

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

Instructions and Measurement

Monitoring Priority: FAPE in the LRE

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

- A. Participation rate for children with IEPs.
- B. Proficiency rate for children with IEPs against grade level academic achievement standards.
- C. Proficiency rate for children with IEPs against alternate academic achievement standards.
- D. Gap in proficiency rates for children with IEPs and all students against grade level academic achievement standards.

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

Data Source

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

Measurement

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

Instructions

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

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

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

3B - Indicator Data

Historical Data:

Subject	Group	Group Name	Baseline Year	Baseline Data
Reading	A	Grade 4	2023	18.34%
Reading	B	Grade 8	2023	10.92%
Reading	C	Grade HS	2018	5.71%
Math	A	Grade 4	2023	18.70%
Math	B	Grade 8	2023	4.77%
Math	C	Grade HS	2018	4.76%

Targets

Subject	Group	Group Name	2023	2024	2025
Reading	A >=	Grade 4	18.34%	18.34%	18.34%
Reading	B >=	Grade 8	10.92%	10.92%	10.92%
Reading	C >=	Grade HS	6.00%	6.10%	6.20%
Math	A >=	Grade 4	18.70%	18.70%	18.70%
Math	B >=	Grade 8	4.77%	4.77%	4.77%
Math	C >=	Grade HS	5.10%	5.20%	5.30%

Targets: Description of Stakeholder Input

The Special Education Advisory Panel (SEAP) in Montana has been in existence since 2013. The SEAP is made up of 17 members, nine of whom are parents of students with disabilities. The panel is fully vested and broadly representative of Montana. Many of the panel members serve in other agency or organization leadership positions or on advisory councils as the voice of students with disabilities. This enables the SEA to draw insight and advice from a diverse group of stakeholders with an understanding of Montana's unique needs and strengths.

In the 2023/2024 school year, the SEA asked for input on Indicators 8 and 14 from the SEAP, the Special Education Directors, Educational Advocates, and the Weekly Superintendent's Hour. The SEA presented information on Indicator 8 regarding moving from a paper and pencil, sample, 23 question survey to an electronic, census, 10 question survey. All four entities agreed with the SEA's proposal.

The SEA asked the SEAP and Special Education Directors to weigh in on Indicator 14. The SEA proposed changing two questions and set new targets. Based on the information provided from stakeholders, the SEA did change the two questions and set new targets for Indicator 14.

In the spring of every school year, the SEA brings together parents, Montana's Parent Training and Information center the Montana Empowerment Center (MEC), the SEAP, and other state agencies for a joint stakeholder meeting. During this meeting the SEA reviews the APR submitted in February. The SEA asks for suggestions on how to potentially improve the outcomes of the indicators along with doing a data drill down of the state data and district level data.

In addition to the above-mentioned stakeholders, the SEA worked with many other stakeholder groups that support students with disabilities. Those groups include but are not limited to:
 Montana Council for Exceptional Children (MCEC) – presented on updates at the SEA, national level, and writing compliant special education paperwork
 Vocational Rehabilitation and Blind Services – strengthening our secondary transition
 Education Advocates – presented Indicator 8 changes & new monitoring process
 Summer Institute
 Montana Council of Administrators of Special Education (MCASE)
 Higher Education Consortium (HEC)
 Great Divide Special Education Cooperative board meeting
 Dawson Community College – assisting in setting up the ParaPathways Program
 Weekly Superintendent's Hour – Indicator 8
 CSPD Regional Directors
 Montana Empowerment Center – IEP Boot Camps
 Disability Rights Montana
 University of Montana – Mental Health Professional Development Grant for the Rural and Indigenous School-based Mental Health and Empowerment (RAISE) initiative

In FFY 2023, Montana allowed LEAs to opt into administration of a new field through year assessment for students grades 3-8 in mathematics and ELA who are required to take the statewide summative assessment. To eliminate an undue burden on students, teachers, and district leaders to prevent double-testing, the state requested a Field Test Flexibility waiver that would allow those participating schools to not administer the existing statewide summative assessments (students with the most significant cognitive disabilities in those schools would continue to take the existing alternate assessment based on alternate academic achievement standards). The U.S. Department of Education granted this waiver to Montana, which resulted in the state not having to produce or provide performance data (including proficiency assignments) for LEAs administering the field test. As a result, the only data reported in the Section 618 Assessment files utilized for Indicators 3A-3D will be the data for those LEAs administering the summative statewide assessment.

When contemplating revising targets for Indicator 3B, the state was reticent to have stakeholders provide in-depth feedback on the targets, given that a large percentage of LEAs were not included in the assessment type that was federally reported and thus the data was not meaningfully representative of the whole state's student populations. Further, the state assessment will change again in FFY 2024, when LEAs in Montana will be required to administer the "through-year" assessment that was field tested in FFY 2023. As a result, next year Montana will have to once again reset baselines and establish new targets. The state believes that it is the FFY 2024 data that should be used to set well-informed targets predicated on the regular assessment performance for LEAs and students in the state. For this reason, the state engaged with its stakeholders and conveyed that for this FFY 2023 reporting period, the state will set targets for grades 4 and 8 for reading and mathematics for FFY 2023 through FFY 2025 that are the same as the data reported in FFY 2023. Once updated assessment data are available for FFY 2024, the state will conduct a more robust data analysis of the participation and proficiency data and work collaboratively with stakeholders to establish targets for FFY 2024 and FFY 2025.

FFY 2023 Data Disaggregation from EDFacts

Data Source:

SY 2023-24 Assessment Data Groups - Reading (EDFacts file spec FS178; Data Group: 584)

Date:

01/08/2025

Reading Assessment Proficiency Data by Grade (1)

Group	Grade 4	Grade 8	Grade HS
a. Children with IEPs who received a valid score and a proficiency level was assigned for the regular assessment	867	797	839
b. Children with IEPs in regular assessment with no accommodations scored at or above proficient against grade level	110	74	71
c. Children with IEPs in regular assessment with accommodations scored at or above proficient against grade level	49	13	12

Data Source:

SY 2023-24 Assessment Data Groups - Math (EDFacts file spec FS175; Data Group: 583)

Date:

01/08/2025

Math Assessment Proficiency Data by Grade (1)

Group	Grade 4	Grade 8	Grade HS
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a. Children with IEPs who received a valid score and a proficiency level was assigned for the regular assessment	861	776	905
b. Children with IEPs in regular assessment with no accommodations scored at or above proficient against grade level	112	33	31
c. Children with IEPs in regular assessment with accommodations scored at or above proficient against grade level	49	4	6

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

FFY 2023 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 2022 Data	FFY 2023 Target	FFY 2023 Data	Status	Slippage
A	Grade 4	159	867	18.27%	18.34%	18.34%	N/A	N/A
B	Grade 8	87	797	11.77%	10.92%	10.92%	N/A	N/A
C	Grade HS	83	839	12.43%	6.00%	9.89%	Met target	No Slippage

FFY 2023 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 2022 Data	FFY 2023 Target	FFY 2023 Data	Status	Slippage
A	Grade 4	161	861	16.38%	18.70%	18.70%	N/A	N/A
B	Grade 8	37	776	6.14%	4.77%	4.77%	N/A	N/A
C	Grade HS	37	905	4.95%	5.10%	4.09%	Did not meet target	Slippage

Provide reasons for slippage for Group C, if applicable

Through analysis of data from FFY 2022 and FFY 2023 to determine potential reasons for slippage for HS math, the state observed a notable decrease in the number of students receiving valid scores (nearly a 10% decrease). In small populations like those in Montana, shifts in small numbers can have more substantial impacts on the overall state data. Accordingly, this could have accounted in part to this slippage (as supported by the slippage reported in 3A).

While this decrease in population of students with disabilities receiving valid scores is worth noting, the state also endeavored to investigate whether there were particular LEAs that were experiencing lower proficiency rates in FFY 2023 as compared to FFY 2022 to see any trends that would explain the slippage. Through this analysis, the state determined that of the 8 LEAs with the most sizeable decreases in numbers of students testing proficient in FFY 2022 as compared to FFY 2023, 4 of these LEAs were among the largest in the state. Thus, shifts in their data had greater bearing on statewide data. In both FFY 2022 and FFY 2023, these 4 LEAs made up roughly 34% of the total high school students with disabilities population receiving a valid score for the regular statewide reading assessment. In FFY 2022, nearly 34% of the high school students with disabilities receiving valid scores in these 4 districts were determined proficient. However, in FFY 2023 only 27.7% were determined proficient. This decrease in proficiency rates for these 4 LEAs by more than 6 percentage points, coupled with the fact these 4 LEAs are such a substantial portion of the population being evaluated in the state, certainly is a likely reason for the statewide decrease in proficiency.

As to why proficiency rates in these large LEAs and others across the state decreased, LEAs have reported significant staffing shortages across the state. These staffing shortages have made it challenging for LEAs to find educators with the training, expertise, and experience to effectively support students with disabilities in differentiating instruction in core instruction. This too may be a likely reason for the slippage observed.

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.

The following link is the website where assessment data have been publicly posted:

<https://opi.mt.gov/Educators/School-Climate-Student-Wellness/Special-Education#10963313031-idea-data>

The following link is a direct link to the publicly reported assessment data:

https://opi.mt.gov/Portals/182/Page%20Files/Special%20Education/IDEA%20Data/Public%20Reporting%20-%20FFY%202023%20Assessment%20Data_Suppressed.xlsx?ver=2025-01-31-072116-650

Provide additional information about this indicator (optional)

In FFY 2023, Montana allowed LEAs to opt into administration of a new field test for students grades 3-8 taking the regular statewide assessment. In FFY 2023, Montana allowed LEAs to opt into administration of a new field through year assessment for students grades 3-8 in mathematics and ELA who are required to take the statewide summative assessment. To eliminate an undue burden on students, teachers, and district leaders to prevent double-testing, the state requested a Field Test Flexibility waiver that would allow those participating schools to not administer the existing statewide summative assessments (students with the most significant cognitive disabilities in those schools would continue to take the existing alternate assessment based on alternate academic achievement standards). The U.S. Department of Education granted this waiver to Montana, which resulted in the state not having to produce or provide performance data (including proficiency assignments) for LEAs administering the field test. As a result, the only data reported in the Section 618 Assessment files utilized for Indicators 3A-3D will be the data for those LEAs administering the summative statewide assessment. A copy of the U.S. Department of Education's waiver can be found here:

https://opi.mt.gov/Portals/182/Page%20Files/MAST/Waiver%20Information/MT_fieldTestResponse2023.pdf.

In light of the unique circumstances and changes related to the FFY 2023 assessment for grades 3-8, and the fact that Montana's federal Section 618 Assessment files do not include participation or results data for those LEAs that administered the field test, the state has reset the baseline due to a change in the data source/methodology. The data for FFY 2023 are no longer comparable to the data from prior years and thus FFY 2023 data are the appropriate baselines for grades 4 and 8 for both reading and mathematics in this FFY 2023 SPP/APR submission. When all LEAs shift to the "through-year" assessments in FFY 2024, the state will again reset the respective baselines, given that an entirely new assessment will be utilized.

3B - Prior FFY Required Actions

None

3B - OSEP Response

3B - Required Actions