**State Performance Plan / Annual Performance Report: Part B**

**for STATE FORMULA GRANT PROGRAMS under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act**

**For reporting on   
FFY 2020**

**Massachusetts**

U.S. Department of Education seal

**PART B DUE February 1, 2022**

**U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION**

**WASHINGTON, DC 20202**

# Introduction

**Instructions**

Provide sufficient detail to ensure that the Secretary and the public are informed of and understand the State’s systems designed to drive improved results for students with disabilities and to ensure that the State Educational Agency (SEA) and Local Educational Agencies (LEAs) meet the requirements of IDEA Part B. This introduction must include descriptions of the State’s General Supervision System, Technical Assistance System, Professional Development System, Stakeholder Involvement, and Reporting to the Public.

## Intro - Indicator Data

**Executive Summary**

Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (MA DESE) is pleased to make available the Massachusetts IDEA Part B FFY 2020 State Performance Plan/Annual Performance Report (MA SPP/APR). Throughout Indicator reporting, MA DESE continues to pursue ambitious and achievable targets in order to reflect our Commonwealth's commitment to high expectations for our students with disabilities and to the communities in which they live and go to school. It is well known nationally that the COVID-19 pandemic has exacted a heavy toll on students, educators, parents, and communities. MA DESE honors and commends our courageous and resilient educators who continue to serve Massachusetts students under extraordinarily difficult circumstances.   
  
Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, Governor Baker declared a state of emergency for the Commonwealth of Massachusetts from March 15, 2020 to June 15, 2021 (https://www.mass.gov/info-details/covid-19-state-of-emergency). From March 15, 2020 until the end of the school year or June 29, 2020, all public and private elementary and secondary (K-12) schools in the Commonwealth, excluding residential and day schools for students with disabilities, were ordered to suspend normal, in-person instruction and other educational operations. Throughout the spring and summer of 2020, MA DESE issued ongoing, extensive legal and technical guidance to assist schools and districts in meeting the needs of their students, the majority of whom were educated in fully remote or hybrid environments. In addition, on July 9, 2020, MA DESE issued comprehensive special education guidance for the 2020-2021 school year which emphasized that all students with disabilities are entitled to a Free and Appropriate Public Education (FAPE) and also that all students with disabilities, particularly preschool-age students and those with significant and complex needs, should be prioritized for in-person instruction. MA DESE continued to provide significant general and special education guidance throughout that school year.   
  
To prepare schools and districts for the 2021-2022 school year, on July 30, 2021, MA DESE and the MA Department of Public Health jointly issued new COVID-19 guidance (https://www.doe.mass.edu/covid19/on-desktop/fall-2021-covid19-guide). While this guidance clarified that all students should return to full-time, in-person school, significant COVID-related challenges are ongoing in Massachusetts, much as they are in the rest of the nation. Among these challenges are very significant difficulty hiring school staff, impacting schools’ capacity for evaluation and instruction, as well as student and staff absences caused by community spread of the COVID-19 virus; systems challenges in providing masks, testing, and vaccines; and pedagogical and mental health challenges related to the pandemic. To meet the needs of its schools and districts and to support full compliance with all federal and state special education laws, MA DESE has continued to issue numerous guidance publications; to provide technical assistance, training, and funding for schools and districts; to create resources for families; and to engage with stakeholders in the planning, implementation, and assessment of needed supports and resources. The most recent COVID-related guidance and resources for special education can be found here, https://www.doe.mass.edu/covid19/sped.html, and for all students here, https://www.doe.mass.edu/covid19/.   
  
MA DESE welcomes suggestions, feedback, and other public comment.

**Additional information related to data collection and reporting**

For this FFY2020 report, some Indicators were affected by the suspension of in-person instruction from March through June 2020, as well as the primary provision of instruction and services through a remote and/or hybrid model in school year 2020-2021. Individual Indicator reports offer specifics.   
  
Since FFY2020 is the start of a new SPP/APR cycle, MA DESE engaged with stakeholders in a year-long process throughout 2021 to determine new Indicator baselines and targets. These conversations highlighted our collective commitment to high standards for Massachusetts students in the context of pandemic reality. This process is described in the narrative below.

**Number of Districts in your State/Territory during reporting year**

400

**General Supervision System:**

**The systems that are in place to ensure that IDEA Part B requirements are met, e.g., monitoring, dispute resolution, etc.**

MA DESE has an integrated system of general supervision consisting of eight key components that are aligned to ensure that IDEA Part B requirements are met:  
• State Performance Plan (https://www.doe.mass.edu/sped/spp/maspp.html);  
• Policies, Procedures and Effective Implementation (https://www.doe.mass.edu/sped/policy.html);   
• Integrated Monitoring Activities (https://www.doe.mass.edu/sped/cc.html);  
• Fiscal Management (https://www.doe.mass.edu/finance/)  
• Grants Management (https://www.doe.mass.edu/grants/);  
• Data on Processes and Results (https://www.doe.mass.edu/DataAccountability.html);   
• Improvement, Correction, Incentives and Sanctions (https://www.doe.mass.edu/sped/osep/determinations.html);  
• Effective Dispute Resolution (https://www.doe.mass.edu/prs/), and  
• Targeted Technical Assistance and Professional Development (https://www.doe.mass.edu/sped/ta.html).  
  
In addition, MA DESE is currently engaging with TA providers to complete a thorough self-assessment of the state’s general supervision system. As part of this work, MA DESE is updating its mission and vision for the general supervision system and delving deeply into each aspect of general supervision to update policies and procedures, beginning with fiscal procedures.

**Technical Assistance System:**

**The mechanisms that the State has in place to ensure the timely delivery of high quality, evidenced based technical assistance and support to LEAs.**

In a collaboration between general and special education, MA DESE is completely redesigning its accountability and assistance systems. The state is updating last year’s redesigned special education determination rubric, focusing on data-driven decision making. As part of this work, MA DESE is providing targeted TA and PD for LEAs so that they can use data from these determinations to identify root causes for compliance and performance outcomes, with a particular emphasis on equitable education and services for students with disabilities with multiple intersecting identities as students of color, English learners, low-income students, LGBTQ+ students, etc.  
  
MA DESE’s comprehensive systems of technical assistance (TA) and professional development (PD) are tied directly to local and statewide needs identified through the SPP/APR data collection and review processes and through the state’s accountability system. Central to this work is the State's framework for district accountability and assistance: http://www.doe.mass.edu/accountability/. The framework creates a coherent structure for linking the state's accountability and assistance activities with LEAs based on their level of need, and provides school and LEA leaders with common indicators and tools for assessing systems and practices, diagnosing challenges, and identifying appropriate interventions. Under the system, Massachusetts adopted accountability categories that define the progress that schools and LEAs are making and the type of support they may receive from MA DESE. LEAs, in turn, are classified within one of the five LEA categories (also referred to as LEA levels).  
  
Special Education Planning and Policy (SEPP) office, along with the Public School Monitoring (PSM) and the Statewide System of Support (SSoS) offices provide assistance and facilitates improvement planning in schools and districts identified by the accountability system. This includes districts and schools demonstrating performance gaps for students with disabilities. Staff from these offices collaborate to provide direct support in the field for planning and connections to existing resources. Additionally, SSoS convenes educators from across districts to learn from each other in networks; one area of focus for these networks is inclusive practices.  
  
MA DESE also provides a coordinated set of guidance documents, technical assistance, and support to LEAs working to improve results for students with IEPs. Specifically, MA DESE uses special education determinations, SPP/APR indicator data, compliance data, and other achievement data to tailor technical assistance (TA) specifically to the needs of LEAs. Conversely, LEAs can and are encouraged to analyze local level data and make requests for technical assistance based on their analyses. Some examples of TA available to all LEAs include Technical Assistance Advisories (https://www.doe.mass.edu/sped/advisories/default.html); Frequently Asked Questions, e.g. https://www.doe.mass.edu/covid19/sped.html; webinars on selected special education topics; MA DESE-facilitated Webinars for Special Education Directors and their staff; and compliance monitoring. Finally, for LEAs with a Special Education Determination of Needs Assistance or Needs Intervention, MA DESE provides direct, one-on-one TA to address the problems and create action plans for improvement. This work is done within all programmatic offices at MA DESE and in collaboration with other state agencies and national technical assistance and support centers, including the Early Childhood Technical Assistance Center, the IDEA Data Center (IDC), the Center for IDEA Fiscal Reporting (CIFR), the Positive Behavioral Interventions & Support Technical Assistance Center, the Center on the Social and Emotional Foundations for Early Learning, and the National Center for Systemic Improvement.

**Professional Development System:**

**The mechanisms the State has in place to ensure that service providers have the skills to effectively provide services that improve results for children with disabilities.**

MA DESE has a robust and comprehensive system of professional development (PD) for our educators and services providers.   
  
In response to the COVID-19 pandemic, MA DESE developed the Acceleration Roadmap, a tool for teachers and leaders in Massachusetts to support acceleration of student learning in the 2021–2022 school year. While all students were impacted during the 2020-2021 school year, the pandemic exacerbated many existing inequities and opportunity gaps. This roadmap was designed to provide a focused and phased approach to supporting students in classrooms. MA DESE developed two versions, one designed specifically for classroom educators and one for building administrators, https://www.doe.mass.edu/covid19/on-desktop/roadmap/.   
  
In 2019, MA DESE initiated a research-based statewide emphasis on Deeper Learning, https://www.doe.mass.edu/deeperlearning/. Through this initiative, MA DESE builds partnerships with educators and leaders through professional development, coaching, guidance, tools, and resources, all built on a foundation of educational equity. These Deeper Learning partnerships, trainings, and resources deliberately work to cultivate critical consciousness, draw upon culturally sustaining practices, and develop an asset-based, intersectional lens in educators across the state.   
  
MA DESE’s IEP Improvement Project is developing tools and resources to support professional knowledge and skills throughout the referral, evaluation, eligibility, and service delivery process. MA DESE has begun to release online learning tools, for example (https://www.doe.mass.edu/sped/ImproveIEP/guidance-rlo/index.html#/lessons/25gSeNZzy21QuXWR7rjVY6i1DevlBv2U). MA DESE has also created significant tools and resources on IDEA Equitable Services, https://www.doe.mass.edu/sped/proshare/default.html.   
  
Educator Preparation  
A core strategy in MA DESE’s Strategic Plan is to promote high quality educator development. By improving the depth and quality of preparation for new teachers, MA DESE intends to narrow the impact gaps between new and experienced teachers, improve retention rates for LEAs, and improve student outcomes, particularly for our most vulnerable and underserved populations — inclusive of low-income students, English Learners, students of color, and students with disabilities.  
  
This objective includes improving the licensure system, and supporting and evaluating educator preparation providers. MA DESE continues to streamline and improve processes for state licensure requirements. MA DESE also maintains and updates the Subject-Matter Knowledge Requirements (SMKs) (https://www.doe.mass.edu/edprep/domains/instruction/) that define what content educators should know in each license field and that align to the curriculum standards for students as outlined in the Massachusetts Curriculum Frameworks. Massachusetts licensure tests (MTEL) are based on SMKs and the Frameworks, and educator preparation programs rely on SMKs to guide their programming.   
  
Furthermore, MA DESE reviews the quality of programs offered by educator preparation providers. Over multi-year cycles, MA DESE, together with trained evaluators, review and approve sponsoring organizations (including higher education institutions, non-profits, and LEAs) and examine a range of educator preparation program data, including survey data collected from a range of program stakeholders. MA DESE also provides organizations with formative feedback based on the performance data of the candidates they prepare and shares data tools with educator preparation providers to improve the educational experience of candidates.  
  
MA DESE is also working to offer resources and professional learning opportunities to enhance educator effectiveness for early-career educators, including resources for pre-service candidates and resources for in-service educators. For example, at the pre-service stage, to complete educator preparation, candidates must demonstrate skills and dispositions reflective of high-quality teaching through the Candidate Assessment of Performance (CAP), https://www.doe.mass.edu/edprep/cap. CAP assesses a teacher candidate's readiness in relation to the Professional Standards for Teachers (PSTs). CAP parallels the Massachusetts Educator Evaluation system in order to better prepare teacher candidates and ensure that they are ready to be effective on day one. It measures teacher candidates' practice across a range of key indicators as outlined in the Guidelines for the Professional Standards for Teachers, https://www.doe.mass.edu/edprep/resources/guidelines-advisories/teachers-guide.docx, and supports them in improving their practice based on the results. Successful completion of CAP is required to complete all teacher preparation programs. MA DESE highlights effective practices for Induction and Mentoring based on an annual statewide survey of local education agencies.  
  
Educator Professional Development  
MA DESE is committed to building the cultural responsiveness and diversity of our educator workforce, https://www.doe.mass.edu/instruction/culturally-responsive. Culturally responsive teaching and leading is great teaching and leading. It happens in classrooms, schools, and districts that foster and support students' diverse backgrounds, identities, strengths, and challenges to deepen their learning, build their understanding and respect for other cultures, and address systemic inequities. MA DESE has committed significant resources to support this work. In addition, MA DESE is working to diversify our educator workforce so that it reflects our student populations, for example through the InSPIRED Initiative, https://www.doe.mass.edu/amazingeducators/inspired/. Our vision is that all children will have the opportunity to see their ethnic, linguistic, and racial backgrounds represented in teachers and leaders within their classrooms and schools. All educators, especially Black, Indigenous, and Educators of Color, will be recognized, supported within, and celebrated by their schools and districts for their value and positive impact on PK–12 students.  
  
MA DESE continues to dedicate resources to helping all educators improve their practice through participation in High Quality Professional Development (HQPD) (http://www.doe.mass.edu/pd/default.html). MA DESE defines HQPD as a set of coherent learning experiences that is systematic, purposeful, and structured over a sustained period of time with the goal of improving teacher practice and student outcomes. HQPD enables educators to facilitate the learning of students by acquiring and applying knowledge, skills, and abilities that address student needs and improvement goals of the LEA, school, and individual. HQPD conforms to best practices in research, relates to educators' assignments and professional responsibilities, and aligns to the ten Massachusetts Standards for Professional Development. All professional development offered by MA DESE and providers approved by the agency to award Professional Development Points (PDPs) must align with the HQPD standards. Through the HQPD registration and approval process, MA DESE assesses the evidence providers submit to demonstrate alignment with the MA Standards for Professional Development for the grade span and specific content area covered by the professional development.  
  
All of MA DESE’s professional development systems are designed to support and improve results for all students, including students with disabilities.

**Broad Stakeholder Input:**

**The mechanisms for soliciting broad stakeholder input on the State’s targets in the SPP/APR and any subsequent revisions that the State has made to those targets, and the development and implementation of Indicator 17, the State’s Systemic Improvement Plan (SSIP).**

MA DESE works closely with stakeholders on developing targets and setting priorities for improvement in each of the areas reported in the SPP/APR.   
  
The Special Education Advisory Panel, comprised of parents, individuals with disabilities, educators, administrators, and representatives from state agencies, higher education, and other stakeholder groups, meets up to five times each school year to review data, discuss policy priorities, and identify unmet needs in the area of special education consistent with state law and IDEA Part B. At every meeting, the group addresses various aspects of the SPP/APR and the State’s general supervision systems, as well as relevant policy matters. A special focus during the pandemic has been COVID-19’s effect on compliance and performance areas related to the SPP/APR Indicators. MA DESE facilitates discussion of baseline and current data, longitudinal targets, historical rates of performance and compliance and the trajectory for improvement for each of the Indicators, and the effectiveness of focused improvement activities within the context of the state's Results Driven Accountability framework.   
  
MA DESE has set a high priority on expanding the agency’s capacity to solicit broad and diverse stakeholder input to set SPP/APR targets, analyze data, develop improvement strategies, and evaluate progress. For FFY2020, MA DESE sought to improve stakeholder Indicator knowledge by posting new webpages for Indicators 1, 2, 3, 5, 6, 7, 8, and 14 with Quick Reference Guides (QRGs) and PowerPoints for each Indicator. These QRGs and PowerPoints were available in six languages that correspond to the most common languages spoken in Massachusetts: English, Spanish, Portuguese, Chinese, Vietnamese, and Haitian Creole. Narrated versions of each PowerPoint were also available in English on the YouTube page of our partner, the Federation for Children with Special Needs (the Massachusetts Parent Training and Information Center/PTIC). MA DESE solicited feedback for Indicators 1, 2, 3, 5, 6, 7, 8, and 14 baselines and targets via an online survey in English, Spanish, Portuguese, Chinese, Vietnamese, and Haitian Creole. In addition, MA DESE collaborated with the Federation for Children with Special Needs, the OSEP funded Parent Training and Information Center (PTI), to hold five virtual stakeholder information and feedback sessions on these Indicators. Meetings were simultaneously interpreted into American Sign Language, Spanish, Portuguese, and Mandarin. Other languages were available but were not requested.   
  
MA DESE also consults regularly, on a monthly or at least quarterly basis, with Massachusetts Administrators of Special Education, http://www.asepage.org/, the Federation for Children with Special Needs, https://fcsn.org/, Massachusetts Advocates for Children, https://www.massadvocates.org/, the Massachusetts Association of Approved Special Education Schools, https://maaps.org/, Massachusetts Urban Special Education Leadership Collaborative, and the Special Needs Advocacy Network, www.spanmass.org. In addition, the Massachusetts State Special Education Director at MA DESE gives monthly virtual presentations to statewide special education leaders on a wide array of special education compliance and performance topics. During all of these meetings, MA DESE solicits and receives significant feedback that informs the development of special education policy and guidance.   
  
As needed, MA DESE also convenes stakeholder working groups throughout the year to provide focused input on specific projects and policy priorities. Examples of these focused groups include the Early Childhood Interagency Coordinating Council, with membership that includes community members and state agencies, a Statewide Systemic Improvement Plan (SSIP) leadership team and working group, a family engagement workgroup, an advisory group for the Dropout Prevention and Re-engagement Network, and secondary transition stakeholder groups. MA DESE also consults with educators, parents, advocates, and others on an ad hoc basis to inform policy and practice.   
  
MA DESE engages with stakeholders on the direction of Indicator 17, the State’s Systemic Improvement Plan (SSIP), at the state, district, classroom, and community levels. Stakeholders are provided with information about activities and goals, training events and embedded supports statewide, and the availability of resources to support and expand implementation. Stakeholders at the district and school levels participate in ongoing decision making about the direction of the SSIP by providing feedback about the quality of events and supports, observed benefits for their own stakeholders, and needs for moving forward with implementation most successfully. For additional information on stakeholder engagement related to Indicator 17, please see the Indicator 17 APR.  
  
Stakeholder engagement is an essential component of MA DESE’s special education agenda.

**Apply stakeholder involvement from introduction to all Part B results indicators (y/n)**

YES

**Number of Parent Members:**

277

**Parent Members Engagement:**

**Describe how the parent members of the State Advisory Panel, parent center staff, parents from local and statewide advocacy and advisory committees, and individual parents were engaged in setting targets, analyzing data, developing improvement strategies, and evaluating progress.**

MA DESE has a close and collaborative relationship with the state's Massachusetts Special Education Advisory Panel, which meets up to five times each school year to review data, discuss policy priorities, and identify unmet needs in the area of special education consistent with state law and IDEA Part B. Of the Panel’s thirty members, twelve are parents of students with disabilities. At every meeting, the group addresses various aspects of the SPP/APR and the State’s general supervision systems. For the FFY2020 SPP/APR submission, MA DESE consulted the Panel on targets, data, improvement strategies, and progress over the course of five Panel meetings.   
  
The Federation for Children with Special Needs (“the Federation”), which is the Massachusetts Parent Training and Information Center (PTI), also has a close relationship with MA DESE. Throughout the year, MA DESE and the Federation connect at least monthly. In the summer and fall of 2021, MA DESE and the Federation met to plan statewide outreach and engagement with families regarding the SPP/APR. Together, MA DESE and the Federation convened five virtual stakeholder information and feedback sessions on SPP/APR Indicators, with interpretation in American Sign Language, Spanish, Portuguese, and Mandarin. Ninety-nine parents participated in these sessions, along with twenty-one parent center staff and seventy-one education professionals. 153 online surveys on Indicator baselines and targets were completed by parents of students with disabilities and twenty-two online surveys were completed by Federation staff.   
  
MA DESE also regularly engages with local and statewide advocacy and advisory committees. In upcoming years, MA DESE will seek to expand its stakeholder engagement activities to ensure the agency is advised by a broad and deep cross-section of stakeholders who accurately represent the demographics of our student population.

**Activities to Improve Outcomes for Children with Disabilities:**

**The activities conducted to increase the capacity of diverse groups of parents to support the development of implementation activities designed to improve outcomes for children with disabilities.**

MA DESE is undertaking a complete transformation of its referral, evaluation, eligibility, and IEP development process guidance and tools. A major priority in this effort is to promote student and parent engagement through the creation of accessible resources that are easy to understand and use. Such resources will increase the capacity of diverse groups of parents to participate in the education system as well-informed partners who can fully engage in improvement activities.  
  
In addition, MA DESE funds the Federation for Children with Special Needs (the Massachusetts PCTI) to conduct:  
• Numerous parent workshops on special education topics   
• Training for special education parent advisory council (SEPAC) leaders so that these state-mandated groups can participate in a well-informed way in the planning, development, and evaluation of each local education agency’s special education programming  
• Train-the-Trainer for educators on the Massachusetts Family Engagement Framework, https://www.doe.mass.edu/sfs/family-engagement-framework.pdf, Massachusetts Family, School, and Community Partnership Fundamentals, https://www.doe.mass.edu/sfs/fscp-fundamentals.docx, and Positive Solutions, https://masfec.org/positive-solutions-for-educators-free-training/   
  
Since 2011, the Massachusetts Educator Evaluation Framework, https://www.doe.mass.edu/edeval/, has included Family and Community Engagement as one of the four professional standards against which all Massachusetts educator and administrator performance is measured. This means that each individual LEA and each individual educator and administrator in general and special education is individually and personally responsible for engaging families and supporting their participation in the schools and schooling. This accountability increases the capacity of diverse groups of parents, because educators and administrators are required to engage with them in meaningful ways, such as through culturally proficient, two-way communication around learning expectations and student support.   
  
As an agency, MA DESE is committed to improving family engagement at the local and state levels. An internal MA DESE Family Engagement Work Group includes members who represent offices across the agency. MA DESE has also worked closely with the National Association for Family, School, and Community Engagement (NAFSCE) to lead work with statewide stakeholders which formed the Family Engagement Coalition that developed the Massachusetts Family Engagement Framework, https://www.doe.mass.edu/sfs/family-engagement-framework.pdf, and continues to develop tools, resources, and training. Participating stakeholders in the Coalition include:   
• MA DESE  
• Families  
• Public Schools  
• Family Engagement Organizations  
• Home Visitors  
• Early Intervention  
• Head Start  
• Family and Community Connection (FCC)  
• Horizons for Homeless  
• Community Organizations  
• Parent Leadership Networks  
• Family Advocates  
• Cultural Organizations  
• Health Care Centers/Hospitals  
• Parent-Child Home Programs  
• Massachusetts Immigrant and Refugee Advocacy Coalition (MIRA)  
• Museums  
• Libraries  
• MA Women, Infants, & Children Nutrition Program (WIC)  
• MA Department of Early Education and Care  
• MA Department of Higher Education  
• MA Department of Public Health  
• MA Department of Children and Families  
• MA Department of Mental Health   
• MA Department of Transitional Assistance  
• MA Department of Housing and Community Development  
• MA Department of Youth Services  
• MA Department of Corrections  
• MA Office of Refugees and Immigrants  
• MA Governor’s Developmental Disabilities Council  
• The Children’s Trust  
• University of Massachusetts  
• MA Board of Library Commissioners  
Of note is that the Framework; Massachusetts Family, School, and Community Partnership Fundamentals; and Train-the-Trainer are consistent across agencies.

**Soliciting Public Input:**

**The mechanisms and timelines for soliciting public input for setting targets, analyzing data, developing improvement strategies, and evaluating progress.**

MA DESE began internal planning for stakeholder engagement for the FFY2020 SPP/APR in March 2021 and discussed Indicator targets, data, improvement strategies, and progress with the Special Education Advisory Panel in May, June, and December of 2021, as well as in January 2022. During the Spring and Summer of 2021, MA DESE developed additional plans which led to posting new webpages for Indicators 1, 2, 3, 5, 6, 7, 8, and 14 in Fall 2021 with Quick Reference Guides (QRGs) and PowerPoints for each Indicator. These QRGs and PowerPoints were available in six languages that correspond to the most common languages spoken in Massachusetts: English, Spanish, Portuguese, Chinese, Vietnamese, and Haitian Creole. Narrated versions of each PowerPoint were also available in English on the YouTube page of our partner, the Federation for Children with Special Needs (the Massachusetts Parent Training and Information Center/PTIC). MA DESE solicited feedback for Indicator 1, 2, 3, 5, 6, 7, 8, and 14 baselines and targets via an online survey in English, Spanish, Portuguese, Chinese, Vietnamese, and Haitian Creole. In addition, MA DESE collaborated with the Federation for Children with Special Needs in December 2021 to hold five virtual stakeholder information and feedback sessions on these Indicators. Meetings were simultaneously interpreted into American Sign Language, Spanish, Portuguese, and Mandarin. Other languages were available but were not requested.   
  
Mechanisms and timelines for additional Indicator-specific stakeholder engagement are discussed in individual APRs  
  
During the 2022 year, MA DESE plans to build upon our FFY2020 efforts to expand stakeholder engagement, including meeting regularly with a broad and diverse group of stakeholders to solicit input on the SPP/APR. During those meetings, MA DESE will solicit public input for setting targets, analyzing data, developing improvement strategies, and evaluating progress. Regular meetings will continue to be held with the Special Education Advisory Panel, the Massachusetts Administrators of Special Education, the Federation for Children with Special Needs, Massachusetts Advocates for Children, the Massachusetts Association of Approved Special Education Schools, Massachusetts Urban Special Education Leadership Collaborative, and the Special Needs Advocacy Network. The Massachusetts State Special Education Director will continue to give monthly virtual presentations to statewide special education leaders on a wide array of special education compliance and performance topics, using these meetings to solicit and receive significant input. In addition, throughout 2022, MA DESE will expand outreach to additional groups that serve diverse populations who represent the demographics of our student population. MA DESE will also improve our website’s capacity to obtain public feedback.

**Making Results Available to the Public:**

**The mechanisms and timelines for making the results of the target setting, data analysis, development of the improvement strategies, and evaluation available to the public.**

MA DESE is working with a vendor to significantly improve our SPP/APR website during the 2022 year to include framing questions, current and archived SPP/APRs, information and resources for each Indicator, and links to data displays. These improvements will enhance MA DESE’s ability to make the results of FFY2020 and future target setting, data analysis, development of the improvement strategies, and evaluation available to the public.   
  
MA DESE will continue to post on our website the FFY2020 performance of each LEA located in the state on the targets in the SPP/APR as soon as practicable, but no later than 120 days following the state’s submission of its FFY2020 APR. See narrative below for more information.   
  
In addition, MA DESE will continue to meet regularly throughout the year with the Special Education Advisory Panel to share and discuss Indicator data and improvement activities. The Panel operates according to Massachusetts Open Meeting Law; agendas and minutes are posted, and members of the public are invited to attend meetings.   
  
During the 2022 year, MA DESE plans to expand stakeholder engagement efforts, including meeting regularly with a broad and diverse group of stakeholders to solicit input on the SPP/APR. During those meetings, the results of the target setting, data analysis, development of the improvement strategies, and evaluation will be made available to the public.

**Reporting to the Public**

**How and where the State reported to the public on the FFY 2019 performance of each LEA located in the State on the targets in the SPP/APR as soon as practicable, but no later than 120 days following the State’s submission of its FFY 2019 APR, as required by 34 CFR §300.602(b)(1)(i)(A); and a description of where, on its Web site, a complete copy of the State’s SPP/APR, including any revision if the State has revised the targets that it submitted with its FFY 2019 APR in 2021, is available.**

Annually, MA DESE makes available the information contained in the state's SPP/APR for review and discussion in a variety of inter- and intra-agency meetings and forums, as well as in communications with external stakeholders and interested parties. This information is the basis for reflection and planning and provides a longitudinal look at statewide performance in various areas.  
  
MA DESE has publicly posted a complete copy of the State's FFY2019 SPP/APR, and all previously submitted SPP/APRs, as well as OSEP's response to the state's submissions, on its website at: http://www.doe.mass.edu/sped/spp/maspp.html.  
  
MA DESE also publicly reports annually on LEA results on performance and compliance indicators. Data from FFY2019 and for the preceding ten years may be viewed through LEA and school level reports on MA DESE’s website, including the SPP targets for each SPP Indicator: https://profiles.doe.mass.edu/gis/sped\_map.aspx?orgcode=04450000&fycode=2020. Reports may be selected by LEA or school using the alphabetical drop down menu on the top right of the webpage. FFY2020 data will be posted at this location in the Winter/Spring of 2022 when all data reports are available.  
  
In accordance with 34 CFR § 300.160(d), MA DESE publicly reports data on the participation of students with IEPs in statewide assessments at the state, LEA, and school levels. State level information is available on the assessment participation webpage: http://profiles.doe.mass.edu/statereport/participation.aspx. LEA-level information on the participation of students with IEPs in statewide assessments, with and without accommodations and including students who participate in the MCAS-Alt, may be accessed from the state-level page referenced above by clicking on the LEA name. An example of an LEA-level report is provided here: https://profiles.doe.mass.edu/mcas/participation.aspx?orgtypecode=5&linkid=26&fycode=2021&orgcode=00090000. Reports are selected by school year using the arrow button at the top left of the web page.  
  
MA DESE publicly reports performance results for students with IEPs who take the MCAS-Alt in a separate state level report found here: http://profiles.doe.mass.edu/statereport/mcas\_alt.aspx. Reports may be selected by type (district/school), school year, and subject by using the drop down menu at the top of the page. LEA-level information on MCAS-Alt performance results may be accessed from the state level page referenced above by clicking on the name of the LEA. An example of an LEA level report is provided here: https://profiles.doe.mass.edu/mcas/achievement\_alt\_level.aspx?linkid=116&orgcode=00200000&orgtypecode=5&fycode=2021. Reports are selected by school year using the arrow button at the top left of the web page.  
  
MA DESE ensures that it makes available assessment data for students with disabilities with the same frequency and in the same detail as it reports on the assessment of students without disabilities, consistent with 34 CFR 300.160(f). This information is now integrated into the assessment webpages referenced above at: http://profiles.doe.mass.edu/statereport/participation.aspx and http://profiles.doe.mass.edu/statereport/mcas\_alt.aspx.   
  
MA DESE reports accountability data at the LEA and school levels: http://www.doe.mass.edu/accountability.   
  
MA DESE also makes available information about progress, slippage, and related requirements through meetings with stakeholders and professional organizations, and through regional and statewide interest groups, some of which are facilitated by partner agencies and organizations.

## Intro - Prior FFY Required Actions

None

## Intro - OSEP Response

## Intro - Required Actions

# Indicator 1: Graduation

**Instructions and Measurement**

**Monitoring Priority:** FAPE in the LRE

**Results indicator:** Percent of youth with Individualized Education Programs (IEPs) exiting special education due to graduating with a regular high school diploma. (20 U.S.C. 1416 (a)(3)(A))

**Data Source**

Same data as used for reporting to the Department under section 618 of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), using the definitions in EDFacts file specification FS009.

**Measurement**

States must report a percentage using the number of youth with IEPs (ages 14-21) who exited special education due to graduating with a regular high school diploma in the numerator and the number of all youth with IEPs who exited high school (ages 14-21) in the denominator.

**Instructions**

*Sampling is not allowed.*

Data for this indicator are “lag” data. Describe the results of the State’s examination of the data for the year before the reporting year (e.g., for the FFY 2020 SPP/APR, use data from 2019-2020), and compare the results to the target. Provide the actual numbers used in the calculation.

Include in the denominator the following exiting categories: (a) graduated with a regular high school diploma; (b) graduated with a state-defined alternate diploma; (c) received a certificate; (d) reached maximum age; or (e) dropped out.

Do not include in the denominator the number of youths with IEPs who exited special education due to: (a) transferring to regular education; or (b) who moved but are known to be continuing in an educational program.

Provide a narrative that describes the conditions youth must meet in order to graduate with a regular high school diploma. If the conditions that youth with IEPs must meet in order to graduate with a regular high school diploma are different, please explain.

## 1 - Indicator Data

**Historical Data**

| **Baseline Year** | **Baseline Data** |
| --- | --- |
| 2011 | 65.60% |

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **FFY** | **2015** | **2016** | **2017** | **2018** | **2019** |
| Target >= | 84.00% | 86.00% | 88.00% | 72.36% | 73.36% |
| Data | 69.90% | 71.79% | 72.83% | 72.36% | 73.94% |

**Targets**

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **FFY** | **2020** | **2021** | **2022** | **2023** | **2024** | **2025** |
| Target >= | 76.33% | 77.33% | 78.33% | 79.33% | 80.33% | 81.33% |

**Targets: Description of Stakeholder Input**

MA DESE works closely with stakeholders on developing targets and setting priorities for improvement in each of the areas reported in the SPP/APR.   
  
The Special Education Advisory Panel, comprised of parents, individuals with disabilities, educators, administrators, and representatives from state agencies, higher education, and other stakeholder groups, meets up to five times each school year to review data, discuss policy priorities, and identify unmet needs in the area of special education consistent with state law and IDEA Part B. At every meeting, the group addresses various aspects of the SPP/APR and the State’s general supervision systems, as well as relevant policy matters. A special focus during the pandemic has been COVID-19’s effect on compliance and performance areas related to the SPP/APR Indicators. MA DESE facilitates discussion of baseline and current data, longitudinal targets, historical rates of performance and compliance and the trajectory for improvement for each of the Indicators, and the effectiveness of focused improvement activities within the context of the state's Results Driven Accountability framework.   
  
MA DESE has set a high priority on expanding the agency’s capacity to solicit broad and diverse stakeholder input to set SPP/APR targets, analyze data, develop improvement strategies, and evaluate progress. For FFY2020, MA DESE sought to improve stakeholder Indicator knowledge by posting new webpages for Indicators 1, 2, 3, 5, 6, 7, 8, and 14 with Quick Reference Guides (QRGs) and PowerPoints for each Indicator. These QRGs and PowerPoints were available in six languages that correspond to the most common languages spoken in Massachusetts: English, Spanish, Portuguese, Chinese, Vietnamese, and Haitian Creole. Narrated versions of each PowerPoint were also available in English on the YouTube page of our partner, the Federation for Children with Special Needs (the Massachusetts Parent Training and Information Center/PTIC). MA DESE solicited feedback for Indicators 1, 2, 3, 5, 6, 7, 8, and 14 baselines and targets via an online survey in English, Spanish, Portuguese, Chinese, Vietnamese, and Haitian Creole. In addition, MA DESE collaborated with the Federation for Children with Special Needs, the OSEP funded Parent Training and Information Center (PTI), to hold five virtual stakeholder information and feedback sessions on these Indicators. Meetings were simultaneously interpreted into American Sign Language, Spanish, Portuguese, and Mandarin. Other languages were available but were not requested.   
  
MA DESE also consults regularly, on a monthly or at least quarterly basis, with Massachusetts Administrators of Special Education, http://www.asepage.org/, the Federation for Children with Special Needs, https://fcsn.org/, Massachusetts Advocates for Children, https://www.massadvocates.org/, the Massachusetts Association of Approved Special Education Schools, https://maaps.org/, Massachusetts Urban Special Education Leadership Collaborative, and the Special Needs Advocacy Network, www.spanmass.org. In addition, the Massachusetts State Special Education Director at MA DESE gives monthly virtual presentations to statewide special education leaders on a wide array of special education compliance and performance topics. During all of these meetings, MA DESE solicits and receives significant feedback that informs the development of special education policy and guidance.   
  
As needed, MA DESE also convenes stakeholder working groups throughout the year to provide focused input on specific projects and policy priorities. Examples of these focused groups include the Early Childhood Interagency Coordinating Council, with membership that includes community members and state agencies, a Statewide Systemic Improvement Plan (SSIP) leadership team and working group, a family engagement workgroup, an advisory group for the Dropout Prevention and Re-engagement Network, and secondary transition stakeholder groups. MA DESE also consults with educators, parents, advocates, and others on an ad hoc basis to inform policy and practice.   
  
MA DESE engages with stakeholders on the direction of Indicator 17, the State’s Systemic Improvement Plan (SSIP), at the state, district, classroom, and community levels. Stakeholders are provided with information about activities and goals, training events and embedded supports statewide, and the availability of resources to support and expand implementation. Stakeholders at the district and school levels participate in ongoing decision making about the direction of the SSIP by providing feedback about the quality of events and supports, observed benefits for their own stakeholders, and needs for moving forward with implementation most successfully. For additional information on stakeholder engagement related to Indicator 17, please see the Indicator 17 APR.  
  
Stakeholder engagement is an essential component of MA DESE’s special education agenda.

An additional MA DESE stakeholder group focused on Indicators 1 and 2 is the Dropout Prevention and Re-engagement (DPR) Advisory Team. This leadership team is composed of district and school-level leaders, school counselors, general, EL, and special education teachers, and community organizations such as America's Promise, MA Business Alliance for Education (MBAE), Boston Private Industry Council, and Latino Education Institute at Worcester State University. The group includes three parents of students with IEPs. This network reviews state and local data for a variety of identified data points affecting graduation and dropout rates such as attendance, behavior, etc. The results of FFY2020 meetings was to identify improved attendance and strengthening school-home partnerships (family engagement) as priority strategies to improve graduation rates for all students but especially students with IEPs, English Language (EL) students and historically underserved student populations.

**Prepopulated Data**

| **Source** | **Date** | **Description** | **Data** |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| SY 2019-20 Exiting Data Groups (EDFacts file spec FS009; Data Group 85) | 05/26/2021 | Number of youth with IEPs (ages 14-21) who exited special education by graduating with a regular high school diploma (a) | 8,526 |
| SY 2019-20 Exiting Data Groups (EDFacts file spec FS009; Data Group 85) | 05/26/2021 | Number of youth with IEPs (ages 14-21) who exited special education by graduating with a state-defined alternate diploma (b) | 0 |
| SY 2019-20 Exiting Data Groups (EDFacts file spec FS009; Data Group 85) | 05/26/2021 | Number of youth with IEPs (ages 14-21) who exited special education by receiving a certificate (c) | 597 |
| SY 2019-20 Exiting Data Groups (EDFacts file spec FS009; Data Group 85) | 05/26/2021 | Number of youth with IEPs (ages 14-21) who exited special education by reaching maximum age (d) | 386 |
| SY 2019-20 Exiting Data Groups (EDFacts file spec FS009; Data Group 85) | 05/26/2021 | Number of youth with IEPs (ages 14-21) who exited special education due to dropping out (e) | 1,101 |

**FFY 2020 SPP/APR Data**

| **Number of youth with IEPs (ages 14-21) who exited special education due to graduating with a regular high school diploma** | **Number of all youth with IEPs who exited special education (ages 14-21)** | **FFY 2019 Data** | **FFY 2020 Target** | **FFY 2020 Data** | **Status** | **Slippage** |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| 8,526 | 10,610 | 73.94% | 76.33% | 80.36% | Met target | N/A |

**Graduation Conditions**

**Provide a narrative that describes the conditions youth must meet in order to graduate with a regular high school diploma.**

To earn a diploma from a public high school in Massachusetts, a student must:  
1) Earn a Competency Determination (CD) which means achieving a specific level of proficiency on Grade 10 English Language Arts (ELA); Mathematics; and Science, Technology, and Engineering (STE) statewide assessments administered through the Massachusetts Comprehensive Assessment System (MCAS). Students may fulfill the CD requirements through the standard MCAS tests or by submitting an MCAS cohort appeal or MCAS competency portfolio, which is an alternative method of student assessment that uses a collection of a student's work samples to measure the educational performance of a small number of students who possess skills at or near grade level, but who cannot demonstrate those skills on the standard MCAS tests, even with accommodations, due to a significant disability; and   
2) Meet local graduation requirements for the LEA that is awarding the diploma.

**Are the conditions that youth with IEPs must meet to graduate with a regular high school diploma different from the conditions noted above? (yes/no)**

YES

**If yes, explain the difference in conditions that youth with IEPs must meet.**

To earn a diploma from a public high school in Massachusetts, a student with an IEP must also have received a free appropriate public education (FAPE), in addition to the two conditions described above. For further information, please see Administrative Advisory SPED 2018-2: Secondary Transition Services and Graduation with a High School Diploma, https://www.doe.mass.edu/sped/advisories/2018-2.html.

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

1. In response to the disruptions caused by COVID in the 2019-2020 school year, OSEP is allowing states to use the previous year's data (2019 for this Indicator) to set a new baseline. This is the first year of reporting using the new measurement for Indicator 1. MA DESE used the previously approved FS009 exiting data from FFY2019 to re-calculate the graduation rate for FFY 2019 based on the new measurement and to select that year as the baseline. The newly calculated 2019 rate is 76.33%  
  
2. For students graduating in this reporting year the MA Board of Elementary and Secondary Education (BESE) modified the CD requirement for students in grade 12 due to the interruption to the testing cycle caused by Covid 19. By modifying the CD requirement students who had not yet taken and received a proficient or higher score on the MCAS tests could earn their diploma by taking a course aligned to the curriculum frameworks in the relevant subject matter, and demonstrating competency in that subject. MA DESE provided a list of the acceptable courses for ELA, Mathematics, and STE. The superintendent of the LEA was responsible for certifiying the successful completion of said courses.  
  
3.MA DESE is engaged in ongoing data analysis to inform the design of technical assistance that will support LEAs in their continuing efforts to improve graduation rates.

## 1 - Prior FFY Required Actions

None

## 1 - OSEP Response

The State reported it revised the baseline for this indicator, using section 618 exiting data from FFY 2019. However, OSEP cannot accept that baseline revision because the State's FFY 2019 baseline data reported in the Historical Data table (65.6%) is not consistent with the data the State submitted in its FFY 2019 (i.e. 2018-19) section 618 exiting data (76.33%).   
  
OSEP cannot accept the State's FFYs 2020-2025 targets for this indicator because OSEP cannot determine whether the State’s end target for FFY 2025 reflects improvement over the State’s baseline data, given the discrepancy in the baseline data, as noted above. The State must ensure that its FFY 2025 target reflects improvement over the baseline.

## 1 - Required Actions

# Indicator 2: Drop Out

**Instructions and Measurement**

**Monitoring Priority:** FAPE in the LRE

**Results indicator:** Percent of youth with IEPs who exited special education due to dropping out. (20 U.S.C. 1416 (a)(3)(A))

**Data Source**

OPTION 1:

Same data as used for reporting to the Department under section 618 of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), using the definitions in EDFacts file specification FS009.

OPTION 2 (For FFY 2020 ONLY):

Use same data source and measurement that the State used to report in its FFY 2010 SPP/APR that was submitted on February 1, 2012.

**Measurement**

OPTION 1:

States must report a percentage using the number of youth with IEPs (ages 14-21) who exited special education due to dropping out in the numerator and the number of all youth with IEPs who exited special education (ages 14-21) in the denominator.

OPTION 2 (For FFY 2020 ONLY):

Use same data source and measurement that the State used to report in its FFY 2010 SPP/APR that was submitted on February 1, 2012.

**Instructions**

*Sampling is not allowed.*

Data for this indicator are “lag” data. Describe the results of the State’s examination of the data for the year before the reporting year (e.g., for the FFY 2020 SPP/APR, use data from 2019-2020), and compare the results to the target.

With the FFY 2020 SPP/APR, due February 1, 2022, States may use either option 1 or 2. States using Option 2 must provide the actual numbers used in the calculation.

OPTION 1:

**Use 618 exiting data** for the year before the reporting year (e.g., for the FFY 2020 SPP/APR, use data from 2019-2020). Include in the denominator the following exiting categories: (a) graduated with a regular high school diploma; (b) graduated with a state-defined alternate diploma; (c) received a certificate; (d) reached maximum age; or (e) dropped out.

Do not include in the denominator the number of youths with IEPs who exited special education due to: (a) transferring to regular education; or (b) who moved, but are known to be continuing in an educational program.

OPTION 2:

Use the annual event school dropout rate for students leaving a school in a single year determined in accordance with the National Center for Education Statistic's Common Core of Data.

If the State has made or proposes to make changes to the data source or measurement under Option 2, when compared to the information reported in its FFY 2010 SPP/APR submitted on February 1, 2012, the State should include a justification as to why such changes are warranted.

Options 1 and 2:

Provide a narrative that describes what counts as dropping out for all youth. Please explain if there is a difference between what counts as dropping out for all students and what counts as dropping out for students with IEPs.

**Beginning with the FFY 2021 SPP/APR, due February 1, 2023**, States must report data using Option 1 (i.e., the same data as used for reporting to the Department under section 618 of the IDEA). Option 2 will not be available beginning with the FFY 2021 SPP/APR.

## 2 - Indicator Data

**Historical Data**

| **Baseline Year** | **Baseline Data** |
| --- | --- |
| 2019 | 13.97% |

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **FFY** | **2015** | **2016** | **2017** | **2018** | **2019** |
| Target <= | 2.70% | 2.40% | 2.10% | 1.70% | 1.70% |
| Data | 3.50% | 3.13% | 3.29% | 3.36% | 3.43% |

**Targets**

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **FFY** | **2020** | **2021** | **2022** | **2023** | **2024** | **2025** |
| Target <= | 13.97% | 13.47% | 12.97% | 12.47% | 11.97% | 11.47% |

**Targets: Description of Stakeholder Input**

MA DESE works closely with stakeholders on developing targets and setting priorities for improvement in each of the areas reported in the SPP/APR.   
  
The Special Education Advisory Panel, comprised of parents, individuals with disabilities, educators, administrators, and representatives from state agencies, higher education, and other stakeholder groups, meets up to five times each school year to review data, discuss policy priorities, and identify unmet needs in the area of special education consistent with state law and IDEA Part B. At every meeting, the group addresses various aspects of the SPP/APR and the State’s general supervision systems, as well as relevant policy matters. A special focus during the pandemic has been COVID-19’s effect on compliance and performance areas related to the SPP/APR Indicators. MA DESE facilitates discussion of baseline and current data, longitudinal targets, historical rates of performance and compliance and the trajectory for improvement for each of the Indicators, and the effectiveness of focused improvement activities within the context of the state's Results Driven Accountability framework.   
  
MA DESE has set a high priority on expanding the agency’s capacity to solicit broad and diverse stakeholder input to set SPP/APR targets, analyze data, develop improvement strategies, and evaluate progress. For FFY2020, MA DESE sought to improve stakeholder Indicator knowledge by posting new webpages for Indicators 1, 2, 3, 5, 6, 7, 8, and 14 with Quick Reference Guides (QRGs) and PowerPoints for each Indicator. These QRGs and PowerPoints were available in six languages that correspond to the most common languages spoken in Massachusetts: English, Spanish, Portuguese, Chinese, Vietnamese, and Haitian Creole. Narrated versions of each PowerPoint were also available in English on the YouTube page of our partner, the Federation for Children with Special Needs (the Massachusetts Parent Training and Information Center/PTIC). MA DESE solicited feedback for Indicators 1, 2, 3, 5, 6, 7, 8, and 14 baselines and targets via an online survey in English, Spanish, Portuguese, Chinese, Vietnamese, and Haitian Creole. In addition, MA DESE collaborated with the Federation for Children with Special Needs, the OSEP funded Parent Training and Information Center (PTI), to hold five virtual stakeholder information and feedback sessions on these Indicators. Meetings were simultaneously interpreted into American Sign Language, Spanish, Portuguese, and Mandarin. Other languages were available but were not requested.   
  
MA DESE also consults regularly, on a monthly or at least quarterly basis, with Massachusetts Administrators of Special Education, http://www.asepage.org/, the Federation for Children with Special Needs, https://fcsn.org/, Massachusetts Advocates for Children, https://www.massadvocates.org/, the Massachusetts Association of Approved Special Education Schools, https://maaps.org/, Massachusetts Urban Special Education Leadership Collaborative, and the Special Needs Advocacy Network, www.spanmass.org. In addition, the Massachusetts State Special Education Director at MA DESE gives monthly virtual presentations to statewide special education leaders on a wide array of special education compliance and performance topics. During all of these meetings, MA DESE solicits and receives significant feedback that informs the development of special education policy and guidance.   
  
As needed, MA DESE also convenes stakeholder working groups throughout the year to provide focused input on specific projects and policy priorities. Examples of these focused groups include the Early Childhood Interagency Coordinating Council, with membership that includes community members and state agencies, a Statewide Systemic Improvement Plan (SSIP) leadership team and working group, a family engagement workgroup, an advisory group for the Dropout Prevention and Re-engagement Network, and secondary transition stakeholder groups. MA DESE also consults with educators, parents, advocates, and others on an ad hoc basis to inform policy and practice.   
  
MA DESE engages with stakeholders on the direction of Indicator 17, the State’s Systemic Improvement Plan (SSIP), at the state, district, classroom, and community levels. Stakeholders are provided with information about activities and goals, training events and embedded supports statewide, and the availability of resources to support and expand implementation. Stakeholders at the district and school levels participate in ongoing decision making about the direction of the SSIP by providing feedback about the quality of events and supports, observed benefits for their own stakeholders, and needs for moving forward with implementation most successfully. For additional information on stakeholder engagement related to Indicator 17, please see the Indicator 17 APR.  
  
Stakeholder engagement is an essential component of MA DESE’s special education agenda.

An additional MA DESE stakeholder group focusing on Indicators 1 and 2 is the Dropout Prevention and Re-engagement (DPR) Advisory Team. This leadership team is composed of district and school-level leaders, school counselors, general, EL, and special education teachers, and community organizations such as America's Promise, MA Business Alliance for Education (MBAE), Boston Private Industry Council, and Latino Education Institute at Worcester State University. It includes 3 parents of students with IEPs. This network reviews state and local data for a variety of identified data points affecting graduation and dropout rates such as attendance, behavior, etc. The results of FFY2020 meetings was to identify improved attendance and strengthening school-home partnerships (family engagement) as priority strategies to improve graduation rates for all students but especially students with IEPs, English Language (EL) students and historically underserved student populations. These activities are now the focus of the work of this group.

**Please indicate the reporting option used on this indicator**

Option 1

**Prepopulated Data**

| **Source** | **Date** | **Description** | **Data** |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| SY 2019-20 Exiting Data Groups (EDFacts file spec FS009; Data Group 85) | 05/26/2021 | Number of youth with IEPs (ages 14-21) who exited special education by graduating with a regular high school diploma (a) | 8,526 |
| SY 2019-20 Exiting Data Groups (EDFacts file spec FS009; Data Group 85) | 05/26/2021 | Number of youth with IEPs (ages 14-21) who exited special education by graduating with a state-defined alternate diploma (b) | 0 |
| SY 2019-20 Exiting Data Groups (EDFacts file spec FS009; Data Group 85) | 05/26/2021 | Number of youth with IEPs (ages 14-21) who exited special education by receiving a certificate (c) | 597 |
| SY 2019-20 Exiting Data Groups (EDFacts file spec FS009; Data Group 85) | 05/26/2021 | Number of youth with IEPs (ages 14-21) who exited special education by reaching maximum age (d) | 386 |
| SY 2019-20 Exiting Data Groups (EDFacts file spec FS009; Data Group 85) | 05/26/2021 | Number of youth with IEPs (ages 14-21) who exited special education due to dropping out (e) | 1,101 |

**FFY 2020 SPP/APR Data**

| **Number of youth with IEPs (ages 14-21) who exited special education due to dropping out** | **Number of all youth with IEPs who exited special education (ages 14-21)** | **FFY 2019 Data** | **FFY 2020 Target** | **FFY 2020 Data** | **Status** | **Slippage** |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| 1,101 | 10,610 | 3.43% | 13.97% | 10.38% | Met target | N/A |

**Provide a narrative that describes what counts as dropping out for all youth**

In Massachusetts, a dropout- regardless of disability status - is defined as a student in grades 9-12 enrolled in a public school who, prior to graduation, leaves school for reasons other than to transfer to another public school and who does not re-enroll before the October 1 reporting date. To calculate this rate MA DESE uses dropout data obtained through the Student Information Management System (SIMS) October 1 enrollment report. Students who may have been reported as dropped out at the end of the previous year and then who re-enroll prior to the October 1 reporting date are removed from the dropout count. MA DESE also removes from the data set any student who dropped out of high school but earned a GED/HISET certificate.

**Is there a difference in what counts as dropping out for youth with IEPs? (yes/no)**

NO

**If yes, explain the difference in what counts as dropping out for youth with IEPs.**

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

1. MA DESE has made the decision to report using Option 1 for the first time this year. The question of which option to use was presented at all stakeholder meetings. After fully explaining the differences between Option 1 and Option 2 including the use of a new denominator in the calculation, stakeholders agreed Option 1 was best, supporting the state's decision.  
   
2. In order to fairly evaluate the data, MA DESE recalculated the 2019 data using the Option 1 measurement. Therefore, MA DESE used previously approved FS009 Exiting data from FFY 2019 to recalculate the dropout rate for FFY 2019 and to select that year as the baseline and therefore as the target for the FFY2020 reporting.   
  
3. MA DESE is engaged in ongoing data analysis to inform the design of technical assistance that will support LEAs in their continuing efforts to reduce dropout rates.

## 2 - Prior FFY Required Actions

None

## 2 - OSEP Response

The State has revised the baseline for this indicator, using IDEA Section 618 data from FFY 2019, and OSEP accepts that revision.  
  
The State provided targets for FFYs 2020 through 2025 for this indicator, and OSEP accepts those targets.

## 2 - Required Actions

# Indicator 3A: Participation for Children with IEPs

**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**

3A. Same data as used for reporting to the Department under Title I of the ESEA, using EDFacts file specifications FS185 and 188.

**Measurement**

A. Participation rate percent = [(# of children with IEPs participating in an assessment) divided by the (total # of children with IEPs enrolled during the testing window)]. Calculate separately for reading and math. Calculate separately for grades 4, 8, and high school. The participation rate is based on all children with IEPs, including 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 3A: Provide separate reading/language arts and mathematics participation rates for children with IEPs for each of the following grades: 4, 8, & high school. Account for ALL children with IEPs, in grades 4, 8, and high school, including children not participating in assessments and those not enrolled for a full academic year. Only include children with disabilities who had an IEP at the time of testing.

## 3A - Indicator Data

**Historical Data:**

| **Subject** | **Group** | **Group Name** | **Baseline Year** | **Baseline Data** |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Reading | A | Grade 4 | FFY2020 | 95.33% |
| Reading | B | Grade 8 | FFY2020 | 90.28% |
| Reading | C | Grade HS | FFY2020 | 92.25% |
| Math | A | Grade 4 | FFY2020 | 95.21% |
| Math | B | Grade 8 | FFY2020 | 90.12% |
| Math | C | Grade HS | FFY2020 | 91.94% |

**Targets**

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Subject** | **Group** | **Group Name** | **2020** | **2021** | **2022** | **2023** | **2024** | **2025** |
| Reading | A >= | Grade 4 | 95.00% | 95.00% | 95.00% | 95.00% | 95.00% | 95.00% |
| Reading | B >= | Grade 8 | 90.00% | 95.00% | 95.00% | 95.00% | 95.00% | 95.00% |
| Reading | C >= | Grade HS | 90.00% | 95.00% | 95.00% | 95.00% | 95.00% | 95.00% |
| Math | A >= | Grade 4 | 95.00% | 95.00% | 95.00% | 95.00% | 95.00% | 95.00% |
| Math | B >= | Grade 8 | 90.00% | 95.00% | 95.00% | 95.00% | 95.00% | 95.00% |
| Math | C >= | Grade HS | 90.00% | 95.00% | 95.00% | 95.00% | 95.00% | 95.00% |

**Targets: Description of Stakeholder Input**

MA DESE works closely with stakeholders on developing targets and setting priorities for improvement in each of the areas reported in the SPP/APR.   
  
The Special Education Advisory Panel, comprised of parents, individuals with disabilities, educators, administrators, and representatives from state agencies, higher education, and other stakeholder groups, meets up to five times each school year to review data, discuss policy priorities, and identify unmet needs in the area of special education consistent with state law and IDEA Part B. At every meeting, the group addresses various aspects of the SPP/APR and the State’s general supervision systems, as well as relevant policy matters. A special focus during the pandemic has been COVID-19’s effect on compliance and performance areas related to the SPP/APR Indicators. MA DESE facilitates discussion of baseline and current data, longitudinal targets, historical rates of performance and compliance and the trajectory for improvement for each of the Indicators, and the effectiveness of focused improvement activities within the context of the state's Results Driven Accountability framework.   
  
MA DESE has set a high priority on expanding the agency’s capacity to solicit broad and diverse stakeholder input to set SPP/APR targets, analyze data, develop improvement strategies, and evaluate progress. For FFY2020, MA DESE sought to improve stakeholder Indicator knowledge by posting new webpages for Indicators 1, 2, 3, 5, 6, 7, 8, and 14 with Quick Reference Guides (QRGs) and PowerPoints for each Indicator. These QRGs and PowerPoints were available in six languages that correspond to the most common languages spoken in Massachusetts: English, Spanish, Portuguese, Chinese, Vietnamese, and Haitian Creole. Narrated versions of each PowerPoint were also available in English on the YouTube page of our partner, the Federation for Children with Special Needs (the Massachusetts Parent Training and Information Center/PTIC). MA DESE solicited feedback for Indicators 1, 2, 3, 5, 6, 7, 8, and 14 baselines and targets via an online survey in English, Spanish, Portuguese, Chinese, Vietnamese, and Haitian Creole. In addition, MA DESE collaborated with the Federation for Children with Special Needs, the OSEP funded Parent Training and Information Center (PTI), to hold five virtual stakeholder information and feedback sessions on these Indicators. Meetings were simultaneously interpreted into American Sign Language, Spanish, Portuguese, and Mandarin. Other languages were available but were not requested.   
  
MA DESE also consults regularly, on a monthly or at least quarterly basis, with Massachusetts Administrators of Special Education, http://www.asepage.org/, the Federation for Children with Special Needs, https://fcsn.org/, Massachusetts Advocates for Children, https://www.massadvocates.org/, the Massachusetts Association of Approved Special Education Schools, https://maaps.org/, Massachusetts Urban Special Education Leadership Collaborative, and the Special Needs Advocacy Network, www.spanmass.org. In addition, the Massachusetts State Special Education Director at MA DESE gives monthly virtual presentations to statewide special education leaders on a wide array of special education compliance and performance topics. During all of these meetings, MA DESE solicits and receives significant feedback that informs the development of special education policy and guidance.   
  
As needed, MA DESE also convenes stakeholder working groups throughout the year to provide focused input on specific projects and policy priorities. Examples of these focused groups include the Early Childhood Interagency Coordinating Council, with membership that includes community members and state agencies, a Statewide Systemic Improvement Plan (SSIP) leadership team and working group, a family engagement workgroup, an advisory group for the Dropout Prevention and Re-engagement Network, and secondary transition stakeholder groups. MA DESE also consults with educators, parents, advocates, and others on an ad hoc basis to inform policy and practice.   
  
MA DESE engages with stakeholders on the direction of Indicator 17, the State’s Systemic Improvement Plan (SSIP), at the state, district, classroom, and community levels. Stakeholders are provided with information about activities and goals, training events and embedded supports statewide, and the availability of resources to support and expand implementation. Stakeholders at the district and school levels participate in ongoing decision making about the direction of the SSIP by providing feedback about the quality of events and supports, observed benefits for their own stakeholders, and needs for moving forward with implementation most successfully. For additional information on stakeholder engagement related to Indicator 17, please see the Indicator 17 APR.  
  
Stakeholder engagement is an essential component of MA DESE’s special education agenda.

MA DESE, in consultation with the stakeholder groups, set Indicator 3 targets through FFY 2025. In setting these targets, the stakeholder groups reviewed statewide longitudinal data, improvement activities, and State policies, including the ESEA waiver granted by the U.S. Department of Education. At its May and June 2021 meetings, the Advisory Panel reviewed the data and endorsed the proposal of maintaining a 95% target participation for reading and math assessments through FFY 2025 for grades 4, 8, and 10, as did parents participating in December 2021 focus groups convened by the Federation for Children with Special Needs.   
  
Moving forward, MA DESE will continue to engage its special education stakeholders in discussions around proficiency on the Next-Generation MCAS. As more years of assessment results are available, allowing for year-over-year comparison, MA DESE, with support from the IDEA Data Center and in collaboration with the Advisory Panel and other stakeholders, will continue to update targets that are rigorous yet reflective of actual and anticipated growth.

**FFY 2020 Data Disaggregation from EDFacts**

**Data Source:**

SY 2020-21 Assessment Data Groups - Reading (EDFacts file spec FS188; Data Group: 589)

**Date:**

03/30/2022

**Reading Assessment Participation Data by Grade**

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Group** | **Grade 4** | **Grade 8** | **Grade HS** |
| a. Children with IEPs\* | 14,207 | 14,611 | 12,395 |
| b. Children with IEPs in regular assessment with no accommodations | 3,648 | 2,214 | 2,380 |
| c. Children with IEPs in regular assessment with accommodations | 9,041 | 10,183 | 8,237 |
| d. Children with IEPs in alternate assessment against alternate standards | 855 | 794 | 818 |

**Data Source:**

SY 2020-21 Assessment Data Groups - Math (EDFacts file spec FS185; Data Group: 588)

**Date:**

03/30/2022

**Math Assessment Participation Data by Grade**

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Group** | **Grade 4** | **Grade 8** | **Grade HS** |
| a. Children with IEPs\* | 14,212 | 14,612 | 12,349 |
| b. Children with IEPs in regular assessment with no accommodations | 2,952 | 1,961 | 2,367 |
| c. Children with IEPs in regular assessment with accommodations | 9,734 | 10,411 | 8,173 |
| d. Children with IEPs in alternate assessment against alternate standards | 845 | 797 | 814 |

\*The children with IEPs count excludes children with disabilities who were reported as exempt due to significant medical emergency in row a for all the prefilled data in this indicator.

**FFY 2020 SPP/APR Data: Reading Assessment**

| **Group** | **Group Name** | **Number of Children with IEPs Participating** | **Number of Children with IEPs** | **FFY 2019 Data** | **FFY 2020 Target** | **FFY 2020 Data** | **Status** | **Slippage** |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **A** | Grade 4 | 13,544 | 14,207 |  | 95.00% | 95.33% | N/A | N/A |
| **B** | Grade 8 | 13,191 | 14,611 |  | 90.00% | 90.28% | N/A | N/A |
| **C** | Grade HS | 11,435 | 12,395 |  | 90.00% | 92.25% | N/A | N/A |

**FFY 2020 SPP/APR Data: Math Assessment**

| **Group** | **Group Name** | **Number of Children with IEPs Participating** | **Number of Children with IEPs** | **FFY 2019 Data** | **FFY 2020 Target** | **FFY 2020 Data** | **Status** | **Slippage** |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **A** | Grade 4 | 13,531 | 14,212 |  | 95.00% | 95.21% | N/A | N/A |
| **B** | Grade 8 | 13,169 | 14,612 |  | 90.00% | 90.12% | N/A | N/A |
| **C** | Grade HS | 11,354 | 12,349 |  | 90.00% | 91.94% | N/A | N/A |

**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.**

Student Participation and Performance on Statewide Assessments (Indicator 3) Comprehensive reports on state and LEA performance are found at:   
https://profiles.doe.mass.edu/mcas/participation.aspx?linkid=26&orgcode=00000000&fycode=2021&orgtypecode=0&

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

The 1993 Massachusetts Education Reform Law, M.G.L. c. 69, § 1I, mandates that all students educated with Massachusetts public funds participate in MCAS testing. MA DESE regularly updates its student participation requirements at http://www.doe.mass.edu/mcas/participation.html?section=gr3-8and10. This report displays the most current data compared with the goals set by federal and state accountability requirements.   
  
The COVID-19 pandemic interrupted testing schedules, which resulted in lower participation statewide in most grades and subjects. MA DESE did not issue school, district, or state accountability determinations in 2021. In April 2021, as a result of the cancellation of the spring 2020 MCAS testing due to the COVID-19 pandemic, MA DESE requested and received a waiver of certain federal accountability requirements for the 2020-2021 school year from the United States Department of Education (USED).  
  
In contrast to prior SPP/APRs, the participation rates reported above are for students in grades 4, 8, and 10 only.   
  
For more information, visit our Accountability Lists, Materials, and Tools website: http://www.doe.mass.edu/accountability/lists-tools/

## 3A - Prior FFY Required Actions

None

## 3A - OSEP Response

The State has revised the baseline for this indicator, using data from FFY 2020, but OSEP cannot accept that baseline revision because the State's FFY 2020 baseline data reported in the Historical Data table are not consistent with the State's FFY 2020 data reported in the FFY 2020 SPP/APR Data table.   
  
The State provided targets for FFYs 2020 through 2025 for this indicator, and OSEP accepts those targets.

## 3A - Required Actions

# 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 EDFacts 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 | 2020 | 20.40% |
| Reading | B | Grade 8 | 2020 | 11.16% |
| Reading | C | Grade HS | 2020 | 26.99% |
| Math | A | Grade 4 | 2020 | 11.77% |
| Math | B | Grade 8 | 2020 | 7.24% |
| Math | C | Grade HS | 2020 | 15.41% |

**Targets**

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Subject** | **Group** | **Group Name** | **2020** | **2021** | **2022** | **2023** | **2024** | **2025** |
| Reading | A >= | Grade 4 | 20.00% | 21.00% | 22.00% | 23.00% | 24.00% | 25.00% |
| Reading | B >= | Grade 8 | 11.00% | 12.00% | 13.00% | 14.00% | 15.00% | 16.00% |
| Reading | C >= | Grade HS | 26.00% | 27.00% | 28.00% | 29.00% | 30.00% | 31.00% |
| Math | A >= | Grade 4 | 11.00% | 12.00% | 13.00% | 14.00% | 15.00% | 16.00% |
| Math | B >= | Grade 8 | 7.00% | 8.00% | 9.00% | 10.00% | 11.00% | 12.00% |
| Math | C >= | Grade HS | 15.00% | 16.00% | 17.00% | 18.00% | 19.00% | 20.00% |

**Targets: Description of Stakeholder Input**

MA DESE works closely with stakeholders on developing targets and setting priorities for improvement in each of the areas reported in the SPP/APR.   
  
The Special Education Advisory Panel, comprised of parents, individuals with disabilities, educators, administrators, and representatives from state agencies, higher education, and other stakeholder groups, meets up to five times each school year to review data, discuss policy priorities, and identify unmet needs in the area of special education consistent with state law and IDEA Part B. At every meeting, the group addresses various aspects of the SPP/APR and the State’s general supervision systems, as well as relevant policy matters. A special focus during the pandemic has been COVID-19’s effect on compliance and performance areas related to the SPP/APR Indicators. MA DESE facilitates discussion of baseline and current data, longitudinal targets, historical rates of performance and compliance and the trajectory for improvement for each of the Indicators, and the effectiveness of focused improvement activities within the context of the state's Results Driven Accountability framework.   
  
MA DESE has set a high priority on expanding the agency’s capacity to solicit broad and diverse stakeholder input to set SPP/APR targets, analyze data, develop improvement strategies, and evaluate progress. For FFY2020, MA DESE sought to improve stakeholder Indicator knowledge by posting new webpages for Indicators 1, 2, 3, 5, 6, 7, 8, and 14 with Quick Reference Guides (QRGs) and PowerPoints for each Indicator. These QRGs and PowerPoints were available in six languages that correspond to the most common languages spoken in Massachusetts: English, Spanish, Portuguese, Chinese, Vietnamese, and Haitian Creole. Narrated versions of each PowerPoint were also available in English on the YouTube page of our partner, the Federation for Children with Special Needs (the Massachusetts Parent Training and Information Center/PTIC). MA DESE solicited feedback for Indicators 1, 2, 3, 5, 6, 7, 8, and 14 baselines and targets via an online survey in English, Spanish, Portuguese, Chinese, Vietnamese, and Haitian Creole. In addition, MA DESE collaborated with the Federation for Children with Special Needs, the OSEP funded Parent Training and Information Center (PTI), to hold five virtual stakeholder information and feedback sessions on these Indicators. Meetings were simultaneously interpreted into American Sign Language, Spanish, Portuguese, and Mandarin. Other languages were available but were not requested.   
  
MA DESE also consults regularly, on a monthly or at least quarterly basis, with Massachusetts Administrators of Special Education, http://www.asepage.org/, the Federation for Children with Special Needs, https://fcsn.org/, Massachusetts Advocates for Children, https://www.massadvocates.org/, the Massachusetts Association of Approved Special Education Schools, https://maaps.org/, Massachusetts Urban Special Education Leadership Collaborative, and the Special Needs Advocacy Network, www.spanmass.org. In addition, the Massachusetts State Special Education Director at MA DESE gives monthly virtual presentations to statewide special education leaders on a wide array of special education compliance and performance topics. During all of these meetings, MA DESE solicits and receives significant feedback that informs the development of special education policy and guidance.   
  
As needed, MA DESE also convenes stakeholder working groups throughout the year to provide focused input on specific projects and policy priorities. Examples of these focused groups include the Early Childhood Interagency Coordinating Council, with membership that includes community members and state agencies, a Statewide Systemic Improvement Plan (SSIP) leadership team and working group, a family engagement workgroup, an advisory group for the Dropout Prevention and Re-engagement Network, and secondary transition stakeholder groups. MA DESE also consults with educators, parents, advocates, and others on an ad hoc basis to inform policy and practice.   
  
MA DESE engages with stakeholders on the direction of Indicator 17, the State’s Systemic Improvement Plan (SSIP), at the state, district, classroom, and community levels. Stakeholders are provided with information about activities and goals, training events and embedded supports statewide, and the availability of resources to support and expand implementation. Stakeholders at the district and school levels participate in ongoing decision making about the direction of the SSIP by providing feedback about the quality of events and supports, observed benefits for their own stakeholders, and needs for moving forward with implementation most successfully. For additional information on stakeholder engagement related to Indicator 17, please see the Indicator 17 APR.  
  
Stakeholder engagement is an essential component of MA DESE’s special education agenda.

MA DESE, in consultation with the stakeholder groups, set Indicator 3 targets through FFY 2025. In setting these targets, the stakeholder groups reviewed statewide longitudinal data, improvement activities, and State policies, including the ESEA waiver granted by the U.S. Department of Education. The stakeholder groups recommended Indicator 3 targets based on the ESEA waiver and supported setting ambitious targets for Indicator 3, as this reflects the State’s commitment that all students, regardless of disability, participate in the State’s assessment system.  
  
At its May and June 2021 meetings, the Advisory Panel reviewed the data and endorsed the proposed targets for Indicator 3B, as did parents participating in December 2021 focus groups convened by the Federation for Children with Special Needs.   
  
For Reading, (English Language Arts) Massachusetts set targets for 3B using FFY 2020 as the baseline year, with a 1 percentage point increase each year through FFY 2025 to ensure rigorous yet attainable goals.   
  
For Mathematics, Massachusetts set targets for 3B using FFY 2020 as the baseline year, with a 1 percentage point increase each year through FFY 2025 to ensure rigorous yet attainable goals.   
  
Moving forward, MA DESE will continue to engage its special education stakeholders in discussions around proficiency on the Next-Generation MCAS. As more years of assessment results are available, allowing for year over year comparison, MA DESE, with support from the IDEA Data Center and in collaboration with the Advisory Panel and other stakeholders, will continue to update targets that are rigorous yet reflective of actual and anticipated growth.

**FFY 2020 Data Disaggregation from EDFacts**

**Data Source:**

SY 2020-21 Assessment Data Groups - Reading (EDFacts file spec FS178; Data Group: 584)

**Date:**

03/03/2022

**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 regular assessment | 12,689 | 12,397 | 10,617 |
| b. Children with IEPs in regular assessment with no accommodations scored at or above proficient against grade level | 1,116 | 471 | 868 |
| c. Children with IEPs in regular assessment with accommodations scored at or above proficient against grade level | 1,472 | 913 | 1,998 |

**Data Source:**

SY 2020-21 Assessment Data Groups - Math (EDFacts file spec FS175; Data Group: 583)

**Date:**

03/03/2022

**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 regular assessment | 12,686 | 12,372 | 10,540 |
| b. Children with IEPs in regular assessment with no accommodations scored at or above proficient against grade level | 729 | 353 | 589 |
| c. Children with IEPs in regular assessment with accommodations scored at or above proficient against grade level | 764 | 543 | 1,035 |

**FFY 2020 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 2019 Data** | **FFY 2020 Target** | **FFY 2020 Data** | **Status** | **Slippage** |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **A** | Grade 4 | 2,588 | 12,689 |  | 20.00% | 20.40% | N/A | N/A |
| **B** | Grade 8 | 1,384 | 12,397 |  | 11.00% | 11.16% | N/A | N/A |
| **C** | Grade HS | 2,866 | 10,617 |  | 26.00% | 26.99% | N/A | N/A |

**FFY 2020 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 2019 Data** | **FFY 2020 Target** | **FFY 2020 Data** | **Status** | **Slippage** |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **A** | Grade 4 | 1,493 | 12,686 |  | 11.00% | 11.77% | N/A | N/A |
| **B** | Grade 8 | 896 | 12,372 |  | 7.00% | 7.24% | N/A | N/A |
| **C** | Grade HS | 1,624 | 10,540 |  | 15.00% | 15.41% | N/A | N/A |

**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.**

Student Participation and Performance on Statewide Assessments (Indicator 3) Comprehensive reports on state and LEA performance are found at   
https://profiles.doe.mass.edu/mcas/participation.aspx?linkid=26&orgcode=00000000&fycode=2021&orgtypecode=0&

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

Over the last few years, MA DESE has gradually implemented a new statewide assessment, called the Next-Generation MCAS. Compared to the legacy MCAS, the new assessment better aligns to the Massachusetts Curriculum Frameworks and better measures students' preparation for the next grade level and college/career readiness. The Next-Generation MCAS also incorporates new, more rigorous test content that is aligned to standards that reflect higher expectations for college readiness and proficiency at the next grade level. In March 2017, the Massachusetts Board of Elementary and Secondary Education adopted new achievement levels for the next-generation tests. Grades 3-8 were introduced to the Next Generation MCAS in 2017, and grade 10 was introduced to the Next Generation MCAS in 2019. These next-generation achievement levels differ from the legacy MCAS achievement levels and are reported using a different scale. The next-generation achievement levels are designed to provide an indication of whether a student is on track to succeed in the subject matter and whether extra academic assistance may be needed for the student.   
  
Beginning in the spring of 2019, all students in grades 3-8 and grade 10 now take the Next-Generation MCAS in reading (English Language Arts (ELA)) and math. For reporting purposes as required by the SPP/APR, MA DESE reports student scores of Meeting Expectations and Exceeding Expectations as proficient. More information on the Next-Gen MCAS is available at http://www.doe.mass.edu/mcas/nextgen/resources.html.  
  
This report displays the most current data compared with the goals set by federal and state accountability requirements. In contrast to prior SPP/APRs, the participation rates reported above are for students in grades 4, 8, and 10 only.   
  
The COVID-19 pandemic interrupted testing schedules, which resulted in lower participation statewide in most grades and subjects. MA DESE did not issue school, district, or state accountability determinations in 2021. In April 2021, as a result of the cancellation of the spring 2020 MCAS testing due to the COVID-19 pandemic, MA DESE requested and received a waiver of certain federal accountability requirements for the 2020-2021 school year from the United States Department of Education (USED).  
  
For more information, visit our Accountability Lists, Materials, and Tools website: http://www.doe.mass.edu/accountability/lists-tools/

## 3B - Prior FFY Required Actions

None

## 3B - OSEP Response

The State has revised the baseline for this indicator, using data from FFY 2020, but OSEP cannot accept that baseline revision because the State's FFY 2020 baseline data reported in the Historical Data table are not consistent with the State's FFY 2020 data reported in the FFY 2020 SPP/APR Data table.   
  
OSEP cannot accept the State's FFYs 2020-2025 targets for this indicator because OSEP cannot determine whether the State’s end targets for FFY 2025 reflect improvement over the State’s baseline data, given the discrepancy in the baseline data, as noted above. The State must ensure that its FFY 2025 targets reflect improvement over the baseline.

## 3B - Required Actions

# Indicator 3C: Proficiency for Children with IEPs (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 EDFacts 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 | 2020 | 0.00% |
| Reading | B | Grade 8 | 2020 | 0.00% |
| Reading | C | Grade HS | 2020 | 0.00% |
| Math | A | Grade 4 | 2020 | 0.00% |
| Math | B | Grade 8 | 2020 | 0.00% |
| Math | C | Grade HS | 2020 | 0.00% |

**Targets**

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Subject** | **Group** | **Group Name** | **2020** | **2021** | **2022** | **2023** | **2024** | **2025** |
| Reading | A >= | Grade 4 | 45.00% | 46.00% | 47.00% | 48.00% | 49.00% | 50.00% |
| Reading | B >= | Grade 8 | 47.00% | 48.00% | 49.00% | 50.00% | 51.00% | 52.00% |
| Reading | C >= | Grade HS | 45.00% | 46.00% | 47.00% | 48.00% | 49.00% | 50.00% |
| Math | A >= | Grade 4 | 71.00% | 72.00% | 73.00% | 74.00% | 75.00% | 76.00% |
| Math | B >= | Grade 8 | 67.00% | 68.00% | 69.00% | 70.00% | 71.00% | 72.00% |
| Math | C >= | Grade HS | 65.00% | 66.00% | 67.00% | 68.00% | 69.00% | 70.00% |

**Targets: Description of Stakeholder Input**

MA DESE works closely with stakeholders on developing targets and setting priorities for improvement in each of the areas reported in the SPP/APR.   
  
The Special Education Advisory Panel, comprised of parents, individuals with disabilities, educators, administrators, and representatives from state agencies, higher education, and other stakeholder groups, meets up to five times each school year to review data, discuss policy priorities, and identify unmet needs in the area of special education consistent with state law and IDEA Part B. At every meeting, the group addresses various aspects of the SPP/APR and the State’s general supervision systems, as well as relevant policy matters. A special focus during the pandemic has been COVID-19’s effect on compliance and performance areas related to the SPP/APR Indicators. MA DESE facilitates discussion of baseline and current data, longitudinal targets, historical rates of performance and compliance and the trajectory for improvement for each of the Indicators, and the effectiveness of focused improvement activities within the context of the state's Results Driven Accountability framework.   
  
MA DESE has set a high priority on expanding the agency’s capacity to solicit broad and diverse stakeholder input to set SPP/APR targets, analyze data, develop improvement strategies, and evaluate progress. For FFY2020, MA DESE sought to improve stakeholder Indicator knowledge by posting new webpages for Indicators 1, 2, 3, 5, 6, 7, 8, and 14 with Quick Reference Guides (QRGs) and PowerPoints for each Indicator. These QRGs and PowerPoints were available in six languages that correspond to the most common languages spoken in Massachusetts: English, Spanish, Portuguese, Chinese, Vietnamese, and Haitian Creole. Narrated versions of each PowerPoint were also available in English on the YouTube page of our partner, the Federation for Children with Special Needs (the Massachusetts Parent Training and Information Center/PTIC). MA DESE solicited feedback for Indicators 1, 2, 3, 5, 6, 7, 8, and 14 baselines and targets via an online survey in English, Spanish, Portuguese, Chinese, Vietnamese, and Haitian Creole. In addition, MA DESE collaborated with the Federation for Children with Special Needs, the OSEP funded Parent Training and Information Center (PTI), to hold five virtual stakeholder information and feedback sessions on these Indicators. Meetings were simultaneously interpreted into American Sign Language, Spanish, Portuguese, and Mandarin. Other languages were available but were not requested.   
  
MA DESE also consults regularly, on a monthly or at least quarterly basis, with Massachusetts Administrators of Special Education, http://www.asepage.org/, the Federation for Children with Special Needs, https://fcsn.org/, Massachusetts Advocates for Children, https://www.massadvocates.org/, the Massachusetts Association of Approved Special Education Schools, https://maaps.org/, Massachusetts Urban Special Education Leadership Collaborative, and the Special Needs Advocacy Network, www.spanmass.org. In addition, the Massachusetts State Special Education Director at MA DESE gives monthly virtual presentations to statewide special education leaders on a wide array of special education compliance and performance topics. During all of these meetings, MA DESE solicits and receives significant feedback that informs the development of special education policy and guidance.   
  
As needed, MA DESE also convenes stakeholder working groups throughout the year to provide focused input on specific projects and policy priorities. Examples of these focused groups include the Early Childhood Interagency Coordinating Council, with membership that includes community members and state agencies, a Statewide Systemic Improvement Plan (SSIP) leadership team and working group, a family engagement workgroup, an advisory group for the Dropout Prevention and Re-engagement Network, and secondary transition stakeholder groups. MA DESE also consults with educators, parents, advocates, and others on an ad hoc basis to inform policy and practice.   
  
MA DESE engages with stakeholders on the direction of Indicator 17, the State’s Systemic Improvement Plan (SSIP), at the state, district, classroom, and community levels. Stakeholders are provided with information about activities and goals, training events and embedded supports statewide, and the availability of resources to support and expand implementation. Stakeholders at the district and school levels participate in ongoing decision making about the direction of the SSIP by providing feedback about the quality of events and supports, observed benefits for their own stakeholders, and needs for moving forward with implementation most successfully. For additional information on stakeholder engagement related to Indicator 17, please see the Indicator 17 APR.  
  
Stakeholder engagement is an essential component of MA DESE’s special education agenda.

MA DESE, in consultation with the stakeholder groups, set Indicator 3 targets through FFY 2025. In setting these targets, the stakeholder groups reviewed statewide longitudinal data, improvement activities, and State policies, including the ESEA waiver granted by the U.S. Department of Education. The stakeholder groups recommended Indicator 3 targets based on the ESEA waiver and supported setting ambitious targets for Indicator 3, as this reflects the State’s commitment that all students, regardless of disability, participate in the State’s assessment system.  
  
At its May and June 2021 meetings, the Advisory Panel reviewed the data and endorsed the proposed targets for Indicator 3C, as did parents participating in December 2021 focus groups convened by the Federation for Children with Special Needs.   
  
For Reading, (English Language Arts) Massachusetts set targets for 3C using FFY 2020 as the baseline year, with a 1 percentage point increase each year through FFY 2025 to ensure rigorous yet attainable goals.   
  
For Mathematics, Massachusetts set targets for 3C using FFY 2020 as the baseline year, with a 1 percentage point increase each year through FFY2025 to ensure rigorous yet attainable goals.   
  
Moving forward, MA DESE will continue to engage its special education stakeholders in discussions around proficiency on the Next-Generation MCAS. As more years of assessment results are available, allowing for year over year comparison, MA DESE, with support from the IDEA Data Center and in collaboration with the Advisory Panel and other stakeholders, will continue to update targets that are rigorous yet reflective of actual and anticipated growth.

**FFY 2020 Data Disaggregation from EDFacts**

**Data Source:**

SY 2020-21 Assessment Data Groups - Reading (EDFacts file spec FS178; Data Group: 584)

**Date:**

03/03/2022

**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 | 855 | 794 | 818 |
| b. Children with IEPs in alternate assessment against alternate standards scored at or above proficient | 0 | 0 | 0 |

**Data Source:**

SY 2020-21 Assessment Data Groups - Math (EDFacts file spec FS175; Data Group: 583)

**Date:**

03/03/2022

**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 | 845 | 797 | 814 |
| b. Children with IEPs in alternate assessment against alternate standards scored at or above proficient | 0 | 0 | 0 |

**FFY 2020 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 2019 Data** | **FFY 2020 Target** | **FFY 2020 Data** | **Status** | **Slippage** |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **A** | Grade 4 | 0 | 855 |  | 45.00% | 0.00% | N/A | N/A |
| **B** | Grade 8 | 0 | 794 |  | 47.00% | 0.00% | N/A | N/A |
| **C** | Grade HS | 0 | 818 |  | 45.00% | 0.00% | N/A | N/A |

**FFY 2020 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 2019 Data** | **FFY 2020 Target** | **FFY 2020 Data** | **Status** | **Slippage** |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **A** | Grade 4 | 0 | 845 |  | 71.00% | 0.00% | N/A | N/A |
| **B** | Grade 8 | 0 | 797 |  | 67.00% | 0.00% | N/A | N/A |
| **C** | Grade HS | 0 | 814 |  | 65.00% | 0.00% | N/A | N/A |

**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.**

Student Participation and Performance on Statewide Assessments (Indicator 3) Comprehensive reports on state and LEA performance are found at  
https://profiles.doe.mass.edu/mcas/participation.aspx?linkid=26&orgcode=00000000&fycode=2021&orgtypecode=0&

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

It is important to note that in Massachusetts, students are considered proficient if they received a score of Progressing, the highest possible score on the MCAS-Alt, the state's alternate assessment. The Data for the "Number of Children with IEPs Scoring At or Above Proficient Against Alternate Academic Achievement Standards" is 'zero".  
  
This report displays the most current data compared with the goals set by federal and state accountability requirements. In contrast to prior SPP/APRs, the participation rates reported above are for students in grades 4, 8, and 10 only.   
  
The COVID-19 pandemic interrupted testing schedules, which resulted in lower participation statewide in most grades and subjects.  
  
MA DESE did not issue school, district, or state accountability determinations in 2021. In April 2021, as a result of the cancellation of the spring 2020 MCAS testing due to the COVID-19 pandemic, MA DESE requested and received a waiver of certain federal accountability requirements for the 2020-2021 school year from the United States Department of Education (USED).  
  
For more information, visit our Accountability Lists, Materials, and Tools website: http://www.doe.mass.edu/accountability/lists-tools/

## 3C - Prior FFY Required Actions

None

## 3C - OSEP Response

The State has revised the baseline for this indicator, using data from FFY 2020, but OSEP cannot accept that baseline revision because the State's FFY 2020 baseline data reported in the Historical Data table are not consistent with the State's FFY 2020 data reported in the FFY 2020 SPP/APR Data table.   
  
OSEP cannot accept the State's FFYs 2020-2025 targets for this indicator because OSEP cannot determine whether the State’s end targets for FFY 2025 reflect improvement over the State’s baseline data, given the discrepancy in the baseline data, as noted above. The State must ensure that its FFY 2025 targets reflect improvement over the baseline.

## 3C - Required Actions

# Indicator 3D: Gap in Proficiency Rates (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**

3D. Same data as used for reporting to the Department under Title I of the ESEA, using EDFacts file specifications FS175 and 178.

**Measurement**

D. Proficiency rate gap = [(proficiency rate for children with IEPs scoring at or above proficient against grade level academic achievement standards for the 2020-2021 school year) subtracted from the (proficiency rate for all students scoring at or above proficient against grade level academic achievement standards for the 2020-2021 school year)]. Calculate separately for reading and math. Calculate separately for grades 4, 8, and high school. The proficiency rate includes all children 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 3D: Gap calculations in this SPP/APR must result in the proficiency rate for children with IEPs were proficient against grade level academic achievement standards for the 2020-2021 school year compared to the proficiency rate for all students who were proficient against grade level academic achievement standards for the 2020-2021 school year. Calculate separately for reading/language arts and math in each of the following grades: 4, 8, and high school, including both children 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.

## 3D - Indicator Data

**Historical Data:**

| **Subject** | **Group** | **Group Name** | **Baseline Year** | **Baseline Data** |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Reading | A | Grade 4 | 2020 | 29.30 |
| Reading | B | Grade 8 | 2020 | 29.93 |
| Reading | C | Grade HS | 2020 | 37.57 |
| Math | A | Grade 4 | 2020 | 21.96 |
| Math | B | Grade 8 | 2020 | 25.24 |
| Math | C | Grade HS | 2020 | 37.28 |

**Targets**

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Subject** | **Group** | **Group Name** | **2020** | **2021** | **2022** | **2023** | **2024** | **2025** |
| Reading | A <= | Grade 4 | 29.30 | 29.40 | 28.90 | 28.40 | 27.90 | 27.40 |
| Reading | B <= | Grade 8 | 29.93 | 29.60 | 29.10 | 28.60 | 28.10 | 27.60 |
| Reading | C <= | Grade HS | 37.57 | 38.10 | 37.60 | 37.10 | 36.60 | 36.10 |
| Math | A <= | Grade 4 | 21.96 | 21.80 | 21.30 | 20.80 | 20.30 | 19.80 |
| Math | B <= | Grade 8 | 25.24 | 24.80 | 24.30 | 23.80 | 23.30 | 22.80 |
| Math | C <= | Grade HS | 37.28 | 37.20 | 36.70 | 36.20 | 35.70 | 35.20 |

**Targets: Description of Stakeholder Input**

MA DESE works closely with stakeholders on developing targets and setting priorities for improvement in each of the areas reported in the SPP/APR.   
  
The Special Education Advisory Panel, comprised of parents, individuals with disabilities, educators, administrators, and representatives from state agencies, higher education, and other stakeholder groups, meets up to five times each school year to review data, discuss policy priorities, and identify unmet needs in the area of special education consistent with state law and IDEA Part B. At every meeting, the group addresses various aspects of the SPP/APR and the State’s general supervision systems, as well as relevant policy matters. A special focus during the pandemic has been COVID-19’s effect on compliance and performance areas related to the SPP/APR Indicators. MA DESE facilitates discussion of baseline and current data, longitudinal targets, historical rates of performance and compliance and the trajectory for improvement for each of the Indicators, and the effectiveness of focused improvement activities within the context of the state's Results Driven Accountability framework.   
  
MA DESE has set a high priority on expanding the agency’s capacity to solicit broad and diverse stakeholder input to set SPP/APR targets, analyze data, develop improvement strategies, and evaluate progress. For FFY2020, MA DESE sought to improve stakeholder Indicator knowledge by posting new webpages for Indicators 1, 2, 3, 5, 6, 7, 8, and 14 with Quick Reference Guides (QRGs) and PowerPoints for each Indicator. These QRGs and PowerPoints were available in six languages that correspond to the most common languages spoken in Massachusetts: English, Spanish, Portuguese, Chinese, Vietnamese, and Haitian Creole. Narrated versions of each PowerPoint were also available in English on the YouTube page of our partner, the Federation for Children with Special Needs (the Massachusetts Parent Training and Information Center/PTIC). MA DESE solicited feedback for Indicators 1, 2, 3, 5, 6, 7, 8, and 14 baselines and targets via an online survey in English, Spanish, Portuguese, Chinese, Vietnamese, and Haitian Creole. In addition, MA DESE collaborated with the Federation for Children with Special Needs, the OSEP funded Parent Training and Information Center (PTI), to hold five virtual stakeholder information and feedback sessions on these Indicators. Meetings were simultaneously interpreted into American Sign Language, Spanish, Portuguese, and Mandarin. Other languages were available but were not requested.   
  
MA DESE also consults regularly, on a monthly or at least quarterly basis, with Massachusetts Administrators of Special Education, http://www.asepage.org/, the Federation for Children with Special Needs, https://fcsn.org/, Massachusetts Advocates for Children, https://www.massadvocates.org/, the Massachusetts Association of Approved Special Education Schools, https://maaps.org/, Massachusetts Urban Special Education Leadership Collaborative, and the Special Needs Advocacy Network, www.spanmass.org. In addition, the Massachusetts State Special Education Director at MA DESE gives monthly virtual presentations to statewide special education leaders on a wide array of special education compliance and performance topics. During all of these meetings, MA DESE solicits and receives significant feedback that informs the development of special education policy and guidance.   
  
As needed, MA DESE also convenes stakeholder working groups throughout the year to provide focused input on specific projects and policy priorities. Examples of these focused groups include the Early Childhood Interagency Coordinating Council, with membership that includes community members and state agencies, a Statewide Systemic Improvement Plan (SSIP) leadership team and working group, a family engagement workgroup, an advisory group for the Dropout Prevention and Re-engagement Network, and secondary transition stakeholder groups. MA DESE also consults with educators, parents, advocates, and others on an ad hoc basis to inform policy and practice.   
  
MA DESE engages with stakeholders on the direction of Indicator 17, the State’s Systemic Improvement Plan (SSIP), at the state, district, classroom, and community levels. Stakeholders are provided with information about activities and goals, training events and embedded supports statewide, and the availability of resources to support and expand implementation. Stakeholders at the district and school levels participate in ongoing decision making about the direction of the SSIP by providing feedback about the quality of events and supports, observed benefits for their own stakeholders, and needs for moving forward with implementation most successfully. For additional information on stakeholder engagement related to Indicator 17, please see the Indicator 17 APR.  
  
Stakeholder engagement is an essential component of MA DESE’s special education agenda.

MA DESE, in consultation with the stakeholder groups, set Indicator 3 targets through FFY 2025. In setting these targets, the stakeholder groups reviewed statewide longitudinal data, improvement activities, and State policies, including the ESEA waiver granted by the U.S. Department of Education. The stakeholder groups recommended Indicator 3 targets based on the ESEA waiver and supported setting ambitious targets for Indicator 3, as this reflects the State’s commitment that all students, regardless of disability, participate in the State’s assessment system.  
At its May, and June 2021 meetings, the Advisory Panel reviewed the data and endorsed the proposed targets for Indicator 3D, as did parents participating in December 2021 focus groups convened by the Federation for Children with Special Needs.   
  
For Reading, (English Language Arts) Massachusetts set targets for Indicator 3D using FFY 2020 as the baseline year, with a 0.5 percentage point decrease each year through FFY2025 to ensure rigorous yet attainable goals.   
  
For Mathematics, Massachusetts set targets for Indicator 3D using FFY 2020 as the baseline year, with a 0.5 percentage point decrease each year through FFY2025 to ensure rigorous yet attainable goals.  
  
Moving forward, MA DESE will continue to engage its special education stakeholders in discussions around proficiency on the Next-Generation MCAS. As more years of assessment results are available, allowing for year-over-year comparison, MA DESE, with support from the IDEA Data Center and in collaboration with the Advisory Panel and other stakeholders, will continue to update targets that are rigorous yet reflective of actual and anticipated growth.

**FFY 2020 Data Disaggregation from EDFacts**

**Data Source:**

SY 2020-21 Assessment Data Groups - Reading (EDFacts file spec FS178; Data Group: 584)

**Date:**

03/03/2022

**Reading Assessment Proficiency Data by Grade**

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Group** | **Grade 4** | **Grade 8** | **Grade HS** |
| a. All Students who received a valid score and a proficiency was assigned for the regular assessment | 64,200 | 66,758 | 63,485 |
| b. Children with IEPs who received a valid score and a proficiency was assigned for the regular assessment | 12,689 | 12,397 | 10,617 |
| c. All students in regular assessment with no accommodations scored at or above proficient against grade level | 30,093 | 25,994 | 38,015 |
| d. All students in regular assessment with accommodations scored at or above proficient against grade level | 1,809 | 1,441 | 2,975 |
| e. Children with IEPs in regular assessment with no accommodations scored at or above proficient against grade level | 1,116 | 471 | 868 |
| f. Children with IEPs in regular assessment with accommodations scored at or above proficient against grade level | 1,472 | 913 | 1,998 |

**Data Source:**

SY 2020-21 Assessment Data Groups - Math (EDFacts file spec FS175; Data Group: 583)

**Date:**

03/03/2022

**Math Assessment Proficiency Data by Grade**

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Group** | **Grade 4** | **Grade 8** | **Grade HS** |
| a. All Students who received a valid score and a proficiency was assigned for the regular assessment | 64,197 | 66,760 | 63,198 |
| b. Children with IEPs who received a valid score and a proficiency was assigned for the regular assessment | 12,686 | 12,372 | 10,540 |
| c. All students in regular assessment with no accommodations scored at or above proficient against grade level | 20,541 | 20,621 | 31,359 |
| d. All students in regular assessment with accommodations scored at or above proficient against grade level | 1,110 | 1,065 | 1,940 |
| e. Children with IEPs in regular assessment with no accommodations scored at or above proficient against grade level | 729 | 353 | 589 |
| f. Children with IEPs in regular assessment with accommodations scored at or above proficient against grade level | 764 | 543 | 1,035 |

**FFY 2020 SPP/APR Data: Reading Assessment**

| **Group** | **Group Name** | **Proficiency rate for children with IEPs scoring at or above proficient against grade level academic achievement standards** | **Proficiency rate for all students scoring at or above proficient against grade level academic achievement standards** | **FFY 2019 Data** | **FFY 2020 Target** | **FFY 2020 Data** | **Status** | **Slippage** |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **A** | Grade 4 | 20.40% | 49.69% |  | 29.30 | 29.30 | N/A | N/A |
| **B** | Grade 8 | 11.16% | 41.10% |  | 29.93 | 29.93 | N/A | N/A |
| **C** | Grade HS | 26.99% | 64.57% |  | 37.57 | 37.57 | N/A | N/A |

**FFY 2020 SPP/APR Data: Math Assessment**

| **Group** | **Group Name** | **Proficiency rate for children with IEPs scoring at or above proficient against grade level academic achievement standards** | **Proficiency rate for all students scoring at or above proficient against grade level academic achievement standards** | **FFY 2019 Data** | **FFY 2020 Target** | **FFY 2020 Data** | **Status** | **Slippage** |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **A** | Grade 4 | 11.77% | 33.73% |  | 21.96 | 21.96 | N/A | N/A |
| **B** | Grade 8 | 7.24% | 32.48% |  | 25.24 | 25.24 | N/A | N/A |
| **C** | Grade HS | 15.41% | 52.69% |  | 37.28 | 37.28 | N/A | N/A |

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

This report displays the most current data compared with the goals set by federal and state accountability requirements. In contrast to prior SPP/APRs, the participation rates reported above are for students in grades 4, 8, and 10 only.   
  
The COVID-19 pandemic interrupted testing schedules, which resulted in lower participation statewide in most grades and subjects. MA DESE did not issue school, district, or state accountability determinations in 2021. In April 2021, as a result of the cancellation of the spring 2020 MCAS testing due to the COVID-19 pandemic, MA DESE requested and received a waiver of certain federal accountability requirements for the 2020-2021 school year from the United States Department of Education (USED).  
  
For more information, visit our Accountability Lists, Materials, and Tools website: http://www.doe.mass.edu/accountability/lists-tools/

## 3D - Prior FFY Required Actions

None

## 3D - OSEP Response

The State has revised the baseline for this indicator, using data from FFY 2020, but OSEP cannot accept that baseline revision because the State's FFY 2020 baseline data reported in the Historical Data table are not consistent with the State's FFY 2020 data reported in the FFY 2020 SPP/APR Data table.   
  
OSEP cannot accept the State's FFYs 2020-2025 targets for this indicator because OSEP cannot determine whether the State’s end targets for FFY 2025 reflect improvement over the State’s baseline data, given the discrepancy in the baseline data, as noted above. The State must ensure that its FFY 2025 targets reflect improvement over the baseline.

## 3D - Required Actions

# Indicator 4A: Suspension/Expulsion

**Instructions and Measurement**

**Monitoring Priority:** FAPE in the LRE

**Results Indicator:** Rates of suspension and expulsion:

A. Percent of local educational agencies (LEA) that have a significant discrepancy, as defined by the State, in the rate of suspensions and expulsions of greater than 10 days in a school year for children with IEPs; and

B. Percent of LEAs that have: (a) a significant discrepancy, as defined by the State, by race or ethnicity, in the rate of suspensions and expulsions of greater than 10 days in a school year for children with IEPs; and (b) policies, procedures or practices that contribute to the significant discrepancy, as defined by the State, and do not comply with requirements relating to the development and implementation of IEPs, the use of positive behavioral interventions and supports, and procedural safeguards.

(20 U.S.C. 1416(a)(3)(A); 1412(a)(22))

**Data Source**

State discipline data, including State’s analysis of State’s Discipline data collected under IDEA Section 618, where applicable. Discrepancy can be computed by either comparing the rates of suspensions and expulsions for children with IEPs to rates for nondisabled children within the LEA or by comparing the rates of suspensions and expulsions for children with IEPs among LEAs within the State.

**Measurement**

Percent = [(# of LEAs that meet the State-established n and/or cell size (if applicable) that have a significant discrepancy, as defined by the State, in the rates of suspensions and expulsions for more than 10 days during the school year of children with IEPs) divided by the (# of LEAs in the State that meet the State-established n and/or cell size (if applicable))] times 100.

Include State’s definition of “significant discrepancy.”

**Instructions**

If the State has established a minimum n and/or cell size requirement, the State may only include, in both the numerator and the denominator, LEAs that met that State-established n and/or cell size. If the State used a minimum n and/or cell size requirement, report the number of LEAs excluded from the calculation as a result of this requirement.

Describe the results of the State’s examination of the data for the year before the reporting year (e.g., for the FFY 2020 SPP/APR, use data from 2019-2020), including data disaggregated by race and ethnicity to determine if significant discrepancies, as defined by the State, are occurring in the rates of long-term suspensions and expulsions (more than 10 days during the school year) of children with IEPs, as required at 20 U.S.C. 1412(a)(22). The State’s examination must include one of the following comparisons:

--The rates of suspensions and expulsions for children with IEPs among LEAs within the State; or

--The rates of suspensions and expulsions for children with IEPs to nondisabled children within the LEAs

In the description, specify which method the State used to determine possible discrepancies and explain what constitutes those discrepancies.

Because the measurement table requires that the data examined for this indicator are lag year data, States should examine the 618 data that was submitted by LEAs that were in operation during the school year before the reporting year. For example, if a State has 100 LEAs operating in the 2019-2020 school year, those 100 LEAs would have reported 618 data in 2019-2020 on the number of children suspended/expelled. If the State then opens 15 new LEAs in 2020-2021, suspension/expulsion data from those 15 new LEAs would not be in the 2019-2020 618 data set, and therefore, those 15 new LEAs should not be included in the denominator of the calculation. States must use the number of LEAs from the year before the reporting year in its calculation for this indicator. For the FFY 2020 SPP/APR submission, States must use the number of LEAs reported in 2019-2020 (which can be found in the FFY 2019 SPP/APR introduction).

Indicator 4A: Provide the actual numbers used in the calculation (based upon districts that met the minimum n and/or cell size requirement, if applicable). If significant discrepancies occurred, describe how the State educational agency reviewed and, if appropriate, revised (or required the affected local educational agency to revise) its policies, procedures, and practices relating to the development and implementation of IEPs, the use of positive behavioral interventions and supports, and procedural safeguards, to ensure that such policies, procedures, and practices comply with applicable requirements.

Provide detailed information about the timely correction of noncompliance as noted in OSEP’s response for the previous SPP/APR. If discrepancies occurred and the LEA with discrepancies had policies, procedures or practices that contributed to the significant discrepancy, as defined by the State, and that do not comply with requirements relating to the development and implementation of IEPs, the use of positive behavioral interventions and supports, and procedural safeguards, describe how the State ensured that such policies, procedures, and practices were revised to comply with applicable requirements consistent with (OSEP) Memorandum 09-02, dated October 17, 2008.

If the State did not ensure timely correction of the previous noncompliance, provide information on the extent to which noncompliance was subsequently corrected (more than one year after identification). In addition, provide information regarding the nature of any continuing noncompliance, improvement activities completed (e.g., review of policies and procedures, technical assistance, training, etc.) and any enforcement actions that were taken.

If the State reported less than 100% compliance for the previous reporting period (e.g., for the FFY 2020 SPP/APR, the data for FFY 2019), and the State did not identify any findings of noncompliance, provide an explanation of why the State did not identify any findings of noncompliance.

## 4A - Indicator Data

**Historical Data**

| **Baseline Year** | **Baseline Data** |
| --- | --- |
| 2016 | 1.92% |

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **FFY** | **2015** | **2016** | **2017** | **2018** | **2019** |
| Target <= | 0.00% | 0.00% | 0.00% | 0.00% | 0.00% |
| Data | 1.25% | 1.92% | 1.36% | 1.08% | 1.06% |

**Targets**

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **FFY** | **2020** | **2021** | **2022** | **2023** | **2024** | **2025** |
| Target <= | 0.00% | 0.00% | 0.00% | 0.00% | 0.00% | 0.00% |

**Targets: Description of Stakeholder Input**

MA DESE works closely with stakeholders on developing targets and setting priorities for improvement in each of the areas reported in the SPP/APR.   
  
The Special Education Advisory Panel, comprised of parents, individuals with disabilities, educators, administrators, and representatives from state agencies, higher education, and other stakeholder groups, meets up to five times each school year to review data, discuss policy priorities, and identify unmet needs in the area of special education consistent with state law and IDEA Part B. At every meeting, the group addresses various aspects of the SPP/APR and the State’s general supervision systems, as well as relevant policy matters. A special focus during the pandemic has been COVID-19’s effect on compliance and performance areas related to the SPP/APR Indicators. MA DESE facilitates discussion of baseline and current data, longitudinal targets, historical rates of performance and compliance and the trajectory for improvement for each of the Indicators, and the effectiveness of focused improvement activities within the context of the state's Results Driven Accountability framework.   
  
MA DESE has set a high priority on expanding the agency’s capacity to solicit broad and diverse stakeholder input to set SPP/APR targets, analyze data, develop improvement strategies, and evaluate progress. For FFY2020, MA DESE sought to improve stakeholder Indicator knowledge by posting new webpages for Indicators 1, 2, 3, 5, 6, 7, 8, and 14 with Quick Reference Guides (QRGs) and PowerPoints for each Indicator. These QRGs and PowerPoints were available in six languages that correspond to the most common languages spoken in Massachusetts: English, Spanish, Portuguese, Chinese, Vietnamese, and Haitian Creole. Narrated versions of each PowerPoint were also available in English on the YouTube page of our partner, the Federation for Children with Special Needs (the Massachusetts Parent Training and Information Center/PTIC). MA DESE solicited feedback for Indicators 1, 2, 3, 5, 6, 7, 8, and 14 baselines and targets via an online survey in English, Spanish, Portuguese, Chinese, Vietnamese, and Haitian Creole. In addition, MA DESE collaborated with the Federation for Children with Special Needs, the OSEP funded Parent Training and Information Center (PTI), to hold five virtual stakeholder information and feedback sessions on these Indicators. Meetings were simultaneously interpreted into American Sign Language, Spanish, Portuguese, and Mandarin. Other languages were available but were not requested.   
  
MA DESE also consults regularly, on a monthly or at least quarterly basis, with Massachusetts Administrators of Special Education, http://www.asepage.org/, the Federation for Children with Special Needs, https://fcsn.org/, Massachusetts Advocates for Children, https://www.massadvocates.org/, the Massachusetts Association of Approved Special Education Schools, https://maaps.org/, Massachusetts Urban Special Education Leadership Collaborative, and the Special Needs Advocacy Network, www.spanmass.org. In addition, the Massachusetts State Special Education Director at MA DESE gives monthly virtual presentations to statewide special education leaders on a wide array of special education compliance and performance topics. During all of these meetings, MA DESE solicits and receives significant feedback that informs the development of special education policy and guidance.   
  
As needed, MA DESE also convenes stakeholder working groups throughout the year to provide focused input on specific projects and policy priorities. Examples of these focused groups include the Early Childhood Interagency Coordinating Council, with membership that includes community members and state agencies, a Statewide Systemic Improvement Plan (SSIP) leadership team and working group, a family engagement workgroup, an advisory group for the Dropout Prevention and Re-engagement Network, and secondary transition stakeholder groups. MA DESE also consults with educators, parents, advocates, and others on an ad hoc basis to inform policy and practice.   
  
MA DESE engages with stakeholders on the direction of Indicator 17, the State’s Systemic Improvement Plan (SSIP), at the state, district, classroom, and community levels. Stakeholders are provided with information about activities and goals, training events and embedded supports statewide, and the availability of resources to support and expand implementation. Stakeholders at the district and school levels participate in ongoing decision making about the direction of the SSIP by providing feedback about the quality of events and supports, observed benefits for their own stakeholders, and needs for moving forward with implementation most successfully. For additional information on stakeholder engagement related to Indicator 17, please see the Indicator 17 APR.  
  
Stakeholder engagement is an essential component of MA DESE’s special education agenda.

At its December 2021 meeting, MA DESE engaged with The Special Education Advisory Panel on Indicator 4. MA DESE collaborated with members of the Panel to review and analyze trends in inequities for students with disabilities, including discussing Indicator 4A and 4B discipline data for FFY2020.

**FFY 2020 SPP/APR Data**

**Has the state established a minimum n/cell-size requirement? (yes/no)**

YES

**If yes, the State may only include, in both the numerator and the denominator, LEAs that met the State-established n/cell size. Report the number of LEAs excluded from the calculation as a result of the requirement.**

26

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Number of LEAs that have a significant discrepancy** | **Number of LEAs that met the State's minimum n/cell size** | **FFY 2019 Data** | **FFY 2020 Target** | **FFY 2020 Data** | **Status** | **Slippage** |
| 4 | 377 | 1.06% | 0.00% | 1.06% | Did not meet target | No Slippage |

**Choose one of the following comparison methodologies to determine whether significant discrepancies are occurring (34 CFR §300.170(a))**

Compare the rates of suspensions and expulsions of greater than 10 days in a school year for children with IEPs among LEAs in the State

**State’s definition of “significant discrepancy” and methodology**

The State’s definition of “significant discrepancy” and methodology is the number of districts with five times the State's rate of suspension and expulsion for more than 10 days for students with IEPs divided by the number of districts that met the “n” size of 30 multiplied by 100. Districts who meet the criteria of “n” size requirements and have a discrepancy rate of five times the state average for two consecutive years are found to have a significant discrepancy. Because of the data lag required for indicator 4 reporting, data is delayed for 2 school years. For the 2017-2018 school year, the overall State average for suspension or expulsion for greater than 10 days for all students was 0.0058%. Districts that suspended students with disabilities at five times this rate, 0.0292, were found to have a discrepancy in that year. For the 2018-2019 school year, the overall State average for suspension or expulsion for greater than 10 days for all students was 0.0062%. Districts that suspended students with disabilities at five times this rate, 0.031, were found to have a discrepancy in that year.   
  
Districts meeting these criteria for both FFY 2019 and 2020 (two consecutive years) were identified as having a significant discrepancy. Overall, four (1.06%) of school districts have a significant discrepancy during this reporting year. Discipline data are reported by the school districts to MA DESE using the School Safety and Discipline Report (SSDR). The SSDR includes all incidents involving bullying, drug, violent, or crime-related offenses on school property and any other offenses that result in a disciplinary action that removes the student from the regular educational environment.   
   
Out of the 403 LEAs, only 377 met the “n” size requirement. Twenty-six (26) did not meet the state-established “n” size. Of the 377 districts meeting the criteria, 4 districts (1.06%) were found to have a discrepancy for two consecutive years.

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

**Review of Policies, Procedures, and Practices (completed in FFY 2020 using 2019-2020 data)**

**Provide a description of the review of policies, procedures, and practices relating to the development and implementation of IEPs, the use of positive behavioral interventions and supports, and procedural safeguards.**

MA DESE uses the same methodology for reviewing policies, practices, and procedures (PPPs) for LEAs identified as significant discrepancies in Indicators 4A and 4B.   
   
Assessing the appropriateness of the PPPs regarding the development and implementation of IEPs, the use of positive behavioral and instructional interventions and supports, and procedural safeguards has been a coordinated and collaborative process among several offices at MA DESE. MA DESE verifies compliance of LEAs' PPPs through its monitoring review process, including special education monitoring criteria that address these focus areas. MA DESE also assesses corrective action reports and progress reports completed by LEAs in all other areas of identified noncompliance to assess whether the non-compliance contributed to the discrepancy in indicators 4A and 4B. Any deficiencies in the PPPs must be corrected by the LEA within one year from the date of notification and the LEA must submit evidence of the corrections to MA DESE for verification.   
   
In this focused process. MA DESE verified that four LEAs identified as having significant discrepancy through data analysis compliant with the IDEA but zero instances of noncompliance in relation to policies, practices, and procedures. Nonetheless, MA DESE will support their participation in the Rethinking Discipline Professional Learning Network (targeted assistance conversations with staff from the MA DESE Offices of Student and Family Support, Special Education Planning and Policy, and Charter Schools and School Redesign). This engagement includes a discussion of district-specific data, as well as information about successful strategies that LEAs have implemented and challenges they are facing related to student discipline practice to provide for reflection on policies, practices, and procedures in order to support students with IEPs and reduce the use of disciplinary removal.

The State DID NOT identify noncompliance with Part B requirements as a result of the review required by 34 CFR §300.170(b)

**Correction of Findings of Noncompliance Identified in FFY 2019**

| **Findings of Noncompliance Identified** | **Findings of Noncompliance Verified as Corrected Within One Year** | **Findings of Noncompliance Subsequently Corrected** | **Findings Not Yet Verified as Corrected** |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  |  |  |  |

**Correction of Findings of Noncompliance Identified Prior to FFY 2019**

| **Year Findings of Noncompliance Were Identified** | **Findings of Noncompliance Not Yet Verified as Corrected as of FFY 2019 APR** | **Findings of Noncompliance Verified as Corrected** | **Findings Not Yet Verified as Corrected** |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  |  |  |  |
|  |  |  |  |
|  |  |  |  |

## 4A - Prior FFY Required Actions

None

## 4A - OSEP Response

The State provided targets for FFYs 2020 through 2025 for this indicator, and OSEP accepts those targets.  
  
OSEP cannot determine whether the data are valid and reliable. The State reported "Out of the 403 LEAs, only 377 met the “n” size requirement. Twenty-six (26) did not meet the state-established “n” size." However, the State also reported "Of the 406 districts meeting the criteria, 4 districts (1.06%) were found to have a discrepancy for two consecutive years." Therefore, OSEP could not determine whether the State met its target.

## 4A - Required Actions

# Indicator 4B: Suspension/Expulsion

**Instructions and Measurement**

**Monitoring Priority:** FAPE in the LRE

**Compliance Indicator:** Rates of suspension and expulsion:

A. Percent of local educational agencies (LEA) that have a significant discrepancy, as defined by the State, in the rate of suspensions and expulsions of greater than 10 days in a school year for children with IEPs; and

B. Percent of LEAs that have: (a) a significant discrepancy, as defined by the State, by race or ethnicity, in the rate of suspensions and expulsions of greater than 10 days in a school year for children with IEPs; and (b) policies, procedures or practices that contribute to the significant discrepancy, as defined by the State, and do not comply with requirements relating to the development and implementation of IEPs, the use of positive behavioral interventions and supports, and procedural safeguards.

(20 U.S.C. 1416(a)(3)(A); 1412(a)(22))

**Data Source**

State discipline data, including State’s analysis of State’s Discipline data collected under IDEA Section 618, where applicable. Discrepancy can be computed by either comparing the rates of suspensions and expulsions for children with IEPs to rates for nondisabled children within the LEA or by comparing the rates of suspensions and expulsions for children with IEPs among LEAs within the State.

**Measurement**

Percent = [(# of LEAs that meet the State-established n and/or cell size (if applicable) for one or more racial/ethnic groups that have: (a) a significant discrepancy, as defined by the State, by race or ethnicity, in the rates of suspensions and expulsions of more than 10 days during the school year of children with IEPs; and (b) policies, procedures or practices that contribute to the significant discrepancy, as defined by the State, and do not comply with requirements relating to the development and implementation of IEPs, the use of positive behavioral interventions and supports, and procedural safeguards) divided by the (# of LEAs in the State that meet the State-established n and/or cell size (if applicable) for one or more racial/ethnic groups)] times 100.

Include State’s definition of “significant discrepancy.”

**Instructions**

If the State has established a minimum n and/or cell size requirement, the State may only include, in both the numerator and the denominator, LEAs that met that State-established n and/or cell size. If the State used a minimum n and/or cell size requirement, report the number of LEAs totally excluded from the calculation as a result of this requirement.

Describe the results of the State’s examination of the data for the year before the reporting year (e.g., for the FFY 2020 SPP/APR, use data from 2019-2020), including data disaggregated by race and ethnicity to determine if significant discrepancies, as defined by the State, are occurring in the rates of long-term suspensions and expulsions (more than 10 days during the school year) of children with IEPs, as required at 20 U.S.C. 1412(a)(22). The State’s examination must include one of the following comparisons:

--The rates of suspensions and expulsions for children with IEPs among LEAs within the State; or

--The rates of suspensions and expulsions for children with IEPs to nondisabled children within the LEAs

In the description, specify which method the State used to determine possible discrepancies and explain what constitutes those discrepancies.

Because the measurement table requires that the data examined for this indicator are lag year data, States should examine the 618 data that was submitted by LEAs that were in operation during the school year before the reporting year. For example, if a State has 100 LEAs operating in the 2019-2020 school year, those 100 LEAs would have reported 618 data in 2019-2020 on the number of children suspended/expelled. If the State then opens 15 new LEAs in 2020-2021, suspension/expulsion data from those 15 new LEAs would not be in the 2019-2020 618 data set, and therefore, those 15 new LEAs should not be included in the denominator of the calculation. States must use the number of LEAs from the year before the reporting year in its calculation for this indicator. For the FFY 2020 SPP/APR submission, States must use the number of LEAs reported in 2019-2020 (which can be found in the FFY 2019 SPP/APR introduction).

Indicator 4B: Provide the following: (a) the number of LEAs that met the State-established n and/or cell size (if applicable) for one or more racial/ethnic groups that have a significant discrepancy, as defined by the State, by race or ethnicity, in the rates of long-term suspensions and expulsions (more than 10 days during the school year) for children with IEPs; and (b) the number of those LEAs in which policies, procedures or practices contribute to the significant discrepancy and do not comply with requirements relating to the development and implementation of IEPs, the use of positive behavioral interventions and supports, and procedural safeguards.

Provide detailed information about the timely correction of noncompliance as noted in OSEP’s response for the previous SPP/APR. If discrepancies occurred and the LEA with discrepancies had policies, procedures or practices that contributed to the significant discrepancy, as defined by the State, and that do not comply with requirements relating to the development and implementation of IEPs, the use of positive behavioral interventions and supports, and procedural safeguards, describe how the State ensured that such policies, procedures, and practices were revised to comply with applicable requirements consistent with (OSEP) Memorandum 09-02, dated October 17, 2008.

If the State did not ensure timely correction of the previous noncompliance, provide information on the extent to which noncompliance was subsequently corrected (more than one year after identification). In addition, provide information regarding the nature of any continuing noncompliance, improvement activities completed (e.g., review of policies and procedures, technical assistance, training, etc.) and any enforcement actions that were taken.

If the State reported less than 100% compliance for the previous reporting period (e.g., for the FFY 2020 SPP/APR, the data for FFY 2019), and the State did not identify any findings of noncompliance, provide an explanation of why the State did not identify any findings of noncompliance.

Targets must be 0% for 4B.

## 4B - Indicator Data

**Not Applicable**

**Select yes if this indicator is not applicable.**

NO

**Historical Data**

| **Baseline Year** | **Baseline Data** |
| --- | --- |
| 2017 | 0.51% |

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **FFY** | **2015** | **2016** | **2017** | **2018** | **2019** |
| Target | 0% | 0% | 0% | 0% | 0% |
| Data | 0.00% | 0.50% | 0.51% | 0.00% | 0.00% |

**Targets**

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **FFY** | **2020** | **2021** | **2022** | **2023** | **2024** | **2025** |
| Target | 0% | 0% | 0% | 0% | 0% | 0% |

**FFY 2020 SPP/APR Data**

**Has the state established a minimum n/cell-size requirement? (yes/no)**

YES

**If yes, the State may only include, in both the numerator and the denominator, LEAs that met the State-established n/cell size. Report the number of LEAs excluded from the calculation as a result of the requirement.**

3

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Number of LEAs that have a significant discrepancy, by race or ethnicity** | **Number of those LEAs that have policies, procedure or practices that contribute to the significant discrepancy and do not comply with requirements** | **Number of LEAs that met the State's minimum n/cell size** | **FFY 2019 Data** | **FFY 2020 Target** | **FFY 2020 Data** | **Status** | **Slippage** |
| 7 | 0 | 400 | 0.00% | 0% | 0.00% | Met target | No Slippage |

**Were all races and ethnicities included in the review?**

YES

**State’s definition of “significant discrepancy” and methodology**

MA DESE’s definition of significant discrepancy in the rate of suspensions and expulsions (for greater than 10 days in a school year) of students with IEPs who are members of a specific racial/ethnic group is a suspension/ expulsion rate of five times the state rate for all students for three consecutive years. During FFY 2020 the state rate of all students statewide who were suspended or expelled for greater than 10 days is 0.006; five times the state rate is 0.031 or 3.1%. (Please note that because Indicator 4 is reported using a one-year lag, the final year of data analysis reported here is from FFY 2020.) Therefore, LEAs met the State's definition of significant discrepancy if they:   
• met the minimum “n” size of 10 students with IEPs in a particular racial/ethnic group; and   
• suspended or expelled more than 3.1% ( five times the state rate) of students with an IEP who are members of a particular racial/ethnic group for greater than 10 days over the course of the 2019-2020 school year;   
• had similar data for the two prior school years.   
   
Discipline data are reported by LEAs to MA DESE using the School Safety and Discipline Report (SSDR). The SSDR includes all incidents involving bullying, drug, violent, or crime-related offenses on school property and any other offenses that result in a disciplinary action removing the student from the regular educational environment.   
   
Although 403 LEAs were in operation during the 2019-2020 school year, MA DESE has overwritten the data for indicator 4B, removing from the calculation those LEAs that did not have data for each year of the calculation or did not meet the state’s minimum “n” size for all reporting years. Data reported here is on the 400 LEAs that met the state’s “n” size requirement for Indicator 4B.

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

As Indicator 4B is on a data lag, most of the data used for this indicator is from before the COVID-19 pandemic. Massachusetts saw the same number of LEAs with significant discrepancy by race or ethnicity in FFY 2020 as in FFY 2019. Beginning in FFY 2021, MA DESE expects there to be an impact on the Indicator 4B as it will include more school years that were impacted by COVID-19.

**Review of Policies, Procedures, and Practices (completed in FFY 2020 using 2019-2020 data)**

**Provide a description of the review of policies, procedures, and practices relating to the development and implementation of IEPs, the use of positive behavioral interventions and supports, and procedural safeguards.**

MA DESE uses the same methodology for reviewing policies, practices, and procedures (PPPs) for LEAs identified as significant discrepancies in Indicators 4A and 4B.   
   
Assessing the appropriateness of the PPPs regarding the development and implementation of IEPs, the use of positive behavioral and instructional interventions and supports, and procedural safeguards has been a coordinated and collaborative process among several offices at MA DESE. MA DESE verifies compliance of LEAs' PPPs through its monitoring review process, including special education monitoring criteria that address these focus areas. MA DESE also assesses corrective action reports and progress reports completed by LEAs in all other areas of identified noncompliance to assesses whether the non-compliance contributed to the discrepancy in indicators 4A and 4B. Any deficiencies in the PPPs must be corrected by the LEA within one year from date of notification and the LEA must submit evidence of the corrections to MA DESE for verification.   
   
In this focused process. MA DESE verified that seven LEAs identified (for 4b) as having significant discrepancy through data analysis compliant with the IDEA but zero instances of noncompliance in relation to policies, practices, and procedures. Nonetheless, MA DESE will support their participation in the Rethinking Discipline Professional Learning Network (targeted assistance with staff from the MA DESE Offices of Student and Family Support, Special Education Planning and Policy, and Charter Schools and School Redesign) and other professional development offered by MA DESE for districts with concerns of possible inequities for students with disabilities. This engagement includes discussion of district-specific data, as well as information about successful strategies that LEAs have implemented and challenges they are facing related to student discipline practice and to provide for reflection on policies, practices, and procedures in order to support students on IEPS and reduce the use of disciplinary removal.   
   
By reviewing information, inclusive of monitoring progress reports, policies, procedures, and action plans, MA DESE verified that seven of the seven LEAs were correctly implementing all regulatory requirements related to the development and implementation of IEPs, positive behavioral interventions and supports, and procedural safeguards.   
  
The State DID NOT identify noncompliance with Part B requirements as a result of the review required by 34 CFR §300.170(b).

The State DID NOT identify noncompliance with Part B requirements as a result of the review required by 34 CFR §300.170(b)

**Correction of Findings of Noncompliance Identified in FFY 2019**

| **Findings of Noncompliance Identified** | **Findings of Noncompliance Verified as Corrected Within One Year** | **Findings of Noncompliance Subsequently Corrected** | **Findings Not Yet Verified as Corrected** |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  |  |  |  |

**Correction of Findings of Noncompliance Identified Prior to FFY 2019**

| **Year Findings of Noncompliance Were Identified** | **Findings of Noncompliance Not Yet Verified as Corrected as of FFY 2019 APR** | **Findings of Noncompliance Verified as Corrected** | **Findings Not Yet Verified as Corrected** |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  |  |  |  |
|  |  |  |  |
|  |  |  |  |

## 4B - Prior FFY Required Actions

None

## 4B - OSEP Response

OSEP cannot determine whether the data are valid and reliable. The State reported that 400 districts met the minimum n size requirement, and 4 districts did not meet the minimum n size requirement and were excluded from the calculation. The number of districts excluded from the calculation because they do not meet the minimum “n” size, plus the number of districts that met the State-established minimum “n” size, do not equal the total number of districts the State reported in either the FFY 2019 Introduction or the FFY 2020 Introduction. Therefore, OSEP could not determine whether the State met its target.

## 4B- Required Actions

# Indicator 5: Education Environments (children 5 (Kindergarten) - 21)

**Instructions and Measurement**

**Monitoring Priority:** FAPE in the LRE

**Results indicator:** Percent of children with IEPs aged 5 who are enrolled in kindergarten and aged 6 through 21 served:

A. Inside the regular class 80% or more of the day;

B. Inside the regular class less than 40% of the day; and

C. In separate schools, residential facilities, or homebound/hospital placements.

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

**Data Source**

Same data as used for reporting to the Department under section 618 of the IDEA, using the definitions in EDFacts file specification FS002.

**Measurement**

A. Percent = [(# of children with IEPs aged 5 who are enrolled in kindergarten and aged 6 through 21 served inside the regular class 80% or more of the day) divided by the (total # of students aged 5 who are enrolled in kindergarten and aged 6 through 21 with IEPs)] times 100.

B. Percent = [(# of children with IEPs aged 5 who are enrolled in kindergarten and aged 6 through 21 served inside the regular class less than 40% of the day) divided by the (total # of students aged 5 who are enrolled in kindergarten and aged 6 through 21 with IEPs)] times 100.

C. Percent = [(# of children with IEPs aged 5 who are enrolled in kindergarten and aged 6 through 21 served in separate schools, residential facilities, or homebound/hospital placements) divided by the (total # of students aged 5 who are enrolled in kindergarten and aged 6 through 21 with IEPs)]times 100.

**Instructions**

*Sampling from the State’s 618 data is not allowed.*

States must report five-year-old children with disabilities who are enrolled in kindergarten in this indicator. Five-year-old children with disabilities who are enrolled in preschool programs are included in Indicator 6.Describe the results of the calculations and compare the results to the target.

If the data reported in this indicator are not the same as the State’s data reported under section 618 of the IDEA, explain.

## 5 - Indicator Data

**Historical Data**

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Part** | **Baseline** | **FFY** | **2015** | **2016** | **2017** | **2018** | **2019** |
| A | 2020 | Target >= | 61.00% | 61.00% | 61.50% | 61.50% | 61.50% |
| A | 65.49% | Data | 62.34% | 62.82% | 63.83% | 65.02% | 65.55% |
| B | 2020 | Target <= | 14.50% | 14.40% | 14.40% | 14.30% | 14.30% |
| B | 13.32% | Data | 14.05% | 13.82% | 13.40% | 13.22% | 13.23% |
| C | 2020 | Target <= | 5.50% | 5.50% | 5.40% | 5.40% | 5.40% |
| C | 6.44% | Data | 6.81% | 6.93% | 6.86% | 6.57% | 6.44% |

**Targets**

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **FFY** | **2020** | **2021** | **2022** | **2023** | **2024** | **2025** |
| Target A >= | 65.49% | 65.49% | 65.49% | 65.49% | 67.49% | 67.99% |
| Target B <= | 13.32% | 13.32% | 13.32% | 13.32% | 12.92% | 12.82% |
| Target C <= | 6.44% | 6.44% | 6.44% | 6.44% | 6.04% | 5.94% |

**Targets: Description of Stakeholder Input**

MA DESE works closely with stakeholders on developing targets and setting priorities for improvement in each of the areas reported in the SPP/APR.   
  
The Special Education Advisory Panel, comprised of parents, individuals with disabilities, educators, administrators, and representatives from state agencies, higher education, and other stakeholder groups, meets up to five times each school year to review data, discuss policy priorities, and identify unmet needs in the area of special education consistent with state law and IDEA Part B. At every meeting, the group addresses various aspects of the SPP/APR and the State’s general supervision systems, as well as relevant policy matters. A special focus during the pandemic has been COVID-19’s effect on compliance and performance areas related to the SPP/APR Indicators. MA DESE facilitates discussion of baseline and current data, longitudinal targets, historical rates of performance and compliance and the trajectory for improvement for each of the Indicators, and the effectiveness of focused improvement activities within the context of the state's Results Driven Accountability framework.   
  
MA DESE has set a high priority on expanding the agency’s capacity to solicit broad and diverse stakeholder input to set SPP/APR targets, analyze data, develop improvement strategies, and evaluate progress. For FFY2020, MA DESE sought to improve stakeholder Indicator knowledge by posting new webpages for Indicators 1, 2, 3, 5, 6, 7, 8, and 14 with Quick Reference Guides (QRGs) and PowerPoints for each Indicator. These QRGs and PowerPoints were available in six languages that correspond to the most common languages spoken in Massachusetts: English, Spanish, Portuguese, Chinese, Vietnamese, and Haitian Creole. Narrated versions of each PowerPoint were also available in English on the YouTube page of our partner, the Federation for Children with Special Needs (the Massachusetts Parent Training and Information Center/PTIC). MA DESE solicited feedback for Indicators 1, 2, 3, 5, 6, 7, 8, and 14 baselines and targets via an online survey in English, Spanish, Portuguese, Chinese, Vietnamese, and Haitian Creole. In addition, MA DESE collaborated with the Federation for Children with Special Needs, the OSEP funded Parent Training and Information Center (PTI), to hold five virtual stakeholder information and feedback sessions on these Indicators. Meetings were simultaneously interpreted into American Sign Language, Spanish, Portuguese, and Mandarin. Other languages were available but were not requested.   
  
MA DESE also consults regularly, on a monthly or at least quarterly basis, with Massachusetts Administrators of Special Education, http://www.asepage.org/, the Federation for Children with Special Needs, https://fcsn.org/, Massachusetts Advocates for Children, https://www.massadvocates.org/, the Massachusetts Association of Approved Special Education Schools, https://maaps.org/, Massachusetts Urban Special Education Leadership Collaborative, and the Special Needs Advocacy Network, www.spanmass.org. In addition, the Massachusetts State Special Education Director at MA DESE gives monthly virtual presentations to statewide special education leaders on a wide array of special education compliance and performance topics. During all of these meetings, MA DESE solicits and receives significant feedback that informs the development of special education policy and guidance.   
  
As needed, MA DESE also convenes stakeholder working groups throughout the year to provide focused input on specific projects and policy priorities. Examples of these focused groups include the Early Childhood Interagency Coordinating Council, with membership that includes community members and state agencies, a Statewide Systemic Improvement Plan (SSIP) leadership team and working group, a family engagement workgroup, an advisory group for the Dropout Prevention and Re-engagement Network, and secondary transition stakeholder groups. MA DESE also consults with educators, parents, advocates, and others on an ad hoc basis to inform policy and practice.   
  
MA DESE engages with stakeholders on the direction of Indicator 17, the State’s Systemic Improvement Plan (SSIP), at the state, district, classroom, and community levels. Stakeholders are provided with information about activities and goals, training events and embedded supports statewide, and the availability of resources to support and expand implementation. Stakeholders at the district and school levels participate in ongoing decision making about the direction of the SSIP by providing feedback about the quality of events and supports, observed benefits for their own stakeholders, and needs for moving forward with implementation most successfully. For additional information on stakeholder engagement related to Indicator 17, please see the Indicator 17 APR.  
  
Stakeholder engagement is an essential component of MA DESE’s special education agenda.

Stakeholders generally agreed with MA DESE’s proposal for Indicator 5 targets. However, there were stakeholders who were concerned targets were too ambitious or not ambitious enough; DESE changed the baseline year and made minor changes to targets in response to this feedback.   
  
Stakeholder dialogue revolved around maintaining high expectations for schools and students with IEPs, as well as ensuring placement decisions are appropriately individualized to students’ strengths and disability-related needs. Of particular concern are students’ increased social, emotional, and behavioral needs, due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Recommendations for future improvement activities include further data analysis and additional professional development opportunities.

**Prepopulated Data**

| **Source** | **Date** | **Description** | **Data** |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| SY 2020-21 Child Count/Educational Environment Data Groups (EDFacts file spec FS002; Data group 74) | 07/07/2021 | Total number of children with IEPs aged 5 (kindergarten) through 21 | 164,975 |
| SY 2020-21 Child Count/Educational Environment Data Groups (EDFacts file spec FS002; Data group 74) | 07/07/2021 | A. Number of children with IEPs aged 5 (kindergarten) through 21 inside the regular class 80% or more of the day | 108,044 |
| SY 2020-21 Child Count/Educational Environment Data Groups (EDFacts file spec FS002; Data group 74) | 07/07/2021 | B. Number of children with IEPs aged 5 (kindergarten) through 21 inside the regular class less than 40% of the day | 21,982 |
| SY 2020-21 Child Count/Educational Environment Data Groups (EDFacts file spec FS002; Data group 74) | 07/07/2021 | c1. Number of children with IEPs aged 5 (kindergarten) through 21 in separate schools | 9,104 |
| SY 2020-21 Child Count/Educational Environment Data Groups (EDFacts file spec FS002; Data group 74) | 07/07/2021 | c2. Number of children with IEPs aged 5 (kindergarten) through 21 in residential facilities | 928 |
| SY 2020-21 Child Count/Educational Environment Data Groups (EDFacts file spec FS002; Data group 74) | 07/07/2021 | c3. Number of children with IEPs aged 5 (kindergarten) through 21 in homebound/hospital placements | 592 |

**Select yes if the data reported in this indicator are not the same as the State’s data reported under section 618 of the IDEA.**

NO

**FFY 2020 SPP/APR Data**

| **Education Environments** | **Number of children with IEPs aged 5 (kindergarten) through 21 served** | **Total number of children with IEPs aged 5 (kindergarten) through 21** | **FFY 2019 Data** | **FFY 2020 Target** | **FFY 2020 Data** | **Status** | **Slippage** |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| A. Number of children with IEPs aged 5 (kindergarten) through 21 inside the regular class 80% or more of the day | 108,044 | 164,975 | 65.55% | 65.49% | 65.49% | N/A | N/A |
| B. Number of children with IEPs aged 5 (kindergarten) through 21 inside the regular class less than 40% of the day | 21,982 | 164,975 | 13.23% | 13.32% | 13.32% | N/A | N/A |
| C. Number of children with IEPs aged 5 (kindergarten) through 21 inside separate schools, residential facilities, or homebound/hospital placements [c1+c2+c3] | 10,624 | 164,975 | 6.44% | 6.44% | 6.44% | N/A | N/A |

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

Previously, Indicator 5 calculated education environments for students with disabilities ages 6 through 21-year-olds. For FFY2020, OSEP updated the Indicator 5 measurement requirements to also include 5-year-olds in Kindergarten (and remove these students from the Indicator 6 calculation). For this reason, DESE established a new baseline year, FFY2020.   
  
MA DESE applied the new measurement requirement (including 5-year-olds in Kindergarten) to student data for FFY2017 through FFY2020. Average annual changes for each calculation yielded from this recalculation, informed Indicator 5 annual targets. Stakeholders generally recommended holding the targets constant for the first several years and allowing the difference to be made up in the last two years. This approach will help to provide more clarity about the impact of COVID -19 on student needs. MA DESE will continue stakeholder dialogue and adjust targets as more information becomes available and data stabilizes.  
  
Indicator 5 data is complete, accurate, and reliable. Early in the pandemic, MA DESE issued guidance indicating LEAs should not amend IEP services or placements in response to the COVID-19 pandemic, preserving FAPE and stay-put rights. The Indicator 5 data does not show a significant impact to student placement for FFY2020, despite changes in learning “locations.” However, MA DESE anticipates shifts in future Indicator 5 data – as IEP Teams address possible new areas of disability-related needs due to COVID-19.

## 5 - Prior FFY Required Actions

None

## 5 - OSEP Response

The State has revised the baseline for this indicator, using data from FFY 2020, and OSEP accepts that revision.  
  
The State provided targets for FFYs 2020 through 2025 for this indicator, and OSEP accepts those targets.

## 5 - Required Actions

# Indicator 6: Preschool Environments

**Instructions and Measurement**

**Monitoring Priority:** FAPE in the LRE

**Results indicator:** Percent of children with IEPs aged 3, 4, and aged 5 who are enrolled in a preschool program attending a:

A. Regular early childhood program and receiving the majority of special education and related services in the regular early childhood program; and

B. Separate special education class, separate school or residential facility.

C. Receiving special education and related services in the home.

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

**Data Source**

Same data as used for reporting to the Department under section 618 of the IDEA, using the definitions in EDFacts file specification FS089.

**Measurement**

A. Percent = [(# of children ages 3, 4, and 5 with IEPs attending a regular early childhood program and receiving the majority of special education and related services in the regular early childhood program) divided by the (total # of children ages 3, 4, and 5 with IEPs)] times 100.

B. Percent = [(# of children ages 3, 4, and 5 with IEPs attending a separate special education class, separate school or residential facility) divided by the (total # of children ages 3, 4, and 5 with IEPs)] times 100.

C. Percent = [(# of children ages 3, 4, and 5 with IEPs receiving special education and related services in the home) divided by the (total # of children ages 3, 4, and 5 with IEPs)] times 100.

**Instructions**

*Sampling from the State’s 618 data is not allowed.*

States must report five-year-old children with disabilities who are enrolled in preschool programs in this indicator. Five-year-old children with disabilities who are enrolled in kindergarten are included in Indicator 5.

States may choose to set one target that is inclusive of children ages 3, 4, and 5, or set individual targets for each age.

For Indicator 6C: States are not required to establish a baseline or targets if the number of children receiving special education and related services in the home is less than 10, regardless of whether the State chooses to set one target that is inclusive of children ages 3, 4, and 5, or set individual targets for each age. In a reporting period during which the number of children receiving special education and related services in the home reaches 10 or greater, States are required to develop baseline and targets and report on them in the corresponding SPP/APR.

For Indicator 6C: States may express their targets in a range (*e.g.*, 75-85%).Describe the results of the calculations and compare the results to the target.

If the data reported in this indicator are not the same as the State’s data reported under IDEA section 618, explain.

## 6 - Indicator Data

**Not Applicable**

**Select yes if this indicator is not applicable.**

NO

**Historical Data – 6A, 6B**

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Part** | **FFY** | **2015** | **2016** | **2017** | **2018** | **2019** |
| **A** | Target >= | 43.00% | 45.00% | 47.00% | 50.00% | 50.00% |
| **A** | Data | 53.05% | 53.68% | 54.41% | 54.76% | 54.78% |
| **B** | Target <= | 13.20% | 12.80% | 12.40% | 12.40% | 12.40% |
| **B** | Data | 15.44% | 16.74% | 16.80% | 16.19% | 17.03% |

**Targets: Description of Stakeholder Input**

MA DESE works closely with stakeholders on developing targets and setting priorities for improvement in each of the areas reported in the SPP/APR.   
  
The Special Education Advisory Panel, comprised of parents, individuals with disabilities, educators, administrators, and representatives from state agencies, higher education, and other stakeholder groups, meets up to five times each school year to review data, discuss policy priorities, and identify unmet needs in the area of special education consistent with state law and IDEA Part B. At every meeting, the group addresses various aspects of the SPP/APR and the State’s general supervision systems, as well as relevant policy matters. A special focus during the pandemic has been COVID-19’s effect on compliance and performance areas related to the SPP/APR Indicators. MA DESE facilitates discussion of baseline and current data, longitudinal targets, historical rates of performance and compliance and the trajectory for improvement for each of the Indicators, and the effectiveness of focused improvement activities within the context of the state's Results Driven Accountability framework.   
  
MA DESE has set a high priority on expanding the agency’s capacity to solicit broad and diverse stakeholder input to set SPP/APR targets, analyze data, develop improvement strategies, and evaluate progress. For FFY2020, MA DESE sought to improve stakeholder Indicator knowledge by posting new webpages for Indicators 1, 2, 3, 5, 6, 7, 8, and 14 with Quick Reference Guides (QRGs) and PowerPoints for each Indicator. These QRGs and PowerPoints were available in six languages that correspond to the most common languages spoken in Massachusetts: English, Spanish, Portuguese, Chinese, Vietnamese, and Haitian Creole. Narrated versions of each PowerPoint were also available in English on the YouTube page of our partner, the Federation for Children with Special Needs (the Massachusetts Parent Training and Information Center/PTIC). MA DESE solicited feedback for Indicators 1, 2, 3, 5, 6, 7, 8, and 14 baselines and targets via an online survey in English, Spanish, Portuguese, Chinese, Vietnamese, and Haitian Creole. In addition, MA DESE collaborated with the Federation for Children with Special Needs, the OSEP funded Parent Training and Information Center (PTI), to hold five virtual stakeholder information and feedback sessions on these Indicators. Meetings were simultaneously interpreted into American Sign Language, Spanish, Portuguese, and Mandarin. Other languages were available but were not requested.   
  
MA DESE also consults regularly, on a monthly or at least quarterly basis, with Massachusetts Administrators of Special Education, http://www.asepage.org/, the Federation for Children with Special Needs, https://fcsn.org/, Massachusetts Advocates for Children, https://www.massadvocates.org/, the Massachusetts Association of Approved Special Education Schools, https://maaps.org/, Massachusetts Urban Special Education Leadership Collaborative, and the Special Needs Advocacy Network, www.spanmass.org. In addition, the Massachusetts State Special Education Director at MA DESE gives monthly virtual presentations to statewide special education leaders on a wide array of special education compliance and performance topics. During all of these meetings, MA DESE solicits and receives significant feedback that informs the development of special education policy and guidance.   
  
As needed, MA DESE also convenes stakeholder working groups throughout the year to provide focused input on specific projects and policy priorities. Examples of these focused groups include the Early Childhood Interagency Coordinating Council, with membership that includes community members and state agencies, a Statewide Systemic Improvement Plan (SSIP) leadership team and working group, a family engagement workgroup, an advisory group for the Dropout Prevention and Re-engagement Network, and secondary transition stakeholder groups. MA DESE also consults with educators, parents, advocates, and others on an ad hoc basis to inform policy and practice.   
  
MA DESE engages with stakeholders on the direction of Indicator 17, the State’s Systemic Improvement Plan (SSIP), at the state, district, classroom, and community levels. Stakeholders are provided with information about activities and goals, training events and embedded supports statewide, and the availability of resources to support and expand implementation. Stakeholders at the district and school levels participate in ongoing decision making about the direction of the SSIP by providing feedback about the quality of events and supports, observed benefits for their own stakeholders, and needs for moving forward with implementation most successfully. For additional information on stakeholder engagement related to Indicator 17, please see the Indicator 17 APR.  
  
Stakeholder engagement is an essential component of MA DESE’s special education agenda.

Additional input was sought from district early childhood coordinators and the Interagency Coordinating Council (ICC). The meeting with the district early childhood coordinators took place on November 8, 2021. Six districts, representing urban and rural communities from across the state, participated in the discussion of Indicator 6 targets. Stakeholder input from ICC took place on January 13, 2022. A total of 44 ICC members participated in the discussion on Indicator 6 targets. Overall, stakeholders recommended that targets remain the same for these next few years (before gradually changing the targets) so that schools and families can focus on existing pandemic-related stressors, while adapting to new routines and instructional environments. Additionally, all stakeholders emphasized the need for DESE to maintain high expectations.

**Targets**

**Please select if the State wants to set baseline and targets based on individual age ranges (i.e. separate baseline and targets for each age), or inclusive of all children ages 3, 4, and 5.**

Inclusive Targets

**Please select if the State wants to use target ranges for 6C.**

Target Range is used

Baselines for Inclusive Targets option (A, B, C)

| **Part** | **Baseline Year** | **Baseline Data** |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **A** | 2020 | 52.31% |
| **B** | 2020 | 19.36% |
| **C** | 2020 | 0.13% |

**Inclusive Targets – 6A, 6B**

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **FFY** | **2020** | **2021** | **2022** | **2023** | **2024** | **2025** |
| Target A >= | 52.31% | 52.31% | 52.31% | 52.31% | 53.36% | 54.41% |
| Target B <= | 19.36% | 19.36% | 19.36% | 19.36% | 18.02% | 16.68% |

**Inclusive Targets (with Target Ranges) – 6C**

| **FFY** | **2020 (low)** | **2020 (high)** | **2021 (low)** | **2021 (high)** | **2022 (low)** | **2022 (high)** | **2023 (low)** | **2023 (high)** | **2024 (low)** | **2024 (high)** | **2025 (low)** | **2025 (high)** |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Target C <= | 0.11% | 0.13% | 0.11% | 0.13% | 0.11% | 0.13% | 0.11% | 0.13% | 0.10% | 0.12% | 0.09% | 0.11% |

**Prepopulated Data**

**Data Source:**

SY 2020-21 Child Count/Educational Environment Data Groups (EDFacts file spec FS089; Data group 613)

**Date:**

07/07/2021

| **Description** | **3** | **4** | **5** | **3 through 5 - Total** |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Total number of children with IEPs | 3,045 | 6,278 | 1,250 | 10,573 |
| a1. Number of children attending a regular early childhood program and receiving the majority of special education and related services in the regular early childhood program | 1,558 | 3,343 | 630 | 5,531 |
| b1. Number of children attending separate special education class | 621 | 1,153 | 181 | 1,955 |
| b2. Number of children attending separate school | 26 | 51 | 15 | 92 |
| b3. Number of children attending residential facility | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| c1**.** Numberof children receiving special education and related services in the home | 5 | 8 | 1 | 14 |

**Select yes if the data reported in this indicator are not the same as the State’s data reported under section 618 of the IDEA.**

NO

**FFY 2020 SPP/APR Data - Aged 3 through 5**

| **Preschool Environments** | **Number of children with IEPs aged 3 through 5 served** | **Total number of children with IEPs aged 3 through 5** | **FFY 2019 Data** | **FFY 2020 Target** | **FFY 2020 Data** | **Status** | **Slippage** |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| A. A regular early childhood program and receiving the majority of special education and related services in the regular early childhood program | 5,531 | 10,573 | 54.78% | 52.31% | 52.31% | N/A | N/A |
| B. Separate special education class, separate school or residential facility | 2,047 | 10,573 | 17.03% | 19.36% | 19.36% | N/A | N/A |

**FFY 2020 SPP/APR Data - Aged 3 through 5**

| **Preschool Environments** | **Number of children with IEPs aged 3 through 5 served** | **Total number of children with IEPs aged 3 through 5** | **FFY 2019 Data** | **FFY 2020 Target(low)** | **FFY 2020 Target(high)** | **FFY 2020 Data** | **Status** | **Slippage** |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| C. Home | 14 | 10,573 |  | 0.11% | 0.13% | 0.13% | N/A | N/A |

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

Indicator 6 baselines were revised due to changes implemented by OSEP (i.e., addition of "home" as an educational placement and the removal of kindergarteners from Indicator 6 analyses). The removal of kindergarten children with IEPs from Indicator 6 calculation no longer allows states to compare current data with previous data. Calculations for 6C were determined based on home-placement data from FFY2018 through FFY2020, showing an average percentage point difference of 0.01%. The starting target for the high end of the target range was determined based on FFY2020 data (baseline), while the starting target for the low end of the range was determined based on the percentage point difference between FFY2018 and FFY2020 (0.02%).   
  
The pandemic may have affected eligible children's access to inclusive preschool special education services and supports in FFY2020. For example, in FFY2019, 6,581 preschool children with IEPs received services in a regular early childhood program, but only 5,531 preschool children with IEPs received services in a regular early childhood program for FFY2020 (15.96% decrease).

## 6 - Prior FFY Required Actions

None

## 6 - OSEP Response

The State has revised the baseline for this indicator, using data from FFY 2020, and OSEP accepts that revision.  
  
The State provided targets for FFYs 2020 through 2025 for this indicator, and OSEP accepts those targets.  
  
OSEP notes that the State reported that it is using target ranges for Indicator 6c, however, the data fields include target ranges and individual inclusive targets.

## 6 - Required Actions

# 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 2 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** | **2015** | **2016** | **2017** | **2018** | **2019** |
| A1 | 2017 | Target >= | 100.00% | 85.00% |  | 86.00% | 86.00% |
| A1 | 85.61% | Data | 79.14% | 88.70% | 85.61% | 85.17% | 82.44% |
| A2 | 2017 | Target >= | 90.00% | 49.00% |  | 50.00% | 50.00% |
| A2 | 47.00% | Data | 53.57% | 47.74% | 47.00% | 46.03% | 43.74% |
| B1 | 2017 | Target >= | 100.00% | 83.00% |  | 85.00% | 85.00% |
| B1 | 84.90% | Data | 78.19% | 85.47% | 84.90% | 83.56% | 84.20% |
| B2 | 2017 | Target >= | 90.00% | 48.00% |  | 49.00% | 49.00% |
| B2 | 48.39% | Data | 52.62% | 46.48% | 48.39% | 46.60% | 45.04% |
| C1 | 2017 | Target >= | 100.00% | 85.00% |  | 86.00% | 86.00% |
| C1 | 85.51% | Data | 80.84% | 89.31% | 85.51% | 86.17% | 84.43% |
| C2 | 2017 | Target >= | 90.00% | 62.00% |  | 63.00% | 63.00% |
| C2 | 60.46% | Data | 61.58% | 63.73% | 60.46% | 60.67% | 58.26% |

**Targets**

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **FFY** | **2020** | **2021** | **2022** | **2023** | **2024** | **2025** |
| Target A1 >= | 86.00% | 86.00% | 86.00% | 86.50% | 87.00% | 88.00% |
| Target A2 >= | 50.00% | 50.00% | 50.00% | 50.25% | 50.50% | 51.00% |
| Target B1 >= | 85.00% | 85.00% | 85.00% | 85.50% | 86.00% | 87.00% |
| Target B2 >= | 49.00% | 49.00% | 49.00% | 49.25% | 49.50% | 50.00% |
| Target C1 >= | 86.00% | 86.00% | 86.00% | 86.50% | 87.00% | 88.00% |
| Target C2 >= | 63.00% | 63.00% | 63.00% | 63.25% | 63.50% | 64.00% |

**Targets: Description of Stakeholder Input**

MA DESE works closely with stakeholders on developing targets and setting priorities for improvement in each of the areas reported in the SPP/APR.   
  
The Special Education Advisory Panel, comprised of parents, individuals with disabilities, educators, administrators, and representatives from state agencies, higher education, and other stakeholder groups, meets up to five times each school year to review data, discuss policy priorities, and identify unmet needs in the area of special education consistent with state law and IDEA Part B. At every meeting, the group addresses various aspects of the SPP/APR and the State’s general supervision systems, as well as relevant policy matters. A special focus during the pandemic has been COVID-19’s effect on compliance and performance areas related to the SPP/APR Indicators. MA DESE facilitates discussion of baseline and current data, longitudinal targets, historical rates of performance and compliance and the trajectory for improvement for each of the Indicators, and the effectiveness of focused improvement activities within the context of the state's Results Driven Accountability framework.   
  
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MA DESE also consults regularly, on a monthly or at least quarterly basis, with Massachusetts Administrators of Special Education, http://www.asepage.org/, the Federation for Children with Special Needs, https://fcsn.org/, Massachusetts Advocates for Children, https://www.massadvocates.org/, the Massachusetts Association of Approved Special Education Schools, https://maaps.org/, Massachusetts Urban Special Education Leadership Collaborative, and the Special Needs Advocacy Network, www.spanmass.org. In addition, the Massachusetts State Special Education Director at MA DESE gives monthly virtual presentations to statewide special education leaders on a wide array of special education compliance and performance topics. During all of these meetings, MA DESE solicits and receives significant feedback that informs the development of special education policy and guidance.   
  
As needed, MA DESE also convenes stakeholder working groups throughout the year to provide focused input on specific projects and policy priorities. Examples of these focused groups include the Early Childhood Interagency Coordinating Council, with membership that includes community members and state agencies, a Statewide Systemic Improvement Plan (SSIP) leadership team and working group, a family engagement workgroup, an advisory group for the Dropout Prevention and Re-engagement Network, and secondary transition stakeholder groups. MA DESE also consults with educators, parents, advocates, and others on an ad hoc basis to inform policy and practice.   
  
MA DESE engages with stakeholders on the direction of Indicator 17, the State’s Systemic Improvement Plan (SSIP), at the state, district, classroom, and community levels. Stakeholders are provided with information about activities and goals, training events and embedded supports statewide, and the availability of resources to support and expand implementation. Stakeholders at the district and school levels participate in ongoing decision making about the direction of the SSIP by providing feedback about the quality of events and supports, observed benefits for their own stakeholders, and needs for moving forward with implementation most successfully. For additional information on stakeholder engagement related to Indicator 17, please see the Indicator 17 APR.  
  
Stakeholder engagement is an essential component of MA DESE’s special education agenda.

Additional input was sought from early childhood district coordinators and the Interagency Coordinating Council (ICC). The meeting with the early childhood district coordinators took place on November 8, 2021—six districts, representing urban and rural communities from across the state, participated in the discussion of Indicator 7 targets. Stakeholder input from the ICC took place on January 13, 2022. A total of 44 ICC attendees participated in the discussion on Indicator 7 targets. Stakeholders, overall, recommended an increase in Indicator 7 targets so that high expectations are maintained and schools are continually challenged to improve upon their existing practices to better meet the social/emotional and cognitive needs of preschoolers with IEPs. ICC, in particular, recommended that the current targets remain the same for these next couple of years so that schools and families have time to focus on existing pandemic-related stressors while adapting to new routines and instructional environments. The delay in increasing targets also allows educators the time and space needed to receive trainings and supports to refine and improve their practices while meeting COVID-related demands. As a result of stakeholder feedback, we maintained rigorous targets and increased the targets in FFY2023, FFY2024, and FFY2025.

**FFY 2020 SPP/APR Data**

**Number of preschool children aged 3 through 5 with IEPs assessed**

1,316

**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 | 18 | 1.37% |
| b. Preschool children who improved functioning but not sufficient to move nearer to functioning comparable to same-aged peers | 210 | 15.96% |
| c. Preschool children who improved functioning to a level nearer to same-aged peers but did not reach it | 502 | 38.15% |
| d. Preschool children who improved functioning to reach a level comparable to same-aged peers | 415 | 31.53% |
| e. Preschool children who maintained functioning at a level comparable to same-aged peers | 171 | 12.99% |

| **Outcome A** | **Numerator** | **Denominator** | **FFY 2019 Data** | **FFY 2020 Target** | **FFY 2020 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. *Calculation:(c+d)/(a+b+c+d)* | 917 | 1,145 | 82.44% | 86.00% | 80.09% | Did not meet target | 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. *Calculation: (d+e)/(a+b+c+d+e)* | 586 | 1,316 | 43.74% | 50.00% | 44.53% | 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 | 13 | 0.99% |
| b. Preschool children who improved functioning but not sufficient to move nearer to functioning comparable to same-aged peers | 197 | 14.97% |
| c. Preschool children who improved functioning to a level nearer to same-aged peers but did not reach it | 528 | 40.12% |
| d. Preschool children who improved functioning to reach a level comparable to same-aged peers | 441 | 33.51% |
| e. Preschool children who maintained functioning at a level comparable to same-aged peers | 137 | 10.41% |

| **Outcome B** | **Numerator** | **Denominator** | **FFY 2019 Data** | **FFY 2020 Target** | **FFY 2020 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. *Calculation: (c+d)/(a+b+c+d)* | 969 | 1,179 | 84.20% | 85.00% | 82.19% | Did not meet target | Slippage |
| B2. The percent of preschool children who were functioning within age expectations in Outcome B by the time they turned 6 years of age or exited the program. *Calculation: (d+e)/(a+b+c+d+e)* | 578 | 1,316 | 45.04% | 49.00% | 43.92% | Did not meet target | Slippage |

**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 | 14 | 1.06% |
| b. Preschool children who improved functioning but not sufficient to move nearer to functioning comparable to same-aged peers | 162 | 12.31% |
| c. Preschool children who improved functioning to a level nearer to same-aged peers but did not reach it | 436 | 33.13% |
| d. Preschool children who improved functioning to reach a level comparable to same-aged peers | 453 | 34.42% |
| e. Preschool children who maintained functioning at a level comparable to same-aged peers | 251 | 19.07% |

| **Outcome C** | **Numerator** | **Denominator** | **FFY 2019 Data** | **FFY 2020 Target** | **FFY 2020 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.  *Calculation:(c+d)/(a+b+c+d)* | 889 | 1,065 | 84.43% | 86.00% | 83.47% | Did not meet target | No 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.  *Calculation: (d+e)/(a+b+c+d+e)* | 704 | 1,316 | 58.26% | 63.00% | 53.50% | Did not meet target | Slippage |

| **Part** | **Reasons for slippage, if applicable** |
| --- | --- |
| **A1** | The Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education’s (MA DESE’s) goal is to meet and exceed the rigorous targets that have been established for this measure. We are mindful that there can be a variety of reasons for changes in the data, including data quality, changes in programs, and/or changes in the population being served. To better understand the extent of slippage, we compared the results using the Early Childhood Technical Assistance (ECTA) Center Meaningful Differences Calculator to determine whether there was a statistical difference year to year (http://ectacenter.org/eco/pages/childoutcomes-calc.asp). Proportional differences from Federal Fiscal Year (FFY) 2019 to FFY 2020 were not found to be significant, based on a 90% confidence interval.  Although results for FFY 2020 were statistically stable, the reasons that this outcome was lower this past year are being considered. Like last year, we infer overall that child outcomes for FFY 2020 were impacted by programming adjustments to provide services remotely given school closures for the majority of schools for much of the 2020–21 school year due to COVID-19.  Regarding COVID-19 specifically, the potential impact on data completeness, validity, and reliability have all been considered. In terms of data completeness, comparing FFY 2019 to FFY 2020, the number of usable records increased by 166 records (14.43%), and the number of reporting districts with usable data increased by seven districts (5.22%). As such, completeness is not perceived to be a factor. Furthermore, the validity of the data was not likely impacted, as the Child Outcomes Summary (COS) process served as the method to measure outcomes, as in prior years. In terms of reliability, data collection processes for the 2020–21 school year continued to differ from those used prior to March 2020 due to building closures and remote service delivery. As with the period from March through June 2020 when school closures first began, district teams’ ability to convene meetings for COS ratings with all stakeholders present, full access to all prior assessments/ documentation, and day-to-day interactions with students and families may all have been affected to some extent. These factors were present for the entire FFY 2020 data collection period. Therefore, it is reasonable to infer that the overall reliability of the measure compared with prior years may have been impacted by the COVID-19 modifications. To help mitigate these impacts, MA DESE moved quickly to offer updated guidance through departmental FAQs and links to practical resources, such as the ECTA Center’s guidance on conducting the COS process remotely, extend data submission deadlines on a district-by-district basis, more closely examine data quality and completeness upon initial submission, and provide technical assistance to districts based on data quality and completeness reviews through phone calls and e-mails throughout the process. |
| **B1** | The Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education’s (MA DESE’s) goal is to meet and exceed the rigorous targets that have been established for this measure. We are mindful that there can be a variety of reasons for changes in the data, including data quality, changes in programs, and/or changes in the population being served. To better understand the extent of slippage, we compared the results using the Early Childhood Technical Assistance (ECTA) Center Meaningful Differences Calculator to determine whether there was a statistical difference year to year (http://ectacenter.org/eco/pages/childoutcomes-calc.asp). Proportional differences from Federal Fiscal Year (FFY) 2019 to FFY 2020 were not found to be significant, based on a 90% confidence interval.  Although results for FFY 2020 were statistically stable, the reasons that this outcome was lower this past year are being considered. Like last year, we infer overall that child outcomes for FFY 2020 were impacted by programming adjustments to provide services remotely given school closures for the majority of schools for much of the 2020–21 school year due to COVID-19.  Regarding COVID-19 specifically, the potential impact on data completeness, validity, and reliability have all been considered. In terms of data completeness, comparing FFY 2019 to FFY 2020, the number of usable records increased by 166 records (14.43%), and the number of reporting districts with usable data increased by seven districts (5.22%). As such, completeness is not perceived to be a factor. Furthermore, the validity of the data was not likely impacted, as the Child Outcomes Summary (COS) process served as the method to measure outcomes, as in prior years. In terms of reliability, data collection processes for the 2020–21 school year continued to differ from those used prior to March 2020 due to building closures and remote service delivery. As with the period from March through June 2020 when school closures first began, district teams’ ability to convene meetings for COS ratings with all stakeholders present, full access to all prior assessments/ documentation, and day-to-day interactions with students and families may all have been affected to some extent. These factors were present for the entire FFY 2020 data collection period. Therefore, it is reasonable to infer that the overall reliability of the measure compared with prior years may have been impacted by the COVID-19 modifications. To help mitigate these impacts, MA DESE moved quickly to offer updated guidance through departmental FAQs and links to practical resources, such as the ECTA Center’s guidance on conducting the COS process remotely, extend data submission deadlines on a district-by-district basis, more closely examine data quality and completeness upon initial submission, and provide technical assistance to districts based on data quality and completeness reviews through phone calls and e-mails throughout the process. |
| **B2** | The Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education’s (MA DESE’s) goal is to meet and exceed the rigorous targets that have been established for this measure. We are mindful that there can be a variety of reasons for changes in the data, including data quality, changes in programs, and/or changes in the population being served. To better understand the extent of slippage, we compared the results using the Early Childhood Technical Assistance (ECTA) Center Meaningful Differences Calculator to determine whether there was a statistical difference year to year (http://ectacenter.org/eco/pages/childoutcomes-calc.asp). Proportional differences from Federal Fiscal Year (FFY) 2019 to FFY 2020 were not found to be significant, based on a 90% confidence interval.  Although results for FFY 2020 were statistically stable, the reasons that this outcome was lower this past year are being considered. Like last year, we infer overall that child outcomes for FFY 2020 were impacted by programming adjustments to provide services remotely given school closures for the majority of schools for much of the 2020–21 school year due to COVID-19.  Regarding COVID-19 specifically, the potential impact on data completeness, validity, and reliability have all been considered. In terms of data completeness, comparing FFY 2019 to FFY 2020, the number of usable records increased by 166 records (14.43%), and the number of reporting districts with usable data increased by seven districts (5.22%). As such, completeness is not perceived to be a factor. Furthermore, the validity of the data was not likely impacted, as the Child Outcomes Summary (COS) process served as the method to measure outcomes, as in prior years. In terms of reliability, data collection processes for the 2020–21 school year continued to differ from those used prior to March 2020 due to building closures and remote service delivery. As with the period from March through June 2020 when school closures first began, district teams’ ability to convene meetings for COS ratings with all stakeholders present, full access to all prior assessments/ documentation, and day-to-day interactions with students and families may all have been affected to some extent. These factors were present for the entire FFY 2020 data collection period. Therefore, it is reasonable to infer that the overall reliability of the measure compared with prior years may have been impacted by the COVID-19 modifications. To help mitigate these impacts, MA DESE moved quickly to offer updated guidance through departmental FAQs and links to practical resources, such as the ECTA Center’s guidance on conducting the COS process remotely, extend data submission deadlines on a district-by-district basis, more closely examine data quality and completeness upon initial submission, and provide technical assistance to districts based on data quality and completeness reviews through phone calls and e-mails throughout the process. |
| **C2** | The Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education’s (MA DESE’s) goal is to meet and exceed the rigorous targets that have been established for this measure. We are mindful that there can be a variety of reasons for changes in the data, including data quality, changes in programs, and/or changes in the population being served. To better understand the extent of slippage, we compared the results using the Early Childhood Technical Assistance (ECTA) Center Meaningful Differences Calculator to determine whether there was a statistical difference year to year (http://ectacenter.org/eco/pages/childoutcomes-calc.asp). Proportional differences from Federal Fiscal Year (FFY) 2019 to FFY 2020 were not found to be significant, based on a 90% confidence interval.  Although results for FFY 2020 were statistically stable, the reasons that this outcome was lower this past year are being considered. Like last year, we infer overall that child outcomes for FFY 2020 were impacted by programming adjustments to provide services remotely given school closures for the majority of schools for much of the 2020–21 school year due to COVID-19.  Regarding COVID-19 specifically, the potential impact on data completeness, validity, and reliability have all been considered. In terms of data completeness, comparing FFY 2019 to FFY 2020, the number of usable records increased by 166 records (14.43%), and the number of reporting districts with usable data increased by seven districts (5.22%). As such, completeness is not perceived to be a factor. Furthermore, the validity of the data was not likely impacted, as the Child Outcomes Summary (COS) process served as the method to measure outcomes, as in prior years. In terms of reliability, data collection processes for the 2020–21 school year continued to differ from those used prior to March 2020 due to building closures and remote service delivery. As with the period from March through June 2020 when school closures first began, district teams’ ability to convene meetings for COS ratings with all stakeholders present, full access to all prior assessments/ documentation, and day-to-day interactions with students and families may all have been affected to some extent. These factors were present for the entire FFY 2020 data collection period. Therefore, it is reasonable to infer that the overall reliability of the measure compared with prior years may have been impacted by the COVID-19 modifications. To help mitigate these impacts, MA DESE moved quickly to offer updated guidance through departmental FAQs and links to practical resources, such as the ECTA Center’s guidance on conducting the COS process remotely, extend data submission deadlines on a district-by-district basis, more closely examine data quality and completeness upon initial submission, and provide technical assistance to districts based on data quality and completeness reviews through phone calls and e-mails throughout the process. |

**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? | YES |
| If yes, has your previously approved sampling plan changed? | NO |

**Describe the sampling methodology outlining how the design will yield valid and reliable estimates.**

MASSACHUSETTS SAMPLING PLAN FOR INDICATOR 7  
  
MA DESE and the Massachusetts Department of Early Education and Care (EEC) collaboratively selected a cohort model for the purpose of this indicator’s reporting activities. Massachusetts divides districts into four cohorts, with each cohort being representative of the State. Further information about this Office of Special Education Programs (OSEP)-approved cohort model can be found below (under instruments and procedures section). According to the cohort schedule (below), local education agencies (LEAs) collect entry data for students once every 4 years as part of their assigned cohort. Data collection and reporting activities for those participating LEAs continue for approximately 3 years following entry data, until all originally assessed students have exited from or terminated early childhood special education services. Once all the children from the LEA’s cohort have exited from early childhood special education, the LEA has a year off of reporting and then begins a new cycle with a new cohort of entering eligible students. Therefore, for each reporting year, our sample includes data from three of the four district cohorts.   
  
Cohort schedule for SY 2020-2021 data collection  
COHORT 1 Report exit data from entry cohort (end cycle)  
COHORT 2 Report exit data from entry cohort  
COHORT 3 Off – no reporting  
COHORT 4 Report entry and exit data (NEW cycle)  
SSIP/PM Districts Report entry and exit data annually  
  
In addition to the cohort model described above, MA DESE collects additional early childhood outcomes data as part of the Massachusetts State Systemic Improvement Plan (SSIP). Through the SSIP, MA DESE is currently working with 34 districts to implement the Pyramid Model for Promoting the Social and Emotional Development of Infants and Young Children (the Pyramid Model) to support improved social-emotional outcomes. Participating SSIP districts began collecting and reporting Indicator 7 data entry and exit data every year starting in FFY 2015, so they are not in the cohort model (defined as following a cohort of students who entered in one school year). The non-SSIP districts have continued to be represented in the approved cohort collection model. (The number of participating SSIP districts was 19 in 2015, and had since expanded to 32 districts as of the FFY 2020 reporting year.) The SSIP districts include several of the largest districts in Massachusetts. Progress on Indicator 7 as it relates to the State Identified Measurable Result (SiMR) for Indicator 17 for SSIP districts specifically is reported in the appropriate section of this report.  
  
In FFY 2020, MA DESE also expanded the data collection window from August 1, 2020, to July 31, 2021, to accommodate districts making COVID-related adjustments that led to some students entering/exiting over the summer months. This expanded data collection window, combined with the SSIP districts' data mentioned above, and improved and more frequent outreach by MA DESE to districts over the past several years about the data collection activities, have likely contributed to an increase in the number of usable records for Indicator 7 in FFY 2020 (n = 1,316), a 14% increase over FFY 2019 (n = 1,150), which was a 10% increase from FFY 2018 (n = 1,045).   
  
MA DESE continues to work toward increasing districts’ capacity for reporting high-quality data to ensure valid and reliable results.

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

YES

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

MA DESE uses the Child Outcomes Summary (COS) process and collects data using a cohort model described above.  
  
Massachusetts Cohort Assignment:  
Org code District Cohort  
0001 Abington Cohort 1  
0600 Acton-Boxborough Cohort 4  
0003 Acushnet Cohort 2  
0005 Agawam Cohort 3  
0007 Amesbury Cohort 4  
0008 Amherst SSIP  
0009 Andover Cohort 3  
0010 Arlington SSIP  
0610 Ashburnham-Westminster Cohort 2  
0014 Ashland Cohort 1  
0615 Athol-Royalston Cohort 4  
0016 Attleboro SSIP  
0017 Auburn Cohort 4  
0018 Avon Cohort 3  
0616 Ayer Shirley School District Cohort 1  
0020 Barnstable Cohort 3  
0023 Bedford Cohort 3  
0024 Belchertown Cohort 1  
0025 Bellingham Cohort 1  
0026 Belmont Cohort 1  
0420 Benjamin Banneker Charter Public (District) Cohort 4  
0027 Berkley Cohort 3  
0618 Berkshire Hills Cohort 3  
0620 Berlin-Boylston Cohort 1  
0030 Beverly Cohort 1  
0031 Billerica Cohort 4  
0622 Blackstone-Millville Cohort 4  
0035 Boston SSIP  
0481 Boston Renaissance Charter Public (District) Cohort 4  
0036 Bourne Cohort 2  
0038 Boxford Cohort 2  
0040 Braintree Cohort 2  
0041 Brewster Cohort 2  
0417 Bridge Boston Charter School (District) Cohort 2  
0625 Bridgewater-Raynham Cohort 3  
0043 Brimfield Cohort 3  
0044 Brockton Cohort 3  
0045 Brookfield Cohort 3  
0046 Brookline SSIP  
0048 Burlington Cohort 1  
0049 Cambridge Cohort 1  
0050 Canton Cohort 4  
0051 Carlisle Cohort 2  
0052 Carver Cohort 3  
0635 Central Berkshire Cohort 1  
0056 Chelmsford Cohort 2  
0057 Chelsea SSIP  
0632 Chesterfield-Goshen Cohort 4  
0061 Chicopee Cohort 2  
0063 Clarksburg Cohort 1  
0064 Clinton Cohort 3  
0438 Codman Academy Charter Public (District) Cohort 1  
0065 Cohasset Cohort 1  
0426 Community Day Charter Public - Gateway Cohort 1  
0431 Community Day Charter Public - R. Kinman Webster Cohort 1  
0440 Community Day Charter Public School - Prospect (District) Cohort 1  
0067 Concord Cohort 2  
0439 Conservatory Lab Charter (District) Cohort 4  
0068 Conway Cohort 3  
0071 Danvers Cohort 3  
0072 Dartmouth Cohort 1  
0073 Dedham Cohort 4  
0074 Deerfield SSIP  
0645 Dennis-Yarmouth Cohort 2  
0650 Dighton-Rehoboth Cohort 3  
0077 Douglas Cohort 4  
0078 Dover Cohort 4  
0655 Dover-Sherborn Cohort 4  
0079 Dracut Cohort 3  
0407 Dudley Street Neighborhood Charter Cohort 1  
0658 Dudley-Charlton Reg Cohort 2  
0082 Duxbury Cohort 3  
0083 East Bridgewater Cohort 4  
0087 East Longmeadow Cohort 3  
0085 Eastham Cohort 2  
0086 Easthampton Cohort 2  
0088 Easton Cohort 2  
0089 Edgartown SSIP  
0091 Erving Cohort 2  
0093 Everett Cohort 4  
0094 Fairhaven Cohort 4  
0095 Fall River SSIP  
0096 Falmouth SSIP  
0662 Farmington River Reg Cohort 3  
0097 Fitchburg Cohort 4  
0098 Florida Cohort 1  
0099 Foxborough Cohort 1  
0100 Framingham Cohort 1  
0101 Franklin Cohort 4  
0665 Freetown-Lakeville Cohort 1  
103 Gardner SSIP  
0672 Gateway Cohort 3  
0105 Georgetown Cohort 3  
0674 Gill-Montague Cohort 3  
0107 Gloucester Cohort 4  
0110 Grafton Cohort 4  
0111 Granby Cohort 2  
0114 Greenfield SSIP  
0673 Groton-Dunstable Cohort 3  
0117 Hadley Cohort 4  
0675 Hamilton-Wenham Cohort 2  
0680 Hampden-Wilbraham Cohort 2  
0121 Hancock Cohort 1  
0122 Hanover SSIP  
0125 Harvard Cohort 4  
0127 Hatfield Cohort 2  
0128 Haverhill Cohort 2  
0685 Hawlemont Cohort 3  
0131 Hingham Cohort 3  
0133 Holbrook Cohort 4  
0135 Holland Cohort 3  
0136 Holliston Cohort 1  
0137 Holyoke SSIP  
0603 Hoosac Valley Regional School District Cohort 2  
0138 Hopedale SSIP  
0139 Hopkinton Cohort 2  
0141 Hudson Cohort 2  
0142 Hull Cohort 4  
0144 Ipswich Cohort 1  
0145 Kingston Cohort 2  
0149 Lawrence SSIP  
0454 Lawrence Family Development Charter (District) Cohort 4  
0150 Lee Cohort 3  
0151 Leicester Cohort 3  
0152 Lenox Cohort 2  
0153 Leominster Cohort 3  
0154 Leverett Cohort 2  
0155 Lexington Cohort 1  
0157 Lincoln Cohort 4  
0158 Littleton Cohort 1  
0159 Longmeadow Cohort 2  
0160 Lowell Cohort 3  
0456 Lowell Community Charter Public (District) Cohort 2  
0161 Ludlow Cohort 3  
0162 Lunenburg Cohort 1  
0163 Lynn Cohort 3  
0164 Lynnfield Cohort 1  
0165 Malden SSIP  
0698 Manchester Essex Regional Cohort 4  
0167 Mansfield SSIP  
0168 Marblehead Cohort 1  
0169 Marion Cohort 3  
0170 Marlborough Cohort 3  
0171 Marshfield Cohort 1  
0172 Mashpee Cohort 4  
0469 MATCH Charter Public School (District) Cohort 4  
0173 Mattapoisett Cohort 3  
0174 Maynard Cohort 3  
0175 Medfield Cohort 1  
0176 Medford Cohort 2  
0177 Medway Cohort 2  
0178 Melrose Cohort 1  
0710 Mendon-Upton Cohort 3  
0181 Methuen SSIP  
0182 Middleborough Cohort 4  
0184 Middleton Cohort 2  
0185 Milford Cohort 2  
0186 Millbury Cohort 4  
0187 Millis Public Schools Cohort 1  
0189 Milton Cohort 2  
0717 Mohawk Trail Cohort 3  
0712 Monomoy Regional School Cohort 2  
0191 Monson Cohort 3  
0715 Mount Greylock Cohort 1  
0196 Nahant Cohort 3  
0197 Nantucket Cohort 3  
0720 Narragansett Cohort 2  
0725 Nashoba SSIP  
0198 Natick Cohort 3  
0199 Needham Cohort 4  
0444 Neighborhood House Charter (District) Cohort 2  
0201 New Bedford Cohort 2  
0728 New Salem-Wendell Cohort 2  
0204 Newburyport Cohort 3  
0207 Newton Cohort 4  
0208 Norfolk Cohort 1  
0209 North Adams Cohort 1  
0211 North Andover Cohort 2  
0212 North Attleborough Cohort 4  
0215 North Brookfield Cohort 2  
0735 North Middlesex Cohort 4  
0217 North Reading Cohort 1  
0210 Northampton Cohort 4  
0213 Northborough Cohort 2  
0214 Northbridge Cohort 4  
0218 Norton Cohort 4  
0219 Norwell Cohort 3  
0220 Norwood Cohort 1  
0221 Oak Bluffs SSIP  
0223 Orange SSIP  
0226 Oxford Cohort 2  
0227 Palmer Cohort 3  
0229 Peabody Cohort 4  
0231 Pembroke Cohort 1  
0745 Pentucket Cohort 1  
0234 Petersham Cohort 2  
0750 Pioneer Valley SSIP  
0236 Pittsfield Cohort 2  
0238 Plainville Cohort 4  
0239 Plymouth Cohort 4  
0487 Prospect Hill Academy Charter (District) Cohort 3  
0242 Provincetown Cohort 1  
0753 Quabbin Cohort 4  
0778 Quaboag Regional Cohort 4  
0243 Quincy Cohort 4  
0244 Randolph SSIP  
0246 Reading SSIP  
0248 Revere Cohort 1  
0249 Richmond Cohort 1  
0250 Rochester Cohort 3  
0251 Rockland SSIP  
0252 Rockport Cohort 3  
0253 Rowe Cohort 1  
0258 Salem Cohort 1  
0261 Sandwich Cohort 3  
0262 Saugus Cohort 1  
0263 Savoy Cohort 1  
0264 Scituate Cohort 3  
0265 Seekonk Cohort 1  
0266 Sharon Cohort 1  
0269 Sherborn Cohort 4  
0271 Shrewsbury Cohort 2  
0272 Shutesbury Cohort 2  
0760 Silver Lake Cohort 2  
0273 Somerset Cohort 2  
0274 Somerville Cohort 3  
0278 South Hadley Cohort 3  
0275 Southampton Cohort 4  
0276 Southborough Cohort 2  
0277 Southbridge Cohort 2  
0765 Southern Berkshire Cohort 2  
0766 Southwick-Tolland-Granville Regional School District Cohort 1  
0767 Spencer-E Brookfield Cohort 4  
0281 Springfield Cohort 1  
0284 Stoneham Cohort 2  
0285 Stoughton Cohort 4  
0287 Sturbridge Cohort 3  
0288 Sudbury Cohort 4  
0289 Sunderland Cohort 3  
0290 Sutton Cohort 3  
0291 Swampscott Cohort 3  
0292 Swansea Cohort 4  
0293 Taunton SSIP  
0295 Tewksbury Cohort 1  
0296 Tisbury SSIP  
0298 Topsfield Cohort 2  
0773 Triton Cohort 2  
0300 Truro Cohort 2  
0301 Tyngsborough Cohort 2  
3505 UP Academy Charter School of Dorchester Cohort 3  
0774 Up-Island Regional SSIP  
0304 Uxbridge Cohort 2  
0775 Wachusett Cohort 3  
0305 Wakefield Cohort 3  
0306 Wales Cohort 3  
0307 Walpole SSIP  
0308 Waltham Cohort 4  
0309 Ware Cohort 2  
0310 Wareham Cohort 3  
0314 Watertown Cohort 4  
0316 Webster Cohort 4  
0317 Wellesley Cohort 2  
0322 West Boylston Cohort 1  
0323 West Bridgewater Cohort 1  
0332 West Springfield Cohort 1  
0321 Westborough Cohort 1  
0325 Westfield SSIP  
0326 Westford Cohort 3  
0327 Westhampton Cohort 4  
0330 Weston Cohort 2  
0331 Westport Cohort 3  
0335 Westwood Cohort 2  
0336 Weymouth SSIP  
0337 Whately Cohort 3  
0780 Whitman-Hanson Cohort 4  
0340 Williamsburg Cohort 4  
0342 Wilmington Cohort 1  
0343 Winchendon SSIP  
0344 Winchester Cohort 3  
0346 Winthrop Cohort 1  
0347 Woburn Cohort 4  
0348 Worcester Cohort 2  
0349 Worthington Cohort 4  
0350 Wrentham Cohort 3

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

Please refer to slippage statements for a description of the impact of COVID-19.

## 7 - Prior FFY Required Actions

None

## 7 - OSEP Response

The State provided targets for FFYs 2020 through 2025 for this indicator, and OSEP accepts those targets.  
  
The State reported that sampling was used to collect data for this indicator and that the previously approved sampling plan had not changed. In order to report data for this indicator using sampling for the FFY 2020-2025 SPP/APR, the State must submit its sampling plan to OSEP and provide data consistent with the approved sampling plan

## 7 - Required Actions

# Indicator 8: Parent involvement

**Instructions and Measurement**

**Monitoring Priority:** FAPE in the LRE

**Results indicator:** Percent of parents with a child receiving special education services who report that schools facilitated parent involvement as a means of improving services and results for children with disabilities.

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

**Data Source**

State selected data source.

**Measurement**

Percent = [(# of respondent parents who report schools facilitated parent involvement as a means of improving services and results for children with disabilities) divided by the (total # of respondent parents of children with disabilities)] times 100.

**Instructions**

*Sampling****of parents from whom response is requested****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 2 for additional instructions on sampling.)*

Describe the results of the calculations and compare the results to the target.

Provide the actual numbers used in the calculation.

If the State is using a separate data collection methodology for preschool children, the State must provide separate baseline data, targets, and actual target data or discuss the procedures used to combine data from school age and preschool data collection methodologies in a manner that is valid and reliable.

While a survey is not required for this indicator, a State using a survey must submit a copy of any new or revised survey with its SPP/APR.

Report the number of parents to whom the surveys were distributed and the number of respondent parents. The survey response rate is automatically calculated using the submitted data.

States must compare the response rate for the reporting year to the response rate for the previous year (e.g., in the FFY 2020 SPP/APR, compare the FFY 2020 response rate to the FFY 2019 response rate) and describe strategies that will be implemented which are expected to increase the response rate, particularly for those groups that are underrepresented.

The State must also analyze the response rate to identify potential nonresponse bias and take steps to reduce any identified bias and promote response from a broad cross section of parents of children with disabilities.

Include in the State’s analysis the extent to which the demographics of the children for whom parents responded are representative of the demographics of children receiving special education services. States should consider categories such as race/ethnicity, age of student, disability category, and geographic location in the State.

States must describe the metric used to determine representativeness (e.g., +/- 3% discrepancy in the proportion of responders compared to target group).

If the analysis shows that the demographics of the children for whom parents responding are not representative of the demographics of children receiving special education services in the State, describe the strategies that the State will use to ensure that in the future the response data are representative of those demographics. In identifying such strategies, the State should consider factors such as how the State distributed the survey to parents (e.g., by mail, by e-mail, on-line, by telephone, in-person through school personnel), and how responses were collected.

**Beginning with the FFY 2021 SPP/APR, due February 1, 2023,** when reporting the extent to which the demographics of the children for whom parents responded are representative of the demographics of children receiving special education services, States must include race/ethnicity in their analysis. In addition, the State’s analysis must also include at least one of the following demographics: age of the student, disability category, gender, geographic location, and/or another demographic category approved through the stakeholder input process.

States are encouraged to work in collaboration with their OSEP-funded parent centers in collecting data.

## 8 - Indicator Data

| **Question** | **Yes / No** |
| --- | --- |
| Do you use a separate data collection methodology for preschool children? | NO |

**Targets: Description of Stakeholder Input**

MA DESE works closely with stakeholders on developing targets and setting priorities for improvement in each of the areas reported in the SPP/APR.   
  
The Special Education Advisory Panel, comprised of parents, individuals with disabilities, educators, administrators, and representatives from state agencies, higher education, and other stakeholder groups, meets up to five times each school year to review data, discuss policy priorities, and identify unmet needs in the area of special education consistent with state law and IDEA Part B. At every meeting, the group addresses various aspects of the SPP/APR and the State’s general supervision systems, as well as relevant policy matters. A special focus during the pandemic has been COVID-19’s effect on compliance and performance areas related to the SPP/APR Indicators. MA DESE facilitates discussion of baseline and current data, longitudinal targets, historical rates of performance and compliance and the trajectory for improvement for each of the Indicators, and the effectiveness of focused improvement activities within the context of the state's Results Driven Accountability framework.   
  
MA DESE has set a high priority on expanding the agency’s capacity to solicit broad and diverse stakeholder input to set SPP/APR targets, analyze data, develop improvement strategies, and evaluate progress. For FFY2020, MA DESE sought to improve stakeholder Indicator knowledge by posting new webpages for Indicators 1, 2, 3, 5, 6, 7, 8, and 14 with Quick Reference Guides (QRGs) and PowerPoints for each Indicator. These QRGs and PowerPoints were available in six languages that correspond to the most common languages spoken in Massachusetts: English, Spanish, Portuguese, Chinese, Vietnamese, and Haitian Creole. Narrated versions of each PowerPoint were also available in English on the YouTube page of our partner, the Federation for Children with Special Needs (the Massachusetts Parent Training and Information Center/PTIC). MA DESE solicited feedback for Indicators 1, 2, 3, 5, 6, 7, 8, and 14 baselines and targets via an online survey in English, Spanish, Portuguese, Chinese, Vietnamese, and Haitian Creole. In addition, MA DESE collaborated with the Federation for Children with Special Needs, the OSEP funded Parent Training and Information Center (PTI), to hold five virtual stakeholder information and feedback sessions on these Indicators. Meetings were simultaneously interpreted into American Sign Language, Spanish, Portuguese, and Mandarin. Other languages were available but were not requested.   
  
MA DESE also consults regularly, on a monthly or at least quarterly basis, with Massachusetts Administrators of Special Education, http://www.asepage.org/, the Federation for Children with Special Needs, https://fcsn.org/, Massachusetts Advocates for Children, https://www.massadvocates.org/, the Massachusetts Association of Approved Special Education Schools, https://maaps.org/, Massachusetts Urban Special Education Leadership Collaborative, and the Special Needs Advocacy Network, www.spanmass.org. In addition, the Massachusetts State Special Education Director at MA DESE gives monthly virtual presentations to statewide special education leaders on a wide array of special education compliance and performance topics. During all of these meetings, MA DESE solicits and receives significant feedback that informs the development of special education policy and guidance.   
  
As needed, MA DESE also convenes stakeholder working groups throughout the year to provide focused input on specific projects and policy priorities. Examples of these focused groups include the Early Childhood Interagency Coordinating Council, with membership that includes community members and state agencies, a Statewide Systemic Improvement Plan (SSIP) leadership team and working group, a family engagement workgroup, an advisory group for the Dropout Prevention and Re-engagement Network, and secondary transition stakeholder groups. MA DESE also consults with educators, parents, advocates, and others on an ad hoc basis to inform policy and practice.   
  
MA DESE engages with stakeholders on the direction of Indicator 17, the State’s Systemic Improvement Plan (SSIP), at the state, district, classroom, and community levels. Stakeholders are provided with information about activities and goals, training events and embedded supports statewide, and the availability of resources to support and expand implementation. Stakeholders at the district and school levels participate in ongoing decision making about the direction of the SSIP by providing feedback about the quality of events and supports, observed benefits for their own stakeholders, and needs for moving forward with implementation most successfully. For additional information on stakeholder engagement related to Indicator 17, please see the Indicator 17 APR.  
  
Stakeholder engagement is an essential component of MA DESE’s special education agenda.

MA DESE continues to work closely with its Special Education Advisory groups to share information about Indicator 8 and the Parent Survey, and to gather feedback on setting targets, informing parents of the survey, and discussing how the data will be used. MA DESE also works collaboratively with The Federation for Children with Special Needs (the Massachusetts Parent Training and Information Center/PTIC), to conduct stakeholder meetings with families to share data regarding response rates and agreement rates.

**Historical Data**

| **Baseline Year** | **Baseline Data** |
| --- | --- |
| 2018 | 89.00% |

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **FFY** | **2015** | **2016** | **2017** | **2018** | **2019** |
| Target >= | 85.00% | 85.50% | 86.00% | 86.50% | 89.50% |
| Data | 81.01% | 82.94% | 80.82% | 89.00% | 88.55% |

**Targets**

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **FFY** | **2020** | **2021** | **2022** | **2023** | **2024** | **2025** |
| Target >= | 89.00% | 89.00% | 89.50% | 90.00% | 90.50% | 91.00% |

**FFY 2020 SPP/APR Data**

| **Number of respondent parents who report schools facilitated parent involvement as a means of improving services and results for children with disabilities** | **Total number of respondent parents of children with disabilities** | | **FFY 2019 Data** | **FFY 2020 Target** | **FFY 2020 Data** | **Status** | **Slippage** |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| 3,451 | | 3,906 | 88.55% | 89.00% | 88.35% | Did not meet target | No Slippage |

**Since the State did not report preschool children separately, discuss the procedures used to combine data from school age and preschool surveys in a manner that is valid and reliable.**

In FFY2020, MA DESE collected Indicator 8 data as part of the Tiered Focus Monitoring process (TFM) through a Parent Survey. To facilitate access and response, MA DESE made the surveys available online, through a mobile device, via email, or in hard copy. Information regarding the Parent Survey was sent by MA DESE to families of students with IEPs, ages 3-21, in these LEAs. Separate preschool surveys were not used; the questions used in the Parent Survey were developed to include families with children in Early Childhood Special Education and are appropriate for all populations. FFY2020 data indicates that 51.1% of all respondents represent children in Preschool-Grade 5.

**The number of parents to whom the surveys were distributed.**

29,316

**Percentage of respondent parents**

13.32%

**Response Rate**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **FFY** | **2019** | **2020** |
| Response Rate | 11.22% | 13.32% |

**Describe strategies that will be implemented which are expected to increase the response rate year over year, particularly for those groups that are underrepresented.**

MA DESE recognizes that low response rates may indicate that all families of students with disabilities have not had the opportunity to share their voice through the TFM Parent Survey. As part of the TFM process, MA DESE hosts a parent information meeting for parents. At these meetings, parents are given information about the Parent Survey, and are encouraged to share this information with other parents of students with disabilities from their district.   
  
MA DESE makes the survey available in several formats to all families of students with IEPs, aged 3 through 21. Multiple input modalities allow for responses online, through mobile devices, and as a printed survey. Additionally, the TFM process ensures that the Parent Survey is translated into the three highest incidence languages in each LEA. The TFM Parent Survey can be translated based on LEA demographics for lower occurring translation needs, including Vietnamese and Haitian-Creole, and others as needed. These additional translations are available upon request.  
  
MA DESE continues to work closely with its Special Education Advisory groups to share information about Indicator 8, the Parent Survey, and to gather feedback on setting targets, informing parents of the survey, and discussing how the data will be used. MA DESE also works collaboratively with The Federation for Children with Special Needs to conduct stakeholder meetings with families to share data regarding response rates and agreement rates.  
  
Indicator 8 and Family Engagement will continue to be topics for discussion and feedback with the Special Education Advisory Groups and the Federation for Children with Special Needs. These opportunities for partnering with stakeholders will increase awareness of Indicator 8 and the TFM Parent Survey, increasing response rates from parents.  
  
As a result of using the TFM Parent Survey for data collection for Indicator 8, and because of the continued partnerships with Advisory and Advocacy groups, MA DESE has reported an increase in the response rate; from 8.41% in FFY2018 to 13.32% in FFY2020.  
  
In addition to developing partnerships with the Advisory and Advocacy groups, MA DESE is exploring working with a contracted vendor to improve the Indicator 8 data collection process to increase responses and representativeness of those responses.

**Describe the analysis** **of the response rate including any nonresponse bias that was identified, and the steps taken to reduce any identified bias and promote response from a broad cross section of parents of children with disabilities.**

A total of 29,316 Parent Surveys (school-age and preschool) were distributed to parents through the TFM process. A total of 3,906 surveys were completed and returned for a response rate of 13.32% which was higher than the previous year (11.22%).  
  
The response rate, when coupled with demographic analyses of respondents, provides a clearer understanding of the survey data. MA DESE recognizes the need to continue to improve upon the representativeness of the response group, including in the following areas:  
  
• The FFY2020 data regarding race/ethnicity indicates that responses from parents of students who are Hispanic/Latino and students who are Black/African American are underrepresented.  
  
• The FFY2020 data responses by grade span indicates that there an underrepresentation of Grades 12+.   
  
To increase representativeness of responses, Indicator 8 and Family Engagement will continue to be topics for discussion and feedback with the Special Education Advisory Groups, the Federation for Children with Special Needs. MA DESE will seek recommendations and implementation strategies targeted to increase response rates from the identified under-represented subgroups. Additionally, MA DESE data specialists will review the data collection processes to make any updates to data collection, and data analysis methodology.  
  
These opportunities for partnering with stakeholders will increase awareness of Indicator 8 and the TFM Parent Survey, increasing response rates from parents of students with disabilities. Additionally, MA DESE is exploring working with a contracted vendor to improve the Indicator 8 data collection process to increase responses and representativeness of those responses.

**Include in the State’s analysis the extent to which the demographics of the children for whom parents responded are representative of the demographics of children receiving special education services. States should consider categories such as race/ethnicity, age of student, disability category, and geographic location in the State.**

The annual response rate is calculated by comparing the number of survey responses received compared to the number of surveys distributed to families of students with IEPs served by the participating LEAs. This year’s response rate is 13.32%. MA DESE recognizes that historically the response rate has been low. In FFY2020, MA DESE reviewed representativeness to determine who is not represented well in the responses. MA DESE continues to work within the TFM systems to increase the response rate in an effort to increase the representativeness.  
  
The Parent Survey is intended to complement the family engagement activities and surveys that occur locally and are comprised of statements/questions that parents rate on a scale of 1 (strongly disagree) through 4 (strongly agree). The standard adopted to demonstrate “schools facilitated parent involvement as a means of improving services and results for students with disabilities” requires that each survey respondent agree or strongly agree with 50% or more of the survey items. The MA DESE Office of Planning and Research has approved the methodology for calculating results. In FFY2020, 3,451 of the 3,906 respondent parents agreed or strongly agreed with at least 50% of the items, yielding an agreement rate of 88.35%.  
  
The Parent Survey administered through the TFM process includes optional questions which families could, voluntarily, identify grade span, placement, gender, and race/ethnicity. The data collected from the FFY2020 survey responses were not entirely representative as compared to the statewide enrollment data of students with disabilities as shown below.  
  
Gender - collected from families of students with disabilities using the TFM Parent Survey  
Statewide enrollment data of students with disabilities:  
Female 34.7% Male: 65.2% Non-Binary: 0.1%  
Survey responses from parents of students with disabilities:  
Female: 33.3% Male: 63.67% Non-Binary: 0.79% No response: 2.25%  
Representativeness: A sample size calculator indicates that the response data is representative of the statewide data of students with disabilities with a 95% confidence level and a margin of error of no more than +/- 3%.  
  
Grade Span – collected from families of students with disabilities using the TFM Parent Survey  
Statewide enrollment data of students with disabilities:  
PreK-Grade 5: 37.76% Grade 6-Grade 8: 24.2% Grade 9-Grade 12: 29.74% Grade 12+: 4.98%  
Survey responses from parents of students with disabilities:  
PreK-Grade 5: 51.1% Grade 6-Grade 8: 23.58% Grade 9-Grade 12: 23.1% Grade 12+: 2.2%  
Representativeness: A sample size calculator indicates that the response data is not entirely representative of the statewide data of students with disabilities. Responses representing students in Grade 12+ were under-represented with a 95% confidence level and a margin of error of +/- 5%.  
  
Race/Ethnicity - collected from families of students with disabilities using the TFM Parent Survey  
Statewide enrollment data of students with disabilities:  
Multiracial: 4.2% Hispanic/Latino: 25.4% Black/African American: 10.7% Asian 3.8%  
Native American/Native Alaskan: 0.2% Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander: 0.3% White: 55.7%  
Survey responses from parents of students with disabilities:  
Multiracial: 6% Hispanic/Latino: 13% Black/African American: 9% Asian 4%  
Native American/Native Alaskan: 1% Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander: 0% White: 67%  
Representativeness: A sample size calculator indicates that the response data is not entirely representative of the statewide data of students with disabilities. Responses representing Hispanic/Latino were under-represented with a 95% confidence level and a margin of error of +/- nearly 4%. Responses representing Black/African American were under-represented with a 95% and a margin of error of +/- 3.25%.  
  
Using the TFM Parent Survey, the data collected regarding the placement/services of students with an IEP could not be analyzed. Because the number of responses to this item was greater than the number of responses to the Parent Survey, it is suspected that families completing the survey identified multiple placements/services.   
Survey responses from parents of students with disabilities:  
Academic Support: 67% Transition Planning: 17% Partial Inclusion: 20% Substantially Separate: 11%  
Out of District: 3% Other: 3%

**The demographics of the parents responding are representative of the demographics of children receiving special education services. (yes/no)**

NO

**If no, describe the strategies that the State will use to ensure that in the future the response data are representative of those demographics.**

MA DESE collected Indicator 8 data in FFY2020 using a survey available to families in LEAs participating in the TFM process. To encourage the broadest representation of respondents, LEAs participating in data collection activities made surveys available to families of students with IEPs. MA DESE does not have concerns about the validity and reliability of the data reported because parent responses to the surveys are submitted directly to MA DESE by families. MA DESE does not have concerns about the validity and reliability of its sampling method for Indicator 8. To ensure the broadest representation of respondents, surveys are made available for all families of children with an IEP in LEAs participating in the identified Tiered Focused Monitoring process (TFM). MA DESE collected demographic information regarding grade span, placement, gender, and race/ethnicity. Analysis of the demographic data, regarding grade span, placement, gender, and race/ethnicity, determined that the data collected are not entirely representative compared to the statewide enrollment data of students with disabilities.   
  
MA DESE recognizes that its FFY2020 response rate of 13.32% continues to be low. Because of the low response rate, MA DESE has low confidence in the data for basing conclusions about family engagement or parental satisfaction for the LEAs involved in the data collection and reporting activities.   
  
MA DESE continues to analyze existing resources and outreach to design additional efforts to increase its response rate and representatives of the survey results. MA DESE continues to take specific steps to increase the representativeness of data. The data collection methodology for Indicator 8 is designed to support broad representation of survey respondents to promote validity and reliability in reporting. Additionally, MA DESE works with the identified LEAs to make the survey available in several formats to all families of students with IEPs, aged 3 through 21, who are enrolled in the LEA. Multiple input modalities allow for responses online, through mobile devices, and as a printed survey. For FFY2020, MA DESE included any findings of trends in the final TFM exit meeting and will provide targeted technical assistance for the LEAs to develop plans to better support families in accessing the survey.  
  
MA DESE collects, on a voluntary basis, demographic information for race/ethnicity, placement, gender, and grade span. The TFM process ensures that the Parent Survey is translated into the three highest incidence languages in each LEA. The TFM Parent Survey can be translated based on LEA demographics for lower occurring translation needs, including Vietnamese and Haitian-Creole, and others as needed. These additional translations are available upon request. LEAs participating in the TFM process use emails and other forms of notification to facilitate parental response. The breadth of the outreach and access initiatives help to support representative sampling through the data collection process.  
  
MA DESE continues to work with the Federation for Children with Special Needs and the Massachusetts Statewide Family Engagement Center to develop resources, and to provide TA and trainings related to evidence-based family engagement practices, racial equity, and inclusion. Trainings include a Train the Trainer model for educators, providers, and families based on the MA DESE Strengthening Partnerships: A Framework for Prenatal through Young Adulthood Family Engagement in Massachusetts, https://www.doe.mass.edu/sfs/family-engagement-framework.pdf, and the Massachusetts Family, School, and Community Partnership Fundamentals, https://www.doe.mass.edu/sfs/fscp-fundamentals.docx.  
  
MA DESE plans to work with the Federation for Children with Special Needs, the Statewide Family Engagement Center, as well as the special education advisory groups to seek recommendations and implementation strategies targeted to increase response rates from the identified under-represented subgroups. Additionally, MA DESE data specialists will review the data collection processes to make any updates to data collection, and data analysis methodology.

**Describe the metric used to determine representativeness (e.g., +/- 3% discrepancy in the proportion of responders compared to target group).**

MA DESE uses a confidence level of 95% with a margin of error of +/- 3% in the proportion of responders compared to target group.

| **Sampling Question** | **Yes / No** |
| --- | --- |
| Was sampling used? | YES |
| If yes, has your previously approved sampling plan changed? | NO |

**Describe the sampling methodology outlining how the design will yield valid and reliable estimates.**

To ensure the broadest representation of respondents, surveys are made available for all families of children with an IEP in LEAs participating in the identified TFM cohort. In FFY2020, 56 LEAs participated. The FFY2020 cohort reported Indicator 8 data using the Parent Survey administered through the TFM process. Each year a representative group of LEAs participates in the TFM process - with the exception of the city of Boston, which conducts Indicator 8 data collection every year - including urban, suburban, rural, large, medium, and small LEAs, as well as the full range of LEA program and structure types (charter, virtual, CVTE, and comprehensive). These LEAs serve a full range of student disability types and need for services, such that the TFM process is representative of the State as a whole.  
  
MA DESE's sampling plan for Indicator 8 incorporates Indicator 8 data collection activities into the TFM process as part of the TFM Parent Survey. The TFM system is the general supervision system through which the state provides oversight and general supervision of school districts on implementation of legal requirements of IDEA and state special education and civil rights law and regulations. During the first year of the three-year monitoring cycle, participating school districts participate in self-assessment activities in partnership with DESE, reviewing special education and civil rights documentation for all required elements, and a representative sample of student records from across grade levels and disability categories. It is the outcome of this review and reported SPP compliance data that are used to determine the on-site monitoring activities that occur in the second year of the TFM cycle. It is during the on-site monitoring year that DESE and school districts collect the Parent Survey from parents of students with disabilities enrolled in the district. DESE reports the data annually in the SPP/APR, and to make available specific district results on its website. DESE monitoring teams will also follow up on survey results as part of the TFM assistance activities, and will provide technical assistance and resources to school districts to support increased response rates and promote increase parent engagement.  
  
DESE collects and reports Indicator 8 data from approximately one-third of all school districts in the state annually under this amended sampling plan; every district in the state will report Indicator 8 data at least once every three years. Any district with enrollment greater than 50,000 will continue to administer the Parent Survey and report data to DESE annually. The annual reporting cohorts are representative of the state.  
  
The approved sampling plan, and the Tiered Focused Monitoring cycle used for Indicator 8 can be found has been attached in the report section.

| **Survey Question** | **Yes / No** |
| --- | --- |
| Was a survey used? | YES |
| If yes, is it a new or revised survey? | NO |
| If yes, provide a copy of the survey. |  |

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

## 8 - Prior FFY Required Actions

In the FFY 2020 SPP/APR, the State must report whether its FFY 2020 data are from a response group that is representative of the demographics of children receiving special education services, and, if not, the actions the State is taking to address this issue. The State must also include its analysis of the extent to which the demographics of the parents responding are representative of the demographics of children receiving special education services.

**Response to actions required in FFY 2019 SPP/APR**

Please see sections above that describe MA DESE's analysis of the representativeness of the state's FFY 2020 data, as well as steps MA DESE is taking to address this issue.

## 8 - OSEP Response

The State provided targets for FFYs 2020 through 2025 for this indicator, and OSEP accepts those targets.  
  
In its narrative, the State reported that the response data for this indicator were not representative of the demographics of children receiving special education services in the State. Specifically, the State reported "MA DESE confirmed that the results are representative of the demographics of children receiving special education services; 95% confidence level with a margin of error of +/- 3%." However, in its narrative, the State also reported " MA DESE determined that the data collected is not entirely representative as compared to the statewide enrollment data of students with disabilities. " Therefore, it is unclear whether the response data was representative. OSEP notes that the State did describe the strategies to address this issue in the future.  
  
The State reported that sampling was used to collect data for this indicator and that the previously approved sampling plan had not changed. In order to report data for this indicator using sampling for the FFY 2020-2025 SPP/APR, the State must submit its sampling plan to OSEP and provide data consistent with the approved sampling plan.

## 8 - Required Actions

# Indicator 9: Disproportionate Representation

**Instructions and Measurement**

**Monitoring Priority:** Disproportionality

**Compliance indicator**: Percent of districts with disproportionate representation of racial and ethnic groups in special education and related services that is the result of inappropriate identification.

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

**Data Source**

State’s analysis, based on State’s Child Count data collected under IDEA section 618, to determine if the disproportionate representation of racial and ethnic groups in special education and related services was the result of inappropriate identification.

**Measurement**

Percent = [(# of districts, that meet the State-established n and/or cell size (if applicable) for one or more racial/ethnic groups, with disproportionate representation of racial and ethnic groups in special education and related services that is the result of inappropriate identification) divided by the (# of districts in the State that meet the State-established n and/or cell size (if applicable) for one or more racial/ethnic groups)] times 100.

Include State’s definition of “disproportionate representation.” Please specify in your definition: 1) the calculation method(s) being used (i.e., risk ratio, weighted risk ratio, e-formula, etc.); and 2) the threshold at which disproportionate representation is identified. Also include, as appropriate, 3) the number of years of data used in the calculation; and 4) any minimum cell and/or n-sizes (i.e., risk numerator and/or risk denominator).

Based on its review of the 618 data for the reporting year, describe how the State made its annual determination as to whether the disproportionate representation it identified of racial and ethnic groups in special education and related services was the result of inappropriate identification as required by 34 CFR §§300.600(d)(3) and 300.602(a), e.g., using monitoring data; reviewing policies, practices and procedures, etc. In determining disproportionate representation, analyze data, for each district, for all racial and ethnic groups in the district, or all racial and ethnic groups in the district that meet a minimum n and/or cell size set by the State. Report on the percent of districts in which disproportionate representation of racial and ethnic groups in special education and related services is the result of inappropriate identification, even if the determination of inappropriate identification was made after the end of the FFY 2020 reporting period (i.e., after June 30, 2021).

**Instructions**

Provide racial/ethnic disproportionality data for all children aged 5 who are enrolled in kindergarten and 6 through 21 served under IDEA, aggregated across all disability categories.

States are not required to report on underrepresentation.

If the State has established a minimum n and/or cell size requirement, the State may only include, in both the numerator and the denominator, districts that met that State-established n and/or cell size. If the State used a minimum n and/or cell size requirement, report the number of districts totally excluded from the calculation as a result of this requirement because the district did not meet the minimum n and/or cell size for any racial/ethnic group.

Consider using multiple methods in calculating disproportionate representation of racial and ethnic groups to reduce the risk of overlooking potential problems. Describe the method(s) used to calculate disproportionate representation.

Provide the number of districts that met the State-established n and/or cell size (if applicable) for one or more racial/ethnic groups identified with disproportionate representation of racial and ethnic groups in special education and related services and the number of those districts identified with disproportionate representation that is the result of inappropriate identification.

Targets must be 0%.

Provide detailed information about the timely correction of noncompliance as noted in OSEP’s response for the previous SPP/APR. If the State did not ensure timely correction of the previous noncompliance, provide information on the extent to which noncompliance was subsequently corrected (more than one year after identification). In addition, provide information regarding the nature of any continuing noncompliance, improvement activities completed (e.g., review of policies and procedures, technical assistance, training, etc.) and any enforcement actions that were taken. If the State reported less than 100% compliance for the previous reporting period (e.g., for the FFY 2020 SPP/APR, the data for FFY 2019), and the State did not identify any findings of noncompliance, provide an explanation of why the State did not identify any findings of noncompliance.

## 9 - Indicator Data

**Not Applicable**

**Select yes if this indicator is not applicable.**

NO

**Historical Data**

| **Baseline Year** | **Baseline Data** |
| --- | --- |
| 2020 | 0.00% |

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **FFY** | **2015** | **2016** | **2017** | **2018** | **2019** |
| Target | 0% | 0% | 0% | 0% | 0% |
| Data | 0.00% | 0.00% | 0.00% | 0.00% | 0.00% |

**Targets**

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **FFY** | **2020** | **2021** | **2022** | **2023** | **2024** | **2025** |
| Target | 0% | 0% | 0% | 0% | 0% | 0% |

**FFY 2020 SPP/APR Data**

**Has the state established a minimum n and/or cell size requirement? (yes/no)**

YES

**If yes, the State may only include, in both the numerator and the denominator, districts that met the State-established n and/or cell size. Report the number of districts excluded from the calculation as a result of the requirement.**

4

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Number of districts with disproportionate representation of racial/ethnic groups in special education and related services** | **Number of districts with disproportionate representation of racial/ethnic groups in special education and related services that is the result of inappropriate identification** | **Number of districts that met the State's minimum n and/or cell size** | **FFY 2019 Data** | **FFY 2020 Target** | **FFY 2020 Data** | **Status** | **Slippage** |
| 4 | 0 | 396 | 0.00% | 0% | 0.00% | N/A | N/A |

**Were all races and ethnicities included in the review?**

YES

**Define “disproportionate representation.” Please specify in your definition: 1) the calculation method(s) being used (i.e., risk ratio, weighted risk ratio, e-formula, etc.); and 2) the threshold at which disproportionate representation is identified. Also include, as appropriate, 3) the number of years of data used in the calculation; and 4) any minimum cell and/or n-sizes (i.e., risk numerator and/or risk denominator).**

Massachusetts defines “disproportionate representation” using a calculation of weighted or alternate risk ratios and a review of the appropriateness of an LEA’s policies, practices, and procedures (PPPs) for identifying students as eligible for special education services.   
   
MA DESE calculates a weighted or alternate risk ratio for each LEA, using a minimum cell size of 10 students with disabilities in each racial/ethnic group in every LEA. In LEAs in which there are at least 10 students with disabilities both in the racial/ethnic group, as well as the comparison group, MA DESE uses a weighted risk ratio. In cases where there are fewer than 10 students in the comparison group, MA DESE employs the alternate risk ratio. A cell of fewer than 10, though removed from the calculation, is reviewed individually to see if data irregularities for specific racial and ethnic groups in the LEA would suggest disproportionate representation due to inappropriate identification. All cells of greater than 10 are retained in the data set and are used to calculate disproportionate representation. Once the calculation is made for each district, the weighted or alternate risk ratios are compared to the two previous years’ weighted or alternate risk ratios. LEAs are flagged if, for three consecutive years, they exhibit a weighted or alternate risk ratio of 3.0 or greater for possible over-representation. All LEAs identified by way of this quantitative analysis are then subject to a review of the appropriateness of their policies, practices, and procedures (PPPs) for special education eligibility determination and disability identification, and communication with MA DESE about the identified disproportionate representation. If MA DESE determines the PPPs are inappropriate or otherwise inconsistent with federal and state regulations and concludes that the PPPs likely caused the disproportionate representation, then the LEA is identified as having disproportionate representation due to inappropriate identification and is required to take corrective actions.   
   
For the FFY 2020 analysis, Massachusetts used the October 1, 2020 enrollment and child count data that it collects from LEAs through its Student Information Management System (SIMS). Four hundred LEAs were in operation in Massachusetts in October 2020, and 396 met the State's n size requirement for at least one racial/ethnic group. MA DESE found that four of these LEAs - a regional vocational technical school and three charter schools - were flagged. The regional vocational technical school was flagged for overrepresentation of white students. Two charter schools were flagged for overrepresentation of Hispanic students and African America/Black students, and the third was flagged for overrepresentation of Hispanic students.   
   
In reviewing the LEAs’ PPPs, MA DESE determined that in these four LEAs the disproportionate representation was not the result of inappropriate identification and no findings of noncompliance were made.

**Describe how the State made its annual determination as to whether the disproportionate representation it identified of racial and ethnic groups in special education and related services was the result of inappropriate identification.**

If an LEA displays a weighted or alternate risk ratio that exceeds 3.0 for three consecutive years for any racial/ethnic group, MA DESE follows up to review the appropriateness of the LEA's policies, practices, and procedures (PPPs). MA DESE requires the LEA to submit its PPPs regarding eligibility determination, along with any other data or information that may explain the pattern of disproportionate representation, including:   
• LEA policies and practices regarding child find, student support teams, and special education referral and evaluation.   
• Descriptions of tiered systems of support and/or other supports for struggling students in place within the LEA prior to referral for special education   
• Information regarding the LEA’s collaboration with other organizations (such as sending districts, local Early Intervention providers, etc.), if applicable.   
• Information regarding any training or support that the LEA provides staff around cultural competency.   
  
MA DESE then reviews this information to determine whether the disproportionate representation is the result of inappropriate identification.   
   
MA DESE reviewed the policies, practices, and procedures, as described above, of the four LEAs identified as having disproportionate representation of racial and ethnic groups in special education and related services. MA DESE determined for each LEA that the disproportionate representation of racial and ethnic groups in special education and related services was not the result of inappropriate identification.

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

MA DESE updated baseline to FFY20 due to the updated data requirements of indicator 9.

**Correction of Findings of Noncompliance Identified in FFY 2019**

| **Findings of Noncompliance Identified** | **Findings of Noncompliance Verified as Corrected Within One Year** | **Findings of Noncompliance Subsequently Corrected** | **Findings Not Yet Verified as Corrected** |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |

**Correction of Findings of Noncompliance Identified Prior to FFY 2019**

| **Year Findings of Noncompliance Were Identified** | **Findings of Noncompliance Not Yet Verified as Corrected as of FFY 2019 APR** | **Findings of Noncompliance Verified as Corrected** | **Findings Not Yet Verified as Corrected** |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  |  |  |  |
|  |  |  |  |
|  |  |  |  |

## 9 - Prior FFY Required Actions

None

## 9 - OSEP Response

The State reported its baseline for this indicator using data from FFY2016; however, OSEP cannot accept this baseline because of revisions to the Measurement Table. Specifically, with the FFY 2020 APR submission, all States are now required to provide racial/ethnic disproportionality data for all children aged 5 who are enrolled in kindergarten in addition to those aged 6 through 21 served under IDEA, aggregated across all disability categories. Therefore, the State must revise its baseline using FFY 2020 data.

## 9 - Required Actions

# Indicator 10: Disproportionate Representation in Specific Disability Categories

**Instructions and Measurement**

**Monitoring Priority:** Disproportionality

**Compliance indicator**: Percent of districts with disproportionate representation of racial and ethnic groups in specific disability categories that is the result of inappropriate identification.

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

**Data Source**

State’s analysis, based on State’s Child Count data collected under IDEA section 618, to determine if the disproportionate representation of racial and ethnic groups in specific disability categories was the result of inappropriate identification.

**Measurement**

Percent = [(# of districts, that meet the State-established n and/or cell size (if applicable) for one or more racial/ethnic groups, with disproportionate representation of racial and ethnic groups in specific disability categories that is the result of inappropriate identification) divided by the (# of districts in the State that meet the State-established n and/or cell size (if applicable) for one or more racial/ethnic groups)] times 100.

Include State’s definition of “disproportionate representation.” Please specify in your definition: 1) the calculation method(s) being used (i.e., risk ratio, weighted risk ratio, e-formula, etc.); and 2) the threshold at which disproportionate representation is identified. Also include, as appropriate, 3) the number of years of data used in the calculation; and 4) any minimum cell and/or n-sizes (i.e., risk numerator and/or risk denominator).

Based on its review of the 618 data for FFY 2020, describe how the State made its annual determination as to whether the disproportionate representation it identified of racial and ethnic groups in specific disability categories was the result of inappropriate identification as required by 34 CFR §§300.600(d)(3) and 300.602(a), e.g., using monitoring data; reviewing policies, practices and procedures, etc. In determining disproportionate representation, analyze data, for each district, for all racial and ethnic groups in the district, or all racial and ethnic groups in the district that meet a minimum n and/or cell size set by the State. Report on the percent of districts in which disproportionate representation of racial and ethnic groups in specific disability categories is the result of inappropriate identification, even if the determination of inappropriate identification was made after the end of the FFY 2020 reporting period (i.e., after June 30, 2021).

**Instructions**

Provide racial/ethnic disproportionality data for all children aged 5 who are enrolled in kindergarten and aged 6 through 21 served under IDEA. Provide these data at a minimum for children in the following six disability categories: intellectual disability, specific learning disabilities, emotional disturbance, speech or language impairments, other health impairments, and autism. If a State has identified disproportionate representation of racial and ethnic groups in specific disability categories other than these six disability categories, the State must include these data and report on whether the State determined that the disproportionate representation of racial and ethnic groups in specific disability categories was the result of inappropriate identification.

States are not required to report on underrepresentation.

If the State has established a minimum n and/or cell size requirement, the State may only include, in both the numerator and the denominator, districts that met that State-established n and/or cell size. If the State used a minimum n and/or cell size requirement, report the number of districts totally excluded from the calculation as a result of this requirement because the district did not meet the minimum n and/or cell size for any racial/ethnic group.

Consider using multiple methods in calculating disproportionate representation of racial and ethnic groups to reduce the risk of overlooking potential problems. Describe the method(s) used to calculate disproportionate representation.

Provide the number of districts that met the State-established n and/or cell size (if applicable) for one or more racial/ethnic groups identified with disproportionate representation of racial and ethnic groups in specific disability categories and the number of those districts identified with disproportionate representation that is the result of inappropriate identification.

Targets must be 0%.

Provide detailed information about the timely correction of noncompliance as noted in OSEP’s response for the previous SPP/APR. If the State did not ensure timely correction of the previous noncompliance, provide information on the extent to which noncompliance was subsequently corrected (more than one year after identification). In addition, provide information regarding the nature of any continuing noncompliance, improvement activities completed (e.g., review of policies and procedures, technical assistance, training, etc.) and any enforcement actions that were taken.

If the State reported less than 100% compliance for the previous reporting period (e.g., for the FFY 2020 SPP/APR, the data for FFY 2019), and the State did not identify any findings of noncompliance, provide an explanation of why the State did not identify any findings of noncompliance.

## 10 - Indicator Data

**Not Applicable**

**Select yes if this indicator is not applicable.**

NO

**Historical Data**

| **Baseline Year** | **Baseline Data** |
| --- | --- |
| 2020 | 0.00% |

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **FFY** | **2015** | **2016** | **2017** | **2018** | **2019** |
| Target | 0% | 0% | 0% | 0% | 0% |
| Data | 0.00% | 0.00% | 0.00% | 0.00% | 0.00% |

**Targets**

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **FFY** | **2020** | **2021** | **2022** | **2023** | **2024** | **2025** |
| Target | 0% | 0% | 0% | 0% | 0% | 0% |

**FFY 2020 SPP/APR Data**

**Has the state established a minimum n and/or cell size requirement? (yes/no)**

YES

**If yes, the State may only include, in both the numerator and the denominator, districts that met the State-established n and/or cell size. Report the number of districts excluded from the calculation as a result of the requirement.**

41

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Number of districts with disproportionate representation of racial/ethnic groups in specific disability categories** | **Number of districts with disproportionate representation of racial/ethnic groups in specific disability categories that is the result of inappropriate identification** | **Number of districts that met the State's minimum n and/or cell size** | **FFY 2019 Data** | **FFY 2020 Target** | **FFY 2020 Data** | **Status** | **Slippage** |
| 5 | 0 | 359 | 0.00% | 0% | 0.00% | N/A | N/A |

**Were all races and ethnicities included in the review?**

YES

**Define “disproportionate representation.” Please specify in your definition: 1) the calculation method(s) being used (i.e., risk ratio, weighted risk ratio, e-formula, etc.); and 2) the threshold at which disproportionate representation is identified. Also include, as appropriate, 3) the number of years of data used in the calculation; and 4) any minimum cell and/or n-sizes (i.e., risk numerator and/or risk denominator).**

Massachusetts defines “disproportionate representation” using a calculation of weighted or alternate risk ratios and a review of the appropriateness of an LEA’s policies, practices, and procedures (PPPs) for identifying students as eligible for special education services.   
   
MA DESE calculates a weighted or alternate risk ratio for every LEA in each of the six required disability categories (intellectual impairments, specific learning disabilities, emotional disturbance, speech/language impairments, other health impairments, autism) using a minimum cell size of 10 for each racial/ethnic disability group in every LEA. In LEAs in which there are at least 10 students with disabilities both in the racial/ethnic disability group, as well as the comparison group, MA DESE uses a weighted risk ratio. In cases where there are fewer than 10 students in the comparison group, MA DESE employs the alternate risk ratio. Cells of fewer than 10, though removed from the calculation, are reviewed individually to see if data irregularities for specific racial and ethnic groups in these LEAs would suggest disproportionate representation. All cells of greater than 10 are retained in the data set and are used to calculate disproportionate representation. Once the calculation is made for each LEA, the weighted or alternate risk ratios are compared to the two previous years’ weighted or alternate risk ratios. LEAs are flagged if, for three consecutive years, they exhibit a weighted or alternate risk ratio of 4.0 or greater for possible over-representation.   
   
All LEAs identified by way of this quantitative analysis are then subject to a review by LEA staff and MA DESE of the appropriateness of their PPPs for special education eligibility determination and disability identification, along with any other information that may explain the pattern of disproportionate representation. Upon review, if MA DESE identifies that the PPPs are inappropriate or otherwise inconsistent with federal and state regulations and concludes that the PPPs likely caused the disproportionate representation, then the LEA is identified as having disproportionate representation due to inappropriate identification and is required to take corrective action.   
   
For the FFY 2020 analysis, Massachusetts used the October 1, 2020 enrollment and child count data that it collects from LEAs through its Student Information Management System (SIMS). Four hundred LEAs were in operation in Massachusetts in October 2020, and 41 LEAs did not have at least 10 students with disabilities in any racial/ethnic disability group, leaving 359 LEAs that met the state's n size requirement for at least one racial/ethnic disability group.   
   
Of the five LEAs flagged, the LEAs were flagged for the following reasons:   
• One Charter School and One School District: Hispanic Students with Communication Disabilities   
• Two Charter Schools: Hispanic Students with Specific Learning Disabilities   
• One Charter School: African American/Black Students with Emotional Disabilities and Hispanic Students with Emotional Disabilities   
   
MA DESE reviewed the policies, practices, and procedures of each of these 5 LEAs and determined that the disproportionate representation was not the result of inappropriate identification and no findings of non-compliance were made.

**Describe how the State made its annual determination as to whether the disproportionate overrepresentation it identified of racial and ethnic groups in specific disability categories was the result of inappropriate identification.**

If an LEA displays a weighted or alternate risk ratio that exceeds 4.0 for three consecutive years for any racial/ethnic group in any disability area, MA DESE follows up to review the appropriateness of the LEA's policies, practices, and procedures. MA DESE requires the LEA to submit its policies, practices, and procedures regarding eligibility determination, along with any other data and information that may explain the pattern of disproportionate representation, including:   
• LEA policies and practices regarding child find, student support teams, and special education referral and evaluation.   
• Descriptions of tiered systems of support and/or other supports for struggling students in place within the LEA prior to referral for special education   
• Information regarding the LEA’s collaboration with other organizations (such as sending districts, local Early Intervention providers, etc.), if applicable.   
• Information regarding any training or support that the LEA provides staff around cultural competency.   
MA DESE then reviews this information to determine whether the disproportionate representation is the result of inappropriate identification.   
   
MA DESE reviewed the policies, practices, and procedures, as described above, of the five LEAs identified as having disproportionate representation of racial and ethnic groups in a specific disability area. MA DESE determined for each LEA that the disproportionate representation of racial and ethnic groups in specific disability areas was not the result of inappropriate identification.

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

MA DESE updated baseline to FFY20 due to the updated data requirements of indicator 10.

**Correction of Findings of Noncompliance Identified in FFY 2019**

| **Findings of Noncompliance Identified** | **Findings of Noncompliance Verified as Corrected Within One Year** | **Findings of Noncompliance Subsequently Corrected** | **Findings Not Yet Verified as Corrected** |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |

**Correction of Findings of Noncompliance Identified Prior to FFY 2019**

| **Year Findings of Noncompliance Were Identified** | **Findings of Noncompliance Not Yet Verified as Corrected as of FFY 2019 APR** | **Findings of Noncompliance Verified as Corrected** | **Findings Not Yet Verified as Corrected** |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  |  |  |  |
|  |  |  |  |
|  |  |  |  |

## 10 - Prior FFY Required Actions

None

## 10 - OSEP Response

The State reported its baseline for this indicator using data from FFY2016; however, OSEP cannot accept this baseline because of revisions to the Measurement Table. Specifically, with the FFY 2020 APR submission, all States are now required to provide racial/ethnic disproportionality data for all children aged 5 who are enrolled in kindergarten in addition to those aged 6 through 21 served under IDEA, aggregated across all disability categories. Therefore, the State must revise its baseline using FFY 2020 data.

## 10 - Required Actions

# Indicator 11: Child Find

**Instructions and Measurement**

**Monitoring Priority**: Effective General Supervision Part B / Child Find

**Compliance indicator**: Percent of children who were evaluated within 60 days of receiving parental consent for initial evaluation or, if the State establishes a timeframe within which the evaluation must be conducted, within that timeframe.

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

**Data Source**

Data to be taken from State monitoring or State data system and must be based on actual, not an average, number of days. Indicate if the State has established a timeline and, if so, what is the State’s timeline for initial evaluations.

**Measurement**

a. # of children for whom parental consent to evaluate was received.

b. # of children whose evaluations were completed within 60 days (or State-established timeline).

Account for children included in (a), but not included in (b). Indicate the range of days beyond the timeline when the evaluation was completed and any reasons for the delays.

Percent = [(b) divided by (a)] times 100.

**Instructions**

*If data are from State monitoring, describe the method used to select LEAs for monitoring. If data are from a State database, include data for the entire reporting year.*

Describe the results of the calculations and compare the results to the target. Describe the method used to collect these data, and if data are from the State’s monitoring, describe the procedures used to collect these data. Provide the actual numbers used in the calculation.

Note that under 34 CFR §300.301(d), the timeframe set for initial evaluation does not apply to a public agency if: (1) the parent of a child repeatedly fails or refuses to produce the child for the evaluation; or (2) a child enrolls in a school of another public agency after the timeframe for initial evaluations has begun, and prior to a determination by the child’s previous public agency as to whether the child is a child with a disability. States should not report these exceptions in either the numerator (b) or denominator (a). If the State-established timeframe provides for exceptions through State regulation or policy, describe cases falling within those exceptions and include in b.

Targets must be 100%.

Provide detailed information about the timely correction of noncompliance as noted in OSEP’s response for the previous SPP/APR. If the State did not ensure timely correction of the previous noncompliance, provide information on the extent to which noncompliance was subsequently corrected (more than one year after identification). In addition, provide information regarding the nature of any continuing noncompliance, improvement activities completed (e.g., review of policies and procedures, technical assistance, training, etc.) and any enforcement actions that were taken.

If the State reported less than 100% compliance for the previous reporting period (e.g., for the FFY 2020 SPP/APR, the data for FFY 2019), and the State did not identify any findings of noncompliance, provide an explanation of why the State did not identify any findings of noncompliance.

## 11 - Indicator Data

**Historical Data**

| **Baseline Year** | **Baseline Data** |
| --- | --- |
| 2017 | 96.50% |

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **FFY** | **2015** | **2016** | **2017** | **2018** | **2019** |
| Target | 100% | 100% | 100% | 100% | 100% |
| Data | 95.26% | 95.83% | 96.50% | 91.69% | 97.28% |

**Targets**

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **FFY** | **2020** | **2021** | **2022** | **2023** | **2024** | **2025** |
| Target | 100% | 100% | 100% | 100% | 100% | 100% |

**FFY 2020 SPP/APR Data**

| **(a) Number of children for whom parental consent to evaluate was received** | **(b) Number of children whose evaluations were completed within 60 days (or State-established timeline)** | **FFY 2019 Data** | **FFY 2020 Target** | **FFY 2020 Data** | **Status** | **Slippage** |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| 983 | 919 | 97.28% | 100% | 93.49% | Did not meet target | Slippage |

**Provide reasons for slippage**

MA DESE is reporting slippage of 3.79 percentage points from FFY 2019 to FFY 2020.   
  
MA DESE attributes the overall slippage in state compliance rate to three large MA LEAs reporting significant delays. Nearly 55% of records with noncompliance came from these three LEAs. These LEAs demonstrated compliance rates that ranged between 72.41% and 88.6%. Should these LEAs’ data be removed from the overall data set, the compliance rate for the reporting cohort would be 96.2%, which is slightly lower than the compliance rate for FFY 2019 (97.2%) and consistent with the compliance rate identified in FFYs 2015-2017.   
  
Over 65% of the reasons reported for delay by these three LEAs were attributable to insufficient staff availability (potentially due to COVID-19 challenges) to complete evaluations within the 45-day timeline required by State law. The LEAs also reported scheduling conflicts as reasons contributing to delays. Of the 219 children for whom parental consent to evaluate was received in these three districts, nearly 16% of the student records, were not evaluated within the requisite timeline. Of those students, 34.29% were found not eligible for services and 17.14% of the records did not have eligibility determined at the time the data were collected. MA DESE will report on the results of all corrective action activities with these districts, and with any others for which noncompliance was identified, in the anticipated clarification period in April 2022, or in the next SPP/APR reporting cycle.

**Number of children included in (a) but not included in (b)**

64

**Account for children included in (a) but not included in (b). Indicate the range of days beyond the timeline when the evaluation was completed and any reasons for the delays.**

In FFY 2020, there were 64 students in 12 LEAs for whom initial evaluations were not completed within the State-established timeline of 45 days. Out of the 64 records with noncompliance, 10.94% of records did not yet have eligibility determined at the time the data were collected (over 85% of these records are in one of the large LEAs referenced in information about slippage). Of the 57 records with eligibility determined, on average those delays exceeded the State-established timeline by 12.72 school working days. MA DESE also analyzed the range of days beyond the timeline using the mean, median, and mode for the number of school working days beyond the 45-day timeline. The mean amount of days beyond the 45-day timeline, as reported above, was 12.72 days. The median was 5 days beyond the 45-day timeline, and the mode was 1 day beyond the 45-day timeline.   
  
LEA-related issues with scheduling and timing of evaluations are not acceptable reasons for delay and are determined to be noncompliant. Additionally, performance on this indicator was impacted by COVID-19, with more than 67% of the records with delays likely attributable in part to challenges with staffing and staff availability as a result of the pandemic. Of the delays reported in FFY 2020, 40.63% were attributed to insufficient staff availability (includes staff out for illness or schools closing for a period of time due to COVID-19); 26.56% were attributed to lack of qualified staff; 12.5% were attributed to LEAs’ evaluators’ reports not received on time; 10.94% were attributed LEAs or schools having a scheduling conflict; and 9.38% were attributed other reasons that included issues with LEA calculation of timelines and internet outages.

**Indicate the evaluation timeline used:**

The State established a timeline within which the evaluation must be conducted

**What is the State’s timeline for initial evaluations? If the State-established timeframe provides for exceptions through State regulation or policy, describe cases falling within those exceptions and include in (b).**

The State's timeline for initial evaluations is 45 school working days. See 603 CMR 28.05(1): Special Education - Education Laws and Regulations.   
603 CMR 28.05: The Team Process and Development of the IEP states:   
   
Within 45 school working days after receipt of a parent's written consent to an initial evaluation or reevaluation, the school district shall: provide an evaluation; convene a Team meeting to review the evaluation data, determine whether the student requires special education and, if required, develop an IEP in accordance with state and federal laws; and provide the parents with two copies of the proposed IEP and proposed placement, except that the proposal of placement may be delayed according to the provisions of 603 CMR 28.06(2)(e); or, if the Team determines that the student is not eligible for special education, the school district shall send a written explanation of the finding that the student is not eligible. The evaluation assessments shall be completed within 30 school working days after receipt of parental consent for evaluation. Summaries of such assessments shall be completed so as to ensure their availability to parents at least two days prior to the Team meeting. If consent is received within 30 to 45 school working days before the end of the school year, the school district shall ensure that a Team meeting is scheduled so as to allow for the provision of a proposed IEP or written notice of the finding that the student is not eligible no later than 14 days after the end of the school year.

**What is the source of the data provided for this indicator?**

State monitoring

**Describe the method used to collect these data, and if data are from the State’s monitoring, describe the procedures used to collect these data.**

MA DESE collects Indicator 11 data through the Tiered Focused Monitoring (TFM) review process conducted by MA DESE's Public School Monitoring Office (PSM). Please see the Introduction section for a detailed explanation of this process. As noted in the Introduction, the only LEA exception to this process is Boston Public Schools, for which MA DESE continues to oversee data collection on an annual basis for all Indicators.  
  
When gathering data for this FFY 2020 submission, MA DESE conducted a two-step verification process by contacting LEAs to explain their data reporting prior to issuing formal letters of finding alongside the required correction activities. This two-step process gave the LEAs an opportunity to explain and rectify errors in their data prior to MA DESE issuing a written finding. This process resulted in 12 LEAs with findings of non-compliance. The 12 LEAs are currently developing and implementing their comprehensive corrective action plans, and/or submitting subsequent data to the MA DESE to demonstrate compliance with regulatory requirements.

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

Of all the evaluations completed in and reported in this FFY 2020 submission, 597 students were determined eligible for special education services, 358 students were determined not eligible for special education services, and 28 students did not yet have eligibility determined when the data were collected.  
  
While COVID-19 did not have an impact on data collection, completeness, validity, and reliability for the indicator, the performance on this indicator was likely impacted by COVID-19. Of the 64 noncompliant records, 26.56% of the records exceeded the state timeline for COVID-19 related issues (e.g., staff out with COVID-19, LEA-wide quarantine). Were these 26.56% of the noncompliant records considered compliant, the compliance percentage for this indicator for FFY 2020 would be 95.21%, which is a 1.72 percentage point increase over the FFY 2020 reported compliance percentage of 93.49%.  
  
In light of the COVID-19 pandemic, MA DESE provided extensive guidance, individualized TA, and resources to LEAs to promote compliance with all federal and state regulations, including this Indicator’s mandatory timelines.

**Correction of Findings of Noncompliance Identified in FFY 2019**

| **Findings of Noncompliance Identified** | **Findings of Noncompliance Verified as Corrected Within One Year** | **Findings of Noncompliance Subsequently Corrected** | **Findings Not Yet Verified as Corrected** |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| 9 | 8 |  | 1 |

**FFY 2019 Findings of Noncompliance Verified as Corrected**

**Describe how the State verified that the source of noncompliance is correctly implementing the *regulatory requirements***

In its FFY 2019 APR, MA DESE made 9 findings of noncompliance for Indicator 11. MA DESE required each LEA to assess the root cause(s) of noncompliance and to take corrective actions to amend policy or practice, and/or to develop and implement appropriate systems, to ensure that timelines are met and eligible students receive services timely. MA DESE verified that these activities occurred by reviewing supplemental documentation provided by the LEAs. Additionally, MA DESE examined a supplemental data set submitted by each LEA and confirmed that the LEA was reporting 100% in compliance with the requirements following the implementation of corrective action activities. This process, consistent with OSEP Memorandum 09-02, ensured that corrections were made as soon as possible following the identification of noncompliance, and within one year of the noncompliance finding.   
   
Actions LEAs engaged in to address non-compliance for FFY 2019 included aforementioned completion of root cause analysis; creation of new initial evaluation protocols; adoption of new tracking tools to monitor timelines; training relevant staff on revised procedures for initial evaluations; hiring additional evaluators; hiring additional IEP Team Chairs; periodic/monthly internal reviews to ensure compliance is sustained; weekly meetings with the Special Education Director, Evaluation Team Leaders and Special Education Coordinators to assess progress towards meeting timelines; and comprehensive review of the district’s policies, practices, and procedures for conducting bilingual special education evaluations.  
  
The state verified that eight out of nine LEAs identified with noncompliance were able to successfully and correctly implement the regulatory requirements (100% compliance) and completed all corrective actions. The remaining LEA with noncompliance is currently undergoing a major, separate review led by MA DESE’s Office of Public School Monitoring. Findings identified in this review were aligned with those identified in the FFY 2019 Indicator 11 finding for this LEA and MA DESE elected to combine all corrective actions from both reviews into one large corrective actions document. As a result, the timeline to complete verification that this LEA demonstrating noncompliance is correctly implementing the requirements was extended. MA DESE will report on correction of noncompliance and verification of correct implementation of regulatory requirements for this LEA in the FFY 2021 SPP/APR.

**Describe how the State verified that each *individual case* of noncompliance was corrected**

The state verified that each individual case of noncompliance was corrected by examining corrective action reports and documentary evidence of correction, including subsequent data as appropriate. Each LEA was able to provide evidence that evaluations had been completed for all students affected by the noncompliance.

**FFY 2019 Findings of Noncompliance Not Yet Verified as Corrected**

**Actions taken if noncompliance not corrected**

MA DESE has not yet verified correct implementation of regulatory requirements for one LEA. This LEA currently has a corrective action plan in place requiring the following: a review of IEP timelines for staff at professional development sessions led by the Coordinator of Special Education (COSE) (must be completed, with evidence provided to the state by March 11, 2022); presentation of initial evaluation timeline document to staff; use of the data dashboard for monitoring compliance created by the Office of Special Education (OSE) data team, to be used by central office staff to monitor schools; provision of a monthly compliance report to schools, noting progress toward completion of initial evaluations and reevaluations; monthly meetings with the LEA’s Assistant Directors of Special Education and their schools to review initial evaluation timeline data (must be conducted monthly, with evidence of meetings provided to the state by March 11, 2022); schools’ submission of proposals to remedy issues related to missing compliance timelines to the LEA’s Assistant Superintendent of Special Education, which the LEA must assist with and support (LEA will provide examples of these school-specific proposals to address instances of noncompliance to the state by March 11, 2022); and submission of a second data set of additional student records in the state’s web-based monitoring system (WBMS) for Indicator 11 to determine systemic compliance (due to state by May 6, 2022). If all components of the corrective action plan are completed and verified to be 100% compliant by the final May 6, 2022 deadline, MA DESE will verify that the LEA is correctly implementing the regulatory requirements (100% compliance), per OSEP Memorandum 09-02.

**Correction of Findings of Noncompliance Identified Prior to FFY 2019**

| **Year Findings of Noncompliance Were Identified** | **Findings of Noncompliance Not Yet Verified as Corrected as of FFY 2019 APR** | **Findings of Noncompliance Verified as Corrected** | **Findings Not Yet Verified as Corrected** |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  |  |  |  |
|  |  |  |  |
|  |  |  |  |

## 11 - Prior FFY Required Actions

Because the State reported less than 100% compliance for FFY 2019, the State must report on the status of correction of noncompliance identified in FFY 2019 for this indicator. When reporting on the correction of noncompliance, the State must report, in the FFY 2020 SPP/APR, that it has verified that each LEA with noncompliance identified in FFY 2019 for this indicator: (1) is correctly implementing the specific regulatory requirements (i.e., achieved 100% compliance) based on a review of updated data such as data subsequently collected through on-site monitoring or a State data system; and (2) has corrected each individual case of noncompliance, unless the child is no longer within the jurisdiction of the LEA, consistent with OSEP Memo 09-02. In the FFY 2020 SPP/APR, the State must describe the specific actions that were taken to verify the correction.  
  
If the State did not identify any findings of noncompliance in FFY 2019, although its FFY 2019 data reflect less than 100% compliance, provide an explanation of why the State did not identify any findings of noncompliance in FFY 2019.

**Response to actions required in FFY 2019 SPP/APR**

See above for a report on the status of the correction of noncompliance identified in FFY 2019 for this indicator, including the verification that each LEA with noncompliance is: 1) is correctly implementing the specific regulatory requirements (i.e., achieved 100% compliance) based on a review of updated data such as data subsequently collected through on-site monitoring or a State data system; and (2) has corrected each individual case of noncompliance, unless the child is no longer within the jurisdiction of the LEA, consistent with OSEP Memo 09-02.

## 11 - OSEP Response

## 11 - Required Actions

# Indicator 12: Early Childhood Transition

**Instructions and Measurement**

**Monitoring Priorit**y: Effective General Supervision Part B / Effective Transition

**Compliance indicator**: Percent of children referred by Part C prior to age 3, who are found eligible for Part B, and who have an IEP developed and implemented by their third birthdays.

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

**Data Source**

Data to be taken from State monitoring or State data system.

**Measurement**

a. # of children who have been served in Part C and referred to Part B for Part B eligibility determination.

b. # of those referred determined to be NOT eligible and whose eligibility was determined prior to their third birthdays.

c. # of those found eligible who have an IEP developed and implemented by their third birthdays.

d. # of children for whom parent refusal to provide consent caused delays in evaluation or initial services or to whom exceptions under 34 CFR §300.301(d) applied.

e. # of children determined to be eligible for early intervention services under Part C less than 90 days before their third birthdays.

f. # of children whose parents chose to continue early intervention services beyond the child’s third birthday through a State’s policy under 34 CFR §303.211 or a similar State option.

Account for children included in (a), but not included in b, c, d, e, or f. Indicate the range of days beyond the third birthday when eligibility was determined and the IEP developed, and the reasons for the delays.

Percent = [(c) divided by (a - b - d - e - f)] times 100.

**Instructions**

*If data are from State monitoring, describe the method used to select LEAs for monitoring. If data are from a State database, include data for the entire reporting year.*

Describe the results of the calculations and compare the results to the target. Describe the method used to collect these data, and if data are from the State’s monitoring, describe the procedures used to collect these data. Provide the actual numbers used in the calculation.

Targets must be 100%.

Category f is to be used only by States that have an approved policy for providing parents the option of continuing early intervention services beyond the child’s third birthday under 34 CFR §303.211 or a similar State option.

Provide detailed information about the timely correction of noncompliance as noted in OSEP’s response for the previous SPP/APR. If the State did not ensure timely correction of the previous noncompliance, provide information on the extent to which noncompliance was subsequently corrected (more than one year after identification). In addition, provide information regarding the nature of any continuing noncompliance, improvement activities completed (e.g., review of policies and procedures, technical assistance, training, etc.) and any enforcement actions that were taken.

If the State reported less than 100% compliance for the previous reporting period (e.g., for the FFY 2020 SPP/APR, the data for FFY 2019), and the State did not identify any findings of noncompliance, provide an explanation of why the State did not identify any findings of noncompliance.

## 12 - Indicator Data

**Not Applicable**

**Select yes if this indicator is not applicable.**

NO

**Historical Data**

| **Baseline Year** | **Baseline Data** |
| --- | --- |
| 2017 | 92.12% |

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **FFY** | **2015** | **2016** | **2017** | **2018** | **2019** |
| Target | 100% | 100% | 100% | 100% | 100% |
| Data | 100.00% | 99.17% | 92.12% | 82.93% | 72.45% |

**Targets**

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **FFY** | **2020** | **2021** | **2022** | **2023** | **2024** | **2025** |
| Target | 100% | 100% | 100% | 100% | 100% | 100% |

**FFY 2020 SPP/APR Data**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| a. Number of children who have been served in Part C and referred to Part B for Part B eligibility determination. | 230 |
| b. Number of those referred determined to be NOT eligible and whose eligibility was determined prior to third birthday. | 31 |
| c. Number of those found eligible who have an IEP developed and implemented by their third birthdays. | 38 |
| d. Number for whom parent refusals to provide consent caused delays in evaluation or initial services or to whom exceptions under 34 CFR §300.301(d) applied. | 108 |
| e. Number of children who were referred to Part C less than 90 days before their third birthdays. | 25 |
| f. Number of children whose parents chose to continue early intervention services beyond the child’s third birthday through a State’s policy under 34 CFR §303.211 or a similar State option. | 0 |

| **Measure** | **Numerator (c)** | **Denominator (a-b-d-e-f)** | **FFY 2019 Data** | **FFY 2020 Target** | **FFY 2020 Data** | **Status** | **Slippage** |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Percent of children referred by Part C prior to age 3 who are found eligible for Part B, and who have an IEP developed and implemented by their third birthdays. | 38 | 66 | 72.45% | 100% | 57.58% | Did not meet target | Slippage |

**Provide reasons for slippage, if applicable**

MA DESE is reporting slippage of 14.87 percentage points from FFY 2019 to FFY 2020.   
  
MA DESE largely attributes the overall slippage in state compliance rate to 1) programming adjustments (e.g., remote learning) and delays due to COVID-19 and 2) three large MA LEAs reporting noncompliance. Of the 28 noncompliant records identified for FFY 2020, 28.57% of the noncompliant records cited COVID-19 challenges (e.g., scheduling issues due to school closures and/or remote learning) or parents electing to delay enrollment in an early childhood program to the 2022-23 school year, possibly due to concerns related to COVID-19. Three large LEAs had 75% of the noncompliant records reported for the state, with one of the three LEAs having 50% of noncompliant records reported for the state. Should these LEAs’ data be removed from the overall data set, the compliance rate for the reporting cohort would be 84.44%, which is more in keeping with data reported prior to FFY 2019 and almost 12 (11.99) percentage points higher than the compliance rate reported in FFY 2019.

**Number of children who served in Part C and referred to Part B for eligibility determination that are not included in b, c, d, e, or f**

28

**Account for children included in (a), but not included in b, c, d, e, or f. Indicate the range of days beyond the third birthday when eligibility was determined and the IEP developed, and the reasons for the delays.**

In FFY 2020, there were 28 children in 7 LEAs who were referred by Part C prior to age 3, found eligible for Part B, but who did not have an IEP developed and implemented by their third birthdays. Of these 28 records, 14.29% of the children were determined not eligible after their third birthdays (average of 50 days between the third birthday and eligibility meeting in which children were found not eligible) and 28.57% were determined eligible but did not have IEPs implemented at the time the data were collected (average of 27.25 days between the third birthday and the IEP meeting in which the IEP was developed). The remaining 57.14% of the 28 noncompliant records were for children determined eligible who had IEPs implemented after their third birthdays (average of 30.2 days between the third birthday and the IEP meeting in which the IEP was developed).  
  
Of the delays reported in FFY 2020, 7.14% were specifically attributed to COVID-19 (e.g., scheduling issues due to school closures and/or remote learning), 17.86% were attributed to LEA delays in sending or following up on consents; 28.57% were attributed to LEA scheduling issues, LEA miscalculations of timelines, and other LEA-specific challenges; 25% were attributed to delays in parents and families returning signed IEPs, registering children, or providing proof of residency as well as challenges with obtaining transportation for meetings; and 21.43% were attributed to parents delaying enrollment and thus electing not to have IEPs implemented by their child’s third birthday.   
   
Through this process to date, LEAs with identified noncompliance are currently developing and implementing their comprehensive corrective action plans, and/or submitting subsequent data to the MA DESE to demonstrate compliance with regulatory requirements. Corrective action activities and demonstration of compliance through MA DESE’s analysis of subsequent LEA data sets are set to be completed within one year of the state’s finding of noncompliance.

**Attach PDF table (optional)**

**What is the source of the data provided for this indicator?**

State monitoring

**Describe the method used to collect these data, and if data are from the State’s monitoring, describe the procedures used to collect these data.**

FFY 2020 Indicator 12 data activities were managed by the MA DESE office of Public School Monitoring as part of the Tiered Focused Monitoring (TFM) review process. For Indicator 12 reporting, LEAs must submit in the MA DESE web-based monitoring system information for student records that include the following data points: dates of referral, dates of evaluation, IEP Team meeting, and written consent for services received, as well as information about reasons for delay, if any. For the FFY 2020 reporting period, participating LEAs were required to report data and referrals from EI, eligibility determination and IEP implementation for children turning three in January, February, and March of 2021.

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

Of all the evaluations completed in and reported in this FFY 2020 submission, 174 children were deemed to be eligible for Part B special education services and 56 children were deemed not eligible for Part B special education services.   
  
While COVID-19 did not have an impact on data collection, completeness, validity, and reliability for the indicator, the performance on this indicator was likely impacted by COVID-19. Of the 28 noncompliant records, 28.57% specifically cited COVID-19 challenges or parents electing to delay enrollment in an early childhood program to the 2022-23 school year, possibly due to concerns related to COVID-19. Were these 28.57% of the noncompliant records considered compliant, the compliance percentage for this indicator for FFY 2020 would be 65.5%, which is a 7.94 percentage point increase over the FFY 2020 reported compliance percentage of 57.58%.  
  
In light of the COVID-19 pandemic, MA DESE provided extensive guidance, individualized TA, and resources to LEAs to promote compliance with all federal and state regulations, including this Indicator’s mandatory timelines.

**Correction of Findings of Noncompliance Identified in FFY 2019**

| **Findings of Noncompliance Identified** | **Findings of Noncompliance Verified as Corrected Within One Year** | **Findings of Noncompliance Subsequently Corrected** | **Findings Not Yet Verified as Corrected** |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| 7 | 7 |  | 0 |

**FFY 2019 Findings of Noncompliance Verified as Corrected**

**Describe how the State verified that the source of noncompliance is correctly implementing the *regulatory requirements***

In its FFY 2019 APR, MA DESE made seven findings of noncompliance for Indicator 12. MA DESE required each LEA to take corrective actions to amend policy or practice, and/or to develop and implement appropriate systems, to ensure that timelines are met and eligible students receive services timely. MA DESE verified that these activities occurred by reviewing supplemental documentation provided by the LEAs.   
  
The LEAs with noncompliance were required to create focused corrective action plans, and examples of actions in these LEA-created plans include: implementing an online referral process and revising LEA online tracking systems to capture all relevant information, creating immediate access for preschool program administrators and staff; creation of new bi-weekly preschool staff meetings to review tracking data and troubleshoot referrals and evaluations; creation of new monthly meetings of preschool administrative to review referrals and evaluations and discuss the efficacy of processes and procedures to ensure compliant timelines and immediate provision of services; piloting of a dedicated special education evaluation team; trainings for Early Intervention (EI) evaluation team members; sending notices/materials to EI staff and LEA staff around Indicator 12 timelines; training on Indicator 12 timelines for staff, including LEA and school administrators; participation of preschool special education administrator in Regional Collaborative Early Childhood meetings; and collaboration with an LEA’s Family Resource Center to get information to families.  
  
The state verified that all LEAs identified with noncompliance were able to successfully and correctly implement the regulatory requirements (100% compliance) and completed all corrective actions, consistent with OSEP Memorandum 09-02.

**Describe how the State verified that each *individual case* of noncompliance was corrected**

The state verified that each individual incident of noncompliance was corrected by examining the LEA's data submission, consistent with OSEP Memorandum 09-02. These verification activities include requiring LEAs to submit the date of IEP implementation for noncompliant records, a subsequent corrective action report completed for LEAs with noncompliant records, and documentation of evidence of correction of individual records with noncompliance (using subsequent data as appropriate). Each LEA was able to provide evidence that each evaluation for those children affected by the noncompliance had been completed and the IEP was implemented after the receipt of the signed IEP for the children affected by the noncompliance.

**Correction of Findings of Noncompliance Identified Prior to FFY 2019**

| **Year Findings of Noncompliance Were Identified** | **Findings of Noncompliance Not Yet Verified as Corrected as of FFY 2019 APR** | **Findings of Noncompliance Verified as Corrected** | **Findings Not Yet Verified as Corrected** |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  |  |  |  |
|  |  |  |  |
|  |  |  |  |

## 12 - Prior FFY Required Actions

Because the State reported less than 100% compliance for FFY 2019, the State must report on the status of correction of noncompliance identified in FFY 2019 for this indicator. When reporting on the correction of noncompliance, the State must report, in the FFY 2020 SPP/APR, that it has verified that each LEA with noncompliance identified in FFY 2019 for this indicator: (1) is correctly implementing the specific regulatory requirements (i.e., achieved 100% compliance) based on a review of updated data such as data subsequently collected through on-site monitoring or a State data system; and (2) has corrected each individual case of noncompliance, unless the child is no longer within the jurisdiction of the LEA, consistent with OSEP Memo 09-02. In the FFY 2020 SPP/APR, the State must describe the specific actions that were taken to verify the correction.  
  
If the State did not identify any findings of noncompliance in FFY 2019, although its FFY 2019 data reflect less than 100% compliance, provide an explanation of why the State did not identify any findings of noncompliance in FFY 2019.

**Response to actions required in FFY 2019 SPP/APR**

See above for a report on the status of the correction of noncompliance identified in FFY 2019 for this indicator, including the verification that each LEA with noncompliance is: 1) is correctly implementing the specific regulatory requirements (i.e., achieved 100% compliance) based on a review of updated data such as data subsequently collected through on-site monitoring or a State data system; and (2) has corrected each individual case of noncompliance, unless the child is no longer within the jurisdiction of the LEA, consistent with OSEP Memo 09-02.

## 12 - OSEP Response

## 12 - Required Actions

# Indicator 13: Secondary Transition

**Instructions and Measurement**

**Monitoring Priority**: Effective General Supervision Part B / Effective Transition

**Compliance indicator**: Percent of youth with IEPs aged 16 and above with an IEP that includes appropriate measurable postsecondary goals that are annually updated and based upon an age appropriate transition assessment, transition services, including courses of study, that will reasonably enable the student to meet those postsecondary goals, and annual IEP goals related to the student’s transition services needs. There also must be evidence that the student was invited to the IEP Team meeting where transition services are to be discussed and evidence that, if appropriate, a representative of any participating agency that is likely to be responsible for providing or paying for transition services, including, if appropriate, pre-employment transition services, was invited to the IEP Team meeting with the prior consent of the parent or student who has reached the age of majority.

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

**Data Source**

Data to be taken from State monitoring or State data system.

**Measurement**

Percent = [(# of youth with IEPs aged 16 and above with an IEP that includes appropriate measurable postsecondary goals that are annually updated and based upon an age appropriate transition assessment, transition services, including courses of study, that will reasonably enable the student to meet those postsecondary goals, and annual IEP goals related to the student’s transition services needs. There also must be evidence that the student was invited to the IEP Team meeting where transition services are to be discussed and evidence that, if appropriate, a representative of any participating agency that is likely to be responsible for providing or paying for transition services, including, if appropriate, pre-employment transition services, was invited to the IEP Team meeting with the prior consent of the parent or student who has reached the age of majority) divided by the (# of youth with an IEP age 16 and above)] times 100.

If a State’s policies and procedures provide that public agencies must meet these requirements at an age younger than 16, the State may, but is not required to, choose to include youth beginning at that younger age in its data for this indicator. If a State chooses to do this, it must state this clearly in its SPP/APR and ensure that its baseline data are based on youth beginning at that younger age.

**Instructions**

*If data are from State monitoring, describe the method used to select LEAs for monitoring. If data are from a State database, include data for the entire reporting year.*

Describe the results of the calculations and compare the results to the target. Describe the method used to collect these data and if data are from the State’s monitoring, describe the procedures used to collect these data. Provide the actual numbers used in the calculation.

Targets must be 100%.

Provide detailed information about the timely correction of noncompliance as noted in OSEP’s response for the previous SPP/APR. If the State did not ensure timely correction of the previous noncompliance, provide information on the extent to which noncompliance was subsequently corrected (more than one year after identification). In addition, provide information regarding the nature of any continuing noncompliance, improvement activities completed (e.g., review of policies and procedures, technical assistance, training, etc.) and any enforcement actions that were taken.

If the State reported less than 100% compliance for the previous reporting period (e.g., for the FFY 2020 SPP/APR, the data for FFY 2019), and the State did not identify any findings of noncompliance, provide an explanation of why the State did not identify any findings of noncompliance.

## 13 - Indicator Data

**Historical Data**

| **Baseline Year** | **Baseline Data** |
| --- | --- |
| 2017 | 97.09% |

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **FFY** | **2015** | **2016** | **2017** | **2018** | **2019** |
| Target | 100% | 100% | 100% | 100% | 100% |
| Data | 100.00% | 99.80% | 97.09% | 96.99% | 97.45% |

**Targets**

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **FFY** | **2020** | **2021** | **2022** | **2023** | **2024** | **2025** |
| Target | 100% | 100% | 100% | 100% | 100% | 100% |

**FFY 2020 SPP/APR Data**

| **Number of youth aged 16 and above with IEPs that contain each of the required components for secondary transition** | **Number of youth with IEPs aged 16 and above** | **FFY 2019 Data** | **FFY 2020 Target** | **FFY 2020 Data** | **Status** | **Slippage** |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| 1,456 | 1,494 | 97.45% | 100% | 97.46% | Did not meet target | No Slippage |

**What is the source of the data provided for this indicator?**

State monitoring

**Describe the method used to collect these data, and if data are from the State’s monitoring, describe the procedures used to collect these data.**

MA DESE collects Indicator 13 data through its Tiered Focused Monitoring (TFM) system, through which the Indicator is integrated into districts’ comprehensive self-assessment on a six-year rotating cohort cycle. Using the Massachusetts Postsecondary Transition Planning Checklist for Indicator 13, all LEAs in the cohort evaluated a representative sample of files for students aged 14-22 with IEPs.

| **Question** | **Yes / No** |
| --- | --- |
| Do the State’s policies and procedures provide that public agencies must meet these requirements at an age younger than 16? | YES |
| If yes, did the State choose to include youth at an age younger than 16 in its data for this indicator and ensure that its baseline data are based on youth beginning at that younger age? | YES |
| If yes, at what age are youth included in the data for this indicator | 14 |

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

For FFY 2020, MA DESE identified 38 records with noncompliance and issued Indicator 13 findings for six LEAs with this noncompliance and engaged with those LEAs in corrective activities such as those detailed below for FFY 2019. These corrections of noncompliance are consistent with the OSEP Memorandum 09-02 and will entail the state verifying correction of individual instances of noncompliance (38 records) as well as verifying that source of noncompliance (six LEAs) is correctly implementing the regulatory requirements. MA DESE will report on the compliance status of these six LEAs in the FFY 2021 APR.

**Correction of Findings of Noncompliance Identified in FFY 2019**

| **Findings of Noncompliance Identified** | **Findings of Noncompliance Verified as Corrected Within One Year** | **Findings of Noncompliance Subsequently Corrected** | **Findings Not Yet Verified as Corrected** |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| 4 |  | 4 | 0 |

**FFY 2019 Findings of Noncompliance Verified as Corrected**

**Describe how the State verified that the source of noncompliance is correctly implementing the *regulatory requirements***

In its FFY 2019 APR, MA DESE made four findings of noncompliance for Indicator 13. MA DESE required each LEA to take corrective actions to amend policy or practice, and/or to develop and implement appropriate systems, to ensure appropriate and compliant postsecondary transition plans are in place for students ages 14-22. Through active communication to ensure oversight and through the submission of subsequent data documenting compliance, MA DESE verified that these corrective action plans were effective. LEA plans included elements such as: conducting root cause analysis to determine the source of noncompliance; revising procedures and protocols for postsecondary transition plans; revising job descriptions for LEA Transition Coordinator; conducting staff training on postsecondary transition plans; establishing a regular schedule of staff training; and instituting periodic reviews of student records to verify compliance.  
  
The LEAs were also required to submit subsequent student records to demonstrate compliance. Through completion of corrective actions and demonstrated 100% compliance in review of subsequent student records, the state verified that all four LEAs that were the source of noncompliance are now correctly implementing the regulatory requirements (100% compliance), per OSEP Memorandum 09-02.

**Describe how the State verified that each *individual case* of noncompliance was corrected**

In each individual case of noncompliance, MA DESE required each LEA to reconvene IEP meetings for students whose records indicated noncompliance, to ensure that these students would now have 100% compliant transition planning and services. In the case of each reconvened meeting, LEAs submitted relevant documents to MA DESE, so that compliance could be verified. For example, if the Indicator 13 review indicated that the student had not been invited to their IEP meeting, the LEA submitted documentation of student invitation for the reconvened meeting. As an additional example, if the Indicator 13 review indicated that the student lacked measurable annual IEP goals related to the student's transition needs, then the LEA submitted to MA DESE the new IEP from the reconvened meeting, with compliant annual IEP goals. The state has verified that all individual cases of noncompliance from FFY 2019 have been corrected and are 100% compliant, consistent with OSEP Memorandum 09-02.

**Correction of Findings of Noncompliance Identified Prior to FFY 2019**

| **Year Findings of Noncompliance Were Identified** | **Findings of Noncompliance Not Yet Verified as Corrected as of FFY 2019 APR** | **Findings of Noncompliance Verified as Corrected** | **Findings Not Yet Verified as Corrected** |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| FFY 2018 | 8 | 8 | 0 |
|  |  |  |  |
|  |  |  |  |

**FFY 2018**

**Findings of Noncompliance Verified as Corrected**

**Describe how the State verified that the source of noncompliance is correctly implementing the *regulatory requirements***

In its FFY 2018 APR, MA DESE made eight findings of noncompliance for Indicator 13.   
  
For state verification that the source of noncompliance was correctly implementing the regulatory requirements:  
  
MA DESE required each LEA to take corrective actions to amend policy or practice, and/or to develop and implement appropriate systems, to ensure appropriate and compliant postsecondary transition plans are in place for students ages 14-22. Through active communication to ensure oversight and through the submission of subsequent data documenting compliance, MA DESE verified that these corrective action plans were effective. LEA plans included elements such as: purchasing tools to assist in developing appropriate transition goals and training staff in the use of those tools; enhancing collaboration activities between the guidance department and special education staff; delivering training for special educators and coordinators on student invitations to meetings; and developing a district plan for transition with measurable goals and action steps.   
  
LEAs were also required to submit subsequent student records to demonstrate compliance. Through completion of corrective actions and demonstrated 100% compliance in review of subsequent student records, the state verified that all eight LEAs that were the source of noncompliance are now correctly implementing the regulatory requirements (100% compliance), per OSEP Memorandum 09-02.

**Describe how the State verified that each *individual case* of noncompliance was corrected**

For state verification that each individual case of noncompliance was corrected:  
  
MA DESE required each LEA to reconvene IEP meetings for students whose records indicated noncompliance, to ensure that these students would have 100% compliant transition planning and services. In the case of each reconvened meeting, LEAs submitted relevant documents to MA DESE, so that compliance could be verified. For example, if the Indicator 13 review indicated that the student had not been invited to their IEP meeting, the LEA submitted documentation of student invitation for the reconvened meeting. As an additional example, if the Indicator 13 review indicated that the student lacked measurable annual IEP goals related to the student's transition needs, then the LEA submitted to MA DESE the new IEP from the reconvened meeting, with compliant annual IEP goals. The state verified that all individual cases of noncompliance from FFY 2018 were corrected and 100% compliant, consistent with OSEP Memorandum 09-02.

## 13 - Prior FFY Required Actions

Because the State reported less than 100% compliance for FFY 2019, the State must report on the status of correction of noncompliance identified in FFY 2019 for this indicator. In addition, the State must demonstrate, in the FFY 2020 SPP/APR, that the remaining eight uncorrected findings of noncompliance identified in FFY 2018 were corrected. When reporting on the correction of noncompliance, the State must report, in the FFY 2020 SPP/APR, that it has verified that each LEA with findings of noncompliance identified in FFY 2019 and each LEA with remaining noncompliance identified in FFY 2018: (1) is correctly implementing the specific regulatory requirements (i.e., achieved 100% compliance) based on a review of updated data such as data subsequently collected through on-site monitoring or a State data system; and (2) has corrected each individual case of noncompliance, unless the child is no longer within the jurisdiction of the LEA, consistent with OSEP Memo 09-02. In the FFY 2020 SPP/APR, the State must describe the specific actions that were taken to verify the correction.   
  
If the State did not identify any findings of noncompliance in FFY 2019, although its FFY 2019 data reflect less than 100% compliance, provide an explanation of why the State did not identify any findings of noncompliance in FFY 2019.

**Response to actions required in FFY 2019 SPP/APR**

See above for a report on the status of the correction of noncompliance identified in FFY 2018 and FFY 2019 for this indicator, including the verification that each LEA with noncompliance is: 1) is correctly implementing the specific regulatory requirements (i.e., achieved 100% compliance) based on a review of updated data such as data subsequently collected through on-site monitoring or a State data system; and (2) has corrected each individual case of noncompliance, unless the child is no longer within the jurisdiction of the LEA, consistent with OSEP Memo 09-02.

## 13 - OSEP Response

## 13 - Required Actions

# Indicator 14: Post-School Outcomes

**Instructions and Measurement**

**Monitoring Priority**: Effective General Supervision Part B / Effective Transition

**Results indicator:** Percent of youth who are no longer in secondary school, had IEPs in effect at the time they left school, and were:

A. Enrolled in higher education within one year of leaving high school.

B. Enrolled in higher education or competitively employed within one year of leaving high school.

C. Enrolled in higher education or in some other postsecondary education or training program; or competitively employed or in some other employment within one year of leaving high school.

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

**Data Source**

State selected data source.

**Measurement**

A. Percent enrolled in higher education = [(# of youth who are no longer in secondary school, had IEPs in effect at the time they left school and were enrolled in higher education within one year of leaving high school) divided by the (# of respondent youth who are no longer in secondary school and had IEPs in effect at the time they left school)] times 100.

B. Percent enrolled in higher education or competitively employed within one year of leaving high school = [(# of youth who are no longer in secondary school, had IEPs in effect at the time they left school and were enrolled in higher education or competitively employed within one year of leaving high school) divided by the (# of respondent youth who are no longer in secondary school and had IEPs in effect at the time they left school)] times 100.

C. Percent enrolled in higher education, or in some other postsecondary education or training program; or competitively employed or in some other employment = [(# of youth who are no longer in secondary school, had IEPs in effect at the time they left school and were enrolled in higher education, or in some other postsecondary education or training program; or competitively employed or in some other employment) divided by the (# of respondent youth who are no longer in secondary school and had IEPs in effect at the time they left school)] times 100.

**Instructions**

*Sampling****of youth who had IEPs and are no longer in secondary school****is allowed. When sampling is used, submit a description of the sampling methodology outlining how the design will yield valid and reliable estimates of the target population. (See General Instructions on page 2 for additional instructions on sampling.)*

Collect data by September 2021 on students who left school during 2019-2020, timing the data collection so that at least one year has passed since the students left school. Include students who dropped out during 2019-2020 or who were expected to return but did not return for the current school year. This includes all youth who had an IEP in effect at the time they left school, including those who graduated with a regular diploma or some other credential, dropped out, or aged out.

**I. *Definitions***

*Enrolled in higher education* as used in measures A, B, and C means youth have been enrolled on a full- or part-time basis in a community college (two-year program) or college/university (four or more year program) for at least one complete term, at any time in the year since leaving high school.

*Competitive employment* as used in measures B and C: States have two options to report data under “competitive employment”:

Option 1: Use the same definition as used to report in the FFY 2015 SPP/APR, i.e., competitive employment means that youth have worked for pay at or above the minimum wage in a setting with others who are nondisabled for a period of 20 hours a week for at least 90 days at any time in the year since leaving high school. This includes military employment.

Option 2: States report in alignment with the term “competitive integrated employment” and its definition, in section 7(5) of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended by Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA). For the purpose of defining the rate of compensation for students working on a “part-time basis” under this category, OSEP maintains the standard of 20 hours a week for at least 90 days at any time in the year since leaving high school. This definition applies to military employment.

*Enrolled in other postsecondary education or training* as used in measure C, means youth have been enrolled on a full- or part-time basis for at least 1 complete term at any time in the year since leaving high school in an education or training program (e.g., Job Corps, adult education, workforce development program, vocational technical school which is less than a two-year program).

*Some other employment* as used in measure C means youth have worked for pay or been self-employed for a period of at least 90 days at any time in the year since leaving high school. This includes working in a family business (e.g., farm, store, fishing, ranching, catering services, etc.).

**II. *Data Reporting***

States must describe the metric used to determine representativeness (e.g., +/- 3% discrepancy in the proportion of responders compared to target group).

Provide the total number of targeted youth in the sample or census.

Provide the actual numbers for each of the following mutually exclusive categories. The actual number of “leavers” who are:

1. Enrolled in higher education within one year of leaving high school;

2. Competitively employed within one year of leaving high school (but not enrolled in higher education);

3. Enrolled in some other postsecondary education or training program within one year of leaving high school (but not enrolled in higher education or competitively employed);

4. In some other employment within one year of leaving high school (but not enrolled in higher education, some other postsecondary education or training program, or competitively employed).

“Leavers” should only be counted in one of the above categories, and the categories are organized hierarchically. So, for example, “leavers” who are enrolled in full- or part-time higher education within one year of leaving high school should only be reported in category 1, even if they also happen to be employed. Likewise, “leavers” who are not enrolled in either part- or full-time higher education, but who are competitively employed, should only be reported under category 2, even if they happen to be enrolled in some other postsecondary education or training program.

States must compare the response rate for the reporting year to the response rate for the previous year (e.g., in the FFY 2020 SPP/APR, compare the FFY 2020 response rate to the FFY 2019 response rate), and describe strategies that will be implemented which are expected to increase the response rate year over year, particularly for those groups that are underrepresented.

The State must also analyze the response rate to identify potential nonresponse bias and take steps to reduce any identified bias and promote response from a broad cross section of youth who are no longer in secondary school and had IEPs in effect at the time they left school.

**III. *Reporting on the Measures/Indicators***

Targets must be established for measures A, B, and C.

Measure A: For purposes of reporting on the measures/indicators, please note that any youth enrolled in an institution of higher education (that meets any definition of this term in the Higher Education Act (HEA)) within one year of leaving high school must be reported under measure A. This could include youth who also happen to be competitively employed, or in some other training program; however, the key outcome we are interested in here is enrollment in higher education.

Measure B: All youth reported under measure A should also be reported under measure B, in addition to all youth that obtain competitive employment within one year of leaving high school.

Measure C: All youth reported under measures A and B should also be reported under measure C, in addition to youth that are enrolled in some other postsecondary education or training program, or in some other employment.

Include the State’s analyses of the extent to which the response data are representative of the demographics of youth who are no longer in secondary school and had IEPs in effect at the time they left school. States should consider categories such as race/ethnicity, disability category, and geographic location in the State.

If the analysis shows that the response data are not representative of the demographics of youth who are no longer in secondary school and had IEPs in effect at the time they left school, describe the strategies that the State will use to ensure that in the future the response data are representative of those demographics. In identifying such strategies, the State should consider factors such as how the State collected the data.

**Beginning with the FFY 2021 SPP/APR, due Feb. 1, 2023,** when reporting the extent to which the demographics of respondents are representative of the demographics of youth who are no longer in secondary school and had IEPs in effect at the time they left school, States must include race/ethnicity in its analysis. In addition, the State’s analysis must include at least one of the following demographics: disability category, gender, geographic location, and/or another demographic category approved through the stakeholder input process.

## 14 - Indicator Data

**Historical Data**

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Measure** | **Baseline** | **FFY** | **2015** | **2016** | **2017** | **2018** | **2019** |
| A | 2020 | Target >= | 49.00% | 51.00% | 53.00% | 50.20% | 50.40% |
| A | 39.91% | Data | 53.83% | 49.64% | 50.00% | 41.18% | 34.79% |
| B | 2020 | Target >= | 84.00% | 86.00% | 88.00% | 79.60% | 79.80% |
| B | 72.26% | Data | 81.31% | 83.13% | 79.37% | 70.88% | 56.55% |
| C | 2020 | Target >= | 91.00% | 93.00% | 95.00% | 87.30% | 87.50% |
| C | 78.68% | Data | 93.74% | 94.43% | 87.09% | 79.02% | 62.35% |

**FFY 2020 Targets**

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **FFY** | **2020** | **2021** | **2022** | **2023** | **2024** | **2025** |
| Target A >= | 40.00% | 42.00% | 44.00% | 46.00% | 48.00% | 50.00% |
| Target B >= | 73.00% | 74.00% | 75.00% | 76.00% | 77.00% | 78.00% |
| Target C >= | 79.00% | 80.00% | 81.00% | 82.00% | 83.00% | 84.00% |

**Targets: Description of Stakeholder Input**

MA DESE works closely with stakeholders on developing targets and setting priorities for improvement in each of the areas reported in the SPP/APR.   
  
The Special Education Advisory Panel, comprised of parents, individuals with disabilities, educators, administrators, and representatives from state agencies, higher education, and other stakeholder groups, meets up to five times each school year to review data, discuss policy priorities, and identify unmet needs in the area of special education consistent with state law and IDEA Part B. At every meeting, the group addresses various aspects of the SPP/APR and the State’s general supervision systems, as well as relevant policy matters. A special focus during the pandemic has been COVID-19’s effect on compliance and performance areas related to the SPP/APR Indicators. MA DESE facilitates discussion of baseline and current data, longitudinal targets, historical rates of performance and compliance and the trajectory for improvement for each of the Indicators, and the effectiveness of focused improvement activities within the context of the state's Results Driven Accountability framework.   
  
MA DESE has set a high priority on expanding the agency’s capacity to solicit broad and diverse stakeholder input to set SPP/APR targets, analyze data, develop improvement strategies, and evaluate progress. For FFY2020, MA DESE sought to improve stakeholder Indicator knowledge by posting new webpages for Indicators 1, 2, 3, 5, 6, 7, 8, and 14 with Quick Reference Guides (QRGs) and PowerPoints for each Indicator. These QRGs and PowerPoints were available in six languages that correspond to the most common languages spoken in Massachusetts: English, Spanish, Portuguese, Chinese, Vietnamese, and Haitian Creole. Narrated versions of each PowerPoint were also available in English on the YouTube page of our partner, the Federation for Children with Special Needs (the Massachusetts Parent Training and Information Center/PTIC). MA DESE solicited feedback for Indicators 1, 2, 3, 5, 6, 7, 8, and 14 baselines and targets via an online survey in English, Spanish, Portuguese, Chinese, Vietnamese, and Haitian Creole. In addition, MA DESE collaborated with the Federation for Children with Special Needs, the OSEP funded Parent Training and Information Center (PTI), to hold five virtual stakeholder information and feedback sessions on these Indicators. Meetings were simultaneously interpreted into American Sign Language, Spanish, Portuguese, and Mandarin. Other languages were available but were not requested.   
  
MA DESE also consults regularly, on a monthly or at least quarterly basis, with Massachusetts Administrators of Special Education, http://www.asepage.org/, the Federation for Children with Special Needs, https://fcsn.org/, Massachusetts Advocates for Children, https://www.massadvocates.org/, the Massachusetts Association of Approved Special Education Schools, https://maaps.org/, Massachusetts Urban Special Education Leadership Collaborative, and the Special Needs Advocacy Network, www.spanmass.org. In addition, the Massachusetts State Special Education Director at MA DESE gives monthly virtual presentations to statewide special education leaders on a wide array of special education compliance and performance topics. During all of these meetings, MA DESE solicits and receives significant feedback that informs the development of special education policy and guidance.   
  
As needed, MA DESE also convenes stakeholder working groups throughout the year to provide focused input on specific projects and policy priorities. Examples of these focused groups include the Early Childhood Interagency Coordinating Council, with membership that includes community members and state agencies, a Statewide Systemic Improvement Plan (SSIP) leadership team and working group, a family engagement workgroup, an advisory group for the Dropout Prevention and Re-engagement Network, and secondary transition stakeholder groups. MA DESE also consults with educators, parents, advocates, and others on an ad hoc basis to inform policy and practice.   
  
MA DESE engages with stakeholders on the direction of Indicator 17, the State’s Systemic Improvement Plan (SSIP), at the state, district, classroom, and community levels. Stakeholders are provided with information about activities and goals, training events and embedded supports statewide, and the availability of resources to support and expand implementation. Stakeholders at the district and school levels participate in ongoing decision making about the direction of the SSIP by providing feedback about the quality of events and supports, observed benefits for their own stakeholders, and needs for moving forward with implementation most successfully. For additional information on stakeholder engagement related to Indicator 17, please see the Indicator 17 APR.  
  
Stakeholder engagement is an essential component of MA DESE’s special education agenda.

For FFY2020, MA DESE consulted three times with the Special Education Advisory Panel regarding Indicator 14, in May 2021, June 2021, and January 2022. Each time, MA DESE sought ideas from Panel members on the measurement, baselines, targets, data, and improvement activities, in general and specifically in light of the COVID-19 pandemic.

**FFY 2020 SPP/APR Data**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Total number of targeted youth in the sample or census | 2,816 |
| Number of respondent youth who are no longer in secondary school and had IEPs in effect at the time they left school | 1,060 |
| Response Rate | 37.64% |
| 1. Number of respondent youth who enrolled in higher education within one year of leaving high school | 423 |
| 2. Number of respondent youth who competitively employed within one year of leaving high school | 343 |
| 3. Number of respondent youth enrolled in some other postsecondary education or training program within one year of leaving high school (but not enrolled in higher education or competitively employed) | 23 |
| 4. Number of respondent youth who are in some other employment within one year of leaving high school (but not enrolled in higher education, some other postsecondary education or training program, or competitively employed). | 45 |

| **Measure** | **Number of respondent youth** | **Number of respondent youth who are no longer in secondary school and had IEPs in effect at the time they left school** | **FFY 2019 Data** | **FFY 2020 Target** | **FFY 2020 Data** | **Status** | **Slippage** |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| A. Enrolled in higher education (1) | 423 | 1,060 | 34.79% | 40.00% | 39.91% | N/A | N/A |
| B. Enrolled in higher education or competitively employed within one year of leaving high school (1 +2) | 766 | 1,060 | 56.55% | 73.00% | 72.26% | N/A | N/A |
| C. Enrolled in higher education, or in some other postsecondary education or training program; or competitively employed or in some other employment (1+2+3+4) | 834 | 1,060 | 62.35% | 79.00% | 78.68% | N/A | N/A |

**Please select the reporting option your State is using:**

Option 1: Use the same definition as used to report in the FFY 2015 SPP/APR, i.e., competitive employment means that youth have worked for pay at or above the minimum wage in a setting with others who are nondisabled for a period of 20 hours a week for at least 90 days at any time in the year since leaving high school. This includes military employment.

**Response Rate**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **FFY** | **2019** | **2020** |
| Response Rate | 39.54% | 37.64% |

**Describe strategies that will be implemented which are expected to increase the response rate year over year, particularly for those groups that are underrepresented.**

To improve response rates, MA DESE provides emails with detailed information to district staff annually along with Technical Assistance (TA) documents that include background and updates about Indicator 14 as well as information about how to prepare for and field the survey, and how to submit survey data on time. MA DESE publicizes Indicator 14 data collection through the agency’s special education listserv, in the agency’s online FAQs, and through regular statewide special education leaders’ meetings. MA DESE emphasizes with districts that all eligible former students should be included in the survey and uses strategies to help ensure that all former students have equal opportunity to respond. For example, MA DESE ensures that the survey is available in English, Spanish, Portuguese, Chinese, Haitian Creole, and Vietnamese to better engage former students and family members from diverse backgrounds. English and translated versions of the survey are available online and as paper forms. Twenty-one percent of survey respondents identified as Hispanic or Latino, close to the statewide prevalence of 23.1% for Hispanic or Latino students aged 3 – 21.   
  
MA DESE encourages districts to work with their dropout re-engagement centers, to collaborate with staff conducting the Perkins post-school survey, and recommends that former students be contacted by school staff who are familiar to them. Several online Indicator 14 TA sessions for district staff are hosted by MA DESE and PIAR, Massachusetts’ contractor. Additionally MA DESE staff and PIAR staff at SUNY Potsdam provide continuous support to district staff throughout the surveying process. Districts receive regular updates from PIAR staff to let them know which individual former students have completed the survey. These are weekly compiled into a statewide accounting of progress, by district, and are provided to MA DESE to monitor statewide progress. MA DESE sends regular reminders to all districts and provides additional personalized TA. Although MA DESE expects the response rate to increase over time, slight decreases year-to-year are not seen as a significant variation from year to year, and the decrease of less than two percent this cycle is not considered an immediate concern. MA DESE plans to continue and strengthen our efforts in the wake of the pandemic to maintain and strengthen response rates in the future.  
  
MA DESE commends our districts, which largely maintained historical survey response rates at a time of significant COVID-related challenge, including staffing shortages

**Describe the analysis of the response rate including any nonresponse bias that was identified, and the steps taken to reduce any identified bias and promote response from a broad cross section of youth who are no longer in secondary school and had IEPs in effect at the time they left school.**

Additional analysis was conducted on the potential implications of former students identified as Economically Disadvantaged being under-represented by 3.69%. Note that among the 1060 respondents about one third are identified as Economically Disadvantaged (367/1060). Former students identified as Economically Disadvantaged are more often Hispanic (60% vs 40%), less often White (24% vs 76%), and engaged less often (C=71.9% vs 82.8%). Hispanic former students report being engaged significantly less often than White former students (66.8% vs 82.7%), therefore the overall Engagement rate is slightly higher than it would be if Economically Disadvantaged and Hispanic former students were proportionally represented (~estimated to be +2% to 3% higher).  
  
To reduce any identified bias and promote response from a broad cross section of youth who are no longer in secondary school and had IEPs in effect at the time they left school, MA DESE provides emails with detailed information to district staff annually along with Technical Assistance (TA) documents that include background and updates about Indicator 14 as well as information about how to prepare for and field the survey, and how to submit survey data on time. MA DESE publicizes Indicator 14 data collection through the agency’s special education listserv, in the agency’s online FAQs, and through regular statewide special education leaders’ meetings. MA DESE emphasizes with districts that all eligible former students should be included in the survey and uses strategies to help ensure that all former students have equal opportunity to respond. For example, MA DESE ensures that the survey is available in English, Spanish, Portuguese, Chinese, Haitian Creole, and Vietnamese to better engage diverse former students and family members. English and translated versions of the survey are available online and as paper forms. Twenty-one percent of survey respondents identified as Hispanic or Latino, close to the statewide prevalence of 23.1 percent for Hispanic or Latino students aged 3 – 21.   
  
MA DESE encourages districts to work with their dropout re-engagement centers, to collaborate with staff conducting the Perkins post-school survey, and recommends that former students be contacted by school staff who are familiar to them. Several online Indicator 14 TA sessions for district staff are hosted by MA DESE and PIAR, Massachusetts’ contractor. Additionally MA DESE staff and PIAR staff at SUNY Potsdam provide continuous support to district staff throughout the surveying process. Districts receive regular updates from PIAR staff to let them know which individual former students have completed the survey. These are weekly compiled into a statewide accounting of progress, by district, and are provided to MA DESE to monitor statewide progress. MA DESE sends regular reminders to all districts and provides additional personalized TA.  
  
For FFY2021, MA DESE is working with Parent Training and Information Center (PTI) staff to create a parent and student brochure on Indicator 14 in six languages, to increase the survey’s visibility and response rate.

**Include the State’s analyses of the extent to which the response data are representative of the demographics of youth who are no longer in secondary school and had IEPs in effect at the time they left school.**

MA DESE used the Representativeness Calculator adapted from the template that is available from the NTACT-C website. This year’s analysis examines the following demographic subpopulations: Specific Learning Disabilities, Emotional Disabilities, Intellectual Disabilities, All Other Disabilities, Female, Minority, ELL/LLP, Dropout, and Economically Disadvantaged. The proportion, as a percentage, that each group contributed to the Survey Pool and Respondent Pool were compared to assess if there were any with a difference of more than plus or minus 3.00%. This analysis indicates that seven out of the nine examined sub-populations are represented within the plus or minus 3.00% benchmark. There are two under-represented groups, Dropout at -4.16% and Economically Disadvantaged at -3.69%. Note that these calculations examine one demographic characteristic category at a time and do not examine the interaction of the multiple characteristics that each of us possess. One characteristic does not influence us in the absence of other characteristics. Future analysis of the interaction between characteristics may help us understand the influence multiple characteristics may have on post-school outcomes.   
  
Unfortunately, interviewers (district staff) in Massachusetts, as in most other states, have more difficulty contacting and interviewing former students who dropped out of high school and those who experience high mobility because available contact information is often found to be out-of-date. There also appears to be interplay between these two characteristics because former students identified as Economically Disadvantaged are significantly over-represented among those who dropout (64.2% vs 35.8%) compared to not identified as Economically Disadvantaged. This increases the likelihood that an under-representation in one of these two groups will make it more likely that the other group is also under-represented. MA DESE has provided multiple strategies to district staff to provide equity to all former students participating in the Indicator 14 survey; these have yet to ensure proportional response rates across all demographic groups. MA DESE notes that the COVID-19 pandemic has significantly impacted vulnerable populations such as former students who are Economically Disadvantaged and students who dropped out.

**The response data is representative of the demographics of youth who are no longer in school and had IEPs in effect at the time they left school. (yes/no)**

NO

**If no, describe the strategies that the State will use to ensure that in the future the response data are representative of those demographics.**

To improve representativeness, MA DESE provides emails with detailed information to district staff annually along with Technical Assistance (TA) documents that include background and updates about Indicator 14 as well as information about how to prepare for and field the survey, and how to submit survey data on time. MA DESE publicizes Indicator 14 data collection through the agency’s special education listserv, in the agency’s online FAQs, and through regular statewide special education leaders’ meetings. MA DESE emphasizes with districts that all eligible former students should be included in the survey and uses strategies to help ensure that all former students have equal opportunity to respond. For example, MA DESE ensures that the survey is available in English, Spanish, Portuguese, Chinese, Haitian Creole, and Vietnamese to better engage diverse former students and family members. English and translated versions of the survey are available online and as paper forms. Twenty-one percent of survey respondents identified as Hispanic or Latino, close to the statewide prevalence of 23.1 percent for Hispanic or Latino students aged 3 – 21.   
  
MA DESE encourages districts to work with their dropout re-engagement centers, to collaborate with staff conducting the Perkins post-school survey, and recommends that former students be contacted by school staff who are familiar to them. Several online Indicator 14 TA sessions for district staff are hosted by MA DESE and PIAR, Massachusetts’ contractor. Additionally MA DESE staff and PIAR staff at SUNY Potsdam provide continuous support to district staff throughout the surveying process. Districts receive regular updates from PIAR staff to let them know which individual former students have completed the survey. These are weekly compiled into a statewide accounting of progress, by district, and are provided to MA DESE to monitor statewide progress. MA DESE sends regular reminders to all districts and provides additional personalized TA.  
  
For FFY2021, MA DESE is working with Parent Training and Information Center (PTI) staff to create a parent and student brochure on Indicator 14 in six languages, to increase the survey’s visibility and response rate.

**Describe the metric used to determine representativeness (e.g., +/- 3% discrepancy in the proportion of responders compared to target group).**

MA DESE uses +/- 3% discrepancy in the proportion of responders compared to target group.

| **Sampling Question** | **Yes / No** |
| --- | --- |
| Was sampling used? | YES |
| If yes, has your previously approved sampling plan changed? | NO |

**Describe the sampling methodology outlining how the design will yield valid and reliable estimates.**

For FFY2020, MA DESE continued to use the OSEP-approved cohort sampling method, to yield valid and reliable estimates. MA DESE divides the state into four cohorts, each of which is representative of the state as a whole. With the exception of the city of Boston, which conducts Indicator 14 data collection every year, Indicator 14 data is collected from each cohort in turn over the course of four years. For a complete description of the MA DESE OSEP-approved cohort sampling plan, please see uploaded attachments.

| **Survey Question** | **Yes / No** |
| --- | --- |
| Was a survey used? | YES |
| If yes, is it a new or revised survey? | NO |

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

## 14 - Prior FFY Required Actions

In the FFY 2020 SPP/APR, the State must report whether the FFY 2020 data are representative of the demographics of youth who are no longer in secondary school and had IEPs in effect at the time they left school, and, if not, the actions the State is taking to address this issue. The State must also include its analysis of the extent to which the response data are representative of the demographics of youth who are no longer in secondary school and had IEPs in effect at the time they left school.

**Response to actions required in FFY 2019 SPP/APR**

Please see sections above that describe MA DESE's analysis of the representativeness of the state's FFY2020 data, as well as steps MA DESE is taking to address this issue.

## 14 - OSEP Response

The State provided targets for FFYs 2020 through 2025 for this indicator, but OSEP cannot accept those targets because the State's end targets for FFY 2025 do not reflect improvement over the State's FFY 2017 baseline data. The State must revise its FFY 2025 target to reflect improvement over the baseline.  
  
The State analyzed the response rate to identify potential non-response bias; however, the State did not identify steps to reduce any identified bias and promote response from a broad cross section of youth who are no longer in secondary school and had IEPs in effect at the time they left school, as required by the Measurement Table.   
  
The State reported that sampling was used to collect data for this indicator and that the previously approved sampling plan had not changed. In order to report data for this indicator using sampling for the FFY 2020-2025 SPP/APR, the State must submit its sampling plan to OSEP and provide data consistent with the approved sampling plan

## 14 - Required Actions

# Indicator 15: Resolution Sessions

**Instructions and Measurement**

**Monitoring Priority**: Effective General Supervision Part B / General Supervision

**Results Indicator:** Percent of hearing requests that went to resolution sessions that were resolved through resolution session settlement agreements.

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

**Data Source**

Data collected under section 618 of the IDEA (IDEA Part B Dispute Resolution Survey in the EDFacts Metadata and Process System (E*MAPS*)).

**Measurement**

Percent = (3.1(a) divided by 3.1) times 100.

**Instructions**

*Sampling is not allowed.*

Describe the results of the calculations and compare the results to the target.

States are not required to establish baseline or targets if the number of resolution sessions is less than 10. In a reporting period when the number of resolution sessions reaches 10 or greater, develop baseline and targets and report on them in the corresponding SPP/APR.

States may express their targets in a range (e.g., 75-85%).

If the data reported in this indicator are not the same as the State’s data under IDEA section 618, explain.

States are not required to report data at the LEA level.

## 15 - Indicator Data

Select yes to use target ranges

Target Range is used

**Prepopulated Data**

| **Source** | **Date** | **Description** | **Data** |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| SY 2020-21 EMAPS IDEA Part B Dispute Resolution Survey; Section C: Due Process Complaints | 11/03/2021 | 3.1 Number of resolution sessions | 3 |
| SY 2020-21 EMAPS IDEA Part B Dispute Resolution Survey; Section C: Due Process Complaints | 11/03/2021 | 3.1(a) Number resolution sessions resolved through settlement agreements | 3 |

**Select yes if the data reported in this indicator are not the same as the State’s data reported under section 618 of the IDEA.**

NO

**Targets: Description of Stakeholder Input**

MA DESE works closely with stakeholders on developing targets and setting priorities for improvement in each of the areas reported in the SPP/APR.   
  
The Special Education Advisory Panel, comprised of parents, individuals with disabilities, educators, administrators, and representatives from state agencies, higher education, and other stakeholder groups, meets up to five times each school year to review data, discuss policy priorities, and identify unmet needs in the area of special education consistent with state law and IDEA Part B. At every meeting, the group addresses various aspects of the SPP/APR and the State’s general supervision systems, as well as relevant policy matters. A special focus during the pandemic has been COVID-19’s effect on compliance and performance areas related to the SPP/APR Indicators. MA DESE facilitates discussion of baseline and current data, longitudinal targets, historical rates of performance and compliance and the trajectory for improvement for each of the Indicators, and the effectiveness of focused improvement activities within the context of the state's Results Driven Accountability framework.   
  
MA DESE has set a high priority on expanding the agency’s capacity to solicit broad and diverse stakeholder input to set SPP/APR targets, analyze data, develop improvement strategies, and evaluate progress. For FFY2020, MA DESE sought to improve stakeholder Indicator knowledge by posting new webpages for Indicators 1, 2, 3, 5, 6, 7, 8, and 14 with Quick Reference Guides (QRGs) and PowerPoints for each Indicator. These QRGs and PowerPoints were available in six languages that correspond to the most common languages spoken in Massachusetts: English, Spanish, Portuguese, Chinese, Vietnamese, and Haitian Creole. Narrated versions of each PowerPoint were also available in English on the YouTube page of our partner, the Federation for Children with Special Needs (the Massachusetts Parent Training and Information Center/PTIC). MA DESE solicited feedback for Indicators 1, 2, 3, 5, 6, 7, 8, and 14 baselines and targets via an online survey in English, Spanish, Portuguese, Chinese, Vietnamese, and Haitian Creole. In addition, MA DESE collaborated with the Federation for Children with Special Needs, the OSEP funded Parent Training and Information Center (PTI), to hold five virtual stakeholder information and feedback sessions on these Indicators. Meetings were simultaneously interpreted into American Sign Language, Spanish, Portuguese, and Mandarin. Other languages were available but were not requested.   
  
MA DESE also consults regularly, on a monthly or at least quarterly basis, with Massachusetts Administrators of Special Education, http://www.asepage.org/, the Federation for Children with Special Needs, https://fcsn.org/, Massachusetts Advocates for Children, https://www.massadvocates.org/, the Massachusetts Association of Approved Special Education Schools, https://maaps.org/, Massachusetts Urban Special Education Leadership Collaborative, and the Special Needs Advocacy Network, www.spanmass.org. In addition, the Massachusetts State Special Education Director at MA DESE gives monthly virtual presentations to statewide special education leaders on a wide array of special education compliance and performance topics. During all of these meetings, MA DESE solicits and receives significant feedback that informs the development of special education policy and guidance.   
  
As needed, MA DESE also convenes stakeholder working groups throughout the year to provide focused input on specific projects and policy priorities. Examples of these focused groups include the Early Childhood Interagency Coordinating Council, with membership that includes community members and state agencies, a Statewide Systemic Improvement Plan (SSIP) leadership team and working group, a family engagement workgroup, an advisory group for the Dropout Prevention and Re-engagement Network, and secondary transition stakeholder groups. MA DESE also consults with educators, parents, advocates, and others on an ad hoc basis to inform policy and practice.   
  
MA DESE engages with stakeholders on the direction of Indicator 17, the State’s Systemic Improvement Plan (SSIP), at the state, district, classroom, and community levels. Stakeholders are provided with information about activities and goals, training events and embedded supports statewide, and the availability of resources to support and expand implementation. Stakeholders at the district and school levels participate in ongoing decision making about the direction of the SSIP by providing feedback about the quality of events and supports, observed benefits for their own stakeholders, and needs for moving forward with implementation most successfully. For additional information on stakeholder engagement related to Indicator 17, please see the Indicator 17 APR.  
  
Stakeholder engagement is an essential component of MA DESE’s special education agenda.

During 2021, MA DESE brought Indicator 15 before the Special Education Advisory Panel to seek their input in setting SPP/APR targets, analyzing data, reviewing COVID-19 impacts on resolution sessions, and considering the future beyond the pandemic.

**Historical Data**

| **Baseline Year** | **Baseline Data** |
| --- | --- |
| 2005 | 48.00% |

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **FFY** | **2015** | **2016** | **2017** | **2018** | **2019** |
| Target >= | 48.00% - 58.00% | 48.00% - 58.00% | 48.00% - 58.00% | 48.00% - 75.00% | 48.00%-75.00% |
| Data | 41.67% | 57.14% | 53.85% | 70.83% | 25.00% |

**Targets**

| **FFY** | **2020 (low)** | **2020 (high)** | **2021 (low)** | **2021 (high)** | **2022 (low)** | **2022 (high)** | **2023 (low)** | **2023 (high)** | **2024 (low)** | **2024 (high)** | **2025 (low)** | **2025 (high)** |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Target >= | 48.00% | 75.00% | 48.00% | 75.00% | 48.00% | 75.00% | 48.00% | 75.00% | 48.00% | 75.00% | 48.00% | 75.00% |

**FFY 2020 SPP/APR Data**

| **3.1(a) Number resolutions sessions resolved through settlement agreements** | **3.1 Number of resolutions sessions** | **FFY 2019 Data** | **FFY 2020 Target (low)** | **FFY 2020 Target (high)** | **FFY 2020 Data** | **Status** | **Slippage** |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| 3 | 3 | 25.00% | 48.00% | 75.00% | 100.00% | Met target | No Slippage |

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

## 15 - Prior FFY Required Actions

None

## 15 - OSEP Response

The State provided targets for this indicator, and OSEP accepts those targets.  
  
The State reported fewer than ten resolution sessions held in FFY 2020. The State is not required to met targets until any fiscal year in which ten or more resolution sessions were held.

## 15 - Required Actions

# Indicator 16: Mediation

**Instructions and Measurement**

**Monitoring Priority**: Effective General Supervision Part B / General Supervision

**Results indicator:** Percent of mediations held that resulted in mediation agreements.

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

**Data Source**

Data collected under section 618 of the IDEA (IDEA Part B Dispute Resolution Survey in the EDFacts Metadata and Process System (E*MAPS*)).

**Measurement**

Percent = (2.1(a)(i) + 2.1(b)(i)) divided by 2.1) times 100.

**Instructions**

*Sampling is not allowed.*

Describe the results of the calculations and compare the results to the target.

States are not required to establish baseline or targets if the number of mediations is less than 10. In a reporting period when the number of resolution mediations reaches 10 or greater, develop baseline and targets and report on them in the corresponding SPP/APR.

States may express their targets in a range (e.g., 75-85%).

If the data reported in this indicator are not the same as the State’s data under IDEA section 618, explain.

States are not required to report data at the LEA level.

## 16 - Indicator Data

**Select yes to use target ranges**

Target Range is used

**Prepopulated Data**

| **Source** | **Date** | **Description** | **Data** |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| SY 2020-21 EMAPS IDEA Part B Dispute Resolution Survey; Section B: Mediation Requests | 11/03/2021 | 2.1 Mediations held | 490 |
| SY 2020-21 EMAPS IDEA Part B Dispute Resolution Survey; Section B: Mediation Requests | 11/03/2021 | 2.1.a.i Mediations agreements related to due process complaints | 10 |
| SY 2020-21 EMAPS IDEA Part B Dispute Resolution Survey; Section B: Mediation Requests | 11/03/2021 | 2.1.b.i Mediations agreements not related to due process complaints | 375 |

**Select yes if the data reported in this indicator are not the same as the State’s data reported under section 618 of the IDEA.**

NO

**Targets: Description of Stakeholder Input**

MA DESE works closely with stakeholders on developing targets and setting priorities for improvement in each of the areas reported in the SPP/APR.   
  
The Special Education Advisory Panel, comprised of parents, individuals with disabilities, educators, administrators, and representatives from state agencies, higher education, and other stakeholder groups, meets up to five times each school year to review data, discuss policy priorities, and identify unmet needs in the area of special education consistent with state law and IDEA Part B. At every meeting, the group addresses various aspects of the SPP/APR and the State’s general supervision systems, as well as relevant policy matters. A special focus during the pandemic has been COVID-19’s effect on compliance and performance areas related to the SPP/APR Indicators. MA DESE facilitates discussion of baseline and current data, longitudinal targets, historical rates of performance and compliance and the trajectory for improvement for each of the Indicators, and the effectiveness of focused improvement activities within the context of the state's Results Driven Accountability framework.   
  
MA DESE has set a high priority on expanding the agency’s capacity to solicit broad and diverse stakeholder input to set SPP/APR targets, analyze data, develop improvement strategies, and evaluate progress. For FFY2020, MA DESE sought to improve stakeholder Indicator knowledge by posting new webpages for Indicators 1, 2, 3, 5, 6, 7, 8, and 14 with Quick Reference Guides (QRGs) and PowerPoints for each Indicator. These QRGs and PowerPoints were available in six languages that correspond to the most common languages spoken in Massachusetts: English, Spanish, Portuguese, Chinese, Vietnamese, and Haitian Creole. Narrated versions of each PowerPoint were also available in English on the YouTube page of our partner, the Federation for Children with Special Needs (the Massachusetts Parent Training and Information Center/PTIC). MA DESE solicited feedback for Indicators 1, 2, 3, 5, 6, 7, 8, and 14 baselines and targets via an online survey in English, Spanish, Portuguese, Chinese, Vietnamese, and Haitian Creole. In addition, MA DESE collaborated with the Federation for Children with Special Needs, the OSEP funded Parent Training and Information Center (PTI), to hold five virtual stakeholder information and feedback sessions on these Indicators. Meetings were simultaneously interpreted into American Sign Language, Spanish, Portuguese, and Mandarin. Other languages were available but were not requested.   
  
MA DESE also consults regularly, on a monthly or at least quarterly basis, with Massachusetts Administrators of Special Education, http://www.asepage.org/, the Federation for Children with Special Needs, https://fcsn.org/, Massachusetts Advocates for Children, https://www.massadvocates.org/, the Massachusetts Association of Approved Special Education Schools, https://maaps.org/, Massachusetts Urban Special Education Leadership Collaborative, and the Special Needs Advocacy Network, www.spanmass.org. In addition, the Massachusetts State Special Education Director at MA DESE gives monthly virtual presentations to statewide special education leaders on a wide array of special education compliance and performance topics. During all of these meetings, MA DESE solicits and receives significant feedback that informs the development of special education policy and guidance.   
  
As needed, MA DESE also convenes stakeholder working groups throughout the year to provide focused input on specific projects and policy priorities. Examples of these focused groups include the Early Childhood Interagency Coordinating Council, with membership that includes community members and state agencies, a Statewide Systemic Improvement Plan (SSIP) leadership team and working group, a family engagement workgroup, an advisory group for the Dropout Prevention and Re-engagement Network, and secondary transition stakeholder groups. MA DESE also consults with educators, parents, advocates, and others on an ad hoc basis to inform policy and practice.   
  
MA DESE engages with stakeholders on the direction of Indicator 17, the State’s Systemic Improvement Plan (SSIP), at the state, district, classroom, and community levels. Stakeholders are provided with information about activities and goals, training events and embedded supports statewide, and the availability of resources to support and expand implementation. Stakeholders at the district and school levels participate in ongoing decision making about the direction of the SSIP by providing feedback about the quality of events and supports, observed benefits for their own stakeholders, and needs for moving forward with implementation most successfully. For additional information on stakeholder engagement related to Indicator 17, please see the Indicator 17 APR.  
  
Stakeholder engagement is an essential component of MA DESE’s special education agenda.

During 2021, MA DESE brought Indicator 16 before the Special Education Advisory Panel to seek their input in setting SPP/APR targets, analyzing data, reviewing COVID-19 impacts on mediations, and considering the future beyond the pandemic.

**Historical Data**

| **Baseline Year** | **Baseline Data** |
| --- | --- |
| 2005 | 83.40% |

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **FFY** | **2015** | **2016** | **2017** | **2018** | **2019** |
| Target >= | 77.00% - 87.00% | 77.00% - 87.00% | 77.00% - 87.00% | 77.00% - 87.00% | 77.00%-87.00% |
| Data | 86.49% | 82.85% | 85.29% | 82.87% | 83.23% |

**Targets**

| **FFY** | **2020 (low)** | **2020 (high)** | **2021 (low)** | **2021 (high)** | **2022 (low)** | **2022 (high)** | **2023 (low)** | **2023 (high)** | **2024 (low)** | **2024 (high)** | **2025 (low)** | **2025 (high)** |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Target >= | 77.00% | 87.00% | 77.00% | 87.00% | 77.00% | 87.00% | 77.00% | 87.00% | 77.00% | 87.00% | 77.00% | 87.00% |

**FFY 2020 SPP/APR Data**

| **2.1.a.i Mediation agreements related to due process complaints** | **2.1.b.i Mediation agreements not related to due process complaints** | **2.1 Number of mediations held** | **FFY 2019 Data** | **FFY 2020 Target (low)** | **FFY 2020 Target (high)** | **FFY 2020 Data** | **Status** | **Slippage** |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| 10 | 375 | 490 | 83.23% | 77.00% | 87.00% | 78.57% | Met target | No Slippage |

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

## 16 - Prior FFY Required Actions

None

## 16 - OSEP Response

The State provided targets for this indicator, and OSEP accepts those targets.

## 16 - Required Actions

# Indicator 17: State Systemic Improvement Plan

**Instructions and Measurement**

**Monitoring Priority:** General Supervision

The State’s SPP/APR includes a State Systemic Improvement Plan (SSIP) that meets the requirements set forth for this indicator.

**Measurement**

The State’s SPP/APR includes an SSIP that is a comprehensive, ambitious, yet achievable multi-year plan for improving results for children with disabilities. The SSIP includes each of the components described below.

**Instructions**

**Baseline Data*:*** The State must provide baseline data that must be expressed as a percentage and which is aligned with the State-identified Measurable Result(s) for Children with Disabilities.

**Targets*:*** In its FFY 2020 SPP/APR, due February 1, 2022, the State must provide measurable and rigorous targets (expressed as percentages) for each of the six years from FFY 2020 through FFY 2025. The State’s FFY 2025 target must demonstrate improvement over the State’s baseline data.

**Updated Data:** In its FFYs 2020 through FFY 2025 SPPs/APRs, due February 2, 2022, the State must provide updated data for that specific FFY (expressed as percentages) and that data must be aligned with the State-identified Measurable Result(s) for Children with Disabilities. In its FFYs 2020 through FFY 2025 SPPs/APRs, the State must report on whether it met its target.

Overview of the Three Phases of the SSIP

It is of the utmost importance to improve results for children with disabilities by improving educational services, including special education and related services. Stakeholders, including parents of children with disabilities, local educational agencies, the State Advisory Panel, and others, are critical participants in improving results for children with disabilities and should be included in developing, implementing, evaluating, and revising the SSIP and included in establishing the State’s targets under Indicator 17. The SSIP should include information about stakeholder involvement in all three phases.

*Phase I: Analysis:*

- Data Analysis;

- Analysis of State Infrastructure to Support Improvement and Build Capacity;

- State-identified Measurable Result(s) for Children with Disabilities;

- Selection of Coherent Improvement Strategies; and

- Theory of Action.

*Phase II: Plan* (which, is in addition to the Phase I content (including any updates) outlined above:

- Infrastructure Development;

- Support for local educational agency (LEA) Implementation of Evidence-Based Practices; and

- Evaluation.

*Phase III: Implementation and Evaluation* (which, is in addition to the Phase I and Phase II content (including any updates) outlined above:

- Results of Ongoing Evaluation and Revisions to the SSIP.

**Specific Content of Each Phase of the SSIP**

Refer to FFY 2013-2015 Measurement Table for detailed requirements of Phase I and Phase II SSIP submissions.

Phase III should only include information from Phase I or Phase II if changes or revisions are being made by the State and/or if information previously required in Phase I or Phase II was not reported.

***Phase III: Implementation and Evaluation***

In Phase III, the State must, consistent with its evaluation plan described in Phase II, assess and report on its progress implementing the SSIP. This includes: (A) data and analysis on the extent to which the State has made progress toward and/or met the State-established short-term and long-term outcomes or objectives for implementation of the SSIP and its progress toward achieving the State-identified Measurable Result(s) for Children with Disabilities (SiMR); (B) the rationale for any revisions that were made, or that the State intends to make, to the SSIP as the result of implementation, analysis, and evaluation; and (C) a description of the meaningful stakeholder engagement. If the State intends to continue implementing the SSIP without modifications, the State must describe how the data from the evaluation support this decision.

A. Data Analysis

As required in the Instructions for the Indicator/Measurement, in its FFYs 2020 through 2025 SPP/APR, the State must report data for that specific FFY (expressed as actual numbers and percentages) that are aligned with the SiMR. The State must report on whether the State met its target. In addition, the State may report on any additional data (e.g., progress monitoring data) that were collected and analyzed that would suggest progress toward the SiMR. States using a subset of the population from the indicator (e.g., a sample, cohort model) should describe how data are collected and analyzed for the SiMR if that was not described in Phase I or Phase II of the SSIP.

B. Phase III Implementation, Analysis and Evaluation

The State must provide a narrative or graphic representation, e.g., a logic model, of the principal activities, measures and outcomes that were implemented since the State’s last SSIP submission (i.e., Feb 2021). The evaluation should align with the theory of action described in Phase I and the evaluation plan described in Phase II. The State must describe any changes to the activities, strategies, or timelines described in Phase II and include a rationale or justification for the changes. If the State intends to continue implementing the SSIP without modifications, the State must describe how the data from the evaluation support this decision.

The State must summarize the infrastructure improvement strategies that were implemented, and the short-term outcomes achieved, including the measures or rationale used by the State and stakeholders to assess and communicate achievement. Relate short-term outcomes to one or more areas of a systems framework (e.g., governance, data, finance, accountability/monitoring, quality standards, professional development and/or technical assistance) and explain how these strategies support system change and are necessary for: (a) achievement of the SiMR; (b) sustainability of systems improvement efforts; and/or (c) scale-up. The State must describe the next steps for each infrastructure improvement strategy and the anticipated outcomes to be attained during the next fiscal year (e.g., for the FFY 2020 APR, report on anticipated outcomes to be obtained during FFY 2021, i.e., July 1, 2021-June 30, 2022).

The State must summarize the specific evidence-based practices that were implemented and the strategies or activities that supported their selection and ensured their use with fidelity. Describe how the evidence-based practices, and activities or strategies that support their use, are intended to impact the SiMR by changing program/district policies, procedures, and/or practices, teacher/provider practices (i.e., behaviors), parent/caregiver outcomes, and/or child outcomes. Describe any additional data (i.e., progress monitoring data) that was collected to support the on-going use of the evidence-based practices and inform decision-making for the next year of SSIP implementation.

C. Stakeholder Engagement

The State must describe the specific strategies implemented to engage stakeholders in key improvement efforts and how the State addressed concerns, if any, raised by stakeholders through its engagement activities.

Additional Implementation Activities

The State should identify any activities not already described that it intends to implement in the next fiscal year (e.g., for the FFY 2020 APR, report on activities it intends to implement in FFY 2021, i.e., July 1, 2021-June 30, 2022) including a timeline, anticipated data collection and measures, and expected outcomes that are related to the SiMR. The State should describe any newly identified barriers and include steps to address these barriers.

## 17 - Indicator Data

**Section A: Data Analysis**

**What is the State-identified Measurable Result (SiMR)?**

The Massachusetts SSIP (MA SSIP) is designed to improve social and emotional outcomes for preschool children with disabilities. The SiMR is aligned with the MA SSIP Theory of Action and is assessed using statewide results for Indicator 7: Preschool Outcomes, Outcome A: Percent of preschool children ages 3–5 with IEPs [individualized education programs] who demonstrate improved positive social-emotional skills (including social relationships). To address Indicator 7, child-level data are collected through the Child Outcomes Summary (COS) process. Results are analyzed to address two summary statements: Summary Statement 1 = Of those preschool children who entered the preschool program below age expectations in Outcome A, the percent who substantially increased their rate of growth by the time they turned 6 or exited the program, and Summary Statement 2 = The percent of preschool children who were functioning within age expectations in Outcome A by age 6 or exited from the program.

**Has the SiMR changed since the last SSIP submission? (yes/no)**

NO

**Is the State using a subset of the population from the indicator (*e.g.*, a sample, cohort model)? (yes/no)**

NO

**Is the State’s theory of action new or revised since the previous submission? (yes/no)**

NO

**Please provide a link to the current theory of action.**

https://www.doe.mass.edu/sped/spp/maspp.html

**Does the State intend to continue implementing the SSIP without modifications? (yes/no)**

NO

**If no, describe any changes to the activities, strategies or timelines described in the previous submission and include a rationale or** **justification for the changes.**

We intend to increase the focus on equitable practices throughout SSIP activities, including professional development (PD), coaching, and evaluation. In particular, MA DESE and the Pyramid Model Consortium (PMC) plan to increase the emphasis on culturally responsive and trauma-informed practices within the Pyramid Model, including strategies to support districts in examining their data through an equity lens. The goal of this work is to ensure that district and school personnel have the knowledge and skills needed to reduce disproportionate rates of discipline and special education referral among students of color and meet the diverse needs of students from all backgrounds. MA DESE and PMC have engaged Dr. Kent McIntosh of the University of Oregon College of Education to advise on efforts to promote a focus on equity in Pyramid Model schools, using a PD model (Project ReAct) that aims to reduce racial/ethnic disproportionality in school discipline and special education referrals. This equity-focused work aligns with MA DESE’s current strategic initiatives, which aim to promote strategies that advance educational equity for Massachusetts students, particularly those traditionally or currently underserved and increase the positive classroom experiences that nurture students’ social/emotional and cognitive developments. In addition, stakeholder input from the Special Education Advisory Panel highlighted concerns about disproportionate rates of discipline among African American and Latino preschoolers as well as increased challenging behavior among preschool children. The focus on equitable and culturally responsive practices within the Pyramid Model is intended to address these concerns.

**Progress toward the SiMR**

**Please provide the data for the specific FFY listed below (expressed as actual number and percentages)*.***

**Select yes if the State uses two targets for measurement. (yes/no)**

YES

**Historical Data**

| **Part** | **Baseline Year** | **Baseline Data** |
| --- | --- | --- |
| A | FFY2017 | 85.61% |
| B | FFY2017 | 47.00% |

**Targets**

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **FFY** | **2020** | **2021** | **2022** | **2023** | **2024** | **2025** |
| Target A >= | 86.00% | 86.00% | 86.00% | 86.50% | 87.00% | 88.00% |
| Target B >= | 50.00% | 50.00% | 50.00% | 50.25% | 50.50% | 51.00% |

**FFY 2020 SPP/APR Data**

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Part** | For Part A, the numerator is the sum of Indicator 7 OSEP Progress Categories c and d. For Part B, the numerator is the sum of all Indicator 7 OSEP Progress Categories d and e. | For Part A, the denominator is the sum of Indicator 7 OSEP Progress Categories a, b, c, and d. For Part B, the denominator is the sum of all Indicator 7 OSEP Progress Categories a through e. | **FFY 2019 Data** | **FFY 2020 Target** | **FFY 2020 Data** | **Status** | **Slippage** |
| A | 917 | 1,145 | 82.44% | 86.00% | 80.09% | N/A | N/A |
| B | 586 | 1,316 | 43.74% | 50.00% | 44.53% | N/A | N/A |

**Provide the data source for the FFY 2020 data.**

Indicator 7 child-level data are collected through the Child Outcomes Summary (COS) process. Results are analyzed to address two summary statements: Summary Statement 1 = Of those preschool children who entered the preschool program below age expectations in Outcome A, the percent who substantially increased their rate of growth by the time they turned 6 or exited the program, and Summary Statement 2 = The percent of preschool children who were functioning within age expectations in Outcome A by age 6 or exited from the program.

**Please describe how data are collected and analyzed for the SiMR**.

Districts collected child-level entry and exit COS data for preschool aged children (3–5 years of age) receiving special education services. For the 2020–21 school year, MA DESE provided a Microsoft Excel SmartForm to assist districts with collecting data through the COS process. The SmartForm includes fields for district name and identifier code, child’s date of birth, date services started, entry ratings for the three outcomes, date the child exited preschool special education or an indicator that the child left the district without exit data being collected, and the exit ratings and progress questions for the three outcomes. The SmartForm automatically calculates the OSEP progress categories. Districts upload their completed SmartForms via a secure website. MA DESE and the external evaluator supported districts with data collection and submission through frequent communication and technical assistance. For FFY 2020, this included a review of each district’s initial submission to identify records where the child was too young to be eligible, indicating a data entry error for either the date of birth or the date that services started (or sometimes both), and missing exit data where the child’s date of birth compared with the date of data submission indicates that the child was old enough to have exited. The external evaluator then contacted the districts to obtain data corrections, allowing the district to submit a corrected, updated file. Next, the external evaluator combined the separate district files into one master data set, identified records meeting ECTA Center- and OSEP-established criteria (exited during the 2020–21 school year, received services for at least 6 months, has exit data, was 3 years old when services started, and was 5 years old at exit [defined as 6 years minus 1 day]). The external evaluator then ran a check on OSEP progress category calculations using the ECTA Center algorithm (https://ectacenter.org/eco/assets/pdfs/Summary\_of\_Rules\_COSF\_to\_OSEP\_8-9-07.pdf) to ensure accuracy, and, upon verification, analyzed the counts of each progress category. Finally, the external evaluator used the ECTA Center Summary Statement Calculator (https://ectacenter.org/eco/assets/xls/SummaryStatementCalculator.xls) to calculate the summary statements as well as the ECTA Center Meaningful Differences Calculator (https://ectacenter.org/eco/assets/xls/MeaningfulDifferencesCalculator.xlsx) to compare FFY 2020 summary statements with FFY 2019 summary statements.

**Optional: Has the State collected additional data *(i.e., benchmark, CQI, survey)* that demonstrates progress toward the SiMR? (yes/no)**

YES

**Describe any additional data collected by the State to assess progress toward the SiMR.**

The MA SSIP Theory of Action (TOA) serves as a blueprint for implementation and assessing progress toward the SiMR. The TOA specifies a cascade of supports across the state, district/program, and classroom levels that, when implemented with fidelity, will result in students with disabilities entering the K–12 system with the social and emotional competencies needed to access and participate in all aspects of school. Family engagement is an ongoing focus. Data are collected at all levels to assess progress toward the SiMR, including feedback from professional development events, quality of district supports, progress on fidelity measures of Pyramid Model implementation, district surveys, and child outcomes data from Indicator 7.   
Results from the annual Leadership Team Survey, conducted in February 2021, suggest perceived benefits among team members on child-level outcomes. Of the 54 survey respondents, 75% reported that, as a result of this work, children are demonstrating improved social- emotional competencies (to a moderate/great extent); 71% reported that children with disabilities are demonstrating improved social-emotional competencies. This latter data point is directly aligned with the SiMR.

**Did the State identify any general data quality concerns, unrelated to COVID-19, that affected progress toward the SiMR during the reporting period? (yes/no)**

NO

**Did the State identify any data quality concerns directly related to the COVID-19 pandemic during the reporting period? (yes/no)**

YES

**If data for this reporting period were impacted specifically by COVID-19, the State must include in the narrative for the indicator: (1) the impact on data completeness, validity and reliability for the indicator; (2) an explanation of how COVID-19 specifically impacted the State’s ability to collect the data for the indicator; and (3) any steps the State took to mitigate the impact of COVID-19 on the data collection.**

Child Outcomes: In terms of data completeness, the number of usable records for FFY 2020 (1,316) increased compared with FFY 2019 (1,150), and the number of districts reporting also increased (141 versus 134, respectively). As such, data completeness is not perceived to be a factor. Furthermore, the validity of the data were not likely impacted, as the COS process served as the outcome measure as in prior years. In terms of reliability, data collection processes for the 2020–21 school year continued to differ from those used prior to March 2020 due to building closures and remote service delivery. As with the period from March through June 2020 in FFY 2019 when school closures first began, in FFY 2020, district teams’ ability to convene meetings for COS ratings with all stakeholders present, full access to all prior assessments/documentation, and day-to-day interactions with students and families may all have been affected to some extent. These factors were present for the entire FFY 2020 data collection period. Therefore, it is reasonable to infer that the overall reliability of the measure compared with prior years may have been impacted by COVID-19 modifications.  
  
To help mitigate these impacts, MA DESE moved quickly to offer updated guidance through departmental FAQs and links to practical resources, such as the ECTA Center’s guidance for conducting the COS process remotely; extend data submission deadlines on a district-by-district basis; more closely examine data quality and completeness upon initial submission; and provide technical assistance to districts based on data quality and completeness reviews through phone calls and e-mail throughout the process.  
  
Early Childhood Benchmarks of Quality (EC-BOQ): Data completeness was likely affected by COVID-19, as 20% of districts did not complete the measure during the 2020–21 school year. Competing priorities among districts and schools; administrator and staff focus on wellness, health/safety, and family engagement during remote learning; and challenges scheduling full Leadership Team meetings amid the pandemic are likely reasons that some sites did not complete the EC-BOQ. There are no concerns about the validity and reliability of the data received. To mitigate the impact and continue supporting progress, the State allowed school districts to balance data collection timelines to best meet their needs. At the same time, completion of this measure has been encouraged by external coaches, when possible, to continue to guide implementation locally.   
  
Teaching Pyramid Observation Tool (TPOT): Data completeness was affected, as the majority of districts/schools did not use this classroom fidelity measure during the 2020–21 school year. Use of the TPOT to assess classroom fidelity has been impacted by remote and hybrid learning models and limited staffing as well as limited staff allowed in classrooms. Pyramid Model developers have indicated the TPOT is not recommended for remote use due to potential diminished validity and reliability. Several districts are moving toward TPOT use this school year as conditions allow, and data will be requested by the State to assess progress. To mitigate the impact, the State’s Pyramid Model vendor has supported external coaches and district teams by providing resources for alternatives to assessing classroom fidelity in virtual learning environments. Feedback from coaches and program staff indicate that TPOT indicators/scales were used in more “informal” ways during the 2020–21 school year by some districts to continue to support fidelity. Examples include using TPOT indicators for teacher self-reflection, for group coaching, and by reviewing prior results to support fidelity. Other supports for fidelity include teachers meeting virtually to support each other, and internal coaches providing resources to teachers to support modifications in the current teaching and learning environment.   
  
Leadership Team and Teacher Surveys: Data completeness of the Leadership Team Survey (n = 54), conducted in February 2021, was likely impacted by competing priorities at the local level. Thirty-five percent of team members and 90% of districts responded to the survey (lower than typical response rates). To mitigate the impact, the survey was streamlined to key data points to increase the likelihood of team members completing the survey. The Teacher Survey was not conducted in 2020–21 due to the demands on teachers and staffing shortages amid the pandemic. The State plans to collect feedback from teachers in February 2022.

**Section B: Implementation, Analysis and Evaluation**

**Please provide a link to the State’s current evaluation plan.**

https://www.doe.mass.edu/sped/spp/ssip-evaluation-plan.docx

**Is the State’s evaluation plan new or revised since the previous submission? (yes/no)**

NO

**Provide a summary of each infrastructure improvement strategy implemented in the reporting period:**

1. External Coaching: MA DESE continues to collaborate with the Pyramid Model Consortium (PMC) to support districts toward implementation of Pyramid Model evidence-based practices (EBPs) to foster children’s social-emotional development. PMC external coaches continued to provide individualized support to districts (remotely since March 2020) during the 2020–21 school year. External coaches guide the sites in all aspects of Pyramid Model implementation, with the goal of gradually fading support as Leadership Teams establish processes that can be sustained locally. External coaches provide a wide range of services, including participating in District Leadership Team meetings, supporting the development of each team’s action plan, planning data collection and data use, helping to build internal coach capacity, training staff, supporting family engagement, and supporting efforts toward greater equity, among other priority areas. To support the external coaches in their roles, PMC conducts monthly virtual meetings to share announcements and professional development (PD) schedules, discuss district progress, communicate evaluation requirements and updates, and provide continued program support. During 2020–21, external coaches met with PMC in region-specific groups each month, coming together as a full group quarterly.  
2. Statewide Virtual Trainings: PMC continued to offer statewide PD opportunities to support Pyramid Model implementation. The state-level trainings facilitated by PMC span topics, such as Practice-Based Coaching (PBC) for internal coaches who support teaching staff, the Teaching Pyramid Observation Tool (TPOT), and Prevent-Teach-Reinforce for Young Children (PRT-YC), devoted to intensive intervention strategies, among others. Districts also have access to foundational Pyramid Model practice trainings. These trainings are facilitated by the external coach or by using the online ePyramid Modules through the Massachusetts learning management system for self-paced learning.  
3. District Leadership Teams: District Leadership Teams continue to guide local efforts toward all aspects of implementation. The teams begin by learning about the Pyramid Model framework and use the Early Childhood Benchmarks of Quality (EC-BOQ) to develop and guide their action plans. Each team is supported by an external coach with expertise in early childhood and Pyramid Model strategies.   
4. Continued Equity Focus: MA DESE continued to prioritize equity throughout SSIP activities, including a focus on culturally responsive practices and trauma-informed care approaches, to help ensure that all children are successful in school and in life. Specific activities included equity-focused PD events such as the annual Pyramid Model Summit focused on intergenerational trauma and statewide trainings on culturally responsive and trauma-informed practices and PD series with Dr. Rosemarie Allen. In addition, evaluation activities included an emphasis on equity. For example the Leadership Team Survey and External Coach Survey included items that asked about needs related to understanding and implementing culturally repsonsive and equitable practices.

**Describe the short-term or intermediate outcomes achieved for each infrastructure improvement strategy during the reporting period including the measures or rationale used by the State and stakeholders to assess and communicate achievement. Please relate short-term outcomes to one or more areas of a systems framework (e.g., governance, data, finance, accountability/monitoring, quality standards, professional development and/or technical assistance) and explain how these strategies support system change and are necessary for: (a) achievement of the SiMR; (b) sustainability of systems improvement efforts; and/or (c) scale-up.**

1. External Coaching: During the 2020–21 school year, coaches supported implementation in 32 school districts, 52 schools, and 304 classrooms. These numbers increased slightly from the 2019–2020 school year (two districts joined during 2020–21;14 additional classrooms began implementation efforts). There also were 58 early childhood education (ECE) programs and three communitywide sites implementing the Pyramid Model during the last school year. The monthly coach log captures coaching supports provided to districts each month and each district’s level of engagement and progress toward implementation. Coach log summaries are shared with project leaders each month. For the 2020–21 school year, data indicated that 100% of districts had documented coaching support. On average, coaches had two contacts with districts each month. Coaches met most often with program administrators (80%), followed by Leadership Teams (58%), internal coaches (36%), and classroom teachers (33%). Support most often focused on Leadership Team activities, such as using the EC-BOQ for planning (77%) and family engagement strategies (16%). In addition to the coach log, Coach Survey results from fall 2020 (n = 16, 84%) suggested that coaches felt best prepared for supporting Leadership Teams, including use of the EC-BOQ, supporting staff wellness efforts, and supporting children in their social-emotional development. Coaches expressed interest in additional supports focused on promoting equity, remote coaching and implementation strategies, and providing training remotely. These coaching activities relate to the Personnel/Workforce component of the ECTA Center (ECTA) System Framework and are necessary supports for personnel to implement the Pyramid Model with fidelity, which will ultimately lead to improved outcomes for children with disabilities.  
2. Statewide Virtual Trainings: Feedback from the statewide virtual PD opportunities was collected by PMC facilitators following PD events using survey links provided by the evaluator. Feedback summaries from each event were shared with state project leaders and PMC to review event-specific details and to make adjustments going forward as needed. The feedback forms contained a retrospective pre-/post-item for participants to self-assess their knowledge of the material prior to the event and then after for each of the learning objectives. The average pre- and post-ratings for all events with sufficient data to report (n = 5 or greater) reflected growth on these measures. Event feedback forms also assessed the relevance and usefulness of the material presented. Ratings across all items for all trainings ranged from 3.0 to 3.9 on a 4-point scale where 1 = strongly disagree, 2 = disagree, 3 = agree, and 4 = strongly agree, indicating the overall value of these experiences for participants. These training activities relate to the Personnel/Workforce component of the ECTA System Framework and are necessary supports for personnel to implement the Pyramid Model with fidelity, which will ultimately lead to improved outcomes for children with disabilities.  
3. District Leadership Teams: Results from the Leadership Team Survey (n = 54, 90% of districts) suggest that, on average, all Cohorts (1–4) made progress during the 2020–21 school year in increasing family engagement (61% report moderate or significant progress), increasing internal coach capacity for supporting Pyramid Model practices (41%), and increasing data use for program planning and improvement (37%). Survey comments suggest that the focus shifted to increased communication with families to support remote learning and social-emotional development, and updating programwide expectations to address remote/hybrid learning and social distancing. Team members commented that Pyramid Model practices, visual supports, and other foundational aspects have served them well during the pandemic by providing a common language and framework to support staff, children, and families at this time. District Leadership Teams ensure that the infrastructure and supports are in place that allow schools and teachers to implement Pyramid Model EBPs successfully, including access to coaching and training, data systems and decision making, and effective leadership. Leadership Team development connects with the Personnel/Workforce component of the ECTA Center System Framework.  
4. Continued Equity Focus: Results from the Leadership Team Survey suggest that respondents made progress in broadening school/district use of culturally responsive practices to address equity (58% report moderate or significant progress). In addition, survey results from 68 participants in the annual Pyramid Model Summit suggest a highly effective event that contributed to the groups’ knowledge and understanding of systemic racism and trauma, and inspired plans for action and next steps. Respondents indicated next steps, such as engaging with families early in the school year, sharing and discussing information about equity with colleagues, and examining their own personal biases. The focus on equity is intended to promote systems change by ensuring that educators and leaders at all levels of the education system have the knowledge and skills to create safe and positive learning environments for all students, regardless of background and level of need. This work relates to the Personnel/Workforce component of the ECTA System Framework.

**Did the State implement any new (newly identified) infrastructure improvement strategies during the reporting period? (yes/no)**

YES

**Describe each new (newly identified) infrastructure improvement strategy and the short-term or intermediate outcomes achieved*.***

New infrastructure improvement strategies introduced in the current reporting period included (1) the Early Childhood Outcomes Summary (ECOS) database, (2) a new regional coaching model, (3) creation of an External Coach Guide, and (4) development of a new Massachusetts Program-wide Implementation in Phases tool.   
1. Early Childhood Outcomes Summary (ECOS) Database. The ECOS database will replace the Microsoft Excel SmartForms currently used by districts to gather Indicator 7 data. ECOS is designed to be securely accessible on any device with a web browser and incorporates automated quality checking features that we anticipate will improve the ease and accuracy of Indicator 7 data collection. The ECOS database is currently being piloted, therefore no outcomes have been achieved.  
2. Pyramid Model Implementation Data System (PIDS). Continuing our work to streamline and improve the quality of data used for evaluation and performance improvement, MA DESE plans to integrate existing data collection and reporting processes into the PIDS, a national database that houses states’ Pyramid Model data. The PIDS is a secure web application that allows data entry, reporting, and administrative functions to be used by early childhood programs that are implementing the Pyramid Model. The data system allows for streamlined data entry and analysis at the child, classroom, program, school, community/regional, and state levels. Pyramid Model Consortium is currently working with districts to establish data-sharing agreements for Pyramid Model data. No outcomes for this infrastructure improvement strategey have yet been achieved.  
3. Regional Coaching Model. MA DESE and PMC staff collaborated to develop a regional coaching model for external coaches. The regional coaching model allows external coaches to work collaboratively in regional groups, each led by a designated lead coach who coordinates the efforts of the group. The system allows for more focused external coach meetings involving smaller sets of districts. Regional coaches also play a leading role in developing and refining tools to facilitate coaches’ work, and they serve as a first point of contact to facilitate communication between the individual coaches and project leaders. Regional coaches are selected based on their degree of experience and record of success in working with MA DESE Pyramid Model districts. During 2020–21, external coaches met with PMC in region-specific groups each month, coming together as a full group quarterly.  
3. External Coach Guide. PMC developed an External Coach Guide that provides resources to assist coaches with their work supporting Pyramid Model implementation. The guide includes a process for onboarding coaches, provisional training requirements, and a catalogue of resources to support high-quality implementation. The guide is currently being used by the external coaching team and has allowed a more coherent approach to coaching across sites.  
4. Massachusetts Program-wide Implementation in Phases Tool. Regional coaches contributed to the development of a new Massachusetts Program-wide Implementation in Phases tool, which provides a roadmap toward scale-up and sustainability of Pyramid Model implementation. The tool identifies the critical external coach activities, professional development priorities, and Leadership Team “deliverables” for each phase of implementation. This tool has helped to standardize the coaching role to a greater extent and has helped prepare new external coaches for their work.

**Provide a summary of the next steps for each infrastructure improvement strategy and the anticipated outcomes to be attained during the next reporting period.**

MA DESE is continuing its work on the four new infrastructure improvement strategies as follows:   
1. Early Childhood Outcomes Summary (ECOS) Database. The ECOS database was launched in late November and DESE is piloting the tool with SSIP and Cohort 3 districts.Districts will be submitting their Indicator 7 data via the ECOS database for this school year, FFY2021. The objectives of the database are to streamline data collection and allow for more accurate data collection. The database will eventually allow districts and DESE to pull reports by demographics to better understand discrepancies in child outcomes and possible biases, both of which will help inform future trainings and supports fo the LEAs.   
2. Regional Coaching Model. MA DESE and PMC continue to refine the regional coaching model in the 2021–22 school year. New strategies being developed to assist regional coaches include a new coaches’ log to provide up-to-date, monthly information on the status of implementation in each district to help organize planning in regional coach meetings. We anticipate that this regional coaching model will result in improved coaching for participating districts.  
3. External Coach Guide. We plan to gather feedback on the utility of the External Coach Guide and refine it accordingly throughout 2021–22, introducing new resources to the guide to meet emerging needs. We anticipate that the guide will result in improved coaching for participating districts.  
4. MA Program-wide Implementation in Phases Tool. The Program-wide Implementation in Phases tool has been introduced to and reviewed with all external coaches and is being piloted, refined, and implemented in the current school year. In order to integrate the tool into monthly coach and quarterly regional coach meetings, the revised coaching log includes ratings related to the phases that will provide quality improvement data to inform monthly and quarterly discussions. A next step for this tool is to include a more explicit focus on equity throughout the document by aligning it with the EC-BOQ Cultural Responsiveness Companion. We anticipate that this tool will support improved implementation of the Pyramid Model in participating districts.

**List the selected evidence-based practices implement in the reporting period:**

The MA SSIP is designed to improve social-emotional outcomes for preschool children with disabilities. Massachusetts selected the implementation of Early Childhood Positive Behavior Supports through Pyramid Model Strategies (EC-PBS/Pyramid) as its evidence-based practice (EBP) to achieve this goal.

**Provide a summary of each evidence-based practices.**

The Pyramid Model is a research-based framework for supporting the implementation of EBPs in early childhood education settings. Tier 1 universal practices focus on responsive and nurturing relationships, including relationships with families, and supportive environments that promote childrens’ engagement. Tier 2 practices include targeted social-emotional supports in areas such as friendship skills, problem solving, and anger management. Tier 3 practices are intensive and individualized to support children with persistent behavior challenges. An effective workforce provides the foundation for the framework.  
At the classroom level, key practice areas of the Pyramid Model, as described in the Teaching Pyramid Observation Tool (TPOT) include: (1) schedules, routines, and activities; (2) transitions between activities are appropriate; (3) engaging in supportive conversations with children; (4) promoting children’s engagement; (5) providing directions; (6) collaborative teaming; (7) teaching behavior expectations; (8) teaching social skills and emotional competencies; (9) teaching friendship skills; (10) teaching children to express emotions; (11) teaching problem solving; (12) interventions for persistent challenging behavior; (13) connecting with families; and (14) supporting family use of the Pyramid Model.   
At the district/program level, key practice areas of the Pyramid Model, as describe in the EC-BOQ include: (1) Establish Leadership Teams, (2) Staff Buy-In, (3) Family Engagement, (4) Program-Wide Expectations, (5) Professional Development and Staff Support Plan, (6) Procedures for Responding to Challenging Behavior, and (7) Monitoring Implementation and Outcomes.

**Provide a summary of how each evidence-based practice and activities or strategies that support its use, is intended to impact the SiMR by changing program/district policies, procedures, and/or practices, teacher/provider practices (e.g. behaviors), parent/caregiver outcomes, and/or child /outcomes.**

Implementation of the Pyramid Model at the classroom level is intended to promote positive child outcomes by building children’s social-emotional competence and reducing challenging behaviors. When practitioners implement these practices with fidelity, they create nurturing and positive relationships and supportive environments that promote positive social-emotional outcomes in young children. In addition, the model includes targeted and explicit teaching of social and emotional competencies, and intensive intervention to address persistent behavior challenges. Professional development and ongoing coaching for teachers is a necessary support for successful implementation of Pyramid Model EBPs. At the district/program level, Pyramid Model implementation focuses on creating the conditions that promote successful implementation of Pyramid Model EBPs in schools and classrooms. District Leadership Teams build the infrastructure and capacity of personnel to implement Pyramid Model EBPs. Professional development and ongoing coaching for Leadership Teams ensures that districts establish the necessary capacity to facilitate Pyramid Model implementation in schools and classrooms.   
The Pyramid Model framework is a key component of the MA SSIP Theory of Action. As state and interagency early childhood special education (ECSE) initiatives support scale up of implementation of Pyramid Model EBPs, ECSE programs will have access to high-quality PD and develop leadership teams to guide improvements. In turn, as staff implement EPBs and continue to engage families, classroom-level activities will move toward greater fidelity to the model. Therefore, by building local capacity and using data for continuous improvement, social-emotional outcomes for preschool children with disabilities will improve.

**Describe the data collected to monitor fidelity of implementation and to assess practice change.**

1. Early Childhood Benchmarks of Quality (EC-BOQ): The EC-BOQ tracks the achievement of program-related implementation goals required for fidelity of implementation and sustainability. Members of Leadership Teams collaboratively assess programwide implementation of the Pyramid Model across seven critical elements, including benchmarks associated with culturally responsive practices to ensure equity. Data received during this reporting period indicate that teams continue to be engaged in moving implementation forward. Qualitative feedback from external coaches and team members also indicated the value of the EC-BOQ for developing action plans and planning next steps. The greatest progress over the course of the year was shown on the critical elements of Staff Buy-In and Program-Wide Expectations, followed by Family Engagement and Procedures for Responding to Challenging Behavior. The Element of Monitoring Implementation and Outcomes was the most challenging area for districts throughout the year, though significant growth was shown in this area as well, with the number of districts showing the element partially or fully in place rising from 33% to 57% at most recent assessment. During the 2020–21 school year, data collected from 24 districts indicate an average overall score of 61%. The 24 districts represent 80% of Cohort 1 through 4 districts (Cohort 5 data are baseline and are not included in this score). Data also were analyzed by cohort to assess progress from the 2019–20 to the 2020–21 school years. Three of four cohorts reported progress.   
 2. Teaching Pyramid Observation Tool (TPOT): At the classroom level, fidelity of implementation is assessed using the TPOT. For most of 2020–21, TPOTs were largely on hold due to the changes in learning environments (i.e., remote learning, limited access by staff and coaches). As described previously, use of the TPOT to assess classroom fidelity has been impacted by remote and hybrid learning models and limited staffing as well as limited staff allowed in classrooms. Several districts are moving toward TPOT use this school year as conditions allow, and data will be requested by the State to assess progress. Feedback from coaches and program staff indicate that TPOT indicators/scales were used in more “informal” ways during the 2020–21 school year by some districts to continue to support fidelity. Examples include using TPOT indicators for teacher self-reflection, for group coaching, and by reviewing prior results to support fidelity. Other supports for fidelity include teachers meeting virtually to support each other and internal coaches providing resources to support modifications in the current teaching and learning environment.

**Describe any additional data (e.g. progress monitoring) that was collected that supports the decision to continue the ongoing use of each evidence-based practice.**

The Leadership Team Survey, conducted in February 2021, captured district teams’ assessment of progress toward implementation, perceived benefits for children and families, and needs going forward. The survey was completed by 54 individuals across 26 districts (Cohorts 1–4), for a 35% participant and 90% district response rate, respectively. Survey data indicated progress toward implementation, the value of the Pyramid Model framework at this time, and perceived benefits for children and families. In addition to the benefits previously described, 74% of survey respondents indicated that the Pyramid Model has resulted in stronger relationships between practitioners and families, 61% reported that families have gained skills and strategies for interacting with their children to support social-emotional development, and 62% reported that children are making greater cognitive and academic progress overall.

**Provide a summary of the next steps for each evidence-based practices and the anticipated outcomes to be attained during the next reporting period.**

Next steps planned for the upcoming year include the following: (1) systemwide equity work and (2) revisions to the coaching log to improve tracking of implementation progress over time.  
1. Equity Work. MA DESE and PMC have engaged Dr. Kent McIntosh of the University of Oregon College of Education to advise on efforts to promote a focus on equity in Pyramid Model schools, using a professional development model (Project ReAct) that aims to reduce racial/ethnic disproportionality in school discipline and special education referrals. PMC will consult with Dr. McIntosh to adapt the PD model to fit the preschool context. This work is currently set to begin in December 2021. In addition, MA DESE and PMC are currently updating PD materials to ensure that all materials include an explicit equity focus across all statewide training events. Finally, the external evaluator is incorporating an equity focus into all data collection and analysis activities to understand how this work is impacting systems, teacher practices, and child outcomes.   
2. External Coaching Log. MA DESE and the external evaluator have revised the External Coaching Log to better track implementation progress over time. Revisions to the log for this year incorporate metrics to assess progress toward full implementation and sustainability for each Pyramid Model district, using the Massachusetts Program-wide Phases of Implementation tool developed for the new External Coaches’ Guide. We will continue to use the system established in the prior year of providing feedback to external coaches, PMC supervisors, and MA DESE on a monthly basis to help drive quality improvement.

**Section C: Stakeholder Engagement**

Description of Stakeholder Input

MA DESE works closely with stakeholders on developing targets and setting priorities for improvement in each of the areas reported in the SPP/APR.   
  
The Special Education Advisory Panel, comprised of parents, individuals with disabilities, educators, administrators, and representatives from state agencies, higher education, and other stakeholder groups, meets up to five times each school year to review data, discuss policy priorities, and identify unmet needs in the area of special education consistent with state law and IDEA Part B. At every meeting, the group addresses various aspects of the SPP/APR and the State’s general supervision systems, as well as relevant policy matters. A special focus during the pandemic has been COVID-19’s effect on compliance and performance areas related to the SPP/APR Indicators. MA DESE facilitates discussion of baseline and current data, longitudinal targets, historical rates of performance and compliance and the trajectory for improvement for each of the Indicators, and the effectiveness of focused improvement activities within the context of the state's Results Driven Accountability framework.   
  
MA DESE has set a high priority on expanding the agency’s capacity to solicit broad and diverse stakeholder input to set SPP/APR targets, analyze data, develop improvement strategies, and evaluate progress. For FFY2020, MA DESE sought to improve stakeholder Indicator knowledge by posting new webpages for Indicators 1, 2, 3, 5, 6, 7, 8, and 14 with Quick Reference Guides (QRGs) and PowerPoints for each Indicator. These QRGs and PowerPoints were available in six languages that correspond to the most common languages spoken in Massachusetts: English, Spanish, Portuguese, Chinese, Vietnamese, and Haitian Creole. Narrated versions of each PowerPoint were also available in English on the YouTube page of our partner, the Federation for Children with Special Needs (the Massachusetts Parent Training and Information Center/PTIC). MA DESE solicited feedback for Indicators 1, 2, 3, 5, 6, 7, 8, and 14 baselines and targets via an online survey in English, Spanish, Portuguese, Chinese, Vietnamese, and Haitian Creole. In addition, MA DESE collaborated with the Federation for Children with Special Needs, the OSEP funded Parent Training and Information Center (PTI), to hold five virtual stakeholder information and feedback sessions on these Indicators. Meetings were simultaneously interpreted into American Sign Language, Spanish, Portuguese, and Mandarin. Other languages were available but were not requested.   
  
MA DESE also consults regularly, on a monthly or at least quarterly basis, with Massachusetts Administrators of Special Education, http://www.asepage.org/, the Federation for Children with Special Needs, https://fcsn.org/, Massachusetts Advocates for Children, https://www.massadvocates.org/, the Massachusetts Association of Approved Special Education Schools, https://maaps.org/, Massachusetts Urban Special Education Leadership Collaborative, and the Special Needs Advocacy Network, www.spanmass.org. In addition, the Massachusetts State Special Education Director at MA DESE gives monthly virtual presentations to statewide special education leaders on a wide array of special education compliance and performance topics. During all of these meetings, MA DESE solicits and receives significant feedback that informs the development of special education policy and guidance.   
  
As needed, MA DESE also convenes stakeholder working groups throughout the year to provide focused input on specific projects and policy priorities. Examples of these focused groups include the Early Childhood Interagency Coordinating Council, with membership that includes community members and state agencies, a Statewide Systemic Improvement Plan (SSIP) leadership team and working group, a family engagement workgroup, an advisory group for the Dropout Prevention and Re-engagement Network, and secondary transition stakeholder groups. MA DESE also consults with educators, parents, advocates, and others on an ad hoc basis to inform policy and practice.   
  
MA DESE engages with stakeholders on the direction of Indicator 17, the State’s Systemic Improvement Plan (SSIP), at the state, district, classroom, and community levels. Stakeholders are provided with information about activities and goals, training events and embedded supports statewide, and the availability of resources to support and expand implementation. Stakeholders at the district and school levels participate in ongoing decision making about the direction of the SSIP by providing feedback about the quality of events and supports, observed benefits for their own stakeholders, and needs for moving forward with implementation most successfully. For additional information on stakeholder engagement related to Indicator 17, please see the Indicator 17 APR.  
  
Stakeholder engagement is an essential component of MA DESE’s special education agenda.

Additional input was sought from early childhood district coordinators and the Interagency Coordinating Council (ICC). The meeting with the early childhood district coordinators took place on November 8, 2021—six districts, representing urban and rural communities from across the state, participated in the discussion of Indicator 7 targets. Stakeholder input from the ICC took place on January 13, 2022. The ICC consists of parents/caregivers, early intervention providers, and state agency representatives. A total of 44 ICC members and attendees participated in the discussion on Indicator 7 targets. Stakeholders, overall, recommended an increase in Indicator 7 targets so that high expectations are maintained and schools are continually challenged to improve upon their existing practices to better meet the social/emotional and cognitive needs of preschoolers with IEPs. ICC, in particular, recommended that the current targets remain the same for these next few years so that schools and families have time to focus on existing pandemic-related stressors while adapting to new routines and instructional environments. The delay in increasing targets also allows educators the time and space needed to receive trainings and supports to refine and improve their practices while meeting COVID-related demands. As a result of stakeholder feedback, we maintained rigorous targets and increased the targets in FFY2023, FFY2024, and FFY2025.

**Describe the specific strategies implemented to engage stakeholders in key improvement efforts.**

MA DESE engages with stakeholders on the direction of the SSIP at the state, district, classroom, and community levels. Stakeholders are provided with information about activities and goals, training events and embedded supports statewide, and the availability of resources to support and expand implementation. Stakeholders at the district and school levels participate in ongoing decision making about the direction of the SSIP by providing feedback about the quality of events and supports, observed benefits for their own stakeholders, and needs for moving forward with implementation most successfully. In the 2020–21 school year, stakeholder feedback pointed to needed support for remote learning and assessment, including family collaboration and engagement strategies, to support progress toward child outcomes.   
  
At all levels, including state interagency efforts, evaluation findings and recommendations are shared and discussed, helping to set the course for improvement. Key aspects of the feedback structures include presentations and discussion with state-level leadership and steering committee meetings. Other methods have included a bimonthly SSIP e-newsletter, shareable infographics, and social media, including Facebook and Pinterest pages.  
  
Statewide/Interagency:  
  
PBS/Pyramid Model State Leadership Team (SLT)-–In FFY 2020, the SLT met bimonthly to collaborate on statewide efforts and provide feedback on the progress of Pyramid Model implementation. Evaluation findings and recommendations across the MA DESE and Early Education and Care (EEC) initiatives were shared and discussed. The SLT continues to collaborate on statewide planning to extend the reach and support for Pyramid Model implementation. The SLT includes members from DESE, EEC, UMass Boston, Massachusetts Department of Public Health (DPH), Head Start, and program and district leadership team members. A major output of the SLT was planning the ninth annual statewide Pyramid Model Summit, held in April 2021.  
  
Special Education Advisory Panel (SEAP)-–MA DESE presented child outcomes (SiMR) data and reviewed annual targets with this interagency group comprised of members appointed by the Commissioner on behalf of the Massachusetts Board of Elementary and Secondary Education. DESE presented a plan for equity in early childhood and led discussion of findings from the Children’s Equity Project report.  
  
District/Program Level:  
  
District Leadership Team Feedback-–Leadership Team Surveys and external coach collaboration are key avenues for engaging district and school personnel in SSIP improvement efforts. Feedback from surveys is shared with DESE leadership and external coaches regularly share feedback from districts via the monthly coaching log and regular coaching meetings.

**Were there any concerns expressed by stakeholders during engagement activities? (yes/no)**

NO

**Describe how the State addressed the concerns expressed by stakeholders.**

**Additional Implementation Activities**

**List any activities not already described that the State intends to implement in the next fiscal year that are related to the SiMR.**

1. Family focus groups  
2. Internal coach focus groups   
3. Improved evaluation and data analysis  
4. Pyramid Model Implementation Data System

**Provide a timeline, anticipated data collection and measures, and expected outcomes for these activities that are related to the SiMR.**

1. Family focus groups. To continue to build upon family engagement, MA DESE will conduct focus groups with families served by Pyramid Model programs. Specific foci include (a) efforts to promote positive behavior among all children, including children with individualized education programs, in Pyramid Model programs; (b) supports to help families address the behavioral, social, and emotional needs of their child given the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic; and (c) efforts to promote family–school partnerships and develop welcoming and inclusive school environments.  
Statewide recruitment has begun for seven planned focus groups (target overall number of 55–65 family members) representing a spectrum of Pyramid Model districts, ranging in size, urbanicity, racial/ethnic composition of students, and region of the state. Through these discussions, we hope to understand families’ awareness, experiences, and perceptions of preschool services and supports to enhance children’s social and emotional development in SSIP-supported programs. MA DESE will apply knowledge gained to recommend improvements to Pyramid Model implementation in SSIP preschools to enhance supports for families. Data collection will be completed by April 2022.   
2. Internal coach focus groups. To better understand the needs of internal coaches, MA DESE will conduct focus groups with personnel who serve in a coaching role within their district or school. Foci of discussions with internal coaches will include (a) their impressions of strengths and weaknesses and suggestions for improving existing SSIP supports, (b) recommendations for improving ongoing capacity building through PMC external coaches to drive progress toward implementation and sustainability in their districts, and (c) perceptions concerning the most important levers for systemwide change in their local districts and how to build upon these in their roles. We plan to conduct internal coach focus groups in June 2022.  
3. Improved evaluation and data analysis. In collaboration with the external evaluator, MA DESE plans to improve data analysis at the state level to better understand how Pyramid Model implementation impacts child outcomes. Evaluation efforts going forward will explore correlational and/or quasi-experimental studies to assess relationships between Pyramid Model implementation at the classroom and district levels and children’s social-emotional competencies. In addition, this analysis will disaggregate data by subgroup to explore success gaps and help create targeted strategies for increasing equity. The external evaluator will conduct this analysis with Indicator 7 data in February 2022.  
MA DESE is also updating their theory of action (TOA) and SSIP evaluation plan to reflect the agency’s focus on diversity, equity, and inclusion to ensure that all children have equitable access to quality supports and services that nurture their social/emotional and cognitive development within a culturally responsive, trauma-informed environment. The updated TOA and evaluation plan, once approved with stakeholder input, will guide future PD, data collection, and analyses of data to so that all supports and trainings provided to LEAs are grounded in DEI principles. We anticipate updating the TOA and evaluation plan by December 2022.   
4. Pyramid Model Implementation Data System (PIDS). Continuing our work to streamline and improve the quality of data used for evaluation and performance improvement, MA DESE is exploring ways to integrate existing data collection and reporting processes into the PIDS, a national database that houses states’ Pyramid Model data. The PIDS is a secure web application that allows data entry, reporting, and administrative functions to be used by early childhood programs that are implementing the Pyramid Model. The data system allows for streamlined data entry and analysis at the child, classroom, program, school, community/regional, and state levels. Pyramid Model Consortium is currently working with districts to establish data-sharing agreements for Pyramid Model data. We plan to pilot PIDS with a group of districts beginning in February 2022.

**Describe any newly identified barriers and include steps to address these barriers.**

1. Attendance at Statewide PD Events. Participation levels overall were substantially lower than in prior school years for most events. The total number of participants across these events was 182 during the 2020–21 school year. By comparison, the total in 2019–20 was 394. Early data on statewide PD event attendance suggest that this trend is continuing in the 2021–22 school year. Barriers that may be impacting attendance include the continued use of a virtual training platform and possible changes in PD and technical assistance needs among districts in earlier implementation cohorts. In addition, Coaches’ Log data for the early 2021 school year suggest that, in many cases, external coaches may be offering trainings tailored to needs of districts as they emerge, rather than relying on statewide PD offerings. Strategies to increase participation include continuing to consult with districts on training needs; transitioning from statewide to more tailored, regional trainings; adapting the statewide trainings to meet districts’ needs; and increasing dissemination and marketing of PD events.   
2. Engagement of Leadership Teams. Some districts’ implementation was sufficiently interrupted by COVID-19-related challenges to require a “reboot” involving new Leadership Team composition and action plans. PMC external coaches have identified districts in need of new action plans and are working with MA DESE and the PMC Leadership Team to find effective strategies for supporting this process. In some districts, evaluation data from the Monthly Coaches’ Log suggest a need to improve engagement in equity-focused implementation. In addition to the above-described efforts to bolster Leadership Team engagement more generally, we plan to guide and support systemwide change efforts in equity promotion through use of the Project ReAct model.   
3. Engagement of Internal Coaches. Leadership Team surveys suggest that most districts continue to rely on external coach support to advance implementation. Scaling up of implementation of the Pyramid Model will require tapering of this support over time, and the internal coach role is specifically designed to assume some external coach responsibilities. In order to better engage internal coaches in implementation and improve our understanding of their capacity-building needs, we plan to hold statewide focus groups with internal coaches in the upcoming year. Findings from these focus groups will be summarized by the end of the current evaluation year and used to plan implementation supports for next year. In addition, external coaches and their regional leadership will continue to be actively engaged with their districts in ensuring that internal coaches are in place and have the supports they need to assume greater responsibility for functions currently held by their external coaches.  
4. Teaching Pyramid Observation Tool for Preschool Classrooms (TPOT) Use. Although Leadership Teams and staff continued to use the TPOT in adapted ways to support implementation in the 2020–21 school year, formal use of the TPOT as a fidelity assessment and performance feedback tool was largely discontinued due to the demands of facilitating classroom observation during remote or hybrid learning. Increasing TPOT use has been identified by MA DESE and PMC as a priority for PD and technical assistance in the upcoming year. In addition to ensuring continued access to TPOT trainings, external coaches and regional leaders will monitor levels of TPOT use and identify supports needed to increase TPOT use.

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

## 17 - Prior FFY Required Actions

None

## 17 - OSEP Response

The State provided targets for FFYs 2020 through 2025 for this indicator, and OSEP accepts those targets.  
  
The State did not provide the numerator and denominator descriptions in the FFY 2020 SPP/APR Data table. The State must provide the description of the numerator and denominator used to calculate its FFY 2020 data.  
  
The State must provide a link or narrative description of the current Theory of Action.

## 17 - Required Actions

# Certification

**Instructions**

**Choose the appropriate selection and complete all the certification information fields. Then click the "Submit" button to submit your APR.**

**Certify**

**I certify that I am the Chief State School Officer of the State, or his or her designee, and that the State's submission of its IDEA Part B State Performance Plan/Annual Performance Report is accurate.**

**Select the certifier’s role:**

Designated by the Chief State School Officer to certify

**Name and title of the individual certifying the accuracy of the State's submission of its IDEA Part B State Performance Plan/Annual Performance Report.**

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**Submitted on:**

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