

Indicator 7: Preschool Outcomes

Instructions and Measurement

Monitoring Priority: FAPE in the LRE

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

- A. Positive social-emotional skills (including social relationships);
- B. Acquisition and use of knowledge and skills (including early language/ communication and early literacy); and
- C. Use of appropriate behaviors to meet their needs.

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

Data Source

State selected data source.

Measurement

Outcomes:

- A. Positive social-emotional skills (including social relationships);
- B. Acquisition and use of knowledge and skills (including early language/communication and early literacy); and
- C. Use of appropriate behaviors to meet their needs.

Progress categories for A, B and C:

- a. Percent of preschool children who did not improve functioning = [(# of preschool children who did not improve functioning) divided by (# of preschool children with IEPs assessed)] times 100.
- b. Percent of preschool children who improved functioning but not sufficient to move nearer to functioning comparable to same-aged peers = [(# of preschool children who improved functioning but not sufficient to move nearer to functioning comparable to same-aged peers) divided by (# of preschool children with IEPs assessed)] times 100.
- c. Percent of preschool children who improved functioning to a level nearer to same-aged peers but did not reach it = [(# of preschool children who improved functioning to a level nearer to same-aged peers but did not reach it) divided by (# of preschool children with IEPs assessed)] times 100.
- d. Percent of preschool children who improved functioning to reach a level comparable to same-aged peers = [(# of preschool children who improved functioning to reach a level comparable to same-aged peers) divided by (# of preschool children with IEPs assessed)] times 100.
- e. Percent of preschool children who maintained functioning at a level comparable to same-aged peers = [(# of preschool children who maintained functioning at a level comparable to same-aged peers) divided by (# of preschool children with IEPs assessed)] times 100.

Summary Statements for Each of the Three Outcomes:

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

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

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

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

Instructions

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

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

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

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

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

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

7 - Indicator Data

Not Applicable

Select yes if this indicator is not applicable.

NO

Historical Data

Part	Baseline	FFY	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022
A1	2008	Target >=	77.00%	77.00%	77.00%	77.10%	77.20%
A1	61.40%	Data	76.19%	80.00%	86.59%	93.55%	79.31%

A2	2008	Target >=	75.50%	75.50%	75.50%	75.60%	75.70%
A2	59.20%	Data	64.43%	68.11%	71.64%	75.22%	71.52%
B1	2008	Target >=	81.00%	81.00%	81.00%	81.10%	81.20%
B1	70.30%	Data	85.23%	84.48%	81.60%	89.11%	75.19%
B2	2008	Target >=	58.50%	58.50%	58.50%	58.60%	58.70%
B2	31.60%	Data	50.52%	58.38%	55.97%	57.52%	55.63%
C1	2008	Target >=	75.90%	75.90%	75.90%	76.00%	76.10%
C1	58.10%	Data	76.23%	79.46%	84.34%	96.77%	79.12%
C2	2008	Target >=	75.90%	75.90%	75.90%	76.00%	76.10%
C2	64.10%	Data	64.43%	70.27%	68.66%	76.99%	70.20%

Targets

FFY	2023	2024	2025
Target A1 >=	77.30%	77.40%	77.50%
Target A2 >=	75.80%	75.90%	76.00%
Target B1 >=	81.30%	81.40%	81.50%
Target B2 >=	58.80%	58.90%	59.00%
Target C1 >=	76.20%	76.30%	76.40%
Target C2 >=	76.20%	76.30%	76.40%

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

FFY 2023 SPP/APR Data

Number of preschool children aged 3 through 5 with IEPs assessed

128

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	14	10.94%
c. Preschool children who improved functioning to a level nearer to same-aged peers but did not reach it	22	17.19%
d. Preschool children who improved functioning to reach a level comparable to same-aged peers	37	28.91%
e. Preschool children who maintained functioning at a level comparable to same-aged peers	55	42.97%

Outcome A	Numerator	Denominator	FFY 2022 Data	FFY 2023 Target	FFY 2023 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>	59	73	79.31%	77.30%	80.82%	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>	92	128	71.52%	75.80%	71.88%	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	28	21.88%
c. Preschool children who improved functioning to a level nearer to same-aged peers but did not reach it	32	25.00%
d. Preschool children who improved functioning to reach a level comparable to same-aged peers	59	46.09%
e. Preschool children who maintained functioning at a level comparable to same-aged peers	9	7.03%

Outcome B	Numerator	Denominator	FFY 2022 Data	FFY 2023 Target	FFY 2023 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: (c+d)/(a+b+c+d)</i>	91	119	75.19%	81.30%	76.47%	Did not meet target	No Slippage
B2. The percent of preschool children who were functioning within age	68	128	55.63%	58.80%	53.13%	Did not meet target	Slippage

Outcome B	Numerator	Denominator	FFY 2022 Data	FFY 2023 Target	FFY 2023 Data	Status	Slippage
expectations in Outcome B by the time they turned 6 years of age or exited the program. <i>Calculation: (d+e)/(a+b+c+d+e)</i>							

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	18	14.06%
c. Preschool children who improved functioning to a level nearer to same-aged peers but did not reach it	17	13.28%
d. Preschool children who improved functioning to reach a level comparable to same-aged peers	37	28.91%
e. Preschool children who maintained functioning at a level comparable to same-aged peers	56	43.75%

Outcome C	Numerator	Denominator	FFY 2022 Data	FFY 2023 Target	FFY 2023 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: (c+d)/(a+b+c+d)</i>	54	72	79.12%	76.20%	75.00%	Did not meet target	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: (d+e)/(a+b+c+d+e)</i>	93	128	70.20%	76.20%	72.66%	Did not meet target	No Slippage

Part	Reasons for slippage, if applicable
B2	<p>The decrease in performance for Outcome B, Summary Statement 2 from FFY 2022 to FFY 2023 was 2.50 percentage points. The state conducted data analysis to determine the reason for the decrease and subsequent slippage and determined that one of the most notable reasons was the difference in entrance ratings for children in FFY 2022 compared to FFY 2023. Indeed, in FFY 2022, 12.05% of the preschool students received an entrance Child Outcomes Summary (COS) rating of 6 or 7 (overall age-expected functioning). This was 5.02 percentage points higher than the same entrance ratings for preschool students in FFY 2023 (7.03% of preschool students in FFY 2023 received entrance COS ratings of 6 or 7). Accordingly, in FFY 2023 there was a larger percentage of preschool students entering preschool not within the age-expected functioning range, thus necessitating much more substantial growth from entrance to exit in order to meet criteria for age-expected functioning. It is much more challenging to enter preschool with a COS rating of 2 and attain an exit COS rating of 6 or 7 as compared to entering preschool with a COS rating of 5 and attaining an exit COS rating of 6 or 7. Accordingly, fewer preschool students were able to exit functioning within age expectations in FFY 2023 as compared to FFY 2022, due in part to the lower COS ratings assigned upon entrance.</p> <p>The fact that preschool students had entrance COS ratings that were lower in FFY 2023 could be a lingering impact of COVID. Students exiting preschool or turning 6 years old during the 2023-24 school year may have been entering preschool as 3-year-olds during the years in which schools were largely virtual or inconsistently in session. Further, many parents elected to keep young non-school age children out of preschool both during the pandemic and the following 1-2 years, which means the children in the FFY 2023 reporting period may not have been getting the same level of access to foundational preschool instruction related to early language and communication, thus not as readily acquiring and using the knowledge and skills that are the focus of Outcome B. This is supported by the decrease in performance on this indicator over the prior two years for the student groups that were most affected by cessation of in-person class and services during the pandemic</p>
C1	<p>The decrease in performance for Outcome C, Summary Statement 1 from FFY 2022 to FFY 2023 was 4.21 percentage points. The state conducted similar data analysis to that outlined above in the slippage statement for Outcome B, Summary Statement 2. Interestingly, as</p>

Part	Reasons for slippage, if applicable
	<p>opposed to the challenges outlined for Outcome B related to preschool students entering preschool with lower COS ratings in FFY 2023, the converse happened for Outcome C. Indeed, in FFY 2022 42.07% of students entering preschool were assigned a COS rating of 6 or 7 (overall age-expected functioning). This was 4.81 percentage points lower than the same entrance ratings for preschool students in FFY 2023 (46.88% of preschool students in FFY 2023 received entrance COS ratings of 6 or 7). Accordingly, in FFY 2023 there was a larger percentage of preschool students entering preschool within the age-expected functioning range. This increased the likelihood that the students would exit with a similar COS rating, indicating functioning within age expectations. As such, students would be more likely to be included in Outcome C Progress Category E. This progress category is only counted in the numerator for Summary Statement 2, so such a result could simultaneously positively impact the percentage for Summary Statement 2 and negatively impact the percentage for Summary Statement 1.</p> <p>The state put this theory to the test by evaluating the exit COS ratings for students entering with a COS rating of 7. In FFY 2023, 94.74% of students entering preschool with a COS rating of 7 exited with COS ratings of 6 or 7. Thus, these records were assigned to Outcome C Progress Category E and were not included in the numerator of Summary Statement 1. Conversely, in FFY 2022 only 89.58% of students entering preschool with a COS rating of 7 exited with COS ratings of 6 or 7, which is 5.16 percentage points less than FFY 2023. This theory that a larger percent of students being reported in Outcome C Progress Category E resulted in slippage for Outcome C Summary Statement 1 is further supported by the notable increase in the state percentage for Outcome C Summary Statement 2. From FFY 2022 to FFY 2023, this percentage increased by 2.46 percentage points, which could be reflective of the larger number of students being reported in Outcome C Progress Category E in FFY 2023.</p> <p>As to whether there is a lingering COVID impact on the data for this indicator that contributed to the slippage, the data does not appear to support that as clearly as it does for Outcome B Summary Statement 2. However, this is due in part to the differences in the Early Childhood Outcomes. Attaining appropriate behaviors to meet needs with age-expected functioning may be more easily achieved in home environments or nontraditional academic environments common during the pandemic than the more concrete academic skills necessary for Outcome B.</p>

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

YES

Sampling Question	Yes / No
Was sampling used?	NO

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

YES

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

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

Provide additional information about this indicator (optional)

7 - Prior FFY Required Actions

None

7 - OSEP Response

7 - Required Actions