

Part B Exiting Data Notes

2015-16 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.

Alabama

The decrease in the counts for basis of exit, received a certificate is attributed to the change in the Alabama Administrative Code Rule regarding the receipt of a graduation certificate. As indicated in the comment section under Certificates for the SY 2015-16 SSS-IDEA, the receipt of a graduation certificate is applicable for students prior to the 2013-14 graduation cohort; as Alabama transitions out of this option, a decrease in the count of students with disabilities receiving a certificate is expected.

Connecticut

Connecticut had a very large class of students age out of transition services this during the 2015-16 school year. Additionally, Connecticut had a small number of districts who made the decision to grant certificates for the first time. Historically, certificates have not been widely utilized by Connecticut public school districts. As such, the Connecticut Department of Education is working with districts surrounding when provision of a certificate is appropriate.

Delaware

The increase in the number of students who were included in the Exit code “Dropped out” is due in part to an increase in students moving out of the SEA, and the low “N” size overall of Delaware count in this category.

Georgia

Georgia reported that 247 fewer students with disabilities (23.4%) exited with a certificate or Special Education Diploma. Georgia also reported that 493 more students with disabilities exited with a High School Diploma. The focus of Georgia’s SSIP is to improve the graduation rate of all students. The result of the SSIP work is an increase in the number of students with disabilities receiving a high school diploma and conversely a decrease in the number of students with disabilities receiving a certificate or Special Education Diploma.

Hawaii

Moved, known to be continuing

For FFY 2015 (SY 2015- 2016), a change in data that triggered the data check is a result of normal fluctuation of students that have moved, and known to be continuing in an educational program.

91 students have been verified through HIDOE's Student Information System (SIS) to have moved to the Continental US, a foreign country, U.S. possession or territory.

Reached Maximum Age

The Hawaii Department of Education, Special Education Section has completed additional verification of the data was conducted and the submitted data for 2015-2016 is accurate. We confirm there was an increase in students that "Reached maximum age" from 2014-2015 to 2015-2016.

Idaho

In Idaho, students may let teachers know that they are moving but sometimes we do not receive a transcript requested from the new district/school if they move out of state.

Districts have been working with students so they can graduate instead of receiving certificates. Idaho is trying to increase the number of Special Education students that graduation with a regular diploma.

Indiana

Indiana law affords students access to special education services provided the student does not turn 23 before the first day of school. This a large number of students are aging out the following year and are not reported to EDFACTS under current submission procedures. Changes in maximum age are thus more largely pronounced among the group of 21-year olds exiting.

Graduation rates have modestly increased in Indiana. School districts are undertaking efforts to reduce the number of dropouts with students with disabilities utilizing effective transition strategies.

Additionally, a large school district with significant disproportionate impact on state totals is undergoing a review on its collecting and state reporting of data, in particular exiting data. Problems occurred during the reporting of exiting data for 2015-16 that may be influencing this total. The SEA is monitoring this process and providing assistance where needed.

Kansas

Year to year change – Kansas had a decrease of 21 students (36%) reported with reaching maximum age as basis of exit. Kansas has confirmed this count to be accurate. This change is reflective of annual trend data showing a statewide decrease of students served in Special education in the 20-21 age group for the past 5 years. An average annual decrease of 3.4% over 5 years has reduced the population for which maximum age would be an applicable basis of exit.

Kentucky

In the 2014-15 school year, Kentucky reported 803 students with disabilities that dropped out of school. The original data for the 2015-16 school year showed that Kentucky had 621 students with IEPs drop out of school. However, new data was submitted that increased that number to 628. This is a difference of -175 students, or -21.8%. Jefferson County Public Schools, the largest district in Kentucky, accounted for the over a quarter of the difference. They reported that they have done a better job of following up with students who originally were listed as "Whereabouts unknown". As a result, they have been able to provide more accurate data. In addition, Kentucky has recently changed its dropout age from 16 to 18. This has resulted in fewer students dropping out of school.

In the 2014-15 school year, Kentucky reported 706 students with disabilities that dropped out of school. The original data for the 2015-16 school year showed that Kentucky had 379 students with IEPs transfer to regular education. However, new data was submitted that increased that number to 563. This is a difference of -143 students, or -20.3%. As with the dropout data, the difference in the data can be explained by better record-keeping for the students after they leave special education.

Maryland

Maryland's Exiting Data Collection: Year-to-year change from the 2014-2015 count (21 students) to 2015-2016 count (44 Students) of students who exit reason is Died, increased by 109.5% which is representative by an increase of 23 students who died in the 2015-2016 Exit Count. The increase was reflected in 4 of Maryland's largest populated school districts. The causal factors may be due to medical and environmental factors.

Maryland's Exiting Data Collection: Year-to-year change from the 2014-2015 count to 2015-2016 count of students who exit and reached the maximum age, decreased by 41.7% which is representative by an decrease of 35 students who reached maximum age in the 2015-2016 Exit Count. This decrease is reflected in 3 of Maryland's largest school districts. Factors attributed to the 2015-2016 growth include an increase in the number of special education students returning to general education and an increase in the special education students graduating with a diploma.

Michigan

Michigan has had a large push for districts to utilize PBIS and MIBLSI. MIBLSI is an initiative in Michigan to help school districts implement and sustain supports for improved student outcomes.

Nevada

The increase in the number of special education students who dropped out is related to an improving job market following the recession, combined with difficulty of satisfying requirements to earn a regular high school diploma.

The increase in the number of students who reached the maximum age may reflect a very slight increase in the number of students who chose to remain in school until they reached age 22.

The very slight increase in the number of students who transferred to regular education is related to an increase in students who were found no longer eligible for special education as part of a reevaluation process. Reevaluations are conducted in compliance with federal and state laws.

North Dakota

The significant decrease (-27.3%) reported in the “Moved, known to be continuing” category of special education student exit data between FFY 2014-15 and FFY 2015-16, was due, in part, to the reduced oil and gas industry activities in the state over the last 2 years. Due to this low oil related activities, a lot of families that moved in because of the oil boom had started leaving the state. The trickling down effect of family movement may have contributed to the year-to-year decrease in this population.

In addition, it is also becoming clearer to LEAs as when to they have to apply “Moved, known to be continuing” code to students exiting.

Oklahoma

We believe that the improved data reporting and collection methods used in 2015/16 resulted in much better counts of exits. In previous years, districts self-reported all exits. In 2015/16, we pulled exiting data directly from student records through the online IEP system. We have installed data checks that ensure districts exit their students timely and accurately. The large 20/20 increases from 2014/15 are a result of much cleaner and accurate data collection.

South Carolina

Received a Certificate – The increase reported is correct and is due to an increase in the number of students in districts around the state who received credentials that met the “Received a Certificate” category. Professional development had also been given to all districts to ensure students were reported in the correct exiting category.

Tennessee

For the Exiting C009 report, the Tennessee Department of Education saw an increase state wide in the count of students dropping out and transferring to regular education. Regarding the dropout count, the department has encouraged districts over the last several years to accurately report the exit information for students with disabilities in the statewide IEP data management system from which this data is pulled. This exit data is reported in both districts’ student information systems and the statewide student information system, but often the personnel inputting this information are not the same school district personnel inputting the exit information in the IEP data management system. Accordingly, there have been incongruences. However, district staff have been working diligently over the last several years to ensure that the exit reasons reported in the other data systems match what is input in the IEP data management system. Thus, a more clear representation of exit reasons, such as dropout, have been reflected. The definition of dropout used in the aforementioned data systems is now accurately

being applied to the IEP data system, so students who may have been coded otherwise, simply because special education staff were unaware of the exit reason, are now being correctly coded.

The increase in the count of students transferring to regular education is due to the fact that those students made ineligible but not actually exited from the IEP data management system from which this data is pulled are being included in this category. Previously, if students were made not eligible but were not formally exited, they would not be included in the exit report. However, technically these students are still enrolled in the school district, just not receiving special education services, and accordingly district staff wanted these students left in their IEP data management system. To ensure that these students made ineligible are indeed being included in the federal report, since they do qualify as exiting under the reason of transferring to regular education, noneligibility documents will now trigger this exit reason. The 2015-16 count should be the more common and expected count moving forward.

Virginia

The data reported by the Virginia Department of Education (VDOE) for the 2015-2016 exiting data, Transferred to Regular Education, has been reviewed and are accurate. VDOE reported 3508 in 2014-2015 and 2487 in 2015-2016, a decrease of 1021 in count and 29.1%. This decrease coincides with the increase in Moved Known to be Continuing (difference of 744), as well as an increase in Drop Out data (difference of 281), totaling 1025 students. VDOE continues to provide guidance and support to LEAs regarding data collection and reporting through training, tutorials, and web resources. While the overall exiting counts for students with disabilities remained fairly stable between the years, the fluctuations in data reported within the exiting categories reflects the increased accuracy for data governance and maintenance within the LEA, specifically data coding, collection, and reporting processes.

The data reported by the Virginia Department of Education (VDOE) for the 2015-2016 exiting data, Moved Known to be Continuing, has been reviewed and are accurate. VDOE reported 2838 in 2014-2015 and 3582 in 2015-2016, an increase of 26.2%. Through an analysis of the data, the LEAs with the most significant increases were the largest LEAs in Virginia. The increase in student counts are attributed to LEAs more accurately tracking students who withdraw from their divisions, reporting that they have transferred out of the division and are known to be continuing. In addition, the LEAs with the greatest increases are also home to military bases where student populations fluctuate between years.

The data reported by the Virginia Department of Education (VDOE) for the 2015-2016 exiting data, Dropped Out, has been reviewed and are accurate. VDOE reported an increase in drop out counts from 933 in 2014-2015 to 1214 in 2015-2016 a 30.1% increase. An analysis and comparison of the exiting data from 2014-2015 to 2015-2016 revealed that significant increases occurred in the disability categories of other health impairment, specific learning disability, and emotional disability. Child count data reveals a parallel increase in these disability categories. In addition, students identified with OHI, SLD, and ED receive the majority of their special education services in the regular education setting, and therefore are required to pass the state assessments in order to receive a standard diploma. Furthermore, the modified standard diploma was eliminated for all students entering the 9th grade on or after 2013-2014 school year. For these students who would have been candidates for the modified standard diploma, the Board of Education instituted credit accommodations for students with disabilities pursuing a standard diploma beginning with the spring of 2013. The transition of diploma options coupled with the increase in child count with the above disability categories has attributed to the increase in drop out counts.