



Questions from MCASE 2025

- 1. How does a district code exit information for a student (19+) that declines FAPE in the AIM system?**

Please reference this user guide for details: [OPI SPED Exiting User Manual](#)

- 2. What are the age limits for the Child Find requirement?**

Child Find responsibility for identifying and locating children who may need special education services continues until they are 22 years old.

- 3. What are district reporting responsibilities for confirmation of FAPE offers for students that graduated last year w/less than a regular diploma?**

All Districts - Notify angie.woodrow2@mt.gov via the **file transfer service** with the following by December 1st:

- Names of students you sent a continued offer of FAPE.
- Names of students that reenrolled.
- Names of students that either did not respond or turned down FAPE.

Please respond even if the district did not have any students that were required to receive a continued offer of FAPE.

For additional information, please see the [Graduation Guidance](#)

- 4. What is the status of Fiscal Expenditure Reports (FER) for the Special Education grant application in the Egrant System?** The E-Grants team has been approving FERs. You should start seeing things moving forward. Please check E-Grants and reach out if you have any questions.

- 5. How is the OPI reinforcing the importance of private/home school numbers data from County Superintendents to School administrators?**

OPI leadership is directing a communication to all county superintendents to remind them of their obligations and to outline the critical need for this information at the school level.

- 6. What are the requirements for Proportionate Share within IDEA funding?**

- Conduct meaningful consultation - A meeting w/partners should take place throughout the year.
- Proportionate share is calculated off of your private/homeschool numbers entered during the fall child count the year before.
- Private school numbers are reported in the resident district of where the private school is located.

- Once proportionate share funds for the year are expended, the district is not required to continue proportionate share services.
- Reference this QA document for more details: [OSEP QA 22-01](#)

Below are excerpts from the QA document.

1 – What happens when a district runs out of proportionate share funds?

Under IDEA, an LEA is only required to spend an amount equal to its calculated proportionate share of federal Part B funds on services for parentally placed private school children with disabilities during a fiscal year. Once the proportionate share requirement is met, the LEA has satisfied its legal obligation for that fiscal year. They are not required to continue providing or funding services beyond that amount with IDEA funds.

Below is a question from [OSEP's FAQ on Parentally-Placed Private School Students \[sites.ed.gov\]](#) that is also relevant. Although under no obligation, the LEA may expend more than the amount designated for equitable services if it is meeting the requirements of IDEA and providing FAPE.

Question D-4: *May an LEA expend more than the amount of its IDEA Part B funds designated to be spent on equitable services for children with disabilities placed by their parents in private schools?*

Answer: *"Yes. As discussed in the response to Question D-3, nothing in the IDEA prohibits an LEA from expending more than the proportionate amount of IDEA Part B funds designated to be spent on equitable services. Each LEA is required to spend a minimum amount of its subgrant under IDEA Part B for children with disabilities placed by their parents in private schools. As long as the LEA meets all the other requirements of the IDEA, including providing FAPE to children with disabilities, it is permissible for an LEA to spend more than the minimum amount of Part B funds on providing services to children with disabilities placed by their parents in private schools. In addition, as referenced in Question D-4 and provided in 34 C.F.R. § 300.133(d), State and local funds may be used to supplement, but not supplant, the LEA's proportionate share of IDEA Part B funds required to be expended on children with disabilities placed by their parents in private schools."*

2 – What happens when we have \$0 for proportionate share and a student moves into a district that needs services?

If there were no eligible parentally-placed private school students with disabilities identified during the child count period, the proportionate share for that fiscal year would be \$0. Any adjustments to the proportionate share calculation would occur in the next fiscal year after the subsequent child count is taken. At that time, an eligible student would be captured in the newest child count and the proportionate share would adjust accordingly. The best practice for an LEA in this situation is to consult with the private school and offer special education and related services to the eligible parentally-placed private school student in the interim. There would be no proportionate share funds available to spend, but the LEA could

use IDEA Part B or state/local funds to provide these services. However, this is *not* a requirement.

7. What are the details regarding Child Count for 2025 that directors need to know?

An email was sent to Special Education Directors on September 17th. The email content is also copied and pasted below.

Please ensure all data is entered and submitted by the deadline. If you have any questions or need assistance, don't hesitate to reach out.

Action Items for SPED Post-School Survey Reporting:

System Access

- Verify that you can successfully log into the SPED Application Portal and access the Post-School Survey module.
- To request new user access, remove a user, or update contact details (email/phone), submit the [Special Education Access Request form](#).

Training and Documentation

- [Child Count Data Verification](#)
- *Review the most current version of the SPED Child Count Data Verification Guide, which includes updated procedures, data entry protocols, and compliance requirements.*

Data Collection Timeline

Timely submission is essential to ensure compliance with federal reporting requirements.

- Portal Opens for Early Data Review: September 17, 2025
- Data Submission Opens: October 6, 2025
- Submission Deadline: October 31, 2025

Communication and Support

- Monitor your email for official updates and guidance from OPI regarding survey reporting.

For assistance, contact OPISPEDCollections@mt.gov

8. What opportunities are available to support the implementation of the new Graduation items for Special Education?

A Special Education graduation work group is being formed. Please reach out to patrick.cates@mt.gov if you are interested in participating in the workgroup. Also, please reach out to the same email if you have topics/items for the graduation workgroup to explore.

9. What are the storage of Special Education Cooperative vehicles?

Usage of the vehicles should be outlined in the interlocal agreement, 20-7-452. Storage of cooperative vehicles in a location other than the cooperative campus would be up to the local cooperative board.

20-7-452, MCA. Detailed contents of full service education cooperative contracts. The contract authorized in **20-7-451** may include all necessary and proper matters but must specify the following:

- (1) its duration, which may not be less than 3 years for purposes of providing special education services;
- (2) the precise organization, composition, and nature of the cooperative;
- (3) the purpose of the cooperative;
- (4) the manner of financing the cooperative and establishing and maintaining a budget for the cooperative;
- (5) the permissible method to be employed in accomplishing the partial or complete termination of the cooperative agreement and for disposing of property upon partial or complete termination;
- (6) provision for a management board that is responsible for administering the cooperative and that is comprised of trustees of the contracting districts or their authorized representatives;
- (7) the manner of acquiring, holding, and disposing of real and personal property used by the cooperative;
- (8) any other necessary and proper matters.

History: En. Sec. 2, Ch. 471, L. 1979; amd. Sec.

ARM 10.16.3808

(1) Special education allowable costs for cooperatives include all allowable costs in ARM 10.16.3806 and 10.16.3807 and the additional cost of the operation of the cooperative. These additional costs allowed exclusively for a cooperative are:

- (a) costs associated with support services including, but not limited to, administration, advertising, recruitment, communication such as postage, telephone, printing, clerk services, audit services and liability insurance;
- (b) costs associated with operation and maintenance including, but not limited to, custodial salaries and benefits, heat, utilities, supplies and expenses, replacement parts, rent, purchase of real property, labor negotiations/ representations, omissions and errors insurance, fire insurance and property insurance.

ARM 10.16.3807

- (g) transportation costs for professional support personnel who: (i) travel on an itinerant basis from school to school or district to district for the provision of related services; (ii) travel to in-state child study team meetings or in-state individualized education program meetings; (iii) in-state travel related to activities associated with structured support and assistance to regular education teachers in identifying and meeting diverse student needs; and (iv) travel for providing or receiving inservice training on the provision of special education services;