**Part B Personnel Data Notes**

**2022-23 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.

**American Samoa**

- American Samoa does not have paraprofessionals.

- Generally, related services are provided by special education teachers who have been trained to provide these specific related services.

**Maryland**

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

* Percent increase differences in special education teacher FTEs can be attributed to:
  + The result of the change in the way in which 5-year-olds were counted, and
  + The shortage of certified teachers.
* There were multiple notable percent differences at the state level for other related professional FTEs. This suggests an increase in hiring or contractually hiring related services personnel who are not fully certified across local education agencies (LEAs). This could be due to financial constraints and/or a shortage of fully certified related services personnel to hire.

**Northern Marianas**

- The Northern Mariana Islands does not employ or contract a medical/nursing service staff, therefore we do not use this related service personnel category.

**Republic of Palau**

- Currently there are no recreation and therapeutic recreation specialists, speech language pathologists, orientation and mobility specialists or interpreters available on the island. However, there's a physical therapist assistant who was hired to provide services and supports to eligible children/youth with disabilities. Trained staff members provide speech/language and sign language services/supports to eligible children/youth with speech/language or hearing impairment. Through collaboration with the Ministry of Health and Human Services, eligible children or youth with disabilities ages 3-21 can access other related services from psychologists, social workers, audiologist, and medical/nursing service staff. Children or youth with disabilities can also access counseling services and participate in physical education (PE) classes at the schools they're enrolled.

**Republic of the Marshall Islands**

- The Republic of the Marshall Islands does not currently have any related services staff or special education paraprofessionals. All these services are provided by special education teachers who have been trained to provide these specific related services.

**Utah**

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

* We have analyzed the data and see that there were some reporting errors with local education agencies (LEAs) in previous submissions. We have implemented new practices and have created a historical tracker for all submissions so that we can catch these errors immediately.

**West Virginia**

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

* A substantial increase in not fully certified special education teachers serving school age students with disabilities was observed from School Year (SY) 2021-22 to SY 2022-23. First, SY 2022-23 data now encompasses special educators supporting students ages 5 (in kindergarten) through 21, compared to the previous 6-21 age range. This broader scope could naturally inflate the number of reported teachers. Second, the nationwide educator shortage continues to impact special education, potentially leading to the hiring of provisionally certified individuals to fill immediate needs.
* A substantial increase in unqualified paraprofessionals serving school age students with disabilities was observed from SY 2021-22 to SY 2022-23. First, SY 2022-23 data now encompasses paraprofessionals supporting students ages 5 (in kindergarten) through 21, compared to the previous 6-21 age range. This broader scope could naturally inflate the number of reported paraprofessionals. Second, external factors like the ongoing COVID-19, increased focus on mental health and behavior in schools, and nationwide staff shortages may have impacted hiring practices and the availability of qualified candidates, leading to temporary staffing solutions that don't meet all qualification requirements. The reported data suggest a significant increase in unqualified paraprofessionals serving young students with disabilities between SY 2021-22 and SY 2022-23. Both datasets cover ages 3-5, but SY 2022-23 excludes 5-year-olds in kindergarten, unlike SY 2021-22. This distinction is essential as kindergarten qualifications often differ from pre-kindergarten settings. Further, increased awareness of mental health and social-emotional needs in early childhood likely necessitated additional support, creating a demand for paraprofessionals even if they hadn't met specific age-group or other requisite qualifications.