differences in the overall parent involvement percentage.

Third, we can compare the responses of parents who responded early in the process to those who responded later in the process. The idea being that perhaps those who do not immediately respond are different in some meaningful way than those who respond immediately. These results showed no statistically significant differences between parents who responded earlier and parents who responded later. Therefore, we conclude that nonresponse bias is not present.

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 should consider categories such as race/ethnicity, age of student, disability category, and geographic location in the State.

The State used statistical significance testing of response rates to determine if one group was over-or under-represented. Note that our survey sample was such that if all disaggregated groups have the same response rate, then by definition, the disaggregated groups are representative of the population. For example, if all racial/ethnic groups had a 30% response rate, then the population of the respondents would mirror the actual population in terms of its racial/ethnic make-up. On the other hand, if one racial/ethnic group has a 30% response rate for example and another a 20% response rate, then the population of the respondents would not mirror the actual population in terms of its racial/ethnic make-up. Significant differences were found in response rates by disability, race/ethnicity, and age of the child. In terms of disability, parents of students with Autism were more likely to respond (response rate=22%) than parents of students with a Specific Learning Disability (response rate=12%). In terms of race/ethnicity, parents of White students were more likely to respond (response rate=13%) than parents of Hispanic students (response rate=8%) and parents of American Indian students (response rate=6%). In terms of age, parents of students Age 3-5 were more likely to respond (response rate=17%) than parents of students Age 15-18 (response rate=8%).

Although there are a few significant differences in response rates between groups of parents by race/ethnicity, primary disability, and age group, there were no significant differences in the parent involvement percentage itself between these groups of parents. For example, parents of white students had a similar parent involvement percentage as parents of Hispanic students. So, we are confident that the overall results are representative of the State despite the differences in response rates. Furthermore, parents from a wide range of districts from across the state responded to the survey. Thus, the results are representative of all racial/ethnic groups and all disability categories and reflect the population of parents in terms of geographic distribution.

The demographics of the parents 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.

Montana has partnered with the Montana Empowerment Center (MEC), the OSEP funded PTI Center for Montana, to send out the surveys. Montana will be working with the MEC to reach out to districts and parents to encourage completion of the survey. The SSIP Coordinator will work with the SSIP Target Schools that are scheduled to be surveyed to ensure they understand the requirements and to help them reach out to their parents to encourage completion of the survey.

Additional strategies Montana will use include:

- Extend the survey end date
- Create an online survey
- Send the survey via email or text message
- Ask districts with a high response rate what they are doing that works
- See if the survey design can be updated (add an online link, add a QR code, send a brochure, send a postcard with a link)

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

Statistical significance testing of response rate was used to determine representativeness with a threshold of $p < 0.05$.

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.

The OPI employed a sampling methodology to gather data for this indicator. The sampling process was conducted in accord with the OPI's five-year compliance monitoring cycle. The cycle annually ensures statewide representation of LEAs through representation of large, small, urban, and rural LEAs and a broad representation of parents of children with disabilities across the spectrum of disabilities. All parents of children with disabilities within the schools identified in the monitoring cycle are included in the sample. At the end of the five-year cycle, all parents of children with disabilities will have had an opportunity to respond to the survey instrument. The sampling methodology was reviewed by the Office of Special Education Programs (OSEP) and in an e-mail received from Larry Wexler, Deputy Director of Monitoring and State Improvement Planning on it was stated, "...Thank you for your letter dated March 29, 2006, in which you provided additional information on how Montana plans to collect baseline data for performance indicator eight of your State Performance Plan. Your sampling plan for Indicator eight, as revised, is consistent with the State Performance Plan sampling directions..."

Montana developed its sampling plan based on a review of data from the December 2005 Child Count, and the October 2005 Enrollment Count. The data showed the following:

- There are 430 operating districts (as of June 7, 2006) districts in MT. (52 K-12 Districts, 269 Elementary Districts, 109 High School Districts)
- There are no districts with more than 50,000 enrolled students.
- 291 (based on October 2005 ADC enrollment count) districts have an enrollment of fewer than 200 students.
- There are a total of 19,260 special education students ages 6-21 (Dec. 2005 count).
- Because the vast majority of the districts have very small enrollments, 349 of the districts are grouped into one of twenty-one special education cooperatives. The cooperative structure ensures all districts have access to the full range of instructional and related services to address free appropriate public education (FAPE).
- The 430 districts (and their corresponding cooperatives) are categorized into 5 groups for monitoring purposes. To determine the statewide representativeness of those groups, Montana reviewed descriptive statistics, including: geographic area, size of school district, and rates for race/ethnicity, free/reduced lunch, and special education.
- There are a total of 1,925 special education students ages 3-5 (Dec. 2005 count).

Based on that review, Montana determined that:

- For districts monitored during the 2006-07 school year, the Part B Parent Involvement Survey will be administered in fall 2006.
 - For districts monitored in subsequent school years, the Parent Involvement Survey will be administered in the spring prior to their monitoring year. For example, the Parent Involvement Survey will be administered in spring 2007 for districts monitored during the 2007-08 school year. This will allow survey results to be used during the monitoring process.
 - All parents of children with disabilities in the districts scheduled within each monitoring cycle will be asked to complete a survey.
- Reasons for tying the Parent Involvement Survey to the monitoring cycle and administering the survey to all parents of children with disabilities:
- The Division of Special Education determined that the monitoring cycle would be the best way to reach parents of children with disabilities in a systematic manner. Aligning the districts to be surveyed with the districts to be monitored will allow for seamless integration of information concerning parent involvement with the compliance monitoring process. Furthermore, the results obtained from the survey will have a direct benefit for both parents and districts since they can actively utilize the data obtained from their districts to improve results. Additionally, by linking the distribution of the survey to those districts scheduled for an upcoming monitoring visit, it is anticipated that Montana schools will be actively involved in encouraging a high return rate of parent responses.
 - The Special Education Programs unit chose not to limit the survey a sample of parents from each district because of small numbers of special education students at many districts and of wanting to give all parents an opportunity to respond. Not giving all parents an opportunity to complete the survey would degrade the acceptance of results by the districts.
 - The same survey will be used for both Part B parents and Part B 619 parents. Most of the issues critical to parents of children aged 6-21 are the same as those that are critical to parents of children aged 3-5. Using the same survey will enable results to be compared across the entire Part B age range and will allow for ease and efficiency of the data collection process.

Since the approval of this plan in March 2006, the methodology has not changed. The demographics of the districts are reviewed approximately every 4 years to determine if changes need to be made to the monitoring cycle to continue to ensure representativeness. Free and Reduced status is no longer looked at, as it is not used for any other special education data reviews.

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)

We believe COVID impacted our response rate for the 2020-21 school year because of the number of kids engaging in remote learning which made receiving responses back from the parents more difficult (e.g., since we couldn't hand out the survey to students to take to parents, since parents weren't attending back-to-school nights, etc.)

8 - Prior FFY Required Actions

In the FFY 2020 SPP/APR, the State must report whether its FFY 2020 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 2019 SPP/APR

The information regarding the representativeness for the FFY2020 data can be found in the prior sections of this indicator discussing representativeness.

8 - OSEP Response

The State provided targets for FFYs 2020 through 2025 for this indicator, and OSEP accepts those targets.

The State reported that sampling was used to collect data for this indicator and that the previously approved sampling plan had not changed. In order to report data for this indicator using sampling for the FFY 2020-2025 SPP/APR, OSEP required the State to submit its sampling plan to and provide data consistent with the approved sampling plan. The State did not provide its sampling plan but reported, "Since the approval of this plan in March 2006, the methodology has not changed. The demographics of the districts are reviewed approximately every 4 years to determine if changes need to be made to the monitoring cycle to continue to ensure representativeness."

8 - Required Actions

In the FFY 2021 SPP/APR, the State must report whether its FFY 2021 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.

With the FFY 2021 APR, the State must submit its sampling plan and provide data consistent with the approved sampling plan.

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, etc. 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 2020 reporting period (i.e., after June 30, 2021).

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.

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 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, etc.) 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 2020 SPP/APR, the data for FFY 2019), 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	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019
Target	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%
Data	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%

Targets

FFY	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025
Target	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%

FFY 2020 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.

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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 2019 Data	FFY 2020 Target	FFY 2020 Data	Status	Slippage
3	0	221	0.00%	0%	0.00%	N/A	N/A

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).

Using a weighted risk ratio with one year of data and a 2.576 threshold, an LEA is determined to have disproportionate overrepresentation if, given a minimum N of 10, an LEA demonstrates a statistically significant difference in the proportion of students with disabilities of racial and ethnic groups within a receiving special education and related services compared to the proportion of students with disabilities of all other racial and ethnic groups and within all other disability categories receiving special education and related services in that LEA, within a 99 percent confidence interval.

Using a minimum N of 10 and a 99 percent confidence interval, a test of difference between proportions was used to measure statistically significant differences between the special education identification rate for students of a specific racial and ethnic group and the special education identification rate for all other students within that LEA. Target data show that none of the 400 LEAs demonstrated a statistically significant difference, resulting in determination of disproportionate representation of racial and ethnic groups in special education and related services. The minimum N of 10 is applied to the denominator of this equation - that is, if an LEA does not have at least 10 students with disabilities in a particular racial/ethnic category, the data is not reviewed for that LEA.

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.

Once an LEA is flagged for disproportionate representation, the policies and procedures of that LEA, results of on-site compliance monitoring, and dispute resolution data are reviewed to determine if the disproportionate representation is due to inappropriate identification. The district is informed of the results of the review.

The LEA reviews included review of selected student files, review of LEA policies, practices and procedures, the most current compliance monitoring data, and selected interviews with LEA staff. As a result of this process, the OPI determined that the disproportionate representation (over-representation) was NOT the result of inappropriate identification.

Provide additional information about this indicator (optional)

Baseline year changed to FFY2020 due to the change in reporting requirements to include 5 year olds in kindergarten in the calculation

Correction of Findings of Noncompliance Identified in FFY 2019

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 2019

Year Findings of Noncompliance Were Identified	Findings of Noncompliance Not Yet Verified as Corrected as of FFY 2019 APR	Findings of Noncompliance Verified as Corrected	Findings Not Yet Verified as Corrected

9 - Prior FFY Required Actions

None

9 - OSEP Response

The State has revised the baseline for this indicator, using data from FFY 2020 and OSEP accepts that revision.

9 - Required Actions

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 618 data for FFY 2020, 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, etc. 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 2020 reporting period (i.e., after June 30, 2021).

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.

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 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, etc.) 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 2020 SPP/APR, the data for FFY 2019), 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	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019
Target	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%
Data	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%

Targets

FFY	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025
Target	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%

FFY 2020 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.

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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 2019 Data	FFY 2020 Target	FFY 2020 Data	Status	Slippage
1	0	133	0.00%	0%	0.00%	N/A	N/A

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).

Using a weighted risk ratio with one year of data and a 2.576 threshold, an LEA is determined to have disproportionate overrepresentation if, given a minimum N of 10, an LEA demonstrates a statistically significant difference in the proportion of students with disabilities of racial and ethnic groups within a specific disability category receiving special education and related services compared to the proportion of students with disabilities of all other racial and ethnic groups and within all other disability categories receiving special education and related services in that LEA, within a 99 percent confidence interval.

Using a minimum N of 10 and a 99 percent confidence interval, a test of difference between proportions was used to measure statistically significant differences between the special education identification rate for students of a specific racial and ethnic group and the special education identification rate for all other students within that LEA. Target data show that none of the 400 LEAs demonstrated a statistically significant difference, resulting in determination of disproportionate representation of racial and ethnic groups in special education and related services. The minimum N of 10 is applied to the denominator of this equation - that is, if an LEA does not have at least 10 students with disabilities in a particular racial/ethnic category, the data is not reviewed for that LEA.

Of the 400 districts in Montana, 133 met the minimum N in at least one of the racial groups and were included in the calculations for that racial group. 267 did not meet the minimum N in any of the racial groups reviewed and were excluded from all calculations.

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.

Once an LEA is flagged for disproportionate representation, the policies and procedures of that LEA, results of on-site compliance monitoring, and dispute resolution data are reviewed to determine if the disproportionate representation is due to inappropriate identification. The district is informed of the results of the review.

The LEA reviews included review of selected student files, review of LEA policies, practices and procedures, the most current compliance monitoring data, and selected interviews with LEA staff. As a result of this process, the OPI determined that the disproportionate representation (over-representation) was NOT the result of inappropriate identification.

Provide additional information about this indicator (optional)

Baseline year changed to FFY2020 due to the change in reporting requirements to include 5 year olds in kindergarten in the calculation

Correction of Findings of Noncompliance Identified in FFY 2019

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 2019

Year Findings of Noncompliance Were Identified	Findings of Noncompliance Not Yet Verified as Corrected as of FFY 2019 APR	Findings of Noncompliance Verified as Corrected	Findings Not Yet Verified as Corrected

10 - Prior FFY Required Actions

None

10 - OSEP Response

The State has revised the baseline for this indicator, using data from FFY 2020 and OSEP accepts that revision.

10 - Required Actions

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 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, etc.) 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 2020 SPP/APR, the data for FFY 2019), 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
2005	93.00%

FFY	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019
Target	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%
Data	99.17%	98.62%	97.91%	99.44%	100.00%

Targets

FFY	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025
Target	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%

FFY 2020 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 2019 Data	FFY 2020 Target	FFY 2020 Data	Status	Slippage
246	236	100.00%	100%	95.93%	Did not meet target	Slippage

Provide reasons for slippage

The slippage for this indicator can attributed to both COVID and small N sizes. The COVID pandemic forced the closure of schools in Montana in March 2020. This created timeline issues for a number of districts who properly documented the delays and finished the evaluations as quickly as possible once schools resumed in fall 2020.

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

10

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.

The children included in a, but not b were across eight (8) LEAs, and ranged from 3 to 210 days.. At the time of the data collection, the evaluations had been completed for all 10 children, and the 8 LEAs had shown continued evidence of being able to meet the 60-day timeline for initial evaluations. Of the 10 children who were not completed within the timeline, six (6) of them were due to COVID. Montana schools were closed on March 16, 2020, and LEAs were not able to meet with students to complete the evaluations and were not prepared to conduct evaluations virtually at that time. By fall of 2020, LEAs were given the option of returning in person. They had also developed ways to conduct evaluations virtually so that students were not experiencing delays in initial determinations any longer. All six (6) of the students who were not able to be completed at in the spring of 2020 were able to be completed within the first month of school resuming in fall 2020. The four students who were not completed for reasons other than COVID did not have a reason for not being completed.

Indicate the evaluation timeline used:

The State used the 60 day timeframe within which the evaluation must be conducted

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.

The OPI collected the indicator data as a part of its compliance monitoring procedures during the 2020-2021 school year. Compliance monitors reviewed a sampling of student records for students who were initially referred for a special education evaluation. Monitors enter the date consent was received, date of the last assessment completed for the evaluation and the date of the Evaluation Report meeting into the OPI Monitoring application. The system calculates the number of calendar days between the date consent was received and the date the last assessment was completed. If more than 60 calendar days passed, the monitor is prompted to enter the reason.

Correction of identified noncompliance related to indicator 11, was verified using both prongs of the verification process described in the OSEP's 09-02 Memorandum and subsequent guidance from the OSEP. Each LEA in Montana has an on-site monitoring record review which is on a five-year cycle. State operated and state funded facilities are reviewed on a three-year cycle. The OPI monitoring staff selects records for review and uses a standard record review protocol to conduct the reviews. During this process, instances of IDEA noncompliance are identified. Following the on-site review, each LEA is provided a list, by student, of every instance of noncompliance identified during the review. The LEAs are given a specific set of timelines in which to correct every instance of noncompliance. Following the initial verification of correction, the OPI staff review additional records completed subsequent to the identification of the noncompliance to verify the LEA is complying with all IDEA regulations. If an LEA completes the correction of each instance of noncompliance, and provides the OPI with sufficient additional records to verify ongoing evidence of compliance, then no finding is issued to the LEA. This practice is based on the guidance provided by OSEP in the FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS REGARDING IDENTIFICATION AND CORRECTION OF NONCOMPLIANCE AND REPORTING ON CORRECTION IN THE STATE PERFORMANCE PLAN (SPP)/ANNUAL PERFORMANCE REPORT (APR) document. In the process for determination of findings, the OPI considers a variety of factors including: (1) whether the noncompliance was extensive or found in only a small percentage of files; (2) whether the noncompliance showed a denial of a basic right under the IDEA (e.g., an extended delay in initial evaluation beyond applicable timelines with a corresponding delay in the child's receipt of FAPE, or a failure to provide any services in accordance with the IEP); and (3) whether the noncompliance represents an isolated incident, or reflects a long-standing failure to meet IDEA requirements. When data indicates additional evidence of sustained post-monitoring compliance is necessary, the OPI requires the district to obtain additional training and/or submit additional evidence of sustained compliance.

The same verification procedures are used for all noncompliance, whether collected through the state's on-site monitoring system, desk review of records, state complaint or due process hearing decisions, or statewide student data system.

The description of Montana's monitoring process is detailed in the Introduction.

Provide additional information about this indicator (optional)

Correction of Findings of Noncompliance Identified in FFY 2019

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 2019

Year Findings of Noncompliance Were Identified	Findings of Noncompliance Not Yet Verified as Corrected as of FFY 2019 APR	Findings of Noncompliance Verified as Corrected	Findings Not Yet Verified as Corrected

11 - Prior FFY Required Actions

None

11 - OSEP Response**11 - Required Actions**

Because the State reported less than 100% compliance for FFY 2020, the State must report on the status of correction of noncompliance identified in FFY 2020 for this indicator. When reporting on the correction of noncompliance, the State must report, in the FFY 2021 SPP/APR, that it has verified that each LEA with noncompliance identified in FFY 2020 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 2021 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 2020, although its FFY 2020 data reflect less than 100% compliance, provide an explanation of why the State did not identify any findings of noncompliance in FFY 2020.

Indicator 12: Early Childhood Transition

Instructions and Measurement

Monitoring Priority: 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 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, etc.) 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 2020 SPP/APR, the data for FFY 2019), 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
2005	67.00%

FFY	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019
Target	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%
Data	93.02%	97.44%	97.73%	93.67%	97.62%

Targets

FFY	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025
Target	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%

FFY 2020 SPP/APR Data

a. Number of children who have been served in Part C and referred to Part B for Part B eligibility determination.	100
b. Number of those referred determined to be NOT eligible and whose eligibility was determined prior to third birthday.	10

c. Number of those found eligible who have an IEP developed and implemented by their third birthdays.	62
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.	18
e. Number of children who were referred to Part C less than 90 days before their third birthdays.	3
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.	3

Measure	Numerator (c)	Denominator (a-b-d-e-f)	FFY 2019 Data	FFY 2020 Target	FFY 2020 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.	62	66	97.62%	100%	93.94%	Did not meet target	Slippage

Provide reasons for slippage, if applicable

The slippage can be directly attributed to small N sizes. The COVID pandemic also contributed to the slippage. Two of the four IEPs that were not completed by the 3rd birthday were due to COVID quarantines

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

4

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.

The four children who were reported in category a, but not in b, c, d, e, or f are from three LEAs. The range of days beyond the 3rd birthday was 6 to 13. The reasons for the IEPs not being written by the child's 3rd birthday were due to one LEA not receiving the paperwork from the Part C agency until 10 days prior to the 3rd birthday, and staff being out due to COVID quarantines. All four LEAs were able to complete the IEPs prior to the data being collected, and to demonstrate compliance with the regulation by having completed eligibility determinations and having IEPs in place by the 3rd birthday for other children in the fiscal year.

For FFY 2019, at the time of data collection, the evaluation process and IEP development had occurred for the child for whom the eligibility determination had not been made or an IEP developed by their third birthday. All instances of noncompliance with this requirement had been corrected in a timely manner. The LEA that had an identified instance of noncompliance was required to provide subsequent documentation of 100 percent compliance with the Part C to Part B transition requirements. For each of these LEAs, their FFY2020 data demonstrated that they did understand the requirements of IDEA, and they were able to get all determinations and IEPs written by the 3rd birthdays for children referred from a Part C Agency.

Attach PDF table (optional)

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

State database that includes data for the entire reporting year

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.

The OPI uses a census-level data collection for this indicator. The Part C Lead Agency submits data regarding all children referred to a school district to the OPI. The OPI collates this data and verifies the referral through the statewide student database system. This system contains documentation of the referral, the eligibility determination and, if appropriate, the student's IEP. This allows the OPI to determine district compliance with the Part C to Part B transition requirements. By using this method, the OPI can account for all children in the state who transition from Part C to Part B.

Provide additional information about this indicator (optional)

Montana experienced slippage for this indicator, and had two IEPs not completed by the 3rd birthday due to COVID quarantines. While COVID did not impact the ability to collect the data for this indicator, it did contribute to the inability to meet it.

Correction of Findings of Noncompliance Identified in FFY 2019

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 2019

Year Findings of Noncompliance Were Identified	Findings of Noncompliance Not Yet Verified as Corrected as of FFY 2019 APR	Findings of Noncompliance Verified as Corrected	Findings Not Yet Verified as Corrected

Year Findings of Noncompliance Were Identified	Findings of Noncompliance Not Yet Verified as Corrected as of FFY 2019 APR	Findings of Noncompliance Verified as Corrected	Findings Not Yet Verified as Corrected

12 - Prior FFY Required Actions

Because the State reported less than 100% compliance for FFY 2019, the State must report on the status of correction of noncompliance identified in FFY 2019 for this indicator. When reporting on the correction of noncompliance, the State must report, in the FFY 2020 SPP/APR, that it has verified that each LEA with noncompliance identified in FFY 2019 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 2020 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 2019, although its FFY 2019 data reflect less than 100% compliance, provide an explanation of why the State did not identify any findings of noncompliance in FFY 2019.

Response to actions required in FFY 2019 SPP/APR

For FFY 2019, at the time of data collection, the evaluation process and IEP development had occurred for the child for whom the eligibility determination had not been made or an IEP developed by their third birthday. All instances of noncompliance with this requirement had been corrected in a timely manner. The LEA that had an identified instance of noncompliance was required to provide subsequent documentation of 100 percent compliance with the Part C to Part B transition requirements. For each of these LEAs, their FFY2020 data demonstrated that they did understand the requirements of IDEA, and they were able to get all determinations and IEPs written by the 3rd birthdays for children referred from a Part C Agency.

12 - OSEP Response

12 - Required Actions

Because the State reported less than 100% compliance for FFY 2020, the State must report on the status of correction of noncompliance identified in FFY 2020 for this indicator. When reporting on the correction of noncompliance, the State must report, in the FFY 2021 SPP/APR, that it has verified that each LEA with noncompliance identified in FFY 2020 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 2021 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 2020, although its FFY 2020 data reflect less than 100% compliance, provide an explanation of why the State did not identify any findings of noncompliance in FFY 2020.

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

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 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, etc.) 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 2020 SPP/APR, the data for FFY 2019), 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
2009	85.30%

FFY	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019
Target	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%
Data	96.94%	98.70%	98.68%	69.03%	73.53%

Targets

FFY	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025
Target	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%

FFY 2020 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 2019 Data	FFY 2020 Target	FFY 2020 Data	Status	Slippage
55	76	73.53%	100%	72.37%	Did not meet target	Slippage

Provide reasons for slippage, if applicable

Montana has very small N sizes for this indicator. Because of that, even a small change in the numerator or denominator will cause changes in the overall percentage.

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.

The OPI collected the indicator data as a part of its compliance monitoring procedures during the 2020-2021 school year. Compliance monitors reviewed a sampling of student records for students, ages 16 and older, to ensure their IEPs include appropriate measurable postsecondary goals that are annually updated and based upon an age-appropriate transition assessments, transition services, including courses of study, that will reasonably enable the student to meet their 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 were 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. Correction of identified noncompliance related to indicator 13, was verified using both prongs of the verification process described in the OSEP's 09-02 Memorandum and subsequent guidance from the OSEP. Each LEA in Montana has an on-site monitoring record review which is on a five-year cycle. State operated and state funded facilities are reviewed on a three-year cycle. The OPI monitoring staff selects records for review and uses a standard record review protocol to conduct the reviews. During this process, instances of IDEA noncompliance are identified. Following the on-site review, each LEA is provided a list, by student, of every instance of noncompliance identified during the review. The LEAs are given a specific set of timelines in which to correct every instance of noncompliance. Following the initial verification of correction, the OPI staff review additional records completed subsequent to the identification of the noncompliance to verify the LEA is complying with all IDEA regulations. If an LEA completes the correction of each instance of noncompliance, and provides the OPI with sufficient additional records to verify ongoing evidence of compliance, then no finding is issued to the LEA. This practice is based on the guidance provided by OSEP in the FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS REGARDING IDENTIFICATION AND CORRECTION OF NONCOMPLIANCE AND REPORTING ON CORRECTION IN THE STATE PERFORMANCE PLAN (SPP)/ANNUAL PERFORMANCE REPORT (APR) document. In the process for determination of findings, the OPI considers a variety of factors including: (1) whether the noncompliance was extensive or found in only a small percentage of files; (2) whether the noncompliance showed a denial of a basic right under the IDEA (e.g., an extended delay in initial evaluation beyond applicable timelines with a corresponding delay in the child's receipt of FAPE, or a failure to provide any services in accordance with the IEP); and (3) whether the noncompliance represents an isolated incident, or reflects a long-standing failure to meet IDEA requirements. When data indicates additional evidence of sustained post-monitoring compliance is necessary, the OPI requires the district to obtain additional training and/or submit additional evidence of sustained compliance.

The same verification procedures are used for all noncompliance, whether collected through the state's on-site monitoring system, desk review of records, state complaint or due process hearing decisions, or statewide student data system.

Question	Yes / No
Do the State's policies and procedures provide that public agencies must meet these requirements at an age younger than 16?	NO

Provide additional information about this indicator (optional)

Correction of Findings of Noncompliance Identified in FFY 2019

Findings of Noncompliance Identified	Findings of Noncompliance Verified as Corrected Within One Year	Findings of Noncompliance Subsequently Corrected	Findings Not Yet Verified as Corrected
3	3	0	0

FFY 2019 Findings of Noncompliance Verified as Corrected

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

The OPI reviewed individual student records to verify LEA's child find, evaluation/re-evaluation, and Individualized Education Program (IEP) processes and procedures meet IDEA requirements and Montana's Administrative Rules. The student record review used during the monitoring process also addresses transfers, expulsion, suspension, aversive treatment plans, manifestation determinations, surrogate parents, private schools, high school graduates, exited students, students found not eligible, students who have had an evaluation report, other unique circumstances, IEPs during the current year and students whose parents revoked consent for special education services. Compliance monitoring activities consisted of:

- Review of a sampling of individual student records to examine current practices and documentation;
- Review of district policy, practices, and procedures;
- Visit selected schools, when appropriate; and
- Communication with individual teachers and specialists to discuss records, when appropriate.

All identified noncompliance is recorded, verified, and accounted for through a process of:

- Notification to the district of all identified noncompliance;
- Required correction of all identified noncompliance as per OSEP's 09-02 memo (Prong 1 of correction);
- District submission of up-dated data verifying 100 percent post-monitoring compliant policy, practice, and procedure (Prong 2 of correction);
- Timely issuance of findings, including corrective actions, for uncorrected identified noncompliance. Each finding cites a specific regulation, either federal or state, and describes the nature of the noncompliance;
- Additional issuance, when appropriate, of required technical assistance, professional development and/or district submission of up-dated data verifying 100 percent post-monitoring compliance in policy, practice, and procedure for issues corrected but originally identified to a degree that is indicative of systemic concern;
- Completion of required technical assistance and professional development activities; and
- The issuance of a final report to the district upon completion of all required compliance monitoring requirements.

The OPI maintains tracking systems for compliance monitoring and due process hearings, mediation, complaints, and other Early Assistance Program activities. The tracking systems are reviewed, on no less than a monthly basis, to ensure timelines are met and procedures are being followed.

Personnel maintaining the tracking systems are responsible for ensuring program specialists are kept aware of the timelines. Program specialists follow up with the LEAs, as appropriate, to ensure corrective actions required are being completed in accord with the designated times. Using these procedures, OPI has verified that each instance of noncompliance has been corrected and the LEAs identified are now correctly implementing the regulatory requirements.

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

The OPI lead monitor for the district in which the noncompliance was found worked specifically with that district and teacher to correct the noncompliance within a specified timeline (30, 60, 90 days). The monitor sent a report to the district describing the incident of noncompliance that must be corrected and for which student(s) in order to meet Prong 1 of the OSEP 09-02 memo. Once it had been corrected for that specific student to satisfy the Prong 1 requirement, the district then submitted evidence of sustained post monitoring compliance to satisfy Prong 2 of the 09-02 memo. This documentation is reviewed in the same manner as the initial documentation, and if non-compliance is found, the district must correct it (prong 1), and continue to submit documentation until they can show that Prong 2 has been met. Using these procedures, OPI has verified that each instance of noncompliance has been corrected and the LEAs identified are now correctly implementing the regulatory requirements.

Correction of Findings of Noncompliance Identified Prior to FFY 2019

Year Findings of Noncompliance Were Identified	Findings of Noncompliance Not Yet Verified as Corrected as of FFY 2019 APR	Findings of Noncompliance Verified as Corrected	Findings Not Yet Verified as Corrected

13 - Prior FFY Required Actions

Because the State reported less than 100% compliance for FFY 2019, the State must report on the status of correction of noncompliance identified in FFY 2019 for this indicator. When reporting on the correction of noncompliance, the State must report, in the FFY 2020 SPP/APR, that it has verified that each LEA with noncompliance identified in FFY 2019 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 2020 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 2019, although its FFY 2019 data reflect less than 100% compliance, provide an explanation of why the State did not identify any findings of noncompliance in FFY 2019.

Response to actions required in FFY 2019 SPP/APR

The description of how the state verified both the source of the noncompliance and the individual instances of noncompliance were corrected using Prong 1 and Prong 2 of the 09-02 OSEP Memo can be found in the applicable sections above.

13 - OSEP Response

13 - Required Actions

Because the State reported less than 100% compliance for FFY 2020, the State must report on the status of correction of noncompliance identified in FFY 2020 for this indicator. When reporting on the correction of noncompliance, the State must report, in the FFY 2021 SPP/APR, that it has verified that each LEA with noncompliance identified in FFY 2020 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 2021 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 2020, although its FFY 2020 data reflect less than 100% compliance, provide an explanation of why the State did not identify any findings of noncompliance in FFY 2020.

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

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 2 for additional instructions on sampling.)

Collect data by September 2021 on students who left school during 2019-2020, timing the data collection so that at least one year has passed since the students left school. Include students who dropped out during 2019-2020 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, etc.).

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 2020 SPP/APR, compare the FFY 2020 response rate to the FFY 2019 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 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 should consider categories such as race/ethnicity, disability category, and geographic location in the State.

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.

Beginning with the FFY 2021 SPP/APR, due Feb. 1, 2023, when reporting the extent to which the demographics of respondents 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.

14 - Indicator Data

Historical Data

Measure	Baseline	FFY	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019
A	2018	Target ≥	26.70%	26.80%	26.90%	27.00%	15.75%
A	15.51%	Data	19.55%	22.14%	22.85%	15.51%	17.30%
B	2018	Target ≥	73.50%	73.60%	73.70%	73.80%	60.75%
B	60.58%	Data	71.28%	73.86%	75.30%	60.58%	62.87%
C	2018	Target ≥	87.10%	87.20%	87.30%	87.40%	79.75%
C	79.57%	Data	84.97%	86.86%	87.58%	79.57%	78.48%

FFY 2020 Targets

FFY	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025
Target A ≥	15.75%	15.85%	15.95%	16.05%	16.15%	16.25%
Target B ≥	60.75%	60.85%	60.95%	61.05%	61.15%	61.25%
Target C ≥	79.75%	79.85%	79.95%	80.05%	80.15%	80.25%

Targets: Description of Stakeholder Input

Discussions and Stakeholder input of the SPP, APR, SSIP, and Results Driven Accountability (RDA)/Results Based Accountability (RBA) began in 2013 with our State Special Education Advisory Panel. The Panel is fully vested and broadly representative of Montana. Additionally, many of the panel members as well as SEA staff serve in other agency or organization leadership positions or on advisory groups in the disability community. This enables MT to draw insight and advice from a broad group of stakeholders with an understanding of Montana's unique needs, strengths, and potential weaknesses.

Other stakeholder groups we sponsor and/or engage include:

- Our CSPD includes both regional and state councils that regularly meet to assess APR data and to evaluate professional development priorities and results.
- The OPI School Mental Health coordinator worked collaboratively with the Children's Mental Health Bureau at the Department of Public Health and Human Services (DPHHS) to facilitate the provision of mental health services in schools through Comprehensive School and Community Treatment services (CSCT).
- The OPI staff has developed productive working relationships with other Montana Agencies that serve youth and adults with disabilities. OPI staff participate as members of advisory councils for early childhood, vocational rehabilitation, juvenile justice, developmental disabilities, the state independent living council and the mental health divisions of the DPHHS. These connections have allowed the OPI staff to build strong working relationships with other agencies, which has resulted in multiple collaborative projects that have strengthened the commitments of all involved to working with Montana's youth to facilitate smooth transitions from birth to adulthood.
- Working with staff from TAESE, the OPI has facilitated the MontanaHEC for nineteen years. The HEC continues to be a part of CSPD and brings together members of faculty from each of the colleges and universities teacher prep programs in Montana. Participation in the consortium is strong and includes faculty members from each of the public and private colleges in Montana. This group has worked to provide greater standardization of the teacher training programs in Montana and has worked together to improve pre-service training programs.
- The OPI staff is involved in an additional coalition to engage in discussion and activity with our Parent Training Information center, Montana Empowerment Center and Disability Rights Montana (DRM). The MEC is available to assist Montana families in obtaining appropriate education for their children; improve education results for all children; train and inform parents and their professionals who work with their children; empower families to be the decision-makers for their children; and, develop collaboration with organizations and agencies that serve children and youth with disabilities.
- The OPI staff is also highly engaged with the Schools Administrators of Montana (SAM) which include affiliates for Superintendents, Principals, Special Education Administrators, and Information Technology (IT) Directors. This partnership allows us to respond quickly to needs expressed in the field by school staff. We also provide SAM with a grant to help fund the Montana Recruitment Project. This program focuses on recruiting hard to fill positions such as speech/language pathologists, special education teachers, occupational therapists, and school psychologists for our districts throughout Montana.

Annually, the SEA brings together representatives from these stakeholder groups for a joint meeting facilitated by TAESE. This meeting gathers over 80 front-line stakeholders together to share up-dates of issues and gather input from a comprehensive representation of the Montana disability community, families and parents of children and students with and without disabilities. For the past six years, the topic has been Montana's SSIP and activities have been conducted to solicit both general and specific stakeholder input. During the spring 2021 meeting, the state presented on the new SPP/APR package to begin facilitating gathering feedback.

The SEA internal stakeholder work continues particularly through the ESEA comprehensive and targeted schools taskforces. These taskforces were created to 1) provide cohesive supports for the development and implementation of a system wide continuous improvement plan across all areas of need for the identified comprehensive school and 2) Support schools identified as targeted by bringing together OPI staff with deep knowledge of struggling student groups to develop a range of improvement activities. These task forces include membership from all program divisions of the agency. Given that our LEAs on Native American reservations will comprise our lowest performing schools, the overall agency, the task force and the SSIP are aligned.

The comprehensive task force identifies and examines barriers that exist in our professional relationships with Indian schools. Barriers in the districts, and in the agency, were identified and analyzed. This began an assessment of interagency collaboration and professional relationships. Common ground was found for improved methodologies in our approach to districts, our analysis of district data and community, tribal, and cultural conditions, district capacities, and how better to target and support improvement efforts. As a result, SSIP improvement activities are now supported and reinforced through cross-divisional coordinated efforts. The Student Support Services division has also been heavily involved in the development of Montana's ESSA state plan.

FFY 2020 SPP/APR Data

Total number of targeted youth in the sample or census	1,004
Number of respondent youth who are no longer in secondary school and had IEPs in effect at the time they left school	684
Response Rate	68.13%
1. Number of respondent youth who enrolled in higher education within one year of leaving high school	87
2. Number of respondent youth who competitively employed within one year of leaving high school	319
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)	43
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).	57

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 2019 Data	FFY 2020 Target	FFY 2020 Data	Status	Slippage
A. Enrolled in higher education (1)	87	684	17.30%	15.75%	12.72%	Did not meet target	Slippage
B. Enrolled in higher education or competitively employed within one year of leaving high school (1 +2)	406	684	62.87%	60.75%	59.36%	Did not meet target	Slippage
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)	506	684	78.48%	79.75%	73.98%	Did not meet target	Slippage

Part	Reasons for slippage, if applicable
A	Montana's FFY2020 data reflect a slippage. The small number of students reported for this indicator can result in percentage changes driven by a handful of student surveys. Many young adults are exploring alternative paths to training, and specific expertise in areas not necessarily offered by traditional post-secondary education pathways. College costs in Montana have risen and students are finding other post-secondary training options. COVID also played a role in smaller numbers – not as many students enrolled in post-secondary education in the 2020-2021 year due to COVID restrictions and/or health concerns.
B	Montana's FFY2020 data reflect a slippage. Many young adults are exploring alternative paths to training, and specific expertise in areas not necessarily offered by traditional post-secondary education pathways. College costs in Montana have risen and students are finding other post-secondary training options. COVID also played a role in smaller numbers – not as many students were employed or enrolled in post-secondary education in the 2020-2021 year due to COVID restrictions and/or health concerns.
C	Montana's FFY2020 data reflect a slippage. COVID also played a role in smaller numbers – not as many students were employed or enrolled in post-secondary education in the 2020-2021 year due to COVID restrictions and/or health concerns.

Please select the reporting option your State is using:

Option 2: Report in alignment with the term “competitive integrated employment” and its definition, in section 7(5) of the Rehabilitation Act, as amended by Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA), and 34 CFR §361.5(c)(9). 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.

Response Rate

FFY	2019	2020
Response Rate	64.70%	68.13%

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

Montana relies on LEAs to contact students and complete the survey. The OPI encourages LEAs to use various methods to reach the students or their families. The LEAs are required to attempt at least 3 times to reach the student or family to complete before they may submit a response of Contact Attempted, not Successful for the survey.

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.

Montana utilizes the Response Calculator that was developed by the National Technical Assistance Center on Transition (NTACT). This calculator looks at the overall response rate and various demographics – disability determination, gender, minority races, rural status, ELL status, and dropouts. The FFY2020 data shows that the survey was representative across all demographic groups analyzed.

The collection of post-school outcomes is completed by each LEA, not by the SEA or an outside contractor. The Montana Office of Public Instruction has identified the LEAs that appear to be having the greatest problem with locating dropout and minority youths to survey in prior years. The OPI continues to work with these specific LEAs on strategies to more effectively find and survey these youth, as was evidenced by the state not having representative issues for the current reporting cycle. Moving forward, Montana will continue to make TA available to all LEAs as they work to contact students and complete the surveys. The SSIP Coordinator will work with the SSIP Target LEAs to ensure they understand the importance of reaching out to the students who are part of this indicator to get their responses to the survey.

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.

The representativeness of the surveys was assessed by using the Response Calculator from the National Technical Assistance Center on Transition (NTACT) to examine the demographic characteristics of the students who responded to the survey compared to the demographic characteristics of all high school students with disabilities who left school during the 2019-2020 school year. The Response Calculator indicated all groups were proportionately represented in the overall group.

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)

YES

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

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

Montana utilizes the Response Calculator that was developed by the NTACT TA Center. This calculator looks at the overall response rate and various demographics – disability determination, gender, minority races, rural status, ELL status, and dropouts. The calculator uses a +/- 3% discrepancy in the proportion of responders compared to target group.

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)

14 - Prior FFY Required Actions

In the FFY 2020 SPP/APR, the State must report whether the FFY 2020 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 2019 SPP/APR

The representativeness of the surveys was assessed by using the Response Calculator from the National Technical Assistance Center on Transition (NTACT) to examine the demographic characteristics of the students who responded to the survey compared to the demographic characteristics of all high school students with disabilities who left school during the 2019-2020 school year. The Response Calculator indicated all groups were proportionately represented in the overall group.

14 - OSEP Response

The State provided targets for FFYs 2020 through 2025 for this indicator, and OSEP accepts those targets.

The State analyzed the response rate to identify potential non-response bias; however, the State did not identify 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, as required by the Measurement Table.

14 - Required Actions

In the FFY 2021 SPP/APR, the State must analyze the response rate to identify potential non-response bias and identify steps taken to reduce any identified bias to 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, as required by the Measurement Table.

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 EDFacts Metadata and Process System (EMAPS)).

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 2020-21 EMAPS IDEA Part B Dispute Resolution Survey; Section C: Due Process Complaints	11/03/2021	3.1 Number of resolution sessions	0
SY 2020-21 EMAPS IDEA Part B Dispute Resolution Survey; Section C: Due Process Complaints	11/03/2021	3.1(a) Number resolution sessions resolved through settlement agreements	0

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

Discussions and Stakeholder input of the SPP, APR, SSIP, and Results Driven Accountability (RDA)/Results Based Accountability (RBA) began in 2013 with our State Special Education Advisory Panel. The Panel is fully vested and broadly representative of Montana. Additionally, many of the panel members as well as SEA staff serve in other agency or organization leadership positions or on advisory groups in the disability community. This enables MT to draw insight and advice from a broad group of stakeholders with an understanding of Montana's unique needs, strengths, and potential weaknesses.

Other stakeholder groups we sponsor and/or engage include:

- Our CSPD includes both regional and state councils that regularly meet to assess APR data and to evaluate professional development priorities and results.
- The OPI School Mental Health coordinator worked collaboratively with the Children's Mental Health Bureau at the Department of Public Health and Human Services (DPHHS) to facilitate the provision of mental health services in schools through Comprehensive School and Community Treatment services (CSCT).
- The OPI staff has developed productive working relationships with other Montana Agencies that serve youth and adults with disabilities. OPI staff participate as members of advisory councils for early childhood, vocational rehabilitation, juvenile justice, developmental disabilities, the state independent living council and the mental health divisions of the DPHHS. These connections have allowed the OPI staff to build strong working relationships with other agencies, which has resulted in multiple collaborative projects that have strengthened the commitments of all involved to working with Montana's youth to facilitate smooth transitions from birth to adulthood.
- Working with staff from TAESE, the OPI has facilitated the MontanaHEC for nineteen years. The HEC continues to be a part of CSPD and brings together members of faculty from each of the colleges and universities teacher prep programs in Montana. Participation in the consortium is strong and includes faculty members from each of the public and private colleges in Montana. This group has worked to provide greater standardization of the teacher training programs in Montana and has worked together to improve pre-service training programs.
- The OPI staff is involved in an additional coalition to engage in discussion and activity with our Parent Training Information center, Montana Empowerment Center and Disability Rights Montana (DRM). The MEC is available to assist Montana families in obtaining appropriate education for their children; improve education results for all children; train and inform parents and their professionals who work with their children; empower families to be the decision-makers for their children; and, develop collaboration with organizations and agencies that serve children and youth with disabilities.
- The OPI staff is also highly engaged with the Schools Administrators of Montana (SAM) which include affiliates for Superintendents, Principals, Special Education Administrators, and Information Technology (IT) Directors. This partnership allows us to respond quickly to needs expressed in the field by school staff. We also provide SAM with a grant to help fund the Montana Recruitment Project. This program focuses on recruiting hard to fill positions such as speech/language pathologists, special education teachers, occupational therapists, and school psychologists for our districts throughout

Montana.

Annually, the SEA brings together representatives from these stakeholder groups for a joint meeting facilitated by TAEESE. This meeting gathers over 80 front-line stakeholders together to share up-dates of issues and gather input from a comprehensive representation of the Montana disability community, families and parents of children and students with and without disabilities. For the past six years, the topic has been Montana's SSIP and activities have been conducted to solicit both general and specific stakeholder input. During the spring 2021 meeting, the state presented on the new SPP/APR package to begin facilitating gathering feedback.

The SEA internal stakeholder work continues particularly through the ESEA comprehensive and targeted schools taskforces. These taskforces were created to 1) provide cohesive supports for the development and implementation of a system wide continuous improvement plan across all areas of need for the identified comprehensive school and 2) Support schools identified as targeted by bringing together OPI staff with deep knowledge of struggling student groups to develop a range of improvement activities. These task forces include membership from all program divisions of the agency. Given that our LEAs on Native American reservations will comprise our lowest performing schools, the overall agency, the task force and the SSIP are aligned.

The comprehensive task force identifies and examines barriers that exist in our professional relationships with Indian schools. Barriers in the districts, and in the agency, were identified and analyzed. This began an assessment of interagency collaboration and professional relationships. Common ground was found for improved methodologies in our approach to districts, our analysis of district data and community, tribal, and cultural conditions, district capacities, and how better to target and support improvement efforts. As a result, SSIP improvement activities are now supported and reinforced through cross-divisional coordinated efforts. The Student Support Services division has also been heavily involved in the development of Montana's ESSA state plan.

Historical Data

Baseline Year	Baseline Data
2005	

FFY	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019
Target >=	100.00%	100.00%	75.00% - 100.00%	75.00% - 100.00%	
Data	0.00%		100.00%	0.00%	

Targets

FFY	2020 (low)	2020 (high)	2021 (low)	2021 (high)	2022 (low)	2022 (high)	2023 (low)	2023 (high)	2024 (low)	2024 (high)	2025 (low)	2025 (high)
Target >=												

FFY 2020 SPP/APR Data

3.1(a) Number resolutions sessions resolved through settlement agreements	3.1 Number of resolutions sessions	FFY 2019 Data	FFY 2020 Target (low)	FFY 2020 Target (high)	FFY 2020 Data	Status	Slippage
0	0					N/A	N/A

Provide additional information about this indicator (optional)

Montana does not meet the minimum N for this indicator. Per OSEP through PSC: Montana's "submissions will be reviewed by OSEP Staff, but they will take the state's N size into account and act accordingly. An explanation from the state included with the indicators the issue with low N size would be appropriate."

15 - Prior FFY Required Actions

None

15 - OSEP Response

The State reported fewer than ten resolution sessions held in FFY 2020. The State is not required to provide targets until any fiscal year in which ten or more resolution sessions were held.

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 EDFacts Metadata and Process System (EMAPS)).

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 resolution 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 2020-21 EMAPS IDEA Part B Dispute Resolution Survey; Section B: Mediation Requests	11/03/2021	2.1 Mediations held	2
SY 2020-21 EMAPS IDEA Part B Dispute Resolution Survey; Section B: Mediation Requests	11/03/2021	2.1.a.i Mediations agreements related to due process complaints	1
SY 2020-21 EMAPS IDEA Part B Dispute Resolution Survey; Section B: Mediation Requests	11/03/2021	2.1.b.i Mediations agreements not related to due process complaints	1

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

Discussions and Stakeholder input of the SPP, APR, SSIP, and Results Driven Accountability (RDA)/Results Based Accountability (RBA) began in 2013 with our State Special Education Advisory Panel. The Panel is fully vested and broadly representative of Montana. Additionally, many of the panel members as well as SEA staff serve in other agency or organization leadership positions or on advisory groups in the disability community. This enables MT to draw insight and advice from a broad group of stakeholders with an understanding of Montana's unique needs, strengths, and potential weaknesses.

Other stakeholder groups we sponsor and/or engage include:

- Our CSPD includes both regional and state councils that regularly meet to assess APR data and to evaluate professional development priorities and results.
- The OPI School Mental Health coordinator worked collaboratively with the Children's Mental Health Bureau at the Department of Public Health and Human Services (DPHHS) to facilitate the provision of mental health services in schools through Comprehensive School and Community Treatment services (CSCT).
- The OPI staff has developed productive working relationships with other Montana Agencies that serve youth and adults with disabilities. OPI staff participate as members of advisory councils for early childhood, vocational rehabilitation, juvenile justice, developmental disabilities, the state independent living council and the mental health divisions of the DPHHS. These connections have allowed the OPI staff to build strong working relationships with other agencies, which has resulted in multiple collaborative projects that have strengthened the commitments of all involved to working with Montana's youth to facilitate smooth transitions from birth to adulthood.
- Working with staff from TAESE, the OPI has facilitated the MontanaHEC for nineteen years. The HEC continues to be a part of CSPD and brings together members of faculty from each of the colleges and universities teacher prep programs in Montana. Participation in the consortium is strong and includes faculty members from each of the public and private colleges in Montana. This group has worked to provide greater standardization of the teacher training programs in Montana and has worked together to improve pre-service training programs.
- The OPI staff is involved in an additional coalition to engage in discussion and activity with our Parent Training Information center, Montana Empowerment Center and Disability Rights Montana (DRM). The MEC is available to assist Montana families in obtaining appropriate education for their children; improve education results for all children; train and inform parents and their professionals who work with their children; empower families to be the decision-makers for their children; and, develop collaboration with organizations and agencies that serve children and youth with disabilities.
- The OPI staff is also highly engaged with the Schools Administrators of Montana (SAM) which include affiliates for Superintendents, Principals, Special Education Administrators, and Information Technology (IT) Directors. This partnership allows us to respond quickly to needs expressed in the field by

school staff. We also provide SAM with a grant to help fund the Montana Recruitment Project. This program focuses on recruiting hard to fill positions such as speech/language pathologists, special education teachers, occupational therapists, and school psychologists for our districts throughout Montana.

Annually, the SEA brings together representatives from these stakeholder groups for a joint meeting facilitated by TAISE. This meeting gathers over 80 front-line stakeholders together to share up-dates of issues and gather input from a comprehensive representation of the Montana disability community, families and parents of children and students with and without disabilities. For the past six years, the topic has been Montana's SSIP and activities have been conducted to solicit both general and specific stakeholder input. During the spring 2021 meeting, the state presented on the new SPP/APR package to begin facilitating gathering feedback.

The SEA internal stakeholder work continues particularly through the ESEA comprehensive and targeted schools taskforces. These taskforces were created to 1) provide cohesive supports for the development and implementation of a system wide continuous improvement plan across all areas of need for the identified comprehensive school and 2) Support schools identified as targeted by bringing together OPI staff with deep knowledge of struggling student groups to develop a range of improvement activities. These task forces include membership from all program divisions of the agency. Given that our LEAs on Native American reservations will comprise our lowest performing schools, the overall agency, the task force and the SSIP are aligned.

The comprehensive task force identifies and examines barriers that exist in our professional relationships with Indian schools. Barriers in the districts, and in the agency, were identified and analyzed. This began an assessment of interagency collaboration and professional relationships. Common ground was found for improved methodologies in our approach to districts, our analysis of district data and community, tribal, and cultural conditions, district capacities, and how better to target and support improvement efforts. As a result, SSIP improvement activities are now supported and reinforced through cross-divisional coordinated efforts. The Student Support Services division has also been heavily involved in the development of Montana's ESSA state plan.

Historical Data

Baseline Year	Baseline Data
2005	

FFY	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019
Target >=	80.00%-100.00%	80.00%-100.00%	80.00% - 100.00%	80.00% - 100.00%	
Data	100.00%	0.00%	100.00%	0.00%	

Targets

FFY	2020 (low)	2020 (high)	2021 (low)	2021 (high)	2022 (low)	2022 (high)	2023 (low)	2023 (high)	2024 (low)	2024 (high)	2025 (low)	2025 (high)
Target >=												

FFY 2020 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 2019 Data	FFY 2020 Target (low)	FFY 2020 Target (high)	FFY 2020 Data	Status	Slippage
1	1	2				100.00%	N/A	N/A

Provide additional information about this indicator (optional)

Montana does not meet the minimum N for this indicator. Per OSEP through PSC: Montana's "submissions will be reviewed by OSEP Staff, but they will take the state's N size into account and act accordingly. An explanation from the state included with the indicators the issue with low N size would be appropriate."

16 - Prior FFY Required Actions

None

16 - OSEP Response

The State reported fewer than ten mediations held in FFY 2020. The State is not required to provide targets until any fiscal year in which ten or more mediations were held.

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) 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 2, 2022, 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) for 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, 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, 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 SPP/APR, 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., Feb 2021). 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 2020 APR, report on anticipated outcomes to be obtained during FFY 2021, i.e., July 1, 2021-June 30, 2022).

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 (i.e., behaviors), parent/caregiver outcomes,

and/or child outcomes. Describe any additional data (i.e., 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 2020 APR, report on activities it intends to implement in FFY 2021, i.e., July 1, 2021-June 30, 2022) 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 number and percent of American Indian students with disabilities who successfully complete their secondary education will increase.

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)

YES

Provide a description of the subset of the population from the indicator.

Relationships play a key role in the Montana SSIP. With this in mind, targeted areas for outreach and support through the Critical Friends' Network (CFN) are based on the SSIP Director's established relationships. Roll out for the CFN began in January 2021 with the NE Region schools on the Fort Belknap Reservation and Fort Peck Reservation (Wolf Point, Frazer, Poplar, Brockton, Hays/Lodge Pole). Expanded outreach will begin in early 2022 with a CFN in our SE Region schools on the Northern Cheyenne Reservation and Crow Reservation (Lodge Grass, Lame Deer, Pryor). Targeted areas also align with the Montana Office of Public Instruction's Regional Summit for Comprehensive Schools hosted in early August 2021. Key agency personnel who directly serve these schools in a supportive capacity were introduced to better enhance working relationships between the SEA and the LEAs receiving Comprehensive support per the Montana ESSA plan.

Is the State's theory of action new or revised since the previous submission? (yes/no)

NO

Please provide a link to the current theory of action.

[https://opi.mt.gov/Portals/182/Page Files/Special Education/Annual Performance Report/MT_ToA_ FINAL.pdf?ver=2021-12-02-090633-033](https://opi.mt.gov/Portals/182/Page%20Files/Special%20Education/Annual%20Performance%20Report/MT_ToA_FINAL.pdf?ver=2021-12-02-090633-033)

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.

A qualitative approach to data collection was selected to maintain the design integrity of MT's relational approach. It was imperative that the data collection method empower stakeholders to be valued team members in the process and appreciate lending their voice to reflections and growth. Stakeholder empowerment in the SSIP process may provide the impetus to emerge as stronger educators giving the tools to Indigenous youth to engage in their schooling, exiting with a high school diploma—the SiMR goal. Rubrics were developed for use with both the Critical Friends Network (CFN) and Tribal Consultation, using the OPI-required survey template in Google suites. The rubrics are identical in nature, but adjusted to fit the applicable activity. Rubric selection is based on the following criteria: 1) it is a continuum of growth; 2) doesn't require administering on a regular basis but at random check points; 3) demonstrates a partnership in the process as well as an opt out; and 4) it is qualitative in nature staying clear of quantifying professional relationships and growing together to better serve students.

The rubrics were only distributed once as a quarterly distribution was deemed repetitive for establishing baseline. The CFN rubric was sent to stakeholders in the NE Region CFN. The respondent pool came from the following schools and the tribal nations they are within—Wolf Point, Frazer, Poplar, Brockton (Fort Peck), Hays/Lodge Pole (Fort Belknap). The initial CFN invite outlined the SSIP as well as the SiMR, with subsequent correspondence refreshing both. Distribution was sent blind copy via private/professional e-mail to individual special education teachers. The Tribal Consultation rubric was sent to stakeholders participating in the agency's inaugural Tribal Consultation process. The respondent pool came from the following Tribal Nations—Fort Belknap, Fort Peck, Blackfeet, Chippewa Cree, Little Shell, Salish and Kootenai, and Crow. Distribution was sent blind copy via private/professional e-mail to individual Tribal Consultation stakeholders.

Critical Friends' Network Data Collection: Baseline Data Established FY21

Total distribution was N=8 with a return rate of 25% (2/8). The rubric's 7-point continuum ranges from low-to-no level engagement to high-level engagement, with incremental engagement levels indicated from 2 thru 6. Low-to-no level engagement reads I have little or no knowledge about inclusion and have no plans to use the practice. High-level engagement reads I use inclusionary practices and I am working with colleagues to combine my effort with theirs to achieve a collective impact on our students.

Both (2/8; 25%) rubric respondents are at rubric level 4: I am using inclusionary practices. At this point, I am primarily dealing with logistical issues such as planning appropriate activities, and/or figuring out how to fit inclusion into IEP goals.

The rubric allows for an open-ended response and both (100%) rubric respondents provided the following comments:

--I am a sped teacher, so I am trying to get my students to be in the general education classroom comfortably. It takes a lot of working with others and there is not always enough time in the days to get the prep done but it is getting there.

--Unclear what is asked here

The baseline data indicates the state has accomplished all 4 of its goals determined to be critical in the rubric design. It appears that the overall purpose and design of the qualitative approach to data collection has worked as intended—it allowed stakeholders to begin to develop a deeper understanding of their participation in the CFN, and how it connects to the work they do in their individual schools/districts, over the past year. Data also appears to indicate that the primary topic of inclusion is still of value to CFN stakeholders.

Tribal Consultation Data Collection: Baseline Data Established FY21

Total distribution was N=15 with a return rate of 33% (5/15).

The 7-point continuum ranges from low-to-no level engagement to high-level engagement, with incremental engagement levels indicated from 2 thru 6. Low-to-no level engagement reads I have little or no knowledge about tribal consultation and have no plans to engage in the practice. High-level engagement reads I engage in tribal consultation and I am working with colleagues to combine my effort with theirs to achieve a collective impact on youth in our community.

Two of 5 (40%) rubric respondents are at rubric level 2: I am gathering general information about tribal consultation through reading, discussions, observations, or workshops.

One of 5 (20%) rubric respondents are at rubric level 5: I am engaging in tribal consultation. At this point, I am primarily dealing with logistical issues such as planning appropriate activities, and/or figuring out how to fit tribal consultation into my role in my career and/or community.

Two of 5 (40%) rubric respondents are at rubric level 6: I routinely engage in tribal consultation, and I am satisfied with how the tribal consultation process is being implemented.

The rubric allows for an open-ended response and 5/5 (100%) rubric respondents provided the following comments:

--Just starting the conversation now...been working for three years to get our foot in the door!

--I do not know much but would definitely like to learn

--I think that meaningful and timely Tribal Consultation will gain more traction from a two-pronged approach as your unit continues to reach schools and districts through your work AND as we as tribal entities cultivate strong partnerships with those same schools and districts.

--I have tried to meet with the Education Committee but they never (note: response was not altered from original)

--We engage in the tribal consultation for health and safety of our students. We also get students to present to the tribal council often. We write policy and laws and we have a forum every election.

Baseline data appears to indicate MT has accomplished all 4 goals determined to be critical in the rubric design. The overall purpose and design of the qualitative approach to data collection has worked as intended—allowing stakeholders to begin to develop a deeper understanding of their participation in the Tribal Consultation process.

Changes to data collection in FY22 will include rubric dissemination quarterly to meet the original intent with the rubric design. Reflection and growth are critical aspects of the SSIP design as MT continues to strive to meet the SiMR goal of increased completion rates for Montana's Indigenous youth with disabilities. The relational approach to working with stakeholders will continue to allow MT to improve our processes for the students served. A quarterly checkpoint will give stakeholder voice a prominent place in the SSIP. It will also allow MT to track what steps in the emergence cycle are beneficial and adjust where needed. It will also continue to lift the voices of Tribal elders through consistent and meaningful interactions steeped in respectful relationships.

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)

NO

Historical Data

Baseline Year	Baseline Data
2013	63.50%

Targets

FFY	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025
Target>=	68.50%	68.60%	68.70%	68.80%	68.90%	69.00%

FFY 2020 SPP/APR Data

Number of American Indian Special Education High School Completers	Number of American Indian Special Education High School Students eligible to complete in 2020-2021	FFY 2019 Data	FFY 2020 Target	FFY 2020 Data	Status	Slippage
107	148	68.50%	68.50%	72.30%	Met target	No Slippage

Provide the data source for the FFY 2020 data.

The data for the FFY2020 Data came from the Graduation/Dropout certification taken in Fall 2020. This certification is done within Montana's statewide student information system.

Please describe how data are collected and analyzed for the SiMR.

Data are collected within the statewide student information system, and certified to the OPI through the Graduation/Dropout certification. Data is verified and analyzed by the Data Operations team of OPI.

Optional: Has the State collected additional data (i.e., benchmark, CQI, survey) that demonstrates progress toward the SiMR? (yes/no)

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)

NO

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://opi.mt.gov/Portals/182/Page Files/Special Education/Annual Performance Report/Evaluation Questions FINAL 3-26-2020.pdf?ver=2021-12-02-090632-053](https://opi.mt.gov/Portals/182/Page%20Files/Special%20Education/Annual%20Performance%20Report/Evaluation%20Questions%20FINAL%203-26-2020.pdf?ver=2021-12-02-090632-053)

Is the State's evaluation plan new or revised since the previous submission? (yes/no)

NO

Provide a summary of each infrastructure improvement strategy implemented in the reporting period:

Tribal Consultation (Elder committees per tribe/region):

Partnering internally with the Tribal, Family, Community Liaison/Tribal Relations and Resiliency Unit allows for the Montana ESSA requirement of Tribal Consultation to move forward. The SSIP/Tribal Consultation partnership brings experienced elders to the table along with experienced personnel at the OPI, utilizing the roots of Indigenous Restorative Practice, to gain a deeper understanding of traditional Indigenous ways of 1. Being (King & Guillory, 2015); 2. Teaching and Learning; 3. Connecting to cultural roots/heritage; along with 4. Walking in both worlds. Giving voice to the Montana Tribal Nations through their elders is the impetus for continued movement at the OPI to give voice to Indigenous Youth, empowering staff at the schools on or near our Montana American Indian Reservations, and revitalizing hope within the communities themselves as they help their children succeed in walking in both worlds.

The Tribal Relations and Resiliency Unit (TRRU) was developed to build relationships and understandings within the Office of Public Instruction (OPI) and Montana school districts to incorporate Tribal voice, share resources and build connections through consultation on matters affecting American Indian students. Consultation, defined within ESSA requirements, will work to create these opportunities for school districts and tribal leaders to work collaboratively for the benefit of the youth. This is an historic time, and the new ESSA gives MT an excellent opportunity to re-envision the educational systems in Indian country.

The partnership of the SSIP Implementation Specialist and the TRRU team will continue providing holistic supports allowing the interagency partners to incorporate the local resources of the tribal communities into the work. Through Tribal consultation and partnership, MT will lift the resiliency, wisdom, and beauty of the Indigenous people at every level within OPI and local educational agencies (LEAs).

Tribal Consultation is a requirement under section 8538 of the ESEA, as amended by the ESSA, for affected LEAs to consult with Indian tribes and tribal organizations on issues affecting American Indian (AI) Students. An affected LEA is defined within the ESSA requirements, as a school district or system that have either 50% or more of its student enrollment made up of American Indian/Alaska Native (AI/AN) students; or received an Indian education formula grant under Title VI of the ESEA, as amended by the ESSA, in the previous fiscal year that exceeded \$40,000, and which also educate AI/AN students. Affected LEAs who meet these criteria are required to consult with local Indian tribes or tribal organizations prior to submitting a plan or application under covered ESEA (ESSA) formula grant programs. (

<https://opi.mt.gov/Portals/182/ESSA/Guidance%20on%20Initiating%20Interagency%20Requests%20for%20Effective%20Tribal%20Consultation.pdf?ver=2020-11-09-102619-830>)

King, L., & Guillory, G. (2015). Tribal TTA Center Healing-informed Care Handout. Alexandria, VA; SAMHSA.

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.

The federally required Montana ESSA framework, section 8538 of the ESEA, allowed stakeholders in the Tribal Consultation the "nudge"/ability (Thaler) to incorporate Tribal voice across Montana's education system, on and off Montana tribal nations. This is significant in helping the agency shape culturally significant, equitable educational outcomes for Montana's Indigenous youth steeped in respect, honor, and value. To quote Safir, Dugan, & Wilson in Street Data: A Next Generation Model for Equity, Pedagogy, and School Transformation, OPI stakeholders are "...choosing the margins as a starting point for our data conversations...inverting the pyramid, shifting the dynamics of power, and bringing children to the center of education discourse." (2021, p. 52) Over the past year, the TRRU has held consistent Tribal Consultation meetings through Zoom and in-person with the following Montana Tribal Nations--Fort Belknap, Fort Peck, Blackfeet, Chippewa Cree, Little Shell, Salish and Kootenai, and Crow. Education was the focal point of discussions. Modern technology aided the historical Indigenous Restorative Practice and gathering in Circles to ignite relationships leading to powerful movement in this work. Stakeholders who have influence in the TRRU provided meaningful input and recognition that historical Tribal perspectives on knowledge and guidance around educating youth is most needed. This valuable input has allowed stakeholders to begin to incorporate centuries-old practices of self-identity and strength into our school systems serving Indigenous youth. Mutual inclusivity was achieved through braiding the two worlds of Western and Traditional approaches, allowing stakeholders to embed tribally specific cultural identity and support systems for the youth. This inside-approach is fast becoming the missing link to showing young people how to succeed in walking in both worlds. While respecting the complications COVID brought to group dialogue, stakeholders were able to organize and facilitate discussions, blending Indigenous Ways of Being with a modern lens of social and emotional supports, allowing barriers to be broken that have been in place since the Carlisle Boarding School Era. Tribal Consultation has given Montana Tribal leaders their voice back. Some leaders have extended collaborative efforts by sharing tribal funds and resources to strengthen support youth. The re-emergence of Tribal voice, braiding Western and Traditional educational approaches, and engaging in deep listening (Safir, et al., 2021) inherent in Restorative Practice and gathering in Circles are paramount to sustainable shifts resulting in the desired graduation outcomes for Montana's Indigenous youth defined in MT's SiMR. If a child can see themselves mirrored in their school setting, they are more likely to become and stay engaged, feel empowered to succeed, and mentor/model those successes for peers.

Safir, S., Dugan, J., & Wilson, C. (2021). Street Data: A Next-Generation Model for Equity, Pedagogy, and School Transformation. Corwin.

Thaler, R. H., & Sunstein, C. R. (2021). Nudge. The final edition. Yale University Press.

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.

The partnership of the SSIP Director and the TRRU team will continue providing holistic supports allowing the interagency partners to incorporate the local resources of tribal communities into MT's work. Through Tribal consultation and partnership, MT will lift the resiliency, wisdom, and beauty of the Indigenous people at every level within OPI and local educational agencies (LEAs). The federally required Montana ESSA framework along with an increase in use of qualitative data to capture the voice of primary stakeholders, Montana tribal elders, will continue to be the nudge needed to incorporate Tribal Consultation across more schools in Montana. While we can't predicate what percentage of increase, OPI personnel will continue to use the historical Indigenous Restorative Practice and gathering in Circles to sustain and nurture developed and newly formed relationships. OPI personnel anticipate using both virtual settings such as Zoom and in-person when allowed to continue this vital work on behalf of Montana's Indigenous youth. Relationships are the key to the Montana SSIP and OPI personnel are confident that this strength-based approach will continue to open doors, further empowering Indigenous youth to see themselves reflected in their school settings.

Thaler, R. H., & Sunstein, C. R. (2021). Nudge. The final edition. Yale University Press.

List the selected evidence-based practices implement in the reporting period:

Critical Friends' Network:

The Montana Critical Friends' Network (CFN), developed by the MT SSIP Director, had its start with the NE Region in March 2021. The NE Region is comprised of the following Comprehensive Support Schools—Wolf Point, Frazer, Poplar, Brockton (all within the Fort Peck Reservation), Hays/Lodge Pole (within the Fort Belknap Reservation). The Critical Friends' Network is based on the premise that professional development offered through a Professional Learning Community (PLC) or Personalized Learning Network (PLN) provides the reciprocity of sharing information on an equal level. No one individual is 'the expert' but rather all stakeholders come with valuable experiences to share with each other while simultaneously learning from each other. Desimone's (2009) "five features of effective professional development: content focus (studying subject matter); active learning (observing, reviewing, discussing); coherence (demonstrating consistency with knowledge, beliefs, policies, and reforms); duration (engaging in 20 or more hours of contact time spread over a semester); and collective participation (interacting and conversing with colleagues)." (Rock, 2019)

The chosen content of inclusion remains the guiding topic for our discussions. To encourage transformational skill building and learning for students served, the subtopic of Invention Literacy is this year's focus. The basic structure of the CFN also remains the same: invitation only, regionally based, invite to special education teachers in the SSIP schools residing on or near Montana reservations with a primary student population of Indigenous youth. Roll out for the CFN began in January 2021 with the NE Region schools on the Fort Belknap Reservation and Fort Peck Reservation (Wolf Point, Frazer, Poplar, Brockton, Hays/Lodge Pole). Targeted areas for roll out were based on established relationships as well as the Montana Office of Public Instruction's Regional Summit for Comprehensive Schools hosted in early August 2021. Key agency personnel who directly serve these schools in a supportive capacity were introduced to better enhance working relationships.

The delivery method is virtual (Zoom) with utilization of interactive tools such as Jamboard. Stakeholders in the CFN have agreed to a monthly 1-hour conversation that is confidential in nature. The group respects each other's experiences, uncertainties, and want-to-know as they celebrate the diversity brought to the conversation both personally and professionally.

Rock, M. (2019). The eCoaching Continuum for Educators: Using Technology to Enrich Professional Development and Improve Student Outcomes. Alexandria, VA: ASCD.

Provide a summary of each evidence-based practices.

Montana will continue to facilitate the CFN(s) with an Indigenous philosophical lens from the perspective of Relational Balance* by utilizing the roots of Indigenous Restorative Practice while engaging stakeholders via a virtual Circle. This past year's dialogue lent itself to reinforcing one of the main tools used for centuries in Indigenous ways of teaching and learning that mirror westernized evidence-based instructional best-practices, that of relationships. One CFN stakeholder likened the time together as 'family time' stating that, "I never close my door, but I do for our time together because it is sacred for me, like spending time with my family. So much so, that I also put a sign up to please not disturb me for the hour." As more traditional Indigenous ways of teaching and learning organically rise to the surface, Montana will cross walk them with like westernized evidence-based practices to honor cultural norms that have powerful impacts on both Indigenous teachers and students.

Continuing to mirror some Tribal Nations tradition of offering gifts to honor individuals and their accomplishments, MT offered a selection of professional materials as the 'give away offering' to acknowledge, honor and support Indigenous teachers' educational efforts. This year's 'give away offering' is a MakeyMakey®, a plug-n-play gadget capitalizing on Invention Literacy to explore STEAM in a fluid, non-threatening manner. The goal is STEAM focused literacy conversations with special educators to help them shift the way they teach/remediate STEAM concepts to move students from Routine Experts to Adaptive Experts with the ability to solve problems they have never seen before (Safir, Dugan, & Wilson, 2021). The MakeyMakey® is a transformational learning tool helping students embrace STEAM in a low stress, invigorating, self-esteem building environment, possibly leading to a career path for some. The power of Invention Literacy lies in learning via a no right or wrong answer process as invention is trial and error until you create the product you envisioned.

*Relational Balance philosophy is—when our relationships are in balance, all thrives around us. If we damage one component, we eventually see a domino effect. Adults achieving a relational balance strive for mental, physical, and spiritual well-being and health. We nurture our students along the same path of relational balance while helping them focus on the things that matter in their lives—family, academics, athletics, hobbies, and social/emotional well-being. The state of symbiosis in our human ecosystem. (Young & Wetzel, 2020)

Safir, S., Dugan, J., & Wilson, C. (2021). Street Data: A Next-Generation Model for Equity, Pedagogy, and School Transformation. Corwin.

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.

The Critical Friends' Network main content of inclusion is multi-faceted in its ability to allow Special Education teachers/related providers to continually emerge into better practitioners. The Montana SSIP focus is designed to show educators more efficient ways to serve the students on their IEP

caseloads, hopefully reducing teacher burnout and departure. Most teachers in the SSIP schools have caseloads ranging between 35-55 students because they are the sole special education provider in their rural district. Use of inclusionary practices, thoughtfully designed around place and purpose, will remove the burden of the special education teacher being the sole provider for students on IEPs to the students being supported by all applicable staff, licensed and support. The Office of Special Education Programs has recently identified inclusionary practices as the single most effective means of closing opportunity gaps for marginalized youth, both pre, during, and post-pandemic, as it is the only means of providing SPED identified youth with full access to the general core curriculum. Access to the general core curriculum is a basic right of all students in the educational system, with the role of Special Education used to design necessary support structures for student success within that curriculum. Students who are SPED identified, who have access to the general core curriculum, are more likely to be successful in their educational path leading to completion of high school with a diploma, the singular SiMR of the Montana SSIP—increased graduation rates for Indigenous youth who are SPED identified. FY21s subtopic of Invention Literacy is designed to assist both teacher/related provider and student emergence into more effective STEAM instructors and concept users. The goal is STEAM focused literacy conversations with special educators to help them shift the way they teach/remediate STEAM concepts to move students from Routine Experts to Adaptive Experts with the ability to solve problems they have never seen before (Safir, Dugan, & Wilson, 2021). The MakeKeyMakeKey@ is a transformational learning tool helping students embrace STEAM in a low stress, invigorating, self-esteem building environment, possibly leading to a career path for some. The power of Invention Literacy lies in learning via a no right or wrong answer process as invention is trial and error until you create the product you envisioned. Students who become and stay engaged, feel empowered to succeed in their academic settings, and are more likely to complete schooling through high school, earning their diplomas.

Safir, S., Dugan, J., & Wilson, C. (2021). Street Data: A Next-Generation Model for Equity, Pedagogy, and School Transformation. Corwin.

Describe the data collected to monitor fidelity of implementation and to assess practice change.

A qualitative approach to data collection was selected to maintain the design integrity of the relational approach to the MT SSIP. It was imperative that the data collection method empowered stakeholders to be valued team members in this process and appreciate lending their voice to their reflections and growth. As valued team members, stakeholder empowerment in the MT SSIP process may provide the impetus to emerge as stronger educators giving the tools to Indigenous youth to engage in their schooling, exiting with a high school diploma—MT's SiMR goal.

A rubric was developed for use with the Critical Friends' Network (CFN). The rubric is an adaptation from Killion's (2008) book, *Assessing Impact: Evaluating Staff Development* (2nd Ed.). Rubric selection is based on the following criteria: 1) it is a continuum of growth; 2) doesn't require administering on a regular basis but at random check points; 3) demonstrates a partnership in the process as well as an opt out; 4) and it is qualitative in nature staying clear of quantifying professional relationships and growing together to better serve students.

Critical Friends' Network Data Collection: Baseline Data Established FY21

Rubric (https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSft2BHF1JjVQjgu292abDIMk2Ken7YYifMyKcW-GGjUMsXzVA/viewform?usp=sf_link) was only distributed September-October as a quarterly distribution was deemed repetitive for establishing baseline.

The rubric was sent to stakeholders in the NE Region CFN. The respondent pool come from the following Montana schools and the tribal nations they are within—Wolf Point, Frazer, Poplar, Brockton (Fort Peck), Hays/Lodge Pole (Fort Belknap). The rubric was designed using the OPI-required survey template in Google suites. Distribution was sent blind copy via private/professional e-mail to individual special education teachers. Total distribution was N=8 with a return rate of 25% (2/8).

The rubric's 7-point continuum ranges from low-to-no level engagement to high-level engagement, with incremental engagement levels indicated from 2 thru 6. Low-to-no level engagement reads I have little or no knowledge about inclusion and have no plans to use the practice. High-level engagement reads I use inclusionary practices and I am working with colleagues to combine my effort with theirs to achieve a collective impact on our students.

Both (2/8; 25%) rubric respondents are at rubric level 4: I am using inclusionary practices. At this point, I am primarily dealing with logistical issues such as planning appropriate activities, and/or figuring out how to fit inclusion into IEP goals.

The rubric allows for an open-ended response and both (100%) rubric respondents provided the following comments:

--I am a sped teacher, so I am trying to get my students to be in the general education classroom comfortably. It takes a lot of working with others and there is not always enough time in the days to get the prep done but it is getting there.

--Unclear what is asked here

The baseline data indicates MT appears to have accomplished all 4 goals determined to be critical in the rubric design. Reflecting on the responses, the SSIP Director is pleased to have a 25% return rate as she is developing relationships in a virtual format, with people who, historically, may not have trusted outsiders nor governmental agencies. It appears that the overall purpose and design of the qualitative approach to data collection has done what was intended—allowed the stakeholders to begin to develop a deeper understanding of their participation in the CFN, and how it connects to the work they do in their individual schools/districts, over the past year. Data also appears to indicate that our primary topic of inclusion is still of value to CFN stakeholders.

Changes to data collection in FY22 will include rubric dissemination quarterly to meet the original intent with the rubric design. Reflection and growth are critical aspects of the MT SSIP design as MT continues to strive to meet the SiMR goal of increased graduation rates for Montana's Indigenous youth who are SPED identified. The MT SSIP Director feels strongly that the relational approach to working with stakeholders will continue to emerge as equal partners in this work, allowing MT to improve our processes for the students served. A quarterly check point will give stakeholder voice a prominent place in our MT SSIP. It will also allow MT to track what steps in the emergence cycle are beneficial and adjust where needed.

Killion, J. (2008). *Assessing Impact: Evaluating Staff Development* (2nd Ed.). Thousand Oaks, CA: Corwin Press.

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.

N/A

Provide a summary of the next steps for each evidence-based practices and the anticipated outcomes to be attained during the next reporting period.

As the OPI leaders in the MT SSIP process continue to focus on MT's SiMR, increased graduation rates for Indigenous youth who are SPED identified, a continuation of the activities in process (Critical Friends' Network, CFN, and Tribal Consultation) that empower the stakeholders to guide the culturally relevant supports will remain the main focus for the upcoming year. Systemic change takes time, and MT believes that the education system the Indigenous youth are involved in is becoming a reflection of who they are. The OPI leaders recognize that graduation success begins at kindergarten and the focus will be to guide the academic successes of all Indigenous youth from K-12, setting them up for post-graduation goals of their choosing. As MT reflected on staff assigned to support students on IEPs, it has become evident that paraprofessionals have a significant part in providing necessary supports for students. Because paraprofessionals spend a lot of time with students one-to-one, there is consideration for opening a CFN for

paraprofessionals in the targeted SSIP schools to train the paraprofessionals on Invention Literacy. Expanded outreach will also begin in early 2022 with a Critical Friends' Network in our SE Region schools on the Northern Cheyenne Reservation and Crow Reservation (Lodge Grass, Lame Deer, Pryor). Inclusion will remain the main conversational focus, along with teachers being provided strategies for implementing thoughtfully designed inclusion around place and purpose. Invention Literacy will remain the subtopic of conversation as STEAM skill building is critical to 21st century college and career outcomes for all students, including those with identified support needs. The OPI leaders are hopeful that strengthening our burgeoning stakeholder relationships will encourage more stakeholders to lend their voice by participating in our quarterly rubric data collection, expressing confidence in their skills—newly acquired or enhanced, being more apt to provide a reflective response to our rubrics' open-ended statements, and perhaps reaching out to us to hold meaningful conversations on their applicable roll—within the CFN or Tribal Consultation.

Section C: Stakeholder Engagement

Description of Stakeholder Input

Discussions and Stakeholder input of the SPP, APR, SSIP, and Results Driven Accountability (RDA)/Results Based Accountability (RBA) began in 2013 with our State Special Education Advisory Panel. The Panel is fully vested and broadly representative of Montana. Additionally, many of the panel members as well as SEA staff serve in other agency or organization leadership positions or on advisory groups in the disability community. This enables MT to draw insight and advice from a broad group of stakeholders with an understanding of Montana's unique needs, strengths, and potential weaknesses.

Other stakeholder groups we sponsor and/or engage include:

- Our CSPD includes both regional and state councils that regularly meet to assess APR data and to evaluate professional development priorities and results.
- The OPI School Mental Health coordinator worked collaboratively with the Children's Mental Health Bureau at the Department of Public Health and Human Services (DPHHS) to facilitate the provision of mental health services in schools through Comprehensive School and Community Treatment services (CSCT).
- The OPI staff has developed productive working relationships with other Montana Agencies that serve youth and adults with disabilities. OPI staff participate as members of advisory councils for early childhood, vocational rehabilitation, juvenile justice, developmental disabilities, the state independent living council and the mental health divisions of the DPHHS. These connections have allowed the OPI staff to build strong working relationships with other agencies, which has resulted in multiple collaborative projects that have strengthened the commitments of all involved to working with Montana's youth to facilitate smooth transitions from birth to adulthood.
- Working with staff from TAESE, the OPI has facilitated the MontanaHEC for nineteen years. The HEC continues to be a part of CSPD and brings together members of faculty from each of the colleges and universities teacher prep programs in Montana. Participation in the consortium is strong and includes faculty members from each of the public and private colleges in Montana. This group has worked to provide greater standardization of the teacher training programs in Montana and has worked together to improve pre-service training programs.
- The OPI staff is involved in an additional coalition to engage in discussion and activity with our Parent Training Information center, Montana Empowerment Center and Disability Rights Montana (DRM). The MEC is available to assist Montana families in obtaining appropriate education for their children; improve education results for all children; train and inform parents and their professionals who work with their children; empower families to be the decision-makers for their children; and, develop collaboration with organizations and agencies that serve children and youth with disabilities.
- The OPI staff is also highly engaged with the Schools Administrators of Montana (SAM) which include affiliates for Superintendents, Principals, Special Education Administrators, and Information Technology (IT) Directors. This partnership allows us to respond quickly to needs expressed in the field by school staff. We also provide SAM with a grant to help fund the Montana Recruitment Project. This program focuses on recruiting hard to fill positions such as speech/language pathologists, special education teachers, occupational therapists, and school psychologists for our districts throughout Montana.

Annually, the SEA brings together representatives from these stakeholder groups for a joint meeting facilitated by TAESE. This meeting gathers over 80 front-line stakeholders together to share up-dates of issues and gather input from a comprehensive representation of the Montana disability community, families and parents of children and students with and without disabilities. For the past six years, the topic has been Montana's SSIP and activities have been conducted to solicit both general and specific stakeholder input. During the spring 2021 meeting, the state presented on the new SPP/APR package to begin facilitating gathering feedback.

The SEA internal stakeholder work continues particularly through the ESEA comprehensive and targeted schools taskforces. These taskforces were created to 1) provide cohesive supports for the development and implementation of a system wide continuous improvement plan across all areas of need for the identified comprehensive school and 2) Support schools identified as targeted by bringing together OPI staff with deep knowledge of struggling student groups to develop a range of improvement activities. These task forces include membership from all program divisions of the agency. Given that our LEAs on Native American reservations will comprise our lowest performing schools, the overall agency, the task force and the SSIP are aligned.

The comprehensive task force identifies and examines barriers that exist in our professional relationships with Indian schools. Barriers in the districts, and in the agency, were identified and analyzed. This began an assessment of interagency collaboration and professional relationships. Common ground was found for improved methodologies in our approach to districts, our analysis of district data and community, tribal, and cultural conditions, district capacities, and how better to target and support improvement efforts. As a result, SSIP improvement activities are now supported and reinforced through cross-divisional coordinated efforts. The Student Support Services division has also been heavily involved in the development of Montana's ESSA state plan.

Describe the specific strategies implemented to engage stakeholders in key improvement efforts.

The key to the Montana SSIP is relationships and both activities are designed to optimize relational interactions for all stakeholders partnering within each activity. The traditional approach to supportive work has always been one where state agency personnel were the 'experts' with protocols to help 'fix' the problem. There are inherent errors in this traditional approach that we desired to avoid in our SSIP implementation. While state agency personnel are highly trained, they aren't the only experts. The school-based personnel and tribal elders are equally qualified to contribute to the solution. Another error is in the assumption that school-based stakeholders and tribal elders want outsiders to 'fix' their problems. These errors lend to difficulties in developing relationships among stakeholders. When relationships are nurtured with stakeholders, the task at hand ceases to be work and a matter of 'fixing' things but becomes a partnership among stakeholders with shared goals and ownership. A critical piece for MT is moving away from the term improvement. It is believed that MT cannot form relationships that are based on mutual respect, value, and honor if one half of the partnership is always wanting the other half to improve. The guiding theory of emergence (the theory that simple rules interact with one another in complex ways to shape a change process, the outcome of which cannot be predicted) (Safir, Dugan, & Wilson, 2021) saw effects take hold in a few short months. MT was able to

break the barriers and stigmas attached to government mandates (Tribal Consultation mandated per ESEA and the Montana ESSA plan; OSEP required SSIP) through a relational approach, still adhering to the governmental requirements of both. All stakeholders remained cognizant of the official requirements of the SSIP tasks they were involved, and OPI leaders in both SSIP activities were able to lead from the heart. Leading from the heart is a traditional Indigenous means of engaging with one another where you value the human capital of those involved. Relationships developed in the Tribal Consultation process saw the unprecedented outreach of Tribal leaders offering Tribal funds and resources to strengthen support to youth. Relationships developed via the SSIP's CFN saw stakeholders value learning from one another, one equating time spent in the CFN to family time. The broad reach of the Montana SSIP is about helping to remove opportunity gaps for Montana's Indigenous youth. As Safir, et al. (2021, p. 205) tell us, "If leading for equity is inherently emotional work, we must cultivate our capacity to sit with and honor people's feelings. Otherwise, we risk erasing their experience." The Montana SSIP's relational approach to stakeholder engagement is giving voice to people. That voice brings power to Walking in Both Worlds and is the mirror our Indigenous youth need to see themselves as worthy of an education culminating in a high school diploma.

Safir, S., Dugan, J., & Wilson, C. (2021). Street Data: A Next-Generation Model for Equity, Pedagogy, and School Transformation. Corwin.

Were there any concerns expressed by stakeholders during engagement activities? (yes/no)

NO

Describe how the State addressed the concerns expressed by stakeholders.

N/A

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.

N/A

Provide additional information about this indicator (optional).

17 - Prior FFY Required Actions

None

17 - OSEP Response

The State provided targets for FFYs 2020 through 2025 for this indicator, and OSEP accepts those targets.

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:

Anne Rainey

Title:

IDEA Part B Data Manager

Email:

arainey@mt.gov

Phone:

406-444-4430

Submitted on:

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