Protocol – Indicator 9

Essential Elements

Indicator Description

Percent of districts with disproportionate representation of racial and ethnic groups in special education and related services that is the result of inappropriate identification.

Measurement

Percent = [(# of districts, that meet the State-established n and/or cell size (if applicable) for one or more racial/ethnic groups, with disproportionate representation of racial and ethnic groups in special education and related services that is the result of inappropriate identification) divided by the (# of districts 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 "disproportionate representation." Please specify in your definition: 1) the calculation method(s) being used (i.e., risk ratio, weighted risk ratio, e-formula, etc.); and 2) the threshold at which disproportionate representation is identified. Also include, as appropriate, 3) the number of years of data used in the calculation; and 4) any minimum cell and/or n-sizes (i.e., risk numerator and/or risk denominator).

Consider using multiple methods in calculating disproportionate representation of racial and ethnic groups to reduce the risk of overlooking potential problems. Describe the method(s) used to calculate disproportionate representation.

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, districts 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 districts totally excluded from the calculation as a result of this requirement because the district did not meet the minimum n and/or cell size for any racial/ethnic group.

Provide the number of districts that met the State-established n and/or cell size (if applicable) for one or more racial/ethnic groups identified with disproportionate representation of racial and ethnic groups in special education and related services and the number of those districts identified with disproportionate representation that is the result of inappropriate identification.

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 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 engage
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 Director of Special Education, the Education Program Administrator for Data and Compliance, the Director of Data Analysis and Reporting, and designated OTSS developers have access to the SPP/APR Tool with permissions to submit and edit the report. The Director of Special Education authorizes user access, while the Director of Data Analysis and Reporting manages user accounts and coordinates communication with Partner Support regarding access and technical issues.

Users with access to the tool login here: https://emaps.ed.gov/suite/

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. Director of the Office of Parent Engagement and Support, Office of Special Education, monitors timelines and accuracy of dispute-resolution data; ensures

cases are logged and closed correctly in SharePoint; oversees parent-engagement activities and procedural-safeguard compliance.

5. Parent Engagement Specialist, Office of Special Education, supports communication and outreach with families; assists in collecting and reviewing parent-engagement and procedural-safeguard data; collaborates with the Director of Parent Engagement and Support.

6. Director of Policy and Practice, Office of Special Education, reviews data and reports for alignment with state policies and program requirements; assists with interpreting results and developing improvement strategies.

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:

Provide state's analysis, based on State's Child Count data the SEA collected under IDEA section 618, to determine if the disproportionate representation of racial and ethnic groups in special education and related services was the result of inappropriate identification.

Provide racial/ethnic disproportionality data for all school aged children aged 5 and enrolled in kindergarten and aged 6 through 21 served under IDEA, aggregated across all disability categories.

Report on the percent of districts in which disproportionate representation of racial and ethnic groups in special education and related services is the result of inappropriate identification, even if the determination of inappropriate identification was made after the end of the reporting period (i.e., after June 30 of the reporting year).

The Office of Technology and Strategic Services (OTSS) maintains a SQL procedure that extracts data for Indicators 9 and 10 (Disproportionate Representation) from MSIS 2.0. This procedure is executed using data from the December 1 snapshot, specifically from the *FactFedSpedStudent* table, and is designed to calculate disproportionate representation based on federal definitions and state criteria.

The same dataset is also used in the preparation of Child Count files. (See the *Child Count Protocol* for a detailed description of the Child Count process and data flow.) Enrollment data for all students are derived from the MSIS 2.0 certified data. The Month 3 Net Membership file serves as the denominator for calculating district-level disproportionality rates.

The OTSS Data Analyst executes the SQL procedures, verifies that all districts are represented, and reviews the output for accuracy and consistency. Data validation includes checking for missing or incomplete records, verifying year-over-year stability, and ensuring that student counts align with the official membership data.

The procedures are run according to the state's data collection calendar, when requested by the Education Program Administrator for Data and Compliance, and upon confirmation from the Director of Data Analysis and Reporting that data are ready for analysis and submission.

State Collection and Submission Schedule:

The December 1 Child Count is finalized by the Office of Special Education (OSE) by the end of January each year. Once OSE has verified the data, the Office of Technology and Strategic Services (OTSS) produces the finalized data files between February and April.

During January and February, missing or incorrect records are reviewed and corrected. Updates are coordinated through the Office of Special Education, entered into MSIS 2.0 by OTSS, and verified by districts within MSIS 2.0 to ensure accuracy and consistency across systems.

All district-level data, MSIS 2.0 datasets, and EDFacts files are interconnected through the Generate submission process. Data quality issues identified during the Generate validations are corrected within MSIS 2.0 and revalidated in Generate prior to submission. This process ensures alignment between MSIS 2.0, the Child Count dataset, and the corresponding EDFacts files.

After EDFacts files are created and validated, OTSS executes the SQL procedures used to generate data for Indicators 4, 9, and 10. These steps are documented in the Special Education Data Task Calendar, located in the state's shared directory:
 M:\Special Education\SPP APR\APR\ [Year]\Special Ed Data Task Calendar.

The OTSS Data Analyst ensures all required source files, procedures, and tables are in place before running indicator queries. Tasks are prioritized according to the Director of Data Analysis and Reporting's established timeline and the annual data management calendar.

Collection:

The OTSS Data Analyst enters and validates indicator data for Indicators 1–14 in the APR Reporting Tool as data become available from verified sources. The Education Program Administrator for Data and Compliance enters and reviews the written narrative components and supporting explanations for each indicator within the reporting tool.

For Indicators 9 and 10, the data are produced through a SQL procedure that returns district-level results, including:

1. District number and name;
2. Final risk ratio;
3. Threshold flags for disproportionate representation by race/ethnicity and disability category;
4. Total number of students in the state;
5. Total number of students in the subgroup; and
6. The statewide risk ratio for the identified subgroup.

All indicator data outputs are saved within the appropriate APR subfolders by year and indicator, located in: M:\Special Education\SPP APR\APR\[Year]\[Indicator Folder].

The calculation process incorporates an alternate risk ratio to ensure accurate comparison to statewide data. The OTSS Data Analyst generates a pivot table summarizing district-level results, which the Education Program Administrator for Data and Compliance reviews and uses to prepare notification reports for districts that have been flagged for disproportionality.

Data Validation:

After the data procedures are executed, the OTSS Data Analyst reviews the output to verify that data have been received from all districts. The analyst then checks for any exception outliers, such as unusually high-risk ratios or results marked as *N/A*, and confirms that each district's data meet the appropriate cell size and minimum N-size thresholds.

The analyst ensures that any district with a recorded Child Count is represented in the dataset and uses this information to create the target district list for analysis and review. Districts that do not meet the minimum N-size requirements are documented accordingly and excluded from calculations, consistent with federal reporting standards and MDE's data validation procedures.

Data Analysis:

Describe the State's process for making its annual determination that the disproportionate overrepresentation it identified of racial and ethnic groups in special education and related services was the result of inappropriate identification as required by §§300.600(d)(3) and 300.602(a) (e.g., using monitoring data; reviewing policies, practices, and procedures).

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, districts 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 districts totally excluded from the calculation as a result of this requirement because the district did not meet the minimum n and/or cell size for any racial/ethnic group.

Mississippi uses the Alternate Risk Ratio (ARR) method for calculating disproportionality for Indicators 9 and 10. The ARR is applied to all districts that have at least 10 students with disabilities within each racial/ethnic group (for Indicator 9) and within each disability category (for Indicator 10). The analysis is based on one year of data, with a threshold value of 4.0 used to identify districts with potential disproportionate representation.

Once the list of districts meeting the threshold criteria is identified, the OSE Data and Reporting Team issues a notification of noncompliance letter. This letter provides the district's specific data results and instructions to review local policies, practices, and procedures (PPPs) to determine whether the disproportionality is a result of inappropriate implementation.

Districts are required to complete this review using the OSE-provided self-assessment checklist, which guides them through evaluating their identification, placement, and disciplinary decision-making processes. Districts have two weeks to complete the review and return documentation to OSE. The OSE Data Team then reviews and verifies each district's submission to ensure all required steps have been completed.
Following this process:
1. If the disproportionality is not the result of inappropriate policies, practices, or procedures, OSE issues a letter of verification confirming compliance.
2. If the disproportionality is determined to be a result of inappropriate policies, practices, or procedures, the district remains noncompliant and is required to implement corrective actions.

A technical assistance (TA) call is conducted with each identified district to discuss the findings, clarify reporting expectations, and answer questions about completing the self-assessment.

The Education Program Administrator for Data and Compliance enters the total number of districts found to have disproportionate representation due to inappropriate policies, practices, and procedures into the APR Reporting Tool. The OTSS Data Analyst documents the associated methodology in the system, and the Education Program Administrator reviews and finalizes the narrative section related to the policy, practice, and procedures component.

Response to OSEP-Required Actions:

The Education Program Administrator for Data and Compliance reviews all required actions and feedback provided by OSEP. The Director of Special Education and the Education Program Administrator meet to discuss the feedback, determine necessary revisions, and identify any corrective actions needed. Once the revisions are agreed upon, they are reviewed, approved, and implemented to ensure continued compliance with OSEP requirements and alignment with state improvement priorities.

Report on Correction of Identified Noncompliance:

For districts that are due to inappropriate policies practices and procedures the Data team sends a letter of noncompliance with corrective actions. If there was noncompliance there would be a verification that the corrective action is completed and an onsite review of files.

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 Education Program Administrator for Data and Compliance reviews all required actions and feedback provided by OSEP. The Director of Special Education and the Education Program Administrator meet to discuss the required actions, identify necessary revisions, and determine next steps. Agreed-upon changes are reviewed, approved, and implemented to ensure compliance and continuous improvement.

Clarification:

The Education Program Administrator for Data and Compliance reviews all OSEP requests and comments for clarification and drafts the corresponding state responses. An internal tracking chart is developed that lists each OSEP comment alongside the proposed state response. This chart is shared with the Director of Special Education and the appropriate program area specialists for review and input prior to submission. Finalized responses are entered into the SPP/APR system during the clarification period.

Data Governance:

Mississippi has an established data governance committee and procedures that outlines the process for change control. Any changes to data collections 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 generated each spring and posted on the MDE website, typically in April or May, in PDF or Excel format. The OTSS Data Team and the Director of Data Analysis and Reporting compile and prepare the reports for publication. The Education Program Administrator for Data and Compliance reviews the reports for accuracy and completeness before requesting that the Office of Technology and Strategic Services (OTSS) post the finalized versions.

The reports are made publicly available on the MDE website at: <u>SPP/APR | The Mississippi Department of Education (mdek12.org)</u>

Indicators 9 and 10 are included in determinations.

District determinations help identify indicators for coaching.