Protocol – Indicator 4b

Essential Elements

Indicator Description

4B. - 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; [1] 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.

Measurement

4B. - 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." Discrepancy can be computed by either comparing the rates of suspension and expulsions for children with IEPs to rates for nondisabled children within the LEA or by comparing the rate of suspensions and expulsions for children with IEPs among LEAs within the state.

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, 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. Provide detailed information.

Data for this indicator are "lag" data. Examine the data for year before the reporting year (e.g., for the FFY2020 SPP/APR, use data from 2019–2020).

Stakeholder Engagement:

Special ED Advisory panel is used for stakeholder engagement. Meetings with the advisory panel are held monthly via Zoom or in-person. The advisory panel helps with targets and suggestions for training with districts and dissemination. Official minutes must be kept on all SEAP meetings and must be made available to the public on request.

 For target and baseline setting for results indicators:
1. There was a series of virtual meetings with parents and for the public to review data and set targets. Special education directors are also included.
2. There are 12 parents of a child with a disability and 4 parent members of organizations out of 27 members on the panel that are engaged in setting targets, analyzing data, developing improvement activities, and evaluating progress.
3. Attendance is tracked by roll call at the beginning of each meeting, and members are marked present or absent on an attendance form. The Research Specialist takes roll and provides the parent engagement
4. In-person training was provided to all panel members on October 22, 2025, from the Program Director, Technical Assistance for Excellence in Special Education (TAESE) at Utah State University. Topics included:
   a. Purpose for the Special Education Advisory Panel Under IDEA
   b. Knowing and Understanding the Panel By-laws
   c. IDEA Regulations Regarding the Advisory Panel
   d. The Panel in the Context of the History of Special Education
   e. The Relationships Between Part C of IDEA, Section 619, and Part B of IDEA
   f. Required Membership of the Advisory Panel Under IDEA
   g. Working as an Advisory Panel
   h. Duties of the Advisory Panel Under IDEA
   i. Panel Meeting Procedures
   j. The Panel and OSEP Related Items – General Supervision/APR and DMS
   k. Establishing Annual Advisory Panel Priorities
   l. Current Issues in Special Education and their Possible Impact on the Advisory Panel
5. These meetings were advertised on website, flyers were sent to districts for students to take home to parents, districts and parent centers were also notified regarding virtual meetings.
6. There was a series of ~7 zoom meetings, to collect feedback and answer questions. There was an overview of the indicators, and historical data was presented to review trends. Suggested targets were provided, and comments were recorded. Questions and comments centered on actual data and how the data impacts children. Chat and verbal discussion were used to collect feedback.
7. Meetings are held on weekends, evenings, and at lunch to maximize the availability of people. These were held from November through January.
8. Meets at least four times per year.

a. Solicits nominations for membership from interested parties, including parents.
b. These meetings serve as the primary mechanism for gathering input on target settings, data analysis, and strategy development. The timeline is aligned with the administrative year (July 1 – June 30).

9. An annual report of SEAP activities and suggestions to the SEA, which must be made publicly available.
10. Results of meetings, target settings, and data analysis etc. are discussed in the APR.

There is also an annual parent conference in partnership with the Mississippi Parent Training and Information Center, which is also open to teachers and directors. The data are presented during the conference, and targets are discussed during this meeting.

Target Setting: This is a compliance indicator.

Target must be 0%.

Online SPP/APR Submission Tool Information:

The Mississippi Department of Education (MDE) submits its State Performance Plan/Annual Performance Report (SPP/APR) through the OSEP EMAPS (EDFacts Metadata and Process System) platform. EMAPS is the secure, web-based federal reporting system used by all states to submit IDEA Part B data, indicator narratives, and supporting documentation to the U.S. Department of Education, Office of Special Education Programs (OSEP).

Access to EMAPS is restricted to authorized MDE staff to ensure data confidentiality and compliance with federal reporting requirements. The following staff have direct access to the SPP/APR submission tool:

1. Executive Director, Office of Special Education (OSE) – certifies the final SPP/APR submission on behalf of MDE.
2. Education Program Administrator for Data and Reporting (OSE) – oversees data preparation, coordination, and submission timelines.
3. Part B Data Manager (OSE) – ensures the accuracy of IDEA data across all indicators prior to submission.
4. Director of Data Analysis and Reporting (Office of Technology and Strategic Services, OTSS) – manages data system integrations, user permissions, and technical support.
5. EDFacts Coordinators (OTSS) – facilitate data validation, system maintenance, and federal reporting compliance.

Requests for additional EMAPS access must be submitted in writing to the Director of Data Analysis and Reporting, who coordinates approval with the Executive Director of OSE and the U.S. Department of Education's Partner Support Center (PSC). Once approved, PSC establishes user credentials and assigns role-based permissions to ensure appropriate access levels.

Authorized users log into the EMAPS platform using their federally issued username and password through the U.S. Department of Education's secure portal at:
 https://emaps.ed.gov/suite/

The Partner Support Center (PSC) provides technical support for the EMAPS submission tool, including login assistance, password resets, and system navigation guidance. PSC support is available by email or phone, and contact information is accessible directly from the EMAPS home page.

To ensure accountability, all data entries, narrative uploads, and certification actions are logged within EMAPS, allowing MDE to track submission history, approvals, and version control. The Executive Director of OSE is responsible for certifying the accuracy and completeness of all submitted data prior to federal acceptance.

Data Stewards:

1. Executive Director, Office of Special Education, Provides final review, approval, and certification of all SPP/APR submissions and related data reports.
2. Education Program Administrator for Data and Reporting / Part B Data Manager, Office of Special Education, oversees data collection, validation, and analysis; coordinates timelines and ensures compliance with IDEA and federal reporting requirements; serves as primary liaison with Partner Support and OSEP.
3. Data and Reporting Data Specialists, Office of Special Education, conduct data collection and validation; analyze district-level data; provide technical assistance to LEAs; ensure data accuracy in SharePoint and related systems.
4. Transition Coordinators, Office of Special Education, collect and validate postsecondary outcomes data (Indicator 14); provide technical assistance to LEAs on transition requirements; ensure accuracy of transition-related data in MSIS and SharePoint.
5. 619 Coordinator, Office of Special Education, oversees IDEA Section 618 data collection and reporting; ensures accuracy and completeness of all federal submissions; collaborates with OSE and OTSS staff to align 618 data with SPP/APR indicators.
6. 619 Specialist, Office of Special Education, supports the 618 Coordinator with data validation and file preparation; maintains documentation for audit compliance; assists with trend analysis and technical assistance to districts.

7. Director of Data Analysis and Reporting, Office of Technology and Strategic Services, pulls data from backend systems for Indicators 1–14; compiles data for the APR and LEA determinations; ensures consistency across state data systems.
8. EDFacts Coordinators, Office of Technology and Strategic Services, maintain EDFacts file specifications, formatting, and submission requirements; ensure alignment of all data files with federal reporting standards.

Data Source Description:

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.

The Mississippi Student Information System (MSIS) 2.0 is the primary database used by the SEA to collect, store, and process data for SPP/APR indicators. MSIS 2.0 was launched in July 2024 to replace the legacy system and now supports:
1. Real-time updates at the student, school, and district levels
2. Electronic transfer of student records across districts
3. Detailed tracking of student demographics, attendance, discipline, special education services, and more
4. Compliance with state and federal reporting requirements, including IDEA Part B

MSIS 2.0 integrates 618 Discipline Data reporting, which includes:
1. Incident-level reporting of disciplinary actions (e.g., suspensions, expulsions)
2. 72-hour reporting requirement for incidents involving expulsions, per MS Code Ann. §37-15-6
3. Daily data submission via API for discipline tracking
4. This protocol ensures accurate and timely discipline data collection for analysis of significant disproportionality under IDEA Section 618(d)
5. Special education data including student's IEP dates and disabilities

State Collection and Submission Schedule:

This schedule reflects the use of lag data, meaning the SEA reports on data from the previous school year. For example, the FFY2023 SPP/APR submitted in February 2025 uses data from the 2022–2023 school year.

Discipline and Special Education data is corrected year-round. Discipline data is certified monthly and Special Education is certified for Child Count and at the end of the school year.

Collection:

Net membership enrollment and discipline records are collected in MSIS 2.0. Data for net membership is from month one (what's reported in the EDFacts membership file). Discipline data for students without disabilities is the same collection as for students with disabilities, all coding of discipline data is the same for students with disabilities and without disabilities. Not all LEAs collect/report data (discipline and enrollment) for students without disabilities ages 3-Kindergarten (would only report if they have a public Prek program).

Data is collected daily via API and file upload for Special Education and Discipline data. Once these data collections are certified, the calculations to identify significant discrepancies are run via a stored data procedure by OTSS data team and the results are shared with the OSE Education Program Administrator for Data and Reporting via OneDrive.

Data Validation:

The Mississippi Student Information System (MSIS 2.0) is the central data system used to collect and process student-level data, including discipline, attendance, special education services, and more. It supports:

1. Real-time updates at the student, school, and district levels
2. Electronic transfer of student records across districts
3. Detailed tracking of student demographics and service
4. MSIS 2.0 includes automated edit checks to flag missing, inconsistent, or invalid data entries.
5. LEAs must correct flagged data before submission deadlines.
6. Discipline data is submitted daily via API.
7. These files undergo format validation, ensuring correct field types, codes, and timelines (e.g., 72-hour reporting for expulsions).
8. Data is cross verified with other sources such as:
    a. Child Count
    b. Exiting data
    c. Assessment participation
    d. Dispute resolution records
9. The Office of Special Education conducts desk audits and on-site monitoring to verify data accuracy.
10. LEAs may be required to submit supporting documentation for flagged records.
11. MDE has a Data Governance Committee (DGC) that oversees data quality, privacy, and security.
12. The DGC ensures that all data issues are resolved through a transparent, agency-wide process.

13. For significant disproportionality analysis, MDE uses a standard methodology involving:
    a. Risk ratios
    b. Alternate risk ratios
    c. Minimum cell and n-sizes
14. LEAs are flagged if they exceed a threshold of 2.0 for three consecutive years in identification, placement, or discipline of students with disabilities.
15. Data used for SPP/APR indicators is lag data, meaning it reflects the prior school year.
16. Example: FFY 2020 SPP/APR uses 2019–2020 school year data\
17. This allows time for validation, stakeholder review, and correction before federal submission

Data Analysis:

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.

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). 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, 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.

Describe the state's process when discrepancies occurred and the district with discrepancies had policies, procedures or practices that contributed to the significant discrepancy and that do not comply with related requirements and 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.

Once the required data has been validated and cetified by districts, the data is then available for analysis. The OTSS database team then runs the stored data procedure that incorporates all of the required business rules that perform the significant discrepancy calculations.

The N Size for Mississippi is 10

The results of the calculations are shared with the OSE Education Program Administrator for Data and Reporting via OneDrive.

Definition of Significant Discrepancy:

Mississippi uses a rate difference calculation for Indicator 4. A "significant discrepancy" is defined as having students with disabilities suspended and expelled at least 2 percentage points greater than the rate of suspension and expulsion for students without disabilities. Mississippi uses the following comparison methodology defined in 34 CFR §300.170(a). The rates of suspensions and expulsions of greater than 10 days in a school year for children with IEPs from a racial/ethnic group in each LEA compared to the rates for non-disabled children in the same LEA. When significant discrepancy is determined for an LEA, The MDE OSE will require the LEA to conduct self-review of policies, practices, and procedures to determine if the contributed to the significant discrepancy.

Data on suspensions and expulsions is gathered from the State database, Mississippi Student Information System (MSIS) 2.0. The data pertaining to students with

disabilities taken from the 618 data collection, also reported to EDFacts in the Children with Disabilities (IDEA) Suspensions/Expulsions file submission. The data pertaining to students without disabilities is taken from the net membership enrollment numbers and discipline records in MSIS 2.0.

For slippage analysis – Bureau Director of Data and Compliance will reach out to the Executive Director and Bureau Director for Policy and Programs for additional information regarding the possible causes for slippage. There is some brainstorming and discussion of what is happening in the field – programs that may have closed or had specific challenges.

Regarding adding additional information regarding the indicator – process changes are indicated and something major that may have happened in a district that might affect data.

Response to OSEP-Required Actions:

Bureau Director of Data and Compliance reviews required actions and all OSEP feedback. The Bureau Director of Data and Compliance and Executive Special Education Director will meet to discuss required actions and determine what needs to be changed. This would be reviewed and implemented.

Report on Correction of Identified Noncompliance:

Databases Used:

1. MSIS 2.0 (Mississippi Student Information System):
    a. Centralized data system used to collect and verify student-level data, including discipline, attendance, and special education services.
    b. Supports real-time updates and electronic record transfers across districts.
2. Sources of Data:
    a. LEA Self-Assessments and Assurances
    b. On-site Monitoring Reports
    c. Desk Audits
    d. Dispute Resolution Records
    e. Fiscal Management Reviews
    f. 618 Data Submissions (e.g., Discipline, Child Count, Exiting).
3. Responsible Personnel:
    a. Office of Special Education (OSE) Monitoring Team
        i. Conducts verification through monitoring protocols, including:
        ii. Review of corrected student records
        iii. Documentation of systemic correction
        iv. Follow-up monitoring visits or virtual audits. [www.mdek12.org]
        v. Ensure that both individual and systemic corrections are completed and sustained.

4. Verification Process Steps
    a. Outlined in the Program and Fiscal Monitoring Handbook: [LINK]
    b. Monitoring Report Issued
    c. Correction of Noncompliance
    d. Verification of Correction
    e. Includes review of updated data and documentation
    f. May involve re-monitoring or additional desk audits
    g. Continued Noncompliance
    h. If correction is not verified, further action is taken
5. Explanation for No Findings of Noncompliance (FFY 2019 Reporting on FFY 2018 Data)
6. If the State reported less than 100% compliance but did not identify findings, the explanation provided includes:
    a. Integrated General Supervision System:
    b. Includes multiple layers of monitoring and data validation
    c. LEAs may have corrected issues prior to formal identification as findings
7. Proactive Technical Assistance and Support:
    a. LEAs received guidance and coaching to address potential issues early
8. Data Review and Validation:
    a. Some discrepancies may have been resolved through clarification or corrected submissions before findings were issued. [www.mdek12.org]

Internal Approval Process:

Data Team provides a first pass review of the indicator to see if anything should be added. Then, the director reviews the SPP/APR and submits the final report.

Submission:

The OTSS Developer enters data into the APR tool, adds the methodology and some of the indicator information copied and pasted as necessary. The Bureau Director of Data and Compliance enter number of compliant and noncompliant districts, and reviews and updates narratives. The Executive Special Education Director is authorized to certify the final report.

Clarification:

Bureau Director of Data and Compliance reviews the request and comments for clarification and addresses the response. The Data Manager creates an internal chart with OSEP's comments and each response from the state and provides it to Director and Program Area expert to review before entering those responses during the clarification period.

Data Governance:

Mississippi has an established data governance committee and procedures that outline the process for change control. Any changes to data collection must be formally submitted to the Change Review Board, a subset of the data governance committee, and voted upon and approved by data owners.

Public Reporting:

District determination reports are created in the Spring, and a PDF or Excel form are posted on the website usually around April or May. The OTSS Developer and the Director of Data Analysis and Reporting create and prepare the determination reports. Bureau Director of Data and Compliance will review the reports then ask IT to post them. These are posted here: SPP/APR | The Mississippi Department of Education (mdek12.org)

Indicators 4a and 4b are included in determinations.

District determinations help to identify indicators for coaching.