

# Indicator 3B: Proficiency for Children with IEPs Against 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	2024	14.01%
Reading	B	Grade 8	2024	10.36%
Reading	C	Grade HS	2018	5.71%
Math	A	Grade 4	2024	12.07%
Math	B	Grade 8	2024	8.24%
Math	C	Grade HS	2018	4.76%

### Targets

Subject	Group	Group Name	2024	2025
Reading	A >=	Grade 4	14.01%	14.02%
Reading	B >=	Grade 8	10.36%	10.37%
Reading	C >=	Grade HS	6.10%	6.20%
Math	A >=	Grade 4	12.07%	12.08%
Math	B >=	Grade 8	8.24%	8.25%
Math	C >=	Grade HS	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 16 members, seven 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 2024-25 and 2025-26 school years, the SEA asked for input on Indicators 3, 4, 9, and 10 from the SEAP. The SEA presented information on the SPP/APR as a whole and then dug into the specific indicators for feedback on targets and proposed methodological changes. The SEAP agreed with the SEA's proposal. Meeting minutes from discussions with SEAP as well as presentation materials have been posted publicly for all stakeholder review and input on the state website for SEAP: <https://opi.mt.gov/Educators/School-Climate-Student-Wellness/Special-Education/Regulations-and-Guidance#10965413037-federal-requirements>.

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 partnership 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:

Monthly Special Education Director’s calls

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

Summer Institute

Montana Council of Administrators of Special Education (MCASE)

Higher Education Consortium (HEC)

Dawson Community College – assisted in setting up level 2 of the ParaPathways Program

CSPD Regional Directors

Montana Empowerment Center – Monthly meetings

Disability Rights Montana

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. The U.S. Department of Education granted an assessment 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. In FFY 2024, the previous field test became the regular statewide assessment used by all LEAs in the state for grades 3-8 in mathematics and ELA. As such, the SEA met with stakeholders through the state special education advisory panel (SEAP) to inform them that baselines must be reset for mathematics and ELA assessments for grade 4 and grade 8 and to solicit input and feedback on new targets. Stakeholders were provided details about the indicator as an overview to support diverse learners who may not have the base understanding necessary to meaningfully provide feedback and input. Based on internal analyses and stakeholder feedback, new targets were established for FFY 2024 and FFY 2025. While the targets reflect a very modest improvement over the baseline in FFY 2025, this is due to the fact that FFY 2024 was the first year of the new statewide assessment and there is not longitudinal data available to analyze trends. As such, the state will be reviewing targets with stakeholders annually as more data becomes available that will allow for longitudinal analyses.

**FFY 2024 Data Disaggregation from EDFacts**

**Data Source:**

SY 2024-25 Academic Achievement in Reading/Language Arts (EDFacts file spec FS178; Data Group: 876, 877)

**Date:**

01/07/2026

**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	1,692	1,352	826
b. Children with IEPs in regular assessment with no accommodations scored at or above proficient against grade level	237	140	93
c. Children with IEPs in regular assessment with accommodations scored at or above proficient against grade level	0	0	6

**Data Source:**

SY 2024-25 Academic Achievement in Mathematics (EDFacts file spec FS175; Data Group: 874, 875)

**Date:**

01/07/2026

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

Group	Grade 4	Grade 8	Grade HS
a. Children with IEPs who received a valid score and a proficiency level was assigned for the regular assessment	1,699	1,360	887
b. Children with IEPs in regular assessment with no accommodations scored at or above proficient against grade level	205	112	30
c. Children with IEPs in regular assessment with accommodations scored at or above proficient against grade level	0	0	2

(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 2024 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 2023 Data	FFY 2024 Target	FFY 2024 Data	Status	Slippage
A	Grade 4	237	1,692	18.34%	14.01%	14.01%	N/A	N/A
B	Grade 8	140	1,352	10.92%	10.36%	10.36%	N/A	N/A
C	Grade HS	99	826	9.89%	6.10%	11.99%	Met target	No Slippage

**FFY 2024 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 2023 Data	FFY 2024 Target	FFY 2024 Data	Status	Slippage
A	Grade 4	205	1,699	18.70%	12.07%	12.07%	N/A	N/A
B	Grade 8	112	1,360	4.77%	8.24%	8.24%	N/A	N/A
C	Grade HS	32	887	4.09%	5.20%	3.61%	Did not meet target	Slippage

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

From FFY 2023 to FFY 2024, there was a decrease of 0.48 percentage points in proficiency rates for high school students with disabilities on the mathematics regular statewide assessment. The state conducted several analyses to determine potential reasons for slippage. First, the state observed an overall decrease in the number of high school students receiving valid scores on the mathematics assessment (2% decrease). While on the whole this decrease may seem nominal, 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.

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 2024 as compared to FFY 2023 to see any trends that would explain the slippage. Through this analysis, the state determined that of the 13 LEAs with decreases in proficiency rates from FFY 2023 to FFY 2024, 4 of these LEAs were among the largest in the state (all in the top 15 largest LEAs, based on total student population). Thus, shifts in their data had greater bearing on statewide data. In both FFY 2023 and FFY 2024, these 4 LEAs made up roughly 33% of the total high school students with disabilities population receiving a valid score for the regular statewide mathematics assessment. In FFY 2023, 7.70% of the high school students with disabilities receiving valid scores on the regular statewide mathematics assessment in these 4 districts were determined proficient. However, in FFY 2024 only 5.50% were determined proficient. This decrease in proficiency rates for these 4 LEAs by more than 2 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 for high school students on the mathematics regular statewide assessment.

As to why proficiency rates in these large LEAs and others decreased across the state, 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 (under "Assessment Data" header):

<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%202024%20Assessment%20Data\\_Suppressed.xlsx?ver=2026-01-02-130436-873](https://opi.mt.gov/Portals/182/Page%20Files/Special%20Education/IDEA%20Data/Public%20Reporting%20-%20FFY%202024%20Assessment%20Data_Suppressed.xlsx?ver=2026-01-02-130436-873)

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

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. The U.S. Department of Education granted an assessment 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. In FFY 2024, the previous field test became the regular statewide assessment used by all LEAs in the state for grades 3-8 in mathematics and ELA. As such, the data for FFY 2024 is no longer comparable to the FFY 2023 data given that an entirely new statewide assessment was utilized for by all LEAs in the state (change in data source). For this reason, the state reset the baseline data for grade 4 and grade 8 in the areas of mathematics and ELA to FFY 2024 data and established new targets that were informed by stakeholder input (see "Targets: Description of Stakeholder Input" field).

### **3B - Prior FFY Required Actions**

None

### **3B - OSEP Response**

The State has revised the baseline and targets for this indicator, using data from FFY 2024, but OSEP cannot accept that revision because the historical data table is inconsistent with the FFY 2024 baseline data.

### **3B - Required Actions**