

Indicator 3C: Proficiency for Children with IEPs Against 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 ED*Facts* file specifications FS175 and 178.

Measurement

C. Proficiency rate percent = [(# of children with IEPs scoring at or above proficient against alternate 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 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	2024	2025
Reading	A >=	Grade 4	48.90%	50.00%
Reading	B >=	Grade 8	42.20%	42.30%
Reading	C >=	Grade HS	51.60%	51.70%
Math	A >=	Grade 4	51.40%	51.50%
Math	B >=	Grade 8	46.20%	46.30%
Math	C >=	Grade HS	43.90%	44.00%

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

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

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	104	96	93
b. Children with IEPs in alternate assessment against alternate standards scored at or above proficient	40	34	49

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

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	102	97	92
b. Children with IEPs in alternate assessment against alternate standards scored at or above proficient	58	51	49

FFY 2024 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 2023 Data	FFY 2024 Target	FFY 2024 Data	Status	Slippage
A	Grade 4	40	104	39.25%	48.90%	38.46%	Did not meet target	No Slippage
B	Grade 8	34	96	48.11%	42.20%	35.42%	Did not meet target	Slippage
C	Grade HS	49	93	52.94%	51.60%	52.69%	Met target	No Slippage

Provide reasons for slippage for Group B, if applicable

From FFY 2023 to FFY 2024, there was a decrease of 12.70 percentage points in proficiency rates for grade 8 students with disabilities on the ELA 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 grade 8 students receiving valid scores on the ELA assessment (9.43% 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 for 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 14 LEAs with decreases in proficiency rates from FFY 2023 to FFY 2024, 5 of these LEAs were among the largest in the state (all in the top 20 largest LEAs, based on total student population). Thus, shifts in their data had greater bearing on statewide data. In FFY 2023 and FFY 2024, these 5 LEAs made up roughly 39.62% and 33.33%, respectively, of the total grade 8 students with disabilities population receiving a valid score for the alternate ELA assessment. In FFY 2023, 52.38% of the grade 8 students with disabilities receiving valid scores on the alternate ELA assessment in these 5 districts were determined proficient. However, in FFY 2024 only 28.13% were determined proficient. This decrease in proficiency rates for these 5 LEAs by 24.25 percentage points, coupled with the fact these 5 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 with more comprehensive needs or cognitive impairments. This too may be a likely reason for the slippage observed. Further, to move close to the 1% threshold for participation in the alternate assessment, LEAs have been making more concerted efforts to ensure that only those students with disabilities with the most substantial needs and cognitive impairments are taking the alternate assessment. Efforts to address this likely contributed to the decrease in the number of students participating in the alternate assessment and the proficiency rates.

FFY 2024 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 2023 Data	FFY 2024 Target	FFY 2024 Data	Status	Slippage
A	Grade 4	58	102	51.89%	51.40%	56.86%	Met target	No Slippage
B	Grade 8	51	97	56.60%	46.20%	52.58%	Met target	No Slippage
C	Grade HS	49	92	51.49%	43.90%	53.26%	Met target	No Slippage

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

Provide additional information about this indicator (optional)

N/A

3C - Prior FFY Required Actions

None

3C - OSEP Response

3C - Required Actions