

Part B Personnel Data Notes

2014-15 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.

Arkansas

Every few years Arkansas sees an increase in the number of not-qualified paraprofessionals for both early childhood and school age programs. As individuals are hired they must complete specific training on working with students with disabilities. While the trainings occur throughout the year many individuals new to their positions may not have completed the training prior to the December 1 child count and personnel data collection.

Arizona

Not Highly Qualified Special Education Teachers

From 2013-2014 to 2014-2015 there was an increase of 135 FTE not highly qualified special education teachers for students ages 6 to 21. This is a 78% percent difference from year to year.

The data from two districts accounts for 90 of the 135 FTE difference in not highly qualified special education teachers for students ages 6 to 21 from 2013-2014 to 2015-2016, which is significantly significant. These particular districts appear to have indicated highly qualified numbers in both the highly qualified AND not highly qualified boxes. These data duplications are significant considering the other 634 reporting entities reported a total of 218 FTE not highly qualified special education teachers.

Additionally, there is a well-documented shortage of special education teachers in Arizona that accounts for the overall increase in not highly qualified special education teachers. Given this shortage, districts are resorting to filling the positions with staff not highly qualified staff due to a lack of highly qualified candidates. These reporting entities will be targeted for training and follow up to ensure that personnel reporting in this area are valid and accurate.

Colorado

-Special Education Teachers – Not highly qualified: SY2013-2014 = 235, SY2014-2015=284, +48.67, +20.72%:

The increase of Non-highly qualified special education teachers was especially evident in one LEA in a rural mountain area. This LEA hired teachers in 2014-15 for hard to fill special education positions who were licensed and endorsed in regular education only. As part of the staff review process, this administrative unit was notified of the need to hire appropriately licensed and endorsed special

education teachers to fill vacant positions in special education. Assurances have been maintained that appropriate staff hiring practices will be taken.

Social workers: SY2013-2014 = 309, SY2014-2015=376, +66.67, +21.57%:

The increase of social workers was accounted for by Colorado's largest LEA, Denver. Denver has been rolling out social emotional learning programs in the district and moving towards new discipline practices to address the school to prison pipeline. They have been focusing on supporting students' mental health and social emotional learning and have added positions to do so.

Indiana

Indiana revised its data collection layout for related services personnel to clarify the types of personnel to be reported. In addition, a review of the data was completed and school corporations were contacted based upon data submitted. By revising the layout and following up with the school corporations, more accurate data regarding the numbers of Orientation and Mobility Specialists and Social Workers was reported. In addition, there was a greater need to employ additional personnel at some school corporations.

Minnesota

Data Group ID 486: Highly Qualified Special Education Teachers

Increases in 'Not Highly Qualified' for special education teachers is due to an increase in the number of special education teachers employed in Minnesota as well as higher numbers of teachers reported by districts as not highly qualified in the state's Staff Automated Report (STAR) system. Examples for areas of increase falling under the not highly qualified category include limited license, variances, community experts, and non-renewable license.

Data Group ID 647: Highly Qualified Special Education Paraprofessionals

Prior to the 2014-15 data reporting year all special education paraprofessionals were counted as highly qualified. In 2014-15, Minnesota refined its business rules for EDEN file C112-Special Education Paraprofessionals to reflect the actual status reported in the state's Staff Automated Report (STAR) system.

Nevada

The availability of counselors varies year to year based on funding and personnel availability.

Oklahoma

Oklahoma has experienced a shortfall in State and Federal Revenue and an increase in children with disabilities. LEAs have had to refocus their funds to pay for required direct services to meet the needs of children with disabilities.

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Oklahoma LEAs are increasing co-teaching learning environments so that students with special needs are spending more time with their age appropriate peers in the general education setting. More teachers are being hired to fill these positions that may not necessarily be highly qualified. Also, there are many teachers applying for emergency certifications to fill holes in school personnel.

South Carolina

Highly qualified personnel, ages 3 to 5 (also HQ personnel, ages 6 to 21) – Previously, the state was reporting speech language pathologists as part of section A because “speech language impairment” is one of the IDEA categories of disabilities. As a result of the state transitioning into a new IEP system and recent discussions regarding how to report speech language pathologists, the state has decided to place this information back in Section C, which accounts for both the increase in this category from last year as well as the decrease of highly qualified teachers.

Counselors and Rehabilitation Counselors – The increase of staff in this category from the previous reporting year was the result of local districts having a better understanding of the definition and which staff was appropriate to include in this category.

Interpreters – The increase of staff in this category from the previous reporting year is due the districts collecting higher quality data as well as increased scrutiny of the data being collected.

Occupational Therapists – The increase of staff in this category from the previous reporting year is due the districts collecting higher quality data as well as increased scrutiny of the data being collected.

Physical Education Teachers – The increase of staff in this category from the previous reporting year is due the districts collecting higher quality data as well as increased scrutiny of the data being collected.

Speech Language Pathologists – Previously, the state was reporting speech language pathologists as part of section A because speech language impairments is one of the IDEA categories of disabilities. As a result of the state transitioning into a new IEP system and recent discussions regarding how to report speech language pathologists, the state has decided to place this information back in Section C, which accounts for both the increase in this category from last year as well as the decrease of highly qualified teachers.

Not qualified paraprofessionals (ages 6 to 21) – School districts have indicated that some are transitioning to a new human resources system and are recoding some of the paraprofessionals within that system. As a result, some staff are being tested to ensure they meet the requirements of their new

position. Many of the employee assessments for the staff in this category were given after the submission of this file and thus were not available.

Utah

Utah reported a reduction in the number of Not Qualified Speech Language Pathologists working with students age 6-21 from the 2012-2013 school year to the 2013-2014 school year. This reduction of 93 not qualified SLPs reflects a reduction of 34%. This reduction is the result of direct action on the part of USOE and Utah Institutes of Higher Education to increase the number of qualified SLPs working in Utah LEAs. USOE provided IHEs with personnel preparation funding to support the training of SLPs in rural areas of the state, where recruitment and retention is most challenging. The reduction in the number/percent of SLPs who are not qualified is matched by an increase in the number/percent of SLPs who are qualified.

Virginia

Highly qualified and not highly qualified special education teachers.

School Course for the Exchange of Data (SCED) codes, the federally endorsed course codes developed by the National Center for Education Statistics (NCES), came into effect in summer 2010 and were adopted in Virginia with the inception of the Master Schedule Collection. Previously, Virginia Assignment codes were the only codes used to determine what courses teachers taught. LEAs have previously had the ability to select which method to use until the transition to SCED was complete. Beginning in fall 2016, Virginia codes are longer allowed in the Master Schedule Collection.

Wisconsin

A new personnel data collection was implemented beginning with the 2014-15 school year. With the release of this new application, the position and assignment for ages 3-5 special education paraprofessionals was inadvertently omitted. Paraprofessionals assigned to this age group are included in the counts reported for ages 6-21 special education paraprofessionals.