**Part B Discipline Data Notes**

**2019-20 Reporting Year**

This document provides information or data notes on the ways in which states collected and reported data differently from the Office of Special Education Programs (OSEP) data formats and instructions. In addition, the data notes provide explanations of substantial changes or other changes that data users may find notable or of interest in the data from the previous year.

# Alaska

- The State provided the following response(s) to large Year to Year change(s):

* Alaska attributes the decrease in both the number of children with disciplinary removals totaling more than 10 days and total disciplinary removals to the closure of in person school due to the COVID-19 Pandemic. In person school in Alaska was ceased starting in March and through the end of the school year.

# Arizona

- The State provided the following response(s) to large Year to Year change(s):

* Due to COVID-19 and Arizona operating with a shortened and modified SY 2018-19, this caused a decrease in the number of discipline incidents. While some entities operated with fewer calendar days in the year, many entities had to adjust to virtual schooling. Discipline incidents in virtual environments would also cause a natural decrease since the school policies and violations in these types of environments generally led to fewer removals from the virtual classroom. This would cause a decrease in the actual number of students with disabilities being removed but also the number of times students were removed in total.

# Bureau of Indian Education

- The State provided the following response(s) to large Year to Year change(s):

* The BIE designed a new data protocol which improved the accuracy of the data reported; and due to COVID-19 there was an overall reduction on the number of disciplinary actions.
* Due to COVID-19 schools closed in March 2020 which affected the exiting numbers by reduction of students dropping out and a reduction of students moving, Known to Be Continued.
* The BIE provided more training sessions for personnel which has affected the quality of reporting of data in the database.

# California

- Effective SY 2019-20, the California Department of Education collects a third gender option, 'X’ Nonbinary. In files where gender is a required data element, the education unit total (EUT) and the sums of the subtotals that includes sex/gender will not match. In addition, students who are age 16 by the end of the school year, will have their Federal age in December as 15.

# Colorado

- The State provided the following response(s) to large Year to Year change(s):

* Due to the postponement of in-person learning in March 2020 caused by COVID19, discipline cases, especially of long-term removals, decreased significantly in many districts.
* Due to the postponement of in-person learning in March 2020 caused by COVID19, more than half of the districts in the state decreased discipline cases significantly from SY 2018-19 to SY 2019-20.

# Connecticut

- The State provided the following response(s) to large Year to Year change(s):

* The decrease in total and subtotal categories are due to the COVID closures of all schools in Connecticut from March 13, 2020 through the end of the school year. Suspensions did not occur while schools were closed for 3 months.

# Delaware

- The State provided the following response(s) to large Year to Year change(s):

* Because of COVID-19, schools in Delaware closed on March 13, 2020. This reduced the number of students being suspended. In comparing this year's totals to last year's total incidents, the difference indicates the rapid decline of incidents due to the districts being closed and the students being quarantined at home.

**District of Columbia**

- The State provided the following response(s) to large Year to Year change(s):

* There were decreases observed in several student categories during SY 2019-20. Office of the State Superintendent of Education (OSSE) does not collect specific reasons for the changes in local educational agency (LEA) or State-level discipline data. However, the decreases may be due to the Student Fair Access to School Amendment Act of 2018 which limits the use of exclusionary practices to specific offenses that put the safety of staff or students at-risk.
* Reductions in disciplinary action may be due to covid-related school closures in spring 2020. Data submitted to USED reflect the data that were submitted to the state by LEAs.

# Florida

- The State provided the following response(s) to large Year to Year change(s):

* Pursuant to Florida Department of Education Emergency Order No. 2020-EO-1, school district facilities were closed and districts delivered educational services to students while they remained at home due to the outbreak of the coronavirus until the end of the school year. Therefore, the counts of discipline are expected to be lower than in prior years as they were at home for over three months.

**Georgia**

- The State provided the following response(s) to large Year to Year change(s):

* The decrease in suspensions/expulsions > 10 days was due to the COVID-19 pandemic.
* Georgia had virtual instruction from March 16, 2020 through the end of the school year. As a result, the number of disciplinary removals and unilateral removals dramatically decreased.

# Illinois

- The State provided the following response(s) to large Year to Year change(s):

* A significant reduction in the number of children suspended for 'Greater than 10 days' in Illinois for SY 2019-20 is a result of changes to in-person attendance policies in Illinois due to COVID-19. In Illinois, there were 3 Executive Orders from the Governor that impacted state educational agency (SEA) Discipline data.

# Iowa

- The State provided the following response(s) to large Year to Year change(s):

* The state attributes the decrease in discipline data to the significant reduction in removals reported because of COVID-19. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic in the spring of 2020, schools were closed by order of the Governor of the state of Iowa for the last two and a half months of the school year, beginning in mid-March. Without students in schools during this time period, disciplinary removals essentially ceased.

# Kansas

- The State provided the following response(s) to large Year to Year change(s):

* The total number of students placed in Interim Alternative Educational Settings for Drug, Weapon and Serious Bodily Injury offences decreased in SY 2019-20. This reduction coincides with the decrease in the number of incidences occurring in SY 2019-20 as reported in FS007. This decrease in removals by school personnel for SY 2019-20 is a result of school building closure in March of 2020 due to the COVID-19 outbreak.
* The number of incidences resulting in students placed in Interim Alternative Educational Settings for Drug offences decreased in SY 2019-20. This reduction coincides with the decrease in the number of students.
* The total number of disciplinary removals of any type by school personnel decreased in SY 2019-20. This reduction coincides with the decrease in the number of incidences and students in SY 2019-20.

# Kentucky

- The State provided the following response(s) to large Year to Year change(s):

* The reduction in the number of students removed greater than 10 days can be explained by the fact that students were simply not attending school in person for one-third of the school year due to school closures because of COVID-19, so there were fewer opportunities for students to be removed from the classroom as a result of disciplinary events. This made it less likely that students would be removed greater than 10 days.
* From SY 2018-19 to SY 2019-20, more Kentucky students were removed from the classroom for 1 day or less while at the same time, there were fewer students removed for Greater than 10 days. This is because students were not attending school face-to-face for 3 months of the school year. Thus, the students had fewer opportunities to be removed from the classroom for disciplinary purposes. This explains the increase for more students removed for 1 day or less and decrease for students removed Greater than 10 days.
* From SY 2018-19 to SY 2019-20, there were fewer disciplinary events for Kentucky students because students were not attending school face-to-face for 3 months of the school year. Thus, the students had fewer opportunities to be removed from the classroom for disciplinary purposes.

# Massachusetts

- The State provided the following response(s) to large Year to Year change(s):

* Differences in the Year-to-Year reports for SY 2019-20 may be attributed to circumstances caused by the COVID-19 pandemic.

# Michigan

- The State provided the following response(s) to large Year to Year change(s):

* Due to COVID-19 and the move to on-line learning from home, the number of discipline incidents compared to prior years was significantly lower.

# Minnesota

- The State provided the following response(s) to large Year to Year change(s):

* On March 15, 2020 Minnesota's Governor issued an executive order to close public schools due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Districts were required to implement distance learning models where students received instruction at home and were not in their typical school environment. This resulted in a significant drop in the number of disciplinary removals between March and June 2020.

# Mississippi

- The State provided the following response(s) to large Year to Year change(s):

* A year-to-year change is present due to school closures and an increase in virtual or hybrid instruction caused by COVID-19 during SY 2019-20.

# Missouri

- The State provided the following response(s) to large Year to Year change(s):

* Due to school closures due to COVID-19 in spring 2020, discipline removal numbers across all categories were substantially lower than the prior year.

# Nebraska

- FS005 and FS007 were not submitted at the local educational agency (LEA) level. Nebraska did not have unilateral removals for students with disabilities for SY 2019-20.

# Nevada

The State provided the following response(s) to large Year to Year change(s):

* The year-to-year decrease in suspensions/expulsions between SY 2018-19 and SY 2019-20 is the result of the combination of the implementation of new state discipline statutes limiting suspensions for students with disabilities as well as COVID mitigation strategies that closed all K-12 grade schools as of March 15, 2020.
* The year-to-year decrease in students removed for drug offenses between SY 2018-19 and SY 2019-20 is the result of the combination of the implementation of new state discipline statutes limiting suspensions for students with disabilities as well as COVID mitigation strategies that closed all K-12 grade schools as of March 15, 2020.
* The year-to-year decrease in disciplinary removals between SY 2018-19 and SY 2019-20 is the result of the combination of the implementation of new state discipline statutes limiting suspensions for students with disabilities as well as COVID mitigation strategies that closed all K-12 grade schools as of March 15, 2020.

# New Jersey

- This year’s data reflect the breadth of alternative instructional delivery methods local educational agencies could avail themselves of to ensure all students received a thorough and efficient education while school buildings were closed and in-person instruction was suspended as part of the State’s efforts to prevent and mitigate the spread of COVID-19 during SY 2019-20.

# North Dakota

- The State provided the following response(s) to large Year to Year change(s):

* The North Dakota Part B Year to Year report for SY 2019-20 and SY 2018-19 shows no change in the count of students with disabilities removed to an interim alternative ed setting based on a Hearing Officer finding that there is substantial likelihood of injury to the child or others.
* The North Dakota Part B Year to Year report for SY 2019-20 shows nearly 63% decrease in the count of children and youth with disabilities who were subject to disciplinary removal greater than 10 days was down by compared to the SY 2018-19 report.
* The ND Department of Public Instruction attributes the decrease in the disciplinary removal greater than 10 days to the statewide school closures resulting from the COVID-19 pandemic in the state. School closures impacted all in-person school activities, including suspension and expulsion incidents reported in the SY 2019-20.
* The North Dakota Part B Year to Year report for SY 2019-20 and SY 2018-19 shows no change in the count of students with disabilities involved in drugs, serious bodily injury, and weapons incidents.
* Data for subgroup has been resubmitted to reflect zero counts
* The North Dakota Part B Year to Year report for SY 2019-20 shows nearly 26% decrease in the count of children and youth with disabilities who were subject to disciplinary removal greater than for 1 day or less compared to the SY 2018-19 report.

# Ohio

- The State provided the following response(s) to large Year to Year change(s):

* After review, the Ohio Department of Education did not identify any specific factors contributing to the year-to-year increase of students with disabilities unilaterally removed to an interim alternative educational setting by school personnel during SY 2019-20.
* For SY 2019-20, Ohio saw a reduction in the number of discipline events reported across several discipline categories. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, Ohio's school buildings were closed, and all students moved to remote learning from March through the end of the school year. The remote learning environment for all students resulted in a significant decrease of discipline events being reported to Ohio’s state information system.

# Oklahoma

- The State provided the following response(s) to large Year to Year change(s):

* Local educational agencies (LEAs) assigned fewer suspensions because of the pandemic. Schools were either closed or conducting remote learning between March 16 and the end of the school year, which was before mid-May for most local educational agencies (LEAs).

# Oregon

- Per U.S. Department of Education (USED) guidance, Oregon does not include in count the Gender X students in Category Set C. Any comparison between Category Set C totals and Other Totals will not match.

- The State provided the following response(s) to large Year to Year change(s):

* The shortened in-person instruction schedule for SY 2019-2020 due to COVID-19 resulted in fewer discipline incidents.

# Pennsylvania

- The State provided the following response(s) to large Year to Year change(s):

* Due to Health and Safety requirements of Governor’s Emergency Orders in response to the COVID-19 Pandemic, schools were not operating in person and impacted the number of disciplinary infractions.

# Puerto Rico

- The State provided the following response(s) to large Year to Year change(s):

* The year-to-year decreases are attributable to there being a significant period of school closures during SY 2019-20 in Puerto Rico due to both an unprecedented series of earthquakes in January 2020 and the arrival of the COVID-19 pandemic in March 2020.
* Following Puerto Rico schools breaking for winter recess on December 20, 2019, the island was hit by an unprecedented sequence of earthquakes that would continue for weeks keeping all public schools closed island-wide through January 27, 2020 and destroying some schools entirely. All PRDE schools and offices were closed until the safety of each building could be assessed and declared safe to resume operations. While some schools began to open January 28, many schools never had the chance to reopen before systemwide closures were mandated due to the COVID-19 outbreak. Puerto Rico schools were again shut down effective March 13 as part of a government lockdown in response to the COVID-19 pandemic. Schools remained closed the remainder of SY 2019-20 and are yet to re-open for in-person learning during SY 2020-21 to date. With schools closed for such a significant period of time, a natural result of students not physically being in school was a decrease in disciplinary actions.

# Rhode Island

- The State provided the following response(s) to large Year to Year change(s):

* The number of disciplinary infractions went down due to COVID-19 and the move to Distance Learning for all schools in the state. This resulted in considerable decreases in some areas including Greater than 10 days, Less than or equal to 10 day, 2 through 10 days and Greater than 10 days.

# South Carolina

- The State provided the following response(s) to large Year to Year change(s):

* The closure of the physical school buildings as a result of the Governor's Executive Order in mid-March of 2020 and the deployment of emergency learning opportunities to students in their homes resulted in this reduction in the number of suspensions/expulsions. This closure lasted through the end of SY 2019-20.

# South Dakota

- The State provided the following response(s) to large Year to Year change(s):

* Reductions in reporting categories are due to COVID-19 and the students not being in the school for over two months.

# Tennessee

- The State provided the following response(s) to large Year to Year change(s):

* Regarding the year-to-year change in students "unilaterally removed to an interim alternative education setting by School Personnel (NOT the Individual Education Plan (IEP) team) for drugs, weapons, or serious bodily injury”: Tennessee recently made improvements to its FS005 data collection process and methodology, which resulted in more accurate reporting and a decrease in the count from SY 2018-19 to SY 2019-20.
* Regarding the year-to-year change in students suspended for either “less than or equal to 10 days” or “greater than 10 days:” in Tennessee, all schools were required to close for in-person learning by March 20, 2020. Many schools closed prior to that date, in early March 2020, due to rising COVID-19 numbers and devastation caused by tornadoes in middle Tennessee. The shortened school year caused an overall decrease in discipline incidents, in particular the decreases decrease from SY 2018-19 to SY 2019-20 in students suspended or expelled for 1 to 10 and in students suspended or expelled greater than 10 days.
* Regarding the year-to-year change in "the number of times children with disabilities who were ages 3 through 21 and unilaterally removed by school personnel (not the individual education plan (IEP) team) from their current educational placement to an interim alternative educational setting (determined by the individualized education plan (IEP) team) due to drug or weapon offenses or serious bodily injury:” Tennessee recently made improvements to its FS007 data collection process and methodology, which resulted in more accurate reporting and a decrease in unilateral removals for drugs, an increase in unilateral removals for serious bodily injury, and an increase in unilateral removals for weapons.
* Regarding the year-to-year change in students “who were subject to any kind of disciplinary removal during the school year” for “1 day or less,” “2 through 10 days,” and “greater than 10 days:” in Tennessee, all schools were required to close for in-person learning by March 20, 2020. Many schools closed prior to that date, in early March 2020, due to rising COVID-19 numbers and devastation caused by tornadoes in middle Tennessee. The shortened school year caused an overall decrease in discipline incidents.
* Regarding the year-to-year change in “the number of times children with disabilities (IDEA) who were ages 3 through 21 and subject to any kind of disciplinary removal:” in Tennessee, all schools were required to close for in-person learning by March 20, 2020. Many schools closed prior to that date, in early March 2020, due to rising COVID-19 numbers and devastation caused by tornadoes in Middle Tennessee. The shortened school year caused an overall decrease in discipline incidents.

# Texas

- The State provided the following response(s) to large Year to Year change(s):

* The year-to-year decrease is attributed to school closures and State reopening of all schools between March 2020 and June 2020 as remote instruction only settings during the Covid-19 Pandemic event. This decrease is evidenced across all Disciplinary file categories.

# Virginia

- The State provided the following response(s) to large Year to Year change(s):

* Exclusion was down because of COVID related closures as well as alternatives to suspension as model guidance suggested (policy changes related to discipline and student behavior).

# Virgin Islands

- The State provided the following response(s) to large Year to Year change(s):

* This can be attributed to the fact that Virgin Islands Department of Education (VIDE) shifted for this time to a complete virtual instructional model during the spring of 2020; which was a result of restrictions and health and safety guidelines issued by the Center for Disease Control and the Virgin Islands Department of Health. Thus, for SY 2019-2020, all students received instruction through the virtual teaching and learning platform.

# Washington

- The State provided the following response(s) to large Year to Year change(s):

* The number and percentage decrease for disciplinary incidents is attributed to Washington State Schools closing down on March 13, 2020 due to the COVID pandemic. Many local educational agencies (LEAs) were closed for at least 6 weeks and then only opening back to virtual learning models. After opening back virtually, there were few, if any, disciplinary incidents reported. The State expects to see similar data in SY 2020-21 reporting.

# West Virginia

- The State provided the following response(s) to large Year to Year change(s):

* Significant change is likely due to school closures caused by COVID-19. An emergency order of the Governor closed in-person traditional schools effective March 16, 2020 due to the COVID-19 pandemic. This remained in place through the remainder of the school year. Students had fewer opportunities for misbehavior while interacting in-person with peers and staff. Students would rarely have opportunities for behavior leading to suspension or expulsion during remote learning. Approximately 75% of the school year was provided in a traditional in-person format. The number of students with greater than ten days of suspensions and expulsions during this school year was 77% of the previous school year. The data appears proportional given the amount of traditional in-person learning.

# West Virginia

- The State provided the following response(s) to large Year to Year change(s):

On March 13, Wisconsin issued an order closing Wisconsin public and private schools, effective at 5 p.m. on March 18, 2020, and lasting through April 6, 2020; the order was subsequently extended through the end of the 2019-2020 school year. As a result of the school closure order, there were fewer disciplinary removals issued by local educational agencies (LEAs) during SY 2019-20.