

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 2021 SPP/APR, use data from 2020-2021), 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	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020
Target >=	81.60%	81.80%	82.00%	82.90%	76.00%
Data	77.75%	76.76%	76.53%	78.03%	78.65%

Targets

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

Targets: Description of Stakeholder Input

Discussions and Stakeholder input of the State's Performance Plan (SPP), Annual Performance Report (APR), State's Systemic Improvement Plan (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 Comprehensive System of Personnel Development (CSPD) includes both regional and state councils that regularly meet to assess APR data and to evaluate professional development priorities and results.

--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 Montana Higher Education Consortium (HEC) for twenty 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 also 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 State Education Agency (SEA) brings together representatives from these stakeholder groups for a joint meeting facilitated by TAESSE. 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 seven years, the topic has been Montana's SSIP and activities have been conducted to solicit both general and specific stakeholder input. During the spring 2022 meeting, the state presented on using data within the state for Local Education Agencies (LEAs) to make decisions. This also included how to interpret the APR data.

Prepopulated Data

Source	Date	Description	Data
SY 2020-21 Exiting Data Groups (EDFacts file spec FS009; Data Group 85)	05/25/2022	Number of youth with IEPs (ages 14-21) who exited special education by graduating with a regular high school diploma (a)	769
SY 2020-21 Exiting Data Groups (EDFacts file spec FS009; Data Group 85)	05/25/2022	Number of youth with IEPs (ages 14-21) who exited special education by graduating with a state-defined alternate diploma (b)	
SY 2020-21 Exiting Data Groups (EDFacts file spec FS009; Data Group 85)	05/25/2022	Number of youth with IEPs (ages 14-21) who exited special education by receiving a certificate (c)	57
SY 2020-21 Exiting Data Groups (EDFacts file spec FS009; Data Group 85)	05/25/2022	Number of youth with IEPs (ages 14-21) who exited special education by reaching maximum age (d)	2
SY 2020-21 Exiting Data Groups (EDFacts file spec FS009; Data Group 85)	05/25/2022	Number of youth with IEPs (ages 14-21) who exited special education due to dropping out (e)	215

FFY 2021 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 2020 Data	FFY 2021 Target	FFY 2021 Data	Status	Slippage
769	1,043	78.65%	77.00%	73.73%	Did not meet target	Slippage

Provide reasons for slippage, if applicable

Montana has a relatively small number of exiting students each year, and a small number of graduates reported on the exit report. Part of that is because of the nature of the collection – students who move during their senior year are counted as moved, rather than graduates. This is the cause for differences in the data each year. The 2020-2021 school year was still experiencing the effects of COVID, part of which involved a high level of movement in and around our Native American reservations. Those students who did successfully graduate during the exiting reporting year but moved at some point, did not count as graduates, accounting for the slippage in our graduation rate.

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)

1 - Prior FFY Required Actions

None

1 - OSEP Response

1 - Required Actions