

# MT Part B

# FFY2014 State Performance Plan / Annual Performance Report

**Introduction to the State Performance Plan (SPP)/Annual Performance Report (APR)**

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In order to ensure consistent data across indicators, provide the number of districts in this field and the data will be loaded into the applicable indicator data tables.

This data will be prepopulated in indicators B3A, B4A, B4B, B9, and B10.

**General Supervision System:**

The systems that are in place to ensure that IDEA Part B requirements are met, e.g., monitoring, dispute resolution, etc.

The Montana Office of Public Instruction (OPI) has a comprehensive system of general supervision that includes a review of IDEA Part B applicants’ policies and procedures to ensure consistency with IDEA Part B requirements. It also includes procedures for formal complaints and due process hearings and mediation, and an Early Assistance Program (EAP) to resolve issues prior to their becoming formal complaints or going to due process. It provides a compliance monitoring process based on a five-year cycle, and a focused intervention system based on selected performance indicators.

Each component of the general supervision system includes procedures for tracking data to ensure requirements and timelines are completed or corrected within required timelines. Complaints, mediations, and due process hearing timelines are tracked by the legal division of the OPI. The LEA/applicant policies and procedures and data, including data gathered through compliance reviews, review of data from the state database, examination of specific, procedural and/or substantive violations of compliance identified by examination of due process hearing decisions and the review of data from the state database and focused intervention are tracked through the OPI Division of Special Education. Continuous improvement, based on each LEAs five-year comprehensive plan, is reported by LEAs annually and tracked through the Accreditation Division.

**Compliance Monitoring**

The OPI reviews individual student records to verify that the LEAs child find procedures, evaluation/re-evaluation processes, and the Individualized Education Program (IEP) procedures meet IDEA requirements and Montana’s standards. This student record review also addresses transfers, expulsion, suspension, aversive treatment plans, manifestation determinations, surrogate parents, private schools, high school graduates, exited students, students found not eligible, students who have had an evaluation report and IEPs during the current year and students whose parents have revoked consent for special education services. Compliance monitoring activities consist of:

- review of a sample of individual student records to examine current practices and documentation;
- review of district policy, practices, and procedures;

- visits to selected schools, when appropriate; and
- contact with individual teachers and specialists to discuss records selected for review, when appropriate.

All identified noncompliance is recorded, verified, and accounted for through a process of:

- notification to the district of all identified noncompliance and required corrections to be made;
- required correction of all identified noncompliance as per OSEP's 09-02 memo (Prong 1 of correction);
- district submission of up-dated data from the district verifying 100 percent post-monitoring compliant policy, practice, and procedure (Prong 2 of correction);
- timely issuance of findings, including corrective actions, for identified noncompliance not corrected. Each finding cites a specific regulation, either federal or state, identified through a review of individual student records and describes the nature of the noncompliance;
- Additional issuance, when appropriate, of required technical assistance and/or professional development and district submission of up-dated data verifying 100 percent post-monitoring compliance in policy, practice, and procedure for issues corrected but originally identified to a degree that is indicative of systemic concern;
- Completion of required technical assistance and professional development activities; and
- The issuance of a final report to the district upon completion of all required compliance monitoring requirements.

The OPI maintains tracking systems for compliance monitoring, as well as a separate tracking system through the Legal Services Division for due process hearings, mediation, complaints and the EAP. The tracking systems are reviewed, on no less than a monthly basis, to ensure timelines are met and procedures are being followed. Personnel maintaining the tracking systems are responsible for ensuring program specialists are kept aware of the timelines. Program specialists conduct follow up with the LEAs, as appropriate, to ensure the LEA is addressing the corrective actions required in accord with the designated times.

The state identified 18 instances of non-compliance that were not related to any of the SPP/APR indicators. Correction of the 18 instances of identified noncompliance was verified using both prongs of the verification process described in the OSEP's 09-02 Memorandum and subsequent guidance from the OSEP. Each LEA in Montana has an on-site monitoring record review on a five-year cycle. Residential and correctional facilities are reviewed on a three-year cycle. The OPI monitoring staff selects records for review and uses a standard record review protocol to conduct the reviews. During this process, instances of noncompliance with the requirements of the IDEA regulations are identified. Following the on-site review, each LEA is provided with a list, by student, of every instance of noncompliance identified during the review. The LEAs are given a specific set of timelines in which to correct every instance of noncompliance. Following the initial verification of correction, the OPI staff review additional records completed subsequent to the identification of the noncompliance to verify that the LEA is complying with all IDEA regulations. If an LEA completes the correction of each instance of noncompliance, and provides the OPI with sufficient additional records to verify ongoing evidence of compliance, then no finding is issued to the LEA. This practice by the state is based on the guidance provided by OSEP in the *FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS REGARDING IDENTIFICATION AND CORRECTION OF NONCOMPLIANCE AND REPORTING ON CORRECTION IN THE STATE PERFORMANCE PLAN (SPP)/ANNUAL PERFORMANCE REPORT (APR)* document. In the process for determination of findings, the OPI considers a variety of factors, including: (1) whether the noncompliance was extensive or found in only a small percentage of files; (2) whether the noncompliance showed a denial of a basic right under the IDEA (e.g., an extended delay in initial evaluation beyond applicable timelines with a corresponding

delay in the child’s receipt of FAPE, or a failure to provide any services in accordance with the IEP); and (3) whether the noncompliance represents an isolated incident in the LEA, or reflects a long-standing failure to meet IDEA requirements. When data indicate that additional evidence of sustained post-monitoring compliance is necessary, the OPI requires the district to obtain additional training and/or submit additional evidence of sustained compliance.

The same verification procedures are used for all noncompliance, whether collected through the state’s on-site monitoring system, desk review of records, state complaint or due process hearing decisions, or statewide student data system.

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**Technical Assistance System:**

The mechanisms that the State has in place to ensure the timely delivery of high quality, evidenced based technical assistance and support to LEAs.

The OPI Special Education Division is organized into four work units that have specific functions and also provide technical assistance related to those functions.

The school improvement/compliance monitoring unit provides both broad and specific technical assistance and training related to the all aspects of the special education process, the proper use and documentation of records and student specific issues. General technical assistance training is regularly scheduled and specific LEA technical assistance is provided whenever requested or required. Technical assistance is also provided to insure timely correction of all identified noncompliance and training is given related to such non-compliance.

The professional development unit is responsible for implementing a number of major training initiatives for the OPI. These programs include:

- Comprehensive System of Personnel Development (CSPD)**
- Montana Behavioral Initiative (MBI)**
- Response to Intervention (RTI)**
- Montana Autism Education Project (MAEP)**
- Montana Higher Education Consortium**
- Traineeships**

Technical assistance is provided as needed to assist in the development and presentation of all professional development activities.

The data and accountability unit provides LEAs technical assistance for all data entry and reporting for all required state and federal reporting purposes. This is done across a variety of platforms and applications. Again, technical assistance training is regularly scheduled and specific LEA technical assistance is provided whenever requested.

The IDEA Part B Program Unit provides technical assistance to LEAs in applying for, use, and accounting of state and federal special education funds. Assistance is also provided in developing and implementing program narratives and special education procedures.

Technical assistance and up-dates are regularly provided to all the directors of special education at conferences and regional meetings.

In addition, OPI professional staff have areas of professional expertise that is available to LEAs, at request, for technical assistance and/or training.

Technical Assistance Providers Montana is currently working with include:

## FFY 2014 Part B State Performance Plan (SPP)/Annual Performance Report (APR)

Montana has joined the **Results-Based Accountability Cross-State Learning Collaborative** through the **National Center for Systemic Improvement (NCSI)**. We are evaluating our general supervision responsibilities and our monitoring process and data to improve our assessment of special education program effectiveness at the LEA level. This, then, will drive not only the focus of our program reviews and monitoring, but also the scope of those activities.

Montana uses the **My Voice Student Survey** from the Quaglia Institute for Student Aspirations. Results from the surveys are analyzed and incorporated into the design of Montana's Behavioral Institute. This alignment of data to direction allows schools involved in MBI to more efficiently cater their program implementation to local needs.

### FFY 2014 Part B State Performance Plan (SPP)/Annual Performance Report (APR)

The **Montana Data Use Culture** grant was received from the US Department of Education, Institute of Education Sciences (IES), in late 2015 as part of the Statewide Longitudinal Data Systems (SLDS) 2015 grant award cycle. This award is funded through 2019. The focus of this grant is on using K-20 data to conduct rigorous analysis of all student-related data in Montana. A special emphasis of this grant has been placed on underserved populations. One of the specific goals of the grant is to investigate and enhance program effectiveness for OPI intervention-based programs. Several OPI-led efforts have taken place in Montana that have focused on school or community-based interventions to enhance student performance in a given subject matter, geographical area, or under supported group. In many of these cases, data that was collected in conjunction with these efforts has not been incorporated into the SLDS data warehouse. Inclusion of data from the Special Education Division of the OPI will provide an excellent example of this new collaboration. Programs such as the Montana Behavioral Initiative (MBI), the Response to Intervention (RTI) and the Multi-Tiered System of Support (MTSS) can be incorporated into the activities of this grant to investigate the longitudinal impact of these efforts on students in Montana. Data concerning the level of program implementation gathered within the Positive Behavior Intervention and Support (PBIS) Applications will be utilized as one aspect of this data linkage. Data reports and analysis will be disseminated within OPI and to the larger education community through yearly reports, presentations and potentially peer-reviewed publications.

All initiatives across the OPI have been developed to include evidence-based practices. Montana's MBI initiative, for example, is based on the research and program developed by the **Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports Center, an OSEP Technical Assistance Center**. Montana's model for our SSIP implementation is premised on the commitment to target and focus on existing supports already in place throughout the SEA. These major initiatives were all developed under strict planning, research, stakeholder involvement, and based on known evidence based practices that produce positive results.

Working with staff from the **Technical Assistance for Excellence in Special Education (TAESE) Center**, the OPI has facilitated the Montana Higher Education Consortium (HEC) for over ten years. The HEC continues to be a part of CSPD and brings together members of the School of Education faculty from each of the colleges and universities in Montana. Participation in the consortium is strong, and includes faculty members from each of the public and private colleges in Montana. This group has worked to provide greater standardization of the teacher training programs in Montana, and has worked together to improve pre-service training programs. This group is also analyzing dispositions of teacher candidates and how to address them, resulting in better qualified educators.

The **TAESE Center** also provides technical assistance to the state through facilitating our large stakeholder meeting, conducting stakeholder input activities, and compiling and analyzing input. In addition, TAESE provides specific orientation training to Montana's State Special Education Advisory Panel.

The division's 619 Coordinator works with the **Early Childhood Technical Assistance (ECTA)** center to discuss inclusion in regards to the Preschool Development Grant (PDG) and the new statement on inclusion of preschool students. She has also listened in on calls in regards to what inclusion looks like in rural states, participated in inclusion webinars presented by ECTA and OSEP, and participated in a webinar on Part C to Part B Transition Data that DaSy and ECTA presented.

The Part B Data Manager has worked with the **IDEA Data Center (IDC)** in multiple ways. There has been participation in various webinars presented by IDC, as well as presentations by the MT Part B Data Manager on some of those webinars; most recently, a joint presentation with the Montana 619 Coordinator regarding the collection, analysis, and use of Part C to Part B transition data for indicators 11 and 12. The Part B Data Manager also participates in the IDC Data Manager Coaching program, and has reviewed various products created by the IDC for use by other data managers.

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## Professional Development System:

The mechanisms the State has in place to ensure that service providers have the skills to effectively provide services that improve results for students with disabilities.

The professional development unit of the special education division operates in a highly structured and efficient system across all of its activities. The Unit Director has been with the office for many years and has spearheaded numerous initiatives that have become national models.

### Comprehensive System of Personnel Development (CSPD)

Montana's **Comprehensive System of Personnel Development (CSPD)** and the **State Personnel Development Grant (SPDG)** provide professional development opportunities, technical assistance, and support to enhance LEA's knowledge and implementation of effective strategies to improve graduation rates and decrease student dropout, in providing FAPE in the LRE with nondisabled peers, training for general education personnel on strategies to use in responding to students with disabilities needs in the regular education setting, research-based strategies to improve student achievement, and provide training in practices to improve instruction through the Response to Intervention (RTI) project. They also provide

statewide training, technical assistance and guidance for IEP teams in IDEA requirements and state procedures, including specific training on timeline requirements.

The five (5) regional CSPD Councils analyze the alignment between the data in the APR and the professional development activities offered in each region. The OPI implemented procedures for the alignment of the professional development offered in each region to the SPP indicators. Based upon an analysis of the SPP/APR data for a given region, the CSPD Council identified the training needs for the region and provided the OPI with a description of which indicator(s) each professional development activity was addressing. This process focused the professional development activities offered throughout Montana on improving the results for students related to each SPP indicator. The CSPD Regions are providers of “just in time” professional development. Based on the performance of the schools on the indicators, the CSPD Regions respond to these needs and provide the appropriate professional development, i.e., instructional strategies, reading, math, transition, early childhood, paraprofessional, etc. The CSPD Regions also provide trainings for general educators to ensure access to the general education curriculum.

The OPI and CSPD Council developed an **Early Childhood Partnership for Professional Development (ECPPD)** committee which provides professional development opportunities for LEA staff involved in the education of preschool-age children. The ECPPD brings together all agencies and organizations that are providers of early childhood education. This includes Head Start, the Governor's Best Beginnings Council, the OPIs Indian Education Division, Part C agency and providers, home day-care providers, center-based day-care providers, and Striving Readers programs. The ECPPD provides the forum for these groups to facilitate consistent professional development for all personnel in early childhood education. Trainings are provided by the CSPD Regions and Part C providers, with continuing education units provided by the Early Childhood Project.

Also under the CSPD, the **Paraprofessional Consortium** is comprised of paraprofessionals, parents, teachers, and administrators in general and special education. The consortium provides resources to support paraprofessionals to be appropriately trained to work with students. The consortium has a Website which provides resources, information on Qualified Paraprofessionals, assessment information, evaluation, employment and recognition. Professional Development is provided through the CSPD regions. Twenty modules are available and provided by trainers in topics such as autism, behavior management, teaming, orientation to special education and others.

**Training activities for general education personnel** continue to be supported by the SPDG and IDEA funds to provide them with skill sets to respond to the needs of students with disabilities in the regular education classroom. Additionally, regular education personnel are encouraged to participate in any training offered through the CSPD regions or OPI training activities and do so in significant numbers. Division of Special Education staff provided workshops for general education teachers as a part of the MEA/MFT educator conference, at other state conferences and CSPD workshops, as well as at LEA request. The annual MBI conference has been extremely successful in providing general education personnel the skills necessary to implement positive supports in the regular education setting.

The CSPD regions work closely with the **Regional Education Service Areas (RESAs)** to provide professional development in both general and special education. The CSPD and RESAs coordinate their professional development activities to meet the needs of educators in their regions. The RESAs are supported through the OPI Accreditation Division. The CSPD coordinators and SPDG director participate in the RESA State Advisory Council. The RESAs and CSPD regions assist with Common Core trainings and work closely with the Striving Readers programs.

The OPI School Mental Health (SMH) coordinator worked collaboratively with the Children’s Mental Health Bureau at the Department of Public Health and Human Services (DPHHS) to facilitate the provision of mental health services in schools through CSCT (Comprehensive School and Community Treatment Services). This position continues to work with DPHHS on collaborative work. Additional SMH activities included social and emotional learning, trauma-informed supports, suicide prevention, and positive behavior supports in alternative education settings. Such proceedings are accomplished through joint trainings, interagency and multi-systems collaboration, the development and ongoing work of Community of Practice

(CoP) face to face CoP meetings, conference calls and the establishment of School Mental Health integration into the annual MBI (PBIS) Summer Institute. The SMH coordinator at the OPI promotes enhanced collaboration toward system integration among families, youth-serving agencies and working toward whole person wellness within our schools.

The **Montana Behavioral Initiative**(MBI) is Montana's PBIS process. Approximately 300 of Montana's schools have enlisted to be "MBI Schools." These schools are provided with intensive team training and support implementing PBIS initiatives within their schools. Each school is provided with an MBI Consultant to facilitate the MBI implementation process with the schools and to assist in gathering data.

In Response to the needs of secondary high schools the MBI has developed a High School Forum. The MBI High School forum addresses PBIS in high schools, drop-out prevention, attendance, and student engagement, the Early Warning System and Family Engagement. Twenty six high schools participated in FFY14 with 128 participants—4AA,7A, 12B, and 3C high schools

In the Spring of 2015, MBI provided a specific training for preschool programs implementing the MBI/PBIS process. Approximately 11 programs and 67 participants took part in training specific for MBI implementation in pre-schools.

Another Component of the MBI is MBI Youth days. Youth day activities brought together students from across Montana in a series of Regional meetings/trainings. The Youth Day activities focused on character education, service learning, the Aspirations Framework, and Mindfulness Activities. These activities resulted in the teams of students creating action plans for their schools regarding the implementation of the MBI process with the integration of the activities mentioned above. These workshops/trainings also addressed leadership skills, asset building and bully prevention through student –directed activities. The FFY 14 MBI You Days also partnered with Project Unify of the Special Olympics so that students with disabilities are included in the MBI Youth Days. For 2015, 60 middle and high schools, 746 students, and 115 chaperones participated. Students and chaperones participated at 57 work sites for the service learning component.

Additionally the MBI provided two Tier 2 trainings of Classroom Problem Solving. Thirty one schools, pre-school through high school with 165 participated in this Tier 2 training.

Additionally on an annual basis the MBI Summer Institute is hosted with trainings at Tiers 1,2 and 3. This annual Summer Institute collaborates with the Montana Content Standards, Juvenile Justice, Safe and Drug Free Schools, Children's Mental Health, School Resource Officers, and others to provide sessions that include a "one stop shop" for training and brings teams of educators, mental health workers, parents, and law enforcement together to ascertain the sessions that they need to move their schools and communities forward for successful students. Over 1200 individuals participated in 2015. The MBI Summer Institute has been hosted by OPI for over 20 years.

As MBI continues to expand and grow so do the trainings and topics for the teams in communities who serve our Montana Youth. In the past year, we have also hosted joint training with school personnel and the School Mental Health Teams located in their schools. Also we have begun to provide Suicide Prevention Training through a Suicide Prevention Protocol Model.

The **Response to Intervention (RTI) project** enrolled nearly 100 schools in the project for training. The majority of these schools have been in training for three or more years and are in the implementing or advanced stages. Montana currently has 23 schools that have achieved a sustaining status. Regional consultants assisted RTI problem-solving teams on-site in implementing and improving the project in their schools. Building problem-solving and intervention capacity in schools also greatly increases the ability of schools to appropriately identify students with disabilities. The OPI staff also worked with and supported all CSPD regions to provide RTI support trainings to school-level teams.

The OPI Special Education Division staff collaborated with the Division of **Indian Education** and other OPI

staff on the development and delivery of professional development related to the unique needs of Montana's students. In particular, an understanding of American Indian Culture and factors that lead to a higher dropout rate for American Indian students is felt to be a critical component in keeping students in schools. As with all students, data on American Indian students with disabilities who have dropped out of school is analyzed and shared with the Division of Indian Education and the Board of Public Education. Special Education staff analyzed data on American Indian students with disabilities for the Indian Education staff to facilitate in designing activities to decrease the dropout rates of American Indian students.

#### Montana Autism Education Project (MAEP)

The **Montana Autism Education Project (MAEP)** expanded the provision of on-site assessment and consultation regarding individual children as well as broader training opportunities at LEA, regional, and state-wide levels to improve the LEAs ability to respond to the challenging behaviors and other instructional needs of children with autism and other low-incidence disabilities.

The MAEP coordinator supervised seven behavioral consultants who provided technical assistance and training to LEA staff and pre-service university programs who educate students with autism and significant cognitive delays. This provided staff development to general and special education staff, pre-service education, school psychology students and speech pathology students.

Student-specific technical assistance activities include: observations of students and discussion with current staff; review of the IEP with technical assistance on developing comprehensive autism services; and consultations on the development of behavioral intervention and communication strategies.

Professional development activities included: providing training in communication strategies; (Michelle Garcia Winner; Zones of Regulation, Linda Hodgdon) and Tier 2/3 behavior intervention strategies. "; providing training on effective components of programs for students with autism; and functional behavior assessment and the development of behavior intervention plans. The MAEP also provided financial assistance to school and pre-service staff to attend non-MAEP workshops and trainings.

Additionally, the MAEP sponsors access to an online training curriculum in educating students with autism spectrum disorders.

**The Montana Higher Education Consortium (HEC)** is a unique community of practice that has brought together general and special education faculty members from all teacher training programs in the state of Montana. Very few SEAs in the country engage and involve their institutions of higher education (IHEs) with improvement efforts. In Montana there is a direct connection with the IHE and the Comprehensive System of Professional Development (CSPD) and the special education advisory panel. In the past two years, the IHEs have been involved in a larger stakeholder group of around 100 participants that have provided feedback to the Montana SSIP. The HEC has become involved and assisted Montana with their large scale initiatives and systems change efforts, such as the Annual Performance Report (APR). The HEC has met twice a year for the past sixteen years, in the spring and fall, to discuss critical issues and share ideas relating to teacher training programs. The meetings have created a strong partnership and collaboration between faculty members at the teacher training programs. The universities and colleges in Montana benefit from the information they receive from the Montana Office of Public Instruction. The HEC has connected and collaborated with two OSEP national centers, IRIS and CEEDAR.

The Unit also implements the **State's Professional Development Grant (SPDG)**.

Professional development activities in Montana are aligned with Superintendent Juneau's Graduation Matters Montana initiative, common core standards, Montana's State Personnel Development Grant, our Comprehensive System of Personnel Development (CSPD), and our State Performance Plan, including its improvement activities.

#### **Multi Tiered System of Support**

Montana has long supported tiered support systems through the MBI and RTI initiatives. The goal of

Montana’s MTSS project is to bring those initiatives together to create an all-encompassing system that supports Montana students with a system of braided behavioral and academic supports. The Montana MTSS project is a system of prevention, early intervention and tiered support that ensures all students, including both struggling and advanced learners, are achieving to high academic and behavioral standards. To this end, individual student progress is monitored and results are used to make the best instructional and intervention decisions for every student.

Montana MTSS Guiding Principles include:

- committed leadership at the state’s district and school levels,
- collaboration teaming,
- data regularly collected from universal screenings and ongoing assessments,
- school-wide commitment to ongoing professional development,
- continuum of evidence-based curriculum, instruction and interventions used to support all students based on their needs.

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**Stakeholder Involvement:**  apply this to all Part B results indicators

The mechanism for soliciting broad stakeholder input on targets in the SPP, including revisions to targets.

The Special Education Division of the Office of Public Instruction (OPI) provides multiple services to Montana schools to assist them in providing a quality education to all students. The programs managed through this division are aligned with State Superintendent Juneau's Graduation Matters Montana initiative, common core standards, Montana's State Personnel Development Grant, our Comprehensive System of Personnel Development (CSPD), and our State Performance Plan, including its improvement activities. The special education division is organized into four work units that provide professional development, funding, data collection and analysis, and general supervision to local school districts and other special education programs in the state. These efforts are supported by an excellent group of administrative assistants that keep the division functioning smoothly.

Montana is a frontier state that is often described as a small town with very long streets. The special education and disability communities are relatively small, but close knit. Personal acquaintanceships and relationships are cultivated and nurtured. We maintain an ability to communicate and exchange information on a less formal basis at times than in many other states and agencies. To promote all the relationships we value, we hold a strong presence in the public forum where there is an intense interrelationship between agencies, associations, and advisory panels and councils, with special education staff serving both appointed and designated multiple advisory and liaison roles. The same holds true with the membership of the state special education advisory panel with strong representation, including not only required member roles, but from a cross section of the disability community including students. Dissemination of information from all these forums is routinely distributed to participants and to the public which then encourages ongoing input and discussion.

Guidance for Montana's Improvement activities comes from this broad acculturated group of stakeholders starting with the advisory panel and supplemented with input gained firsthand from the multiple agencies, groups, and individuals our office seeks out and engages.

Discussions and Stakeholder input of the SPP, APR, SSIP, and RDA/RBA began in 2013 with our State

Special Education Advisory Panel. The Panel is fully vested as required and broadly representative of Montana. Additionally, many of the panel members as well as SEA staff serve in other agency or organization leadership positions or on advisory groups in the disability community. This enables us to draw insight and advise from a very encompassing overview and understanding of Montana's unique needs, potentials, weaknesses and strengths. The advisory panel is our primary stakeholder group.

Additionally, there are a number of other stakeholder groups that we sponsor and/or participate in.

- Our state CSPD includes both regional and state councils that regularly meet to assess APR data and to evaluate professional development priorities and results.
- The OPI and CSPD Council developed an **Early Childhood Partnership for Professional Development (ECPPD)** committee which provides professional development opportunities for LEA staff involved in the education of preschool-age children. The ECPPD brings together all agencies and organizations that are providers of early childhood education. This includes Head Start, the Governor's Best Beginnings Council, the OPI's Indian Education Division, Part C agency and providers, home day-care providers, center-based day-care providers, and Striving Readers programs.
- Also under the CSPD, the **Paraprofessional Consortium** is comprised of paraprofessionals, parents, teachers, and administrators in general and special education. The consortium provides resources to support paraprofessionals to be appropriately trained to work with students. The consortium has a Website which provides resources, information on Qualified Paraprofessionals, assessment information, evaluation, employment and recognition.
- The CSPD regions work closely with the RESAs to provide professional development in both general and special education. The CSPD and RESAs coordinate their professional development activities to meet the needs of educators in their regions. The RESAs are supported through the OPI Accreditation Division. The CSPD coordinators and SPDG director participate in the RESA State Advisory Council. The RESAs and CSPD regions assist with Common Core trainings and work closely with the Striving Readers programs.
- The OPI School Mental Health (SMH) coordinator worked collaboratively with the Children's Mental Health Bureau at the DPHHS to facilitate the provision of mental health services in schools through CSCT (Comprehensive School and Community Treatment Services).
- The OPI continues its collaboration with the IDEA Partnership, the School Administrators of Montana (and its affiliated groups), the MEA/MFT, the Montana Association of School Psychologists and others that make up the Montana RTI Council to provide guidance to facilitate the implementation of the RTI process in Montana. The partnership also supports the SMH community of practice.
- The OPI Special Education Division staff has developed productive working relationships with other Montana Agencies that serve youth and adults with disabilities. Division staff participated as members of advisory councils for vocational rehabilitation, juvenile justice, developmental disabilities, the state independent living council and the mental health divisions of the DPHHS. These connections have allowed the OPI staff to build strong working relationships with other agencies, which resulted in multiple collaborative projects that have strengthened the commitments of all involved to working with Montana's youth to facilitate smooth transitions from birth to adulthood.
- Working with staff from the Technical Assistance for Excellence in Special Education (TAESE) center, the OPI has facilitated the Montana Higher Education Consortium (HEC) for over ten years. The HEC continues to be a part of CSPD and brings together members of the School of Education faculty from each of the colleges and universities in Montana. Participation in the consortium is strong, and includes faculty members from each of the public and private colleges in Montana. This group has worked to provide greater standardization of the teacher training programs in Montana, and has worked together to improve pre-service training programs. This group also is analyzing dispositions of teacher candidates and how to address them, resulting in better qualified educators.

Annually, the SEA brings together representatives from all these stakeholder groups for a joint meeting in May facilitated by TAESE. This meeting gathers over 80 front-line stakeholders together to share up-dates of issues and to gather input from a comprehensive representation of Montana disability community, families

and parents of regular and special education children and students. For the past three years, the topic has been Montana's SSIP and, this year, Phase II of the SSIP, and activities have been conducted to solicit both general and specific stakeholder input. In May 2015, after meeting with the State Advisory Panel in January, the joint meeting conducted an activity led by Norm Ames from Mountain Plains Regional Resource Center centered identification of initiatives and programs currently active in the state; their possible connection to the SSIP; what data they collect and how it's measured; and the potential impact of the initiative on the state's SiMR. The OPI support of each initiative and stakeholder support was also collected. Compiled results were analyzed and reviewed by the State Advisory Panel in June and September. Final review and input from the Panel were received and are being incorporated into the Montana Phase II SSIP.

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**Reporting to the Public:**

How and where the State reported to the public on the FFY 2013 performance of each LEA located in the State on the targets in the SPP/APR as soon as practicable, but no later than 120 days following the State's submission of its FFY 2013 APR, as required by 34 CFR §300.602(b)(1)(i)(A); and a description of where, on its Web site, a complete copy of the State's SPP, including any revision if the State has revised the SPP that it submitted with its FFY 2013 APR in 2015, is available.

**Dissemination of the State Performance Plan and Annual Performance Report to the Public**

The February 2, 2015, Montana Annual Performance Report and revised State Performance Plan will be made available to the public via the OPI Web site at <http://www.opi.mt.gov/Programs/SpecialEd/Index.html> by no later than March 1, 2015. For the FFY 2013 SPP/APR, all information related to Indicator 17, State Systemic Improvement Plan, including baseline and targets, due April 1, 2015, will be made available to the public via the OPI Web site at <http://www.opi.mt.gov/Programs/SpecialEd/Index.html> by no later than May 1, 2015. An electronic announcement of the report with links to the Montana State Performance Plan and Annual Performance Report will be sent to the authorized representatives of the LEAs, directors of special education, to the parent training and information center PLUK, to Disability Rights Montana and to state and regional CSPD Council members. Hard copies of both documents are given to members of the state Special Education Advisory Panel.

**Attachments**

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**Actions required in FFY 2013 response**

None

**OSEP Response**

The State's determinations for both 2014 and 2015 were Needs Assistance. Pursuant to section 616(e)(1) of the IDEA and 34 C.F.R. § 300.604(a), OSEP's June 30, 2015

## FFY 2014 Part B State Performance Plan (SPP)/Annual Performance Report (APR)

determination letter informed the State that it must report with its FFY 2014 SPP/APR submission, due February 1, 2016, on: (1) the technical assistance sources from which the State received assistance; and (2) the actions the State took as a result of that technical assistance. The State provided the required information.

### Required Actions

## Indicator 1: Graduation

Monitoring Priority: FAPE in the LRE

Results indicator: Percent of youth with IEPs graduating from high school with a regular diploma. (20 U.S.C. 1416 (a)(3)(A))

### Historical Data

Baseline Data: 2011

FFY	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013
Target ≥			69.90%	70.00%	80.00%	80.00%	80.00%	80.00%	80.00%	81.00%
Data		70.20%	68.90%	73.90%	76.80%	74.90%	78.30%	69.20%	80.60%	76.27%

Key:  Gray – Data Prior to Baseline  Yellow – Baseline  Blue – Data Update

### FFY 2014 - FFY 2018 Targets

FFY	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018
Target ≥	81.20%	81.40%	81.60%	81.80%	82.00%

Key:

**Targets: Description of Stakeholder Input** - Please see the Stakeholder Involvement section of the [introduction](#).

Enter additional information about stakeholder involvement

### Prepopulated Data

Source	Date	Description	Data	Overwrite Data
SY 2013-14 Cohorts for Regulatory Adjusted-Cohort Graduation Rate (EDFacts file spec C151; Data group 696)	12/2/2015	<a href="#">Number of youth with IEPs graduating with a regular diploma</a>	920	
SY 2013-14 Cohorts for Regulatory Adjusted-Cohort Graduation Rate (EDFacts file spec C151; Data group 696)	12/2/2015	<a href="#">Number of youth with IEPs eligible to graduate</a>	1,214	null
SY 2013-14 Regulatory Adjusted Cohort Graduation Rate (EDFacts file spec C150; Data group 695)	12/2/2015	<a href="#">2012-13 Regulatory four-year adjusted-cohort graduation rate table</a>	75.78%	Calculate <input type="checkbox"/>

### FFY 2014 SPP/APR Data

Number of youth with IEPs in the current year's adjusted cohort graduating with a regular diploma	Number of youth with IEPs in the current year's adjusted cohort eligible to graduate	FFY 2013 Data	FFY 2014 Target	FFY 2014 Data
920	1,214	76.27%	81.20%	75.78%

### Graduation Conditions Field

**FFY 2014 Part B State Performance Plan (SPP)/Annual Performance Report (APR)**

Provide the four-year graduation cohort rate. The four-year graduation rate follows a cohort, or a group of students, who begin as first-time 9th graders in a particular school year and who graduate with a regular high school diploma in four years or less. An extended-year graduation rate follows the same cohort of students for an additional year or years. The cohort is "adjusted" by adding any students transferring into the cohort and by subtracting any students who transfer out, emigrate to another country, or die during the years covered by the rate.

Under 34 C.F.R. §200.19(b)(1)(iv), a "regular high school diploma" means the standard high school diploma awarded to students in a State that is fully aligned with the State's academic content standards and does not include a GED credential, certificate of attendance, or any alternative award. The term "regular high school diploma" also includes a "higher diploma" that is awarded to students who complete requirements above and beyond what is required for a regular diploma.

Montana's U.S. Department of Education-approved high school graduation rate is an estimated cohort group rate. This estimated cohort method utilizes both dropout and graduate data and uses data from four consecutive years. Graduation rate, defined as "the percentage of students who graduate from secondary school with a regular diploma in the standard number of years" (i.e., "on-time") is the required additional indicator for public high schools in Montana's AYP determinations.

**Actions required in FFY 2013 response**

None

**OSEP Response**

**Required Actions**

## Indicator 2: Drop Out

Monitoring Priority: FAPE in the LRE

Results indicator: Percent of youth with IEPs dropping out of high school. (20 U.S.C. 1416 (a)(3)(A))

### Historical Data

Baseline Data: 2011

FFY	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013
Target ≤			5.80%	5.60%	5.10%	5.00%	4.90%	4.80%	4.70%	3.60%
Data		5.90%	5.60%	4.50%	4.50%	3.40%	3.50%	4.00%	3.70%	3.76%

Key:  Gray – Data Prior to Baseline  Yellow – Baseline  Blue – Data Update

### FFY 2014 - FFY 2018 Targets

FFY	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018
Target ≤	3.60%	3.50%	3.50%	3.40%	3.40%

Key:

**Targets: Description of Stakeholder Input** - Please see the Stakeholder Involvement section of the [introduction](#).

Enter additional information about stakeholder involvement

### FFY 2014 SPP/APR Data

Number of special education dropouts, grades 7-12	Number of students with disabilities enrolled in school as of October 1, grades 7-12	FFY 2013 Data*	FFY 2014 Target*	FFY 2014 Data
260	6,977	3.76%	3.60%	3.73%

Use a different calculation methodology

Change numerator description in data table

Change denominator description in data table

Please explain the methodology used to calculate the numbers entered above.

**Measurement:** States must report using the dropout data used in the ESEA graduation rate calculation and follow the timeline established by the Department under the ESEA.

The calculation method used in this report is an event rate (snapshot of those who drop out in a single year) adapted from the National Center for Education Statistics (NCES) at the U.S. Department of Education and is consistent with the requirements of the NCES Common Core of Data (CCD) reporting.

#### Dropout Rate calculation:

Dropout Rates are calculated by dividing the number of special education dropouts, grades 7-12, by the number of students

with disabilities, grades 7-12, enrolled in school as of the first Monday in October.

Number of special education dropouts, grades 7-12

Number of students with disabilities enrolled in school as of October 1, grades 7-12

Provide additional information about this indicator (optional)

The data presented in Table 2.1 below is used to assess Montana's progress in meeting its FFY 2014 performance target for the dropout rates of students with disabilities. The state set a target, based on a sample size of a minimum N of 10, of decreasing the dropout rates of students with disabilities to 3.6 percent for FFY 2014, within a 95 percent confidence interval. When assessing Montana's progress in meeting its established performance target, a minimum N of 10 and a confidence interval are applied to reduce the effect of variability due to small sample sizes. When the minimum N and the confidence interval are applied, Montana meets its target.

**Table 2.1 Montana Performance Target Status for FFY 2014**

School Year	Special Education Dropout Rate	Confidence Interval – High	Confidence Interval – Low	SPP Performance Target for 2012	State Performance Status
2013-2014	3.7%	4.2%	3.3%	3.6%	Met Target

**Actions required in FFY 2013 response**

None

**OSEP Response**

**Required Actions**

### Indicator 3A: Districts Meeting AYP/AMO for Disability Subgroup

Monitoring Priority: FAPE in the LRE

Results indicator: Participation and performance of children with IEPs on Statewide assessments:

- A. Percent of the districts with a disability subgroup that meets the State's minimum "n" size that meet the State's AYP/AMO targets for the disability subgroup.
- B. Participation rate for children with IEPs.
- C. Proficiency rate for children with IEPs against grade level, modified and alternate academic achievement standards.

(20 U.S.C. 1416 (a)(3)(A))

#### Historical Data

Baseline Data: 2005

FFY	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013
Target ≥			39.00%	40.40%	41.00%	41.00%	41.50%	41.50%	41.50%	
Data		40.40%	50.00%	44.30%	8.80%	17.80%	8.20%	6.90%	0%	0%

Key:  Gray – Data Prior to Baseline  Yellow – Baseline  Blue – Data Update

#### FFY 2014 - FFY 2018 Targets

FFY	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018
Target ≥					

Key:

**Targets: Description of Stakeholder Input** - Please see the Stakeholder Involvement section of the [introduction](#).

Enter additional information about stakeholder involvement

#### FFY 2014 SPP/APR Data

Does your State have an ESEA Flexibility Waiver of determining AYP?

Yes  No

Number of districts in the State	Number of districts that met the minimum "n" size	Number of districts that meet the minimum "n" size AND met AYP	FFY 2013 Data*	FFY 2014 Target*	FFY 2014 Data
408	null	null	0%		

#### Actions required in FFY 2013 response

None

#### OSEP Response

Indicator 3A is not applicable for FFY 2014.

**Required Actions**

### Indicator 3B: Participation for Students with IEPs

Monitoring Priority: FAPE in the LRE

Results indicator: Participation and performance of children with IEPs on Statewide assessments:

- A. Percent of the districts with a disability subgroup that meets the State’s minimum “n” size that meet the State’s AYP/AMO targets for the disability subgroup.
- B. Participation rate for children with IEPs.
- C. Proficiency rate for children with IEPs against grade level, modified and alternate academic achievement standards.

(20 U.S.C. 1416 (a)(3)(A))

#### Historical Data

	Group Name	Baseline Year	FFY	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013
Reading	A Overall	2014	Target ≥			95.00%	95.00%	95.00%	95.00%	95.00%	95.00%	95.00%	100%
			Data		99.00%	97.30%	95.60%	98.20%	95.00%	96.10%	96.60%	95.80%	62.90%
Math	A Overall	2014	Target ≥			95.00%	95.00%	95.00%	95.00%	95.00%	95.00%	95.00%	100%
			Data		99.00%	97.60%	95.80%	95.40%	95.90%	96.30%	96.90%	97.00%	61.32%

Key:  Gray – Data Prior to Baseline  Yellow – Baseline  Blue – Data Update

#### FFY 2014 - FFY 2018 Targets

	FFY	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018
Reading	A ≥ Overall	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%
Math	A ≥ Overall	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%

Key:

**Targets: Description of Stakeholder Input** - Please see the Stakeholder Involvement section of the [introduction](#).

Enter additional information about stakeholder involvement

Would you like to use the assessment data below to automatically calculate the actual data reported in your FFY 2013 APR by the grade groups you provided on the Reporting Group Selection page? yes

Would you like the disaggregated data to be displayed in your final APR? yes

**Data Source:** SY 2014-15 Assessment Data Groups - Reading (EDFacts file spec C188; Data Group: 589) **Date:** 3/3/2016

Reading assessment participation data by grade											
Grade	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	HS
a. Children with IEPs	1371	1316	1303	1306	1266	1194	n	n	1005	n	n
b. IEPs in regular assessment with no accommodations	605	568	518	510	521	470			513		

**FFY 2014 Part B State Performance Plan (SPP)/Annual Performance Report (APR)**

Reading assessment participation data by grade											
Grade	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	HS
c. IEPs in regular assessment with accommodations	35	19	24	18	33	26			8		
d. IEPs in alternate assessment against grade-level standards											
e. IEPs in alternate assessment against modified standards											
f. IEPs in alternate assessment against alternate standards	103	112	109	118	104	92			80		

**Data Source: Date:**

Math assessment participation data by grade											
Grade	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	HS
a. Children with IEPs	1371	1317	1303	1307	1266	1194	n	n	1005	n	n
b. IEPs in regular assessment with no accommodations	591	550	488	510	522	481			510		
c. IEPs in regular assessment with accommodations	407	441	431	401	411	336			138		
d. IEPs in alternate assessment against grade-level standards											
e. IEPs in alternate assessment against modified standards											
f. IEPs in alternate assessment against alternate standards	102	112	109	116	104	94			80		

**FFY 2014 SPP/APR Data: Reading Assessment**

Group Name	Number of Children with IEPs	Number of Children with IEPs Participating	FFY 2013 Data*	FFY 2014 Target*	FFY 2014 Data
A Overall	8,761	4,586	62.90%	100%	52.35%

**Explanation of Group A Slippage**

In the 2013-2014 school year Montana received a testing waiver from the Department of Education. Under that waiver, Montana conducted a field test of the Smarter Balanced assessment. No official data were obtained. Montana began using the Smarter Balanced assessment in the 2014-15 school year. Administration of the test was beset with technical difficulties. Some districts were unable to test all students and some districts were unable to test any students. This led to reduced participation and tests that could not be scored.

**FFY 2014 SPP/APR Data: Math Assessment**

Group Name	Number of Children with IEPs	Number of Children with IEPs Participating	FFY 2013 Data*	FFY 2014 Target*	FFY 2014 Data
A Overall	8,763	6,934	61.32%	100%	79.13%

**Public Reporting Information**

Provide links to the page(s) where you provide public reports of assessment results.

[http://gems.opi.mt.gov/StudentAchievement/Dashboards/Student%20Achievement%20Dashboard/MontCAS%20\(CRT\).aspx](http://gems.opi.mt.gov/StudentAchievement/Dashboards/Student%20Achievement%20Dashboard/MontCAS%20(CRT).aspx)

This link takes you to Montana's statewide longitudinal data system.

### Actions required in FFY 2013 response

None

### OSEP Response

The State reported that, due to technical difficulties related to the State's vendor for statewide assessments, the State was not able to report complete data regarding the participation of students with disabilities in Statewide assessments during the 2014-2015 school year. Therefore, OSEP cannot determine whether the State met its targets. The State provided the following explanation in its FFY 2014 SPP/APR as to why it could not report complete data: "Montana began using the Smarter Balanced assessment in the 2014-15 school year. Administration of the test was beset with technical difficulties. Some districts were unable to test all students and some districts were unable to test any students. This led to reduced participation and tests that could not be scored."

### Required Actions

### Indicator 3C: Proficiency for Students with IEPs

Monitoring Priority: FAPE in the LRE

Results indicator: Participation and performance of children with IEPs on Statewide assessments:

- A. Percent of the districts with a disability subgroup that meets the State’s minimum “n” size that meet the State’s AYP/AMO targets for the disability subgroup.
- B. Participation rate for children with IEPs.
- C. Proficiency rate for children with IEPs against grade level, modified and alternate academic achievement standards.

(20 U.S.C. 1416 (a)(3)(A))

#### Historical Data

	Group Name	Baseline Year	FFY	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013
Reading	A Overall	2014	Target ≥			32.00%	32.00%	33.00%	33.00%	33.50%	33.50%	33.50%	
			Data		32.00%	41.10%	34.80%	45.96%	48.70%	50.70%	54.10%	48.90%	80.52%
Math	A Overall	2014	Target ≥			32.00%	32.00%	33.00%	33.00%	33.50%	33.50%	33.50%	
			Data		32.00%	25.60%	34.80%	27.85%	30.10%	31.40%	30.90%	28.50%	69.35%

Key:  Gray – Data Prior to Baseline  Yellow – Baseline  Blue – Data Update

#### FFY 2014 - FFY 2018 Targets

	FFY	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018
Reading	A ≥ Overall					
Math	A ≥ Overall					

Key:

**Targets: Description of Stakeholder Input** - Please see the Stakeholder Involvement section of the [introduction](#).

Enter additional information about stakeholder involvement

Would you like to use the assessment data below to automatically calculate the actual data reported in your FFY 2013 APR by the grade groups you provided on the Reporting Group Selection page? yes

Would you like the disaggregated data to be displayed in your final APR? yes

**Data Source:** SY 2014-15 Assessment Data Groups - Reading (EDFacts file spec C188; Data Group: 589) **Date:** 3/3/2016

Reading proficiency data by grade											
Grade	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	HS
a. Children with IEPs who received a valid score and a proficiency was assigned	565	533	544	490	492	474	n	n	458	n	n

**FFY 2014 Part B State Performance Plan (SPP)/Annual Performance Report (APR)**

Reading proficiency data by grade											
Grade	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	HS
b. IEPs in regular assessment with no accommodations scored at or above proficient against grade level	111	80	86	43	43	35			46		
c. IEPs in regular assessment with accommodations scored at or above proficient against grade level	6	n	n	n	7	n			n		
d. IEPs in alternate assessment against grade-level standards scored at or above proficient against grade level											
e. IEPs in alternate assessment against modified standards scored at or above proficient against grade level											
f. IEPs in alternate assessment against alternate standards scored at or above proficient against grade level	47	49	54	38	45	48			46		

**Data Source:** SY 2014-15 Assessment Data Groups - Math (EDFacts file spec C185; Data Group: 588) **Date:** 3/3/2016

Math proficiency data by grade											
Grade	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	HS
a. Children with IEPs who received a valid score and a proficiency was assigned	965	942	919	851	864	784	n	n	611	n	n
b. IEPs in regular assessment with no accommodations scored at or above proficient against grade level	150	98	64	31	42	24			11		
c. IEPs in regular assessment with accommodations scored at or above proficient against grade level	41	29	19	8	16	6			n		
d. IEPs in alternate assessment against grade-level standards scored at or above proficient against grade level											
e. IEPs in alternate assessment against modified standards scored at or above proficient against grade level											
f. IEPs in alternate assessment against alternate standards scored at or above proficient against grade level	46	40	50	48	38	49			32		

**FFY 2014 SPP/APR Data: Reading Assessment**

Group Name	Children with IEPs who received a valid score and a proficiency was assigned	Number of Children with IEPs Proficient	FFY 2013 Data*	FFY 2014 Target*	FFY 2014 Data
A Overall	3,556	797	80.52%		22.41%

**FFY 2014 SPP/APR Data: Math Assessment**

## FFY 2014 Part B State Performance Plan (SPP)/Annual Performance Report (APR)

Group Name	Children with IEPs who received a valid score and a proficiency was assigned	Number of Children with IEPs Proficient	FFY 2013 Data*	FFY 2014 Target*	FFY 2014 Data
A Overall	5,936	846	69.35%		14.25%

### Public Reporting Information

Provide links to the page(s) where you provide public reports of assessment results.

[http://gems.opi.mt.gov/StudentAchievement/Dashboards/Student%20Achievement%20Dashboard/MontCAS%20\(CRT\).aspx](http://gems.opi.mt.gov/StudentAchievement/Dashboards/Student%20Achievement%20Dashboard/MontCAS%20(CRT).aspx)

This link takes you to Montana's statewide longitudinal data system.

### Provide additional information about this indicator (optional)

In the 2013-2014 school year Montana received a testing waiver from the Department of Education. Under that waiver, Montana conducted a field test of the Smarter Balanced assessment. No official data were obtained. Montana began using the Smarter Balanced assessment in the 2014-15 school year. Administration of the test was beset with technical difficulties. Some districts were unable to test all students and some districts were unable to test any students. This led to reduced participation and large numbers of tests that could not be scored.

### Actions required in FFY 2013 response

None

### OSEP Response

The State did not provide valid and reliable data for this indicator. These data are not valid and reliable because the data are incomplete. Therefore, OSEP could not determine whether the State met its target.

The State has revised the baseline for this indicator, using data from FFY 2014. Because the State did not provide valid and reliable FFY 2014 data for this indicator, OSEP cannot accept that revision.

### Required Actions

The State did not provide valid and reliable data for FFY 2014.

The State must provide valid and reliable data for FFY 2015 in the FFY 2015 SPP/APR.

## Indicator 4A: Suspension/Expulsion

Monitoring Priority: FAPE in the LRE

Results indicator: Rates of suspension and expulsion:

- A. Percent of districts that have a significant discrepancy in the rate of suspensions and expulsions of greater than 10 days in a school year for children with IEPs; and
- B. Percent of districts that have: (a) a significant discrepancy, by race or ethnicity, in the rate of suspensions and expulsions of greater than 10 days in a school year for children with IEPs; and (b) policies, procedures or practices that contribute to the significant discrepancy 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.

(20 U.S.C. 1416(a)(3)(A); 1412(a)(22))

### Historical Data

Baseline Data: 2005

FFY	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013
Target ≤			0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%
Data		0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%

Key:  Gray – Data Prior to Baseline  Yellow – Baseline  Blue – Data Update

### FFY 2014 - FFY 2018 Targets

FFY	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018
Target ≤	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%

Key:

**Targets: Description of Stakeholder Input** - Please see the Stakeholder Involvement section of the [introduction](#).

Enter additional information about stakeholder involvement

### FFY 2014 SPP/APR Data

Please indicate the type of denominator provided

- Number of districts in the State
- Number of districts that met the State's minimum n-size

Number of districts that have a significant discrepancy	Number of districts in the State	FFY 2013 Data*	FFY 2014 Target*	FFY 2014 Data
0	408	0%	0%	0%

Choose one of the following comparison methodologies to determine whether significant discrepancies are occurring (34 CFR §300.170(a)):

- Compare the rates of suspensions and expulsions of greater than 10 days in a school year for children with IEPs among LEAs in the State
- The rates of suspensions and expulsions of greater than 10 days in a school year for children with IEPs in each LEA compared to the rates for nondisabled children in the same LEA

State's definition of "significant discrepancy" and methodology

State Definition of Significant Discrepancy

A. An LEA is determined to have a significant discrepancy if, given a minimum N of 10, an LEA demonstrates a statistical difference in long-term suspension and expulsion rates for students with disabilities when compared to the long-term suspension and expulsion rates for students without disabilities, within a 99 percent confidence interval.

B. An LEA is determined to have a significant discrepancy if, given a minimum N of 10, an LEA demonstrates a statistical difference in long-term (greater than 10 days) suspension and expulsion rates, by race or ethnicity, for students with disabilities when compared to the long-term suspension and expulsion rates for all students without disabilities.

Montana conducted a review of LEA long-term suspension and expulsion rates for students with disabilities to determine if a significant discrepancy is occurring within an LEA. To do this, the rates of long-term suspensions and expulsions of students with disabilities are compared to the rates of long-term suspension and expulsion rates of nondisabled students within each LEA. Using a test of the difference between proportions as the methodology for identifying significant discrepancy, an LEA is determined to have a significant discrepancy if, given a minimum N of 10, an LEA demonstrates a statistical difference in long-term suspension and expulsion rates for students with disabilities when compared to the long-term suspension and expulsion rates for students without disabilities, within a 99 percent confidence interval.

As noted in OSEP’s Part B Indicator Measurement Table, data used in the state’s examination is from the 2013-2014 school year, resulting in a one-year data lag for this indicator.

Montana did not have any districts that met the minimum "n" for this indicator.

Actions required in FFY 2013 response

None

FFY 2013 Identification of Noncompliance

Review of Policies, Procedures, and Practices (completed in FFY 2014 using 2013-2014 data)

Description of review

[Empty text box for description of review]

- The State DID NOT identify noncompliance with Part B requirements as a result of the review required by 34 CFR §300.170(b)
- The State DID identify noncompliance with Part B requirements as a result of the review required by 34 CFR §300.170(b). If YES, select one of the following:
  - The State DID ensure that such policies, procedures, and practices were revised to comply with applicable requirements consistent with OSEP Memorandum 09-02, dated October 17, 2008.

Describe 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.

[Empty text box for description of how requirements were met]

- The State did NOT ensure that such policies, procedures, and practices were revised to comply with applicable requirements consistent with OSEP Memorandum 09-02, dated October 17, 2008.

Correction of Findings of Noncompliance Identified in FFY 2013

Findings of Noncompliance Identified	Findings of Noncompliance Verified as Corrected Within One Year	Findings of Noncompliance Subsequently Corrected	Findings Not Yet Verified as Corrected
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**FFY 2014 Part B State Performance Plan (SPP)/Annual Performance Report (APR)**

Findings of Noncompliance Identified	Findings of Noncompliance Verified as Corrected Within One Year	Findings of Noncompliance Subsequently Corrected	Findings Not Yet Verified as Corrected
2	2	null	0

**FFY 2013 Findings of Noncompliance Verified as Corrected**

*Describe how the State verified that the source of noncompliance is correctly implementing the regulatory requirements*

The description of Montana's monitoring process is detailed in the Introduction.

*Describe how the State verified that each individual case of noncompliance was corrected*

The description of Montana's monitoring process is detailed in the Introduction. The same verification procedures are used for all noncompliance, whether collected through the state's on-site monitoring system, desk review of records, state complaint or due process hearing decisions, or statewide student data system.

**OSEP Response**

**Required Actions**

## Indicator 4B: Suspension/Expulsion

Monitoring Priority: FAPE in the LRE

Compliance indicator: Rates of suspension and expulsion:

- A. Percent of districts that have a significant discrepancy in the rate of suspensions and expulsions of greater than 10 days in a school year for children with IEPs; and
- B. Percent of districts that have: (a) a significant discrepancy, by race or ethnicity, in the rate of suspensions and expulsions of greater than 10 days in a school year for children with IEPs; and (b) policies, procedures or practices that contribute to the significant discrepancy 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.

(20 U.S.C. 1416(a)(3)(A); 1412(a)(22))

### Historical Data

Baseline Data: 2009

FFY	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013
Target			0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%
Data						0%	0%	0%	0%	0%

Key:  Gray – Data Prior to Baseline  Yellow – Baseline

### FFY 2014 - FFY 2018 Targets

FFY	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018
Target	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%

### FFY 2014 SPP/APR Data

Please indicate the type of denominator provided

- Number of districts in the State
- Number of districts that met the State's minimum n-size

Number of districts that have a significant discrepancy, by race or ethnicity	Number of those districts that have policies, procedures, or practices that contribute to the significant discrepancy and do not comply with requirements	Number of districts in the State	FFY 2013 Data*	FFY 2014 Target*	FFY 2014 Data
0	0	408	0%	0%	0%

All races and ethnicities were included in the review

### State's definition of "significant discrepancy" and methodology

State Definition of Significant Discrepancy

A. An LEA is determined to have a significant discrepancy if, given a minimum N of 10, an LEA demonstrates a statistical difference in long-term suspension and expulsion rates for students with disabilities when compared to the long-term suspension and expulsion rates for students without disabilities, within a 99 percent confidence interval.

B. An LEA is determined to have a significant discrepancy if, given a minimum N of 10, an LEA demonstrates a statistical difference in long-term (greater than 10 days) suspension and expulsion rates, by race or ethnicity, for students with

disabilities when compared to the long-term suspension and expulsion rates for all students without disabilities.

Montana conducted a review of LEA long-term suspension and expulsion rates for students with disabilities to determine if a significant discrepancy is occurring within an LEA. To do this, the rates of long-term suspensions and expulsions of students with disabilities are compared to the rates of long-term suspension and expulsion rates of nondisabled students within each LEA. Using a test of the difference between proportions as the methodology for identifying significant discrepancy, an LEA is determined to have a significant discrepancy if, given a minimum N of 10, an LEA demonstrates a statistical difference in long-term suspension and expulsion rates for students with disabilities when compared to the long-term suspension and expulsion rates for students without disabilities, within a 99 percent confidence interval.

As noted in OSEP’s Part B Indicator Measurement Table, data used in the state’s examination is from the 2012-2013 school year, resulting in a one-year data lag for this indicator.

Montana did not have any districts that met the minimum "n" for this indicator.

**Actions required in FFY 2013 response**

None

**FFY 2013 Identification of Noncompliance**

**Review of Policies, Procedures, and Practices** (completed in FFY 2014 using 2013-2014 data)

Description of review

- The State DID NOT identify noncompliance with Part B requirements as a result of the review required by 34 CFR §300.170(b)
- The State DID identify noncompliance with Part B requirements as a result of the review required by 34 CFR §300.170(b).

Describe 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.

**Correction of Findings of Noncompliance Identified in FFY 2013**

Findings of Noncompliance Identified	Findings of Noncompliance Verified as Corrected Within One Year	Findings of Noncompliance Subsequently Corrected	Findings Not Yet Verified as Corrected
null	null	null	0

**OSEP Response**

Required Actions

**Indicator 5: Education Environments (children 6-21)**

Monitoring Priority: FAPE in the LRE

Results indicator: Percent of children with IEPs aged 6 through 21 served:

- A. Inside the regular class 80% or more of the day;
- B. Inside the regular class less than 40% of the day; and
- C. In separate schools, residential facilities, or homebound/hospital placements.

(20 U.S.C. 1416(a)(3)(A))

**Historical Data**

	Baseline Year	FFY	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013
A	2005	Target ≥			48.50%	48.50%	49.00%	50.50%	52.00%	52.00%	52.00%	52.00%
		Data		51.50%	49.00%	51.00%	52.20%	51.40%	51.10%	49.00%	47.30%	47.19%
B	2005	Target ≤			12.50%	12.50%	12.00%	11.50%	11.00%	11.00%	11.00%	11.20%
		Data		11.20%	12.20%	11.70%	11.70%	11.10%	12.70%	13.70%	13.10%	13.00%
C	2005	Target ≤			1.80%	1.70%	1.50%	1.60%	1.50%	1.50%	1.50%	1.50%
		Data		1.50%	1.30%	1.40%	1.50%	1.85%	1.73%	1.40%	1.50%	1.43%

Key:  Gray – Data Prior to Baseline  Yellow – Baseline  Blue – Data Update

**FFY 2014 - FFY 2018 Targets**

FFY	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018
Target A ≥	52.10%	52.20%	52.30%	52.40%	52.50%
Target B ≤	11.20%	11.20%	11.10%	11.10%	11.10%
Target C ≤	1.50%	1.50%	1.40%	1.40%	1.40%

Key:

**Targets: Description of Stakeholder Input** - Please see the Stakeholder Involvement section of the [introduction](#).

Enter additional information about stakeholder involvement

**Prepopulated Data**

Source	Date	Description	Data	Overwrite Data
SY 2014-15 Child Count/Educational Environment Data Groups (EDFacts file spec C002; Data group 74)	6/4/2015	<a href="#">Total number of children with IEPs aged 6 through 21</a>	15,412	null
SY 2014-15 Child Count/Educational Environment Data Groups (EDFacts file spec C002; Data group 74)	7/2/2015	<a href="#">A. Number of children with IEPs aged 6 through 21 inside the regular class 80% or more of the day</a>	7,217	null
SY 2014-15 Child Count/Educational Environment Data Groups (EDFacts file spec C002; Data group 74)	7/2/2015	<a href="#">B. Number of children with IEPs aged 6 through 21 inside the regular class less than 40% of the day</a>	1,963	null

**FFY 2014 Part B State Performance Plan (SPP)/Annual Performance Report (APR)**

Source	Date	Description	Data	Overwrite Data
C002; Data group 74)				
SY 2014-15 Child Count/Educational Environment Data Groups (EDFacts file spec C002; Data group 74)	7/2/2015	<a href="#">c1. Number of children with IEPs aged 6 through 21 in separate schools</a>	80	null
SY 2014-15 Child Count/Educational Environment Data Groups (EDFacts file spec C002; Data group 74)	7/2/2015	<a href="#">c2. Number of children with IEPs aged 6 through 21 in residential facilities</a>	113	null
SY 2014-15 Child Count/Educational Environment Data Groups (EDFacts file spec C002; Data group 74)	7/2/2015	<a href="#">c3. Number of children with IEPs aged 6 through 21 in homebound/hospital placements</a>	22	null

**FFY 2014 SPP/APR Data**

	Number of children with IEPs aged 6 through 21 served	Total number of children with IEPs aged 6 through 21	FFY 2013 Data*	FFY 2014 Target*	FFY 2014 Data
A. Number of children with IEPs aged 6 through 21 inside the regular class 80% or more of the day	7,217	15,412	47.19%	52.10%	46.83%
B. Number of children with IEPs aged 6 through 21 inside the regular class less than 40% of the day	1,963	15,412	13.00%	11.20%	12.74%
C. Number of children with IEPs aged 6 through 21 inside separate schools, residential facilities, or homebound/hospital placements [c1+c2+c3]	215	15,412	1.43%	1.50%	1.40%

**Actions required in FFY 2013 response**

None

**OSEP Response**

**Required Actions**

## Indicator 6: Preschool Environments

Monitoring Priority: FAPE in the LRE

Results indicator: Percent of children aged 3 through 5 with IEPs attending a:

- A. Regular early childhood program and receiving the majority of special education and related services in the regular early childhood program; and
- B. Separate special education class, separate school or residential facility.

(20 U.S.C. 1416(a)(3)(A))

### Historical Data

	Baseline Year	FFY	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013
A	2011	Target ≥									45.00%	44.90%
		Data									44.90%	39.10%
B	2011	Target ≤									27.70%	27.70%
		Data									27.70%	31.30%

Key:  Gray – Data Prior to Baseline  Yellow – Baseline  Blue – Data Update

### FFY 2014 - FFY 2018 Targets

FFY	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018
Target A ≥	44.90%	45.00%	45.00%	45.10%	45.10%
Target B ≤	27.70%	27.60%	27.60%	27.50%	27.50%

Key:

**Targets: Description of Stakeholder Input** - Please see the Stakeholder Involvement section of the [introduction](#).

Enter additional information about stakeholder involvement

### Prepopulated Data

Source	Date	Description	Data	Overwrite Data
SY 2014-15 Child Count/Educational Environment Data Groups (EDFacts file spec C089; Data group 613)	7/2/2015	<a href="#">Total number of children with IEPs aged 3 through 5</a>	1,620	null
SY 2014-15 Child Count/Educational Environment Data Groups (EDFacts file spec C089; Data group 613)	7/2/2015	<a href="#">a1. Number of children attending a regular early childhood program and receiving the majority of special education and related services in the regular early childhood program</a>	710	null
SY 2014-15 Child Count/Educational Environment Data Groups (EDFacts file spec C089; Data group 613)	7/2/2015	<a href="#">b1. Number of children attending separate special education class</a>	446	null
SY 2014-15 Child Count/Educational Environment Data Groups (EDFacts file spec C089; Data group 613)	7/2/2015	<a href="#">b2. Number of children attending separate school</a>	19	null

FFY 2014 Part B State Performance Plan (SPP)/Annual Performance Report (APR)

Source	Date	Description	Data	Overwrite Data
SY 2014-15 Child Count/Educational Environment Data Groups (EDFacts file spec C089; Data group 613)	7/2/2015	<a href="#">b3. Number of children attending residential facility</a>	n	null

FFY 2014 SPP/APR Data

	Number of children with IEPs aged 3 through 5 attending	Total number of children with IEPs aged 3 through 5	FFY 2013 Data*	FFY 2014 Target*	FFY 2014 Data
A. A regular early childhood program and receiving the majority of special education and related services in the regular early childhood program	710	1,620	39.66%	44.90%	43.83%
B. Separate special education class, separate school or residential facility	465	1,620	30.83%	27.70%	28.70%

Provide additional information about this indicator (optional)

The data presented in Table 6.1 below is used to assess Montana’s progress in meeting its FFY 2014 performance target for Indicator 6. The state set targets for Indicator 6A, and B. When assessing Montana’s progress in meeting its established performance target, confidence intervals are applied to reduce the effect of variability due to small sample sizes. When the confidence intervals are applied, Montana did meet it’s targets for both 6A and 6B.

Table 6.1 Montana Performance Target Status for FFY2014

SPP Indicator Number	Education Environment	Setting Count	Educational Placement Percentage	Confidence Interval-Upper Limit	Confidence Interval-Lower Limit	SPP Target	State Performance Status
6A	In a regular early childhood program and receiving the majority of special education and related services in the regular early childhood program	710	43.8%	46.3%	41.4%	44.9%	Target Met
6B	Receiving services in a separate special education class, separate school or residential facility	465	28.7%	31.0%	26.6%	27.7%	Target Met

Actions required in FFY 2013 response

None

**OSEP Response**

**Required Actions**

## Indicator 7: Preschool Outcomes

Monitoring Priority: FAPE in the LRE

Results indicator: Percent of preschool children aged 3 through 5 with IEPs who demonstrate improved:

- A. Positive social-emotional skills (including social relationships);
- B. Acquisition and use of knowledge and skills (including early language/ communication and early literacy); and
- C. Use of appropriate behaviors to meet their needs.

(20 U.S.C. 1416 (a)(3)(A))

### Historical Data

	Baseline Year	FFY	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013
A1	2008	Target ≥						61.50%	62.50%	64.00%	65.00%	76.50%
		Data					61.40%	71.10%	76.80%	77.60%	76.40%	73.56%
A2	2008	Target ≥						60.00%	61.00%	62.00%	63.00%	75.00%
		Data					59.20%	63.40%	67.50%	72.50%	74.90%	67.81%
B1	2008	Target ≥						70.00%	71.00%	72.00%	73.00%	80.50%
		Data					70.30%	78.70%	84.80%	78.80%	80.40%	73.15%
B2	2008	Target ≥						32.00%	33.00%	34.00%	35.00%	58.00%
		Data					31.60%	43.70%	60.20%	55.10%	57.70%	48.43%
C1	2008	Target ≥						59.00%	60.00%	61.00%	62.00%	75.40%
		Data					58.10%	73.30%	74.90%	81.40%	75.30%	69.07%
C2	2008	Target ≥						64.00%	65.00%	66.00%	67.00%	75.40%
		Data					64.10%	68.50%	69.20%	76.60%	75.30%	69.52%

Key:  Gray – Data Prior to Baseline  Yellow – Baseline  Blue – Data Update

### FFY 2014 - FFY 2018 Targets

FFY	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018
Target A1 ≥	76.60%	76.70%	76.80%	76.90%	77.00%
Target A2 ≥	75.10%	75.20%	75.30%	75.40%	75.50%
Target B1 ≥	80.60%	80.70%	80.80%	80.90%	81.00%
Target B2 ≥	58.10%	58.20%	58.30%	58.40%	58.50%
Target C1 ≥	75.50%	75.60%	75.70%	75.80%	75.90%
Target C2 ≥	75.50%	75.60%	75.70%	75.80%	75.90%

Key:

**Targets: Description of Stakeholder Input** - Please see the Stakeholder Involvement section of the [introduction](#).

Enter additional information about stakeholder involvement

### FFY 2014 SPP/APR Data

Number of preschool children aged 3 through 5 with IEPs assessed	316.00
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**Outcome A: Positive social-emotional skills (including social relationships)**

	Number of Children
a. Preschool children who did not improve functioning	1.00
b. Preschool children who improved functioning but not sufficient to move nearer to functioning comparable to same-aged peers	34.00
c. Preschool children who improved functioning to a level nearer to same-aged peers but did not reach it	41.00
d. Preschool children who improved functioning to reach a level comparable to same-aged peers	105.00
e. Preschool children who maintained functioning at a level comparable to same-aged peers	135.00

	Numerator	Denominator	FFY 2013 Data*	FFY 2014 Target*	FFY 2014 Data
A1. Of those preschool children who entered or exited the preschool program below age expectations in Outcome A, the percent who substantially increased their rate of growth by the time they turned 6 years of age or exited the program. $(c+d)/(a+b+c+d)$	146.00	181.00	73.56%	76.60%	80.66%
A2. The percent of preschool children who were functioning within age expectations in Outcome A by the time they turned 6 years of age or exited the program. $(d+e)/(a+b+c+d+e)$	240.00	316.00	67.81%	75.10%	75.95%

**Outcome B: Acquisition and use of knowledge and skills (including early language/communication)**

	Number of Children
a. Preschool children who did not improve functioning	1.00
b. Preschool children who improved functioning but not sufficient to move nearer to functioning comparable to same-aged peers	53.00
c. Preschool children who improved functioning to a level nearer to same-aged peers but did not reach it	101.00
d. Preschool children who improved functioning to reach a level comparable to same-aged peers	143.00
e. Preschool children who maintained functioning at a level comparable to same-aged peers	18.00

	Numerator	Denominator	FFY 2013 Data*	FFY 2014 Target*	FFY 2014 Data
B1. Of those preschool children who entered or exited the preschool program below age expectations in Outcome B, the percent who substantially increased their rate of growth by the time they turned 6 years of age or exited the program. $(c+d)/(a+b+c+d)$	244.00	298.00	73.15%	80.60%	81.88%
B2. The percent of preschool children who were functioning within age expectations in Outcome B by the time they turned 6 years of age or exited the program. $(d+e)/(a+b+c+d+e)$	161.00	316.00	48.43%	58.10%	50.95%

**Outcome C: Use of appropriate behaviors to meet their needs**

	Number of Children
a. Preschool children who did not improve functioning	1.00
b. Preschool children who improved functioning but not sufficient to move nearer to functioning comparable to same-aged peers	32.00
c. Preschool children who improved functioning to a level nearer to same-aged peers but did not reach it	43.00

**FFY 2014 Part B State Performance Plan (SPP)/Annual Performance Report (APR)**

	Number of Children
d. Preschool children who improved functioning to reach a level comparable to same-aged peers	97.00
e. Preschool children who maintained functioning at a level comparable to same-aged peers	143.00

	Numerator	Denominator	FFY 2013 Data*	FFY 2014 Target*	FFY 2014 Data
C1. Of those preschool children who entered or exited the preschool program below age expectations in Outcome C, the percent who substantially increased their rate of growth by the time they turned 6 years of age or exited the program. $(c+d)/(a+b+c+d)$	140.00	173.00	69.07%	75.50%	80.92%
C2. The percent of preschool children who were functioning within age expectations in Outcome C by the time they turned 6 years of age or exited the program. $(d+e)/(a+b+c+d+e)$	240.00	316.00	69.52%	75.50%	75.95%

**Was sampling used?** No

**Did you use the Early Childhood Outcomes Center (ECO) Child Outcomes Summary Form (COSF)?** Yes

**Actions required in FFY 2013 response**

None

**OSEP Response**

**Required Actions**

## Indicator 8: Parent involvement

Monitoring Priority: FAPE in the LRE

Results indicator: Percent of parents with a child receiving special education services who report that schools facilitated parent involvement as a means of improving services and results for children with disabilities.

(20 U.S.C. 1416(a)(3)(A))

Do you use a separate data collection methodology for preschool children?

### Historical Data

Baseline Data: 2005

FFY	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013
Target ≥			65.50%	65.50%	66.00%	67.00%	68.00%	68.00%	68.00%	70.00%
Data		65.50%	68.90%	62.00%	72.90%	72.70%	70.30%	67.60%	69.50%	66.67%

Key:  Gray – Data Prior to Baseline  Yellow – Baseline  Blue – Data Update

### FFY 2014 - FFY 2018 Targets

FFY	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018
Target ≥	70.10%	70.20%	70.30%	70.40%	70.50%

Key:

**Targets: Description of Stakeholder Input** - Please see the Stakeholder Involvement section of the [introduction](#).

Enter additional information about stakeholder involvement

### FFY 2014 SPP/APR Data

Number of respondent parents who report schools facilitated parent involvement as a means of improving services and results for children with disabilities	Total number of respondent parents of children with disabilities	FFY 2013 Data*	FFY 2014 Target*	FFY 2014 Data
387.00	518.00	66.67%	70.10%	74.71%

Since the State did not report preschool children separately, discuss the procedures used to combine data from school age and preschool surveys in a manner that is valid and reliable.

Parents of all students with disabilities, including preschool students with disabilities, are given an opportunity to complete the survey. As in previous years, in FFY2014, the survey was given to parents at the annual IEP meeting, parent-teacher conferences, and community dinners; in many cases it was also sent via mail. This personalized distribution method ensured all parents received the survey; furthermore, school staff members personally encouraged the parents to complete the survey. Parents of students at all grade levels, including preschool, received and were encouraged to respond to the survey.

Describe how the State has ensured that any response data are valid and reliable, including how the data represent the demographics of the State.

The representativeness of the surveys was assessed by examining the demographic characteristics of the children of the parents who responded to the survey to the demographic characteristics of all special education students. This comparison indicates the results are representative (1) by geographic region where the child attends school; (2) by size of district where the child attends school; (3) by the race/ethnicity of the child; and (4) by the age of the child. For example, 87% of the parents who returned a survey indicated that their children are white, and 93.2% of special education students in the monitored districts are white. Another example is 23% of the parents who returned a survey indicated that their children have a speech language impairment, and 23.6% of special education students in the monitored districts have a speech language impairment. However, even given these slightly differential response rates, a large enough number of parents from each demographic group responded to the survey in order to arrive at an overall State score that is representative of all students in the population.

**Was sampling used?** Yes

**Was a collection tool used?** Yes

**Describe the sampling methodology outlining how the design will yield valid and reliable estimates.**

The OPI employed a sampling methodology to gather data for this indicator. The sampling process was conducted in accord with the OPI's five-year compliance monitoring cycle. The cycle annually ensures statewide representation of LEAs through representation of large, small, urban, and rural LEAs and broad representation of parents of children with disabilities across the spectrum of disabilities. All parents of children with disabilities within the schools identified in the monitoring cycle are included in the sample. At the end of the five-year cycle, all parents of children with disabilities will have had an opportunity to respond to the survey instrument. The sampling methodology was reviewed by the Office of Special Education Programs (OSEP) and in an e-mail received from Larry Wexler, Deputy Director of Monitoring and State Improvement Planning on it was stated, "...Thank you for your letter dated March 29, 2006, in which you provided additional information on how Montana plans to collect baseline data for performance indicator eight of your State Performance Plan. Your sampling plan for Indicator eight, as revised, is consistent with the State Performance Plan sampling directions...".

**Actions required in FFY 2013 response**

None

**OSEP Response**

**Required Actions**

## Indicator 9: Disproportionate Representations

Monitoring Priority: Disproportionate Representations

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

(20 U.S.C. 1416(a)(3)(C))

### Historical Data

Baseline Data: 2005

FFY	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013
Target			0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%
Data		0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%

Key:  Gray – Data Prior to Baseline  Yellow – Baseline

### FFY 2014 - FFY 2018 Targets

FFY	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018
Target	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%

### FFY 2014 SPP/APR Data

Please indicate the type of denominator provided

- Number of districts in the State
- Number of districts that met the State's minimum n-size

Number of districts with disproportionate representation of racial and ethnic groups in special education and related services	Number of districts with disproportionate representation of racial and ethnic groups in special education and related services that is the result of inappropriate identification	Number of districts in the State	FFY 2013 Data*	FFY 2014 Target*	FFY 2014 Data
0	0	408	0%	0%	0%

All races and ethnicities were included in the review

Define “disproportionate representation” and describe the method(s) used to calculate disproportionate representation

#### Definition of Disproportionate Representation

An LEA is determined to have **disproportionate representation** (under or over) if, given a minimum N of 10 and within a 99 percent confidence interval, an LEA demonstrates a statistically significant difference in the proportion of students with disabilities of a specific racial/ethnic group receiving special education and related services compared to the proportion of students with disabilities in all other racial/ethnic groups receiving special education and related services in that LEA.

Once an LEA is flagged for disproportionate representation, the policies and procedures of that LEA, results of on-site compliance monitoring, and dispute resolution data are reviewed to determine if the disproportionate representation is due to inappropriate identification.

Using a minimum N of 10 and a 99 percent confidence interval, a test of difference between proportions was used to measure

**FFY 2014 Part B State Performance Plan (SPP)/Annual Performance Report (APR)**

statistically significant differences between the special education identification rate for students of a specific racial and ethnic group and the special education identification rate for all other students within that LEA. Target data show that none of the 409 LEAs demonstrated a statistically significant difference, resulting in determination of disproportionate representation of racial and ethnic groups in special education and related services.

**Of the 408 districts in Montana, 206 met the minimum N in at least one of the racial groups. 202 did not meet the minimum N in any of the racial groups reviewed.**

**Actions required in FFY 2013 response**

None

**Correction of Findings of Noncompliance Identified in FFY 2013**

Findings of Noncompliance Identified	Findings of Noncompliance Verified as Corrected Within One Year	Findings of Noncompliance Subsequently Corrected	Findings Not Yet Verified as Corrected
null	null	null	0

**OSEP Response**

**Required Actions**

## Indicator 10: Disproportionate Representations in Specific Disability Categories

Monitoring Priority: Disproportionate Representations

Compliance indicator: Percent of districts with disproportionate representation of racial and ethnic groups in specific disability categories that is the result of inappropriate identification.

(20 U.S.C. 1416(a)(3)(C))

### Historical Data

Baseline Data: 2005

FFY	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013
Target			0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%
Data		0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%

Key:  Gray – Data Prior to Baseline  Yellow – Baseline

### FFY 2014 - FFY 2018 Targets

FFY	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018
Target	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%

### FFY 2014 SPP/APR Data

Please indicate the type of denominator provided

- Number of districts in the State
- Number of districts that met the State's minimum n-size

Number of districts with disproportionate representation of racial and ethnic groups in specific disability categories	Number of districts with disproportionate representation of racial and ethnic groups in specific disability categories that is the result of inappropriate identification	Number of districts in the State	FFY 2013 Data*	FFY 2014 Target*	FFY 2014 Data
1	0	408	0%	0%	0%

All races and ethnicities were included in the review

Define “disproportionate representation” and describe the method(s) used to calculate disproportionate representation

#### Definition of Disproportionate Representation

An LEA is determined to have **disproportionate representation** (under or over) if, given a minimum N of 10, an LEA demonstrates a statistically significant difference in the proportion of students with disabilities of racial and ethnic groups within a specific disability category receiving special education and related services compared to the proportion of students with disabilities of all other racial and ethnic groups and within all other disability categories receiving special education and related services in that LEA, within a 99 percent confidence interval.

Once an LEA is flagged for disproportionate representation, the policies and procedures of that LEA, results of on-site compliance monitoring, and dispute resolution data are reviewed to determine if the disproportionate representation is due to inappropriate identification. The district is informed of the results of the review.

Of the 408 districts in Montana, 120 met the minimum N in at least 1 disability category in at least 1 racial group. 288 did not meet the minimum N in any disability category in any racial group.

**Actions required in FFY 2013 response**

None

**Correction of Findings of Noncompliance Identified in FFY 2013**

Findings of Noncompliance Identified	Findings of Noncompliance Verified as Corrected Within One Year	Findings of Noncompliance Subsequently Corrected	Findings Not Yet Verified as Corrected
null	null	null	0

**OSEP Response**

**Required Actions**

**Indicator 11: Child Find**

Monitoring Priority: Effective General Supervision Part B / Child Find

Compliance indicator: Percent of children who were evaluated within 60 days of receiving parental consent for initial evaluation or, if the State establishes a timeframe within which the evaluation must be conducted, within that timeframe.

(20 U.S.C. 1416(a)(3)(B))

**Historical Data**

Baseline Data: 2005

FFY	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013
Target			100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%
Data		93.00%	85.40%	91.10%	90.10%	97.20%	97.40%	96.80%	97.60%	98.40%

Key:  Gray – Data Prior to Baseline  Yellow – Baseline

**FFY 2014 - FFY 2018 Targets**

FFY	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018
Target	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%

**FFY 2014 SPP/APR Data**

(a) Number of children for whom parental consent to evaluate was received	(b) Number of children whose evaluations were completed within 60 days (or State-established timeline)	FFY 2013 Data*	FFY 2014 Target*	FFY 2014 Data
270	268	98.40%	100%	99.26%

Number of children included in (a), but not included in (b) [a-b]	2
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**Account for children included in (a) but not included in (b). Indicate the range of days beyond the timeline when the evaluation was completed and any reasons for the delays.**

Montana did not meet the target of 100 percent compliance for this indicator. Data for this indicator are based on compliance monitoring record review samples. The OPI conducts on-site monitoring record reviews in each LEA in Montana on a five (5) year cycle. In each LEA that is subject to monitoring the OP reviews records for students who have been subject to an initial evaluation during the preceding year. This assures that the OPI reviews current LEA practices and procedures for conducting initial evaluations both for students who are determined eligible for special education and for those who are not.

For FFY 2014, target data indicate that two evaluations were not completed within the 60-day timeline. The evaluations not completed within the 60-day timeline were from two of the thirty-seven LEAs participating in the compliance monitoring for the 2014-2015 school year. The range of days beyond the timeline when the evaluation was completed was from eight to ten days. In each case, the district failed to meet the deadline.

For all noted incidents, the evaluation had been completed at the time of the monitoring record review and these incidents were deemed corrected. Consistent with the requirements initially set forth in the OSEP's 09-02 memo, the initial correction of

each incidence of noncompliance was verified by the review of documentation provided by each LEA subsequent to the on-site monitoring.

**Indicate the evaluation timeline used**

- The State used the 60 day timeframe within which the evaluation must be conducted.
- The State established a timeline within which the evaluation must be conducted.

**What is the State's timeline for initial evaluations?**

**What is the source of the data provided for this indicator?**

- State monitoring
- State database that includes data for the entire reporting year

**Describe the method used to collect these data, and if data are from the State's monitoring, describe the procedures used to collect these data.**

The description of Montana's monitoring process is detailed in the Introduction.

**Actions required in FFY 2013 response**

None

**Correction of Findings of Noncompliance Identified in FFY 2013**

Findings of Noncompliance Identified	Findings of Noncompliance Verified as Corrected Within One Year	Findings of Noncompliance Subsequently Corrected	Findings Not Yet Verified as Corrected
1	1	null	0

**FFY 2013 Findings of Noncompliance Verified as Corrected**

*Describe how the State verified that the source of noncompliance is correctly implementing the regulatory requirements*

The description of Montana's monitoring process is detailed in the Introduction.

*Describe how the State verified that each individual case of noncompliance was corrected*

The description of Montana's monitoring process is detailed in the Introduction. The same verification procedures are used for all noncompliance, whether collected through the state's on-site monitoring system, desk review of records, state complaint or due process hearing decisions, or statewide student data system.

**OSEP Response**

Because the State reported less than 100% compliance for FFY 2014, the State must report on the status of correction of noncompliance identified in FFY 2014 for this indicator.

## FFY 2014 Part B State Performance Plan (SPP)/Annual Performance Report (APR)

When reporting on the correction of noncompliance, the State must report, in the FFY 2015 SPP/APR, that it has verified that each LEA with noncompliance identified in FFY 2014 for this indicator: (1) is correctly implementing the specific regulatory requirements (i.e., achieved 100% compliance) based on a review of updated data such as data subsequently collected through on-site monitoring or a State data system; and (2) has corrected each individual case of noncompliance, unless the child is no longer within the jurisdiction of the LEA, consistent with OSEP Memo 09-02. In the FFY 2015 SPP/APR, the State must describe the specific actions that were taken to verify the correction.

If the State did not identify any findings of noncompliance in FFY 2014, although its FFY 2014 data reflect less than 100% compliance, provide an explanation of why the State did not identify any findings of noncompliance in FFY 2014.

### Required Actions

## Indicator 12: Early Childhood Transition

Monitoring Priority: Effective General Supervision Part B / Effective Transition

Compliance indicator: Percent of children referred by Part C prior to age 3, who are found eligible for Part B, and who have an IEP developed and implemented by their third birthdays.

(20 U.S.C. 1416(a)(3)(B))

### Historical Data

Baseline Data: 2005

FFY	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013
Target			100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%
Data		67.00%	61.40%	71.50%	70.50%	82.90%	93.10%	94.10%	96.90%	98.11%

Key:  Gray – Data Prior to Baseline  Yellow – Baseline

### FFY 2014 - FFY 2018 Targets

FFY	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018
Target	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%

### FFY 2014 SPP/APR Data

a. Number of children who have been served in Part C and referred to Part B for Part B eligibility determination.	139
b. Number of those referred determined to be NOT eligible and whose eligibility was determined prior to third birthday.	12
c. Number of those found eligible who have an IEP developed and implemented by their third birthdays.	99
d. Number for whom parent refusals to provide consent caused delays in evaluation or initial services or to whom exceptions under 34 CFR §300.301(d) applied.	14
e. Number of children who were referred to Part C less than 90 days before their third birthdays.	10

	Numerator (c)	Denominator (a-b-d-e)	FFY 2013 Data*	FFY 2014 Target*	FFY 2014 Data
Percent of children referred by Part C prior to age 3 who are found eligible for Part B, and who have an IEP developed and implemented by their third birthdays. $[c/(a-b-d-e)] \times 100$	99	103	98.11%	100%	96.12%

Number of children who have been served in Part C and referred to Part B for eligibility determination that are not included in b, c, d, e	4
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### Explanation of Slippage

Montana did not achieve its target for this indicator for FFY2014, and did experience slippage. The slippage can be explained as a result of the small numbers of students in both the denominator and numerator for this indicator. A change of even one student in either can result in slippage in the percentage.

Account for children included in (a), but not included in b, c, d, or e. Indicate the range of days beyond the third birthday when eligibility was determined and the IEP developed, and the reasons for the delays.

The four students who are in a, but not in b, c, d, or e are from two LEA's. They were not able to get the students completed by their 3rd birthday due to the Part C agency not providing the information to the district in a timely manner, as well as a misunderstanding of the requirements. The OPI has worked with these districts and the Part C lead agency to ensure that the requirements are well understood and to ensure that this does not happen again. The range of days over the third birthday was from 21 to 43 days.

**What is the source of the data provided for this indicator?**

- State monitoring
- State database that includes data for the entire reporting year

**Describe the method used to collect these data, and if data are from the State's monitoring, describe the procedures used to collect these data.**

The OPI uses a census-level data collection for this indicator. The Part C providers submit data regarding all children referred to a school district to the OPI. The OPI collates this data and verifies the referral through the statewide student database system. This system contains documentation of the referral, the eligibility determination and, if appropriate, the student's IEP. This allows the OPI to determine district compliance with the Part C to Part B transition requirements. By using this method, the OPI can account for all children in the state who transition from Part C to Part B.

**Actions required in FFY 2013 response**

None

**Correction of Findings of Noncompliance Identified in FFY 2013**

Findings of Noncompliance Identified	Findings of Noncompliance Verified as Corrected Within One Year	Findings of Noncompliance Subsequently Corrected	Findings Not Yet Verified as Corrected
null	null	null	0

**OSEP Response**

Because the State reported less than 100% compliance for FFY 2014, the State must report on the status of correction of noncompliance identified in FFY 2014 for this indicator.

When reporting on the correction of noncompliance, the State must report, in the FFY 2015 SPP/APR, that it has verified that each LEA with noncompliance identified in FFY 2014 for this indicator: (1) is correctly implementing the specific regulatory requirements (i.e., achieved 100% compliance) based on a review of updated data such as data subsequently collected through on-site monitoring or a State data system; and (2) has corrected each individual case of noncompliance, unless the child is no longer within the jurisdiction of the LEA, consistent with OSEP Memo 09-02. In the FFY 2015 SPP/APR, the State must describe the specific actions that were taken to verify the correction.

If the State did not identify any findings of noncompliance in FFY 2014, although its FFY 2014 data reflect less than 100% compliance, provide an explanation of why the State did not identify any findings of noncompliance in FFY 2014.

**Required Actions**

### Indicator 13: Secondary Transition

Monitoring Priority: Effective General Supervision Part B / Effective Transition

Compliance indicator: Percent of youth with IEPs aged 16 and above with an IEP that includes appropriate measurable postsecondary goals that are annually updated and based upon an age appropriate transition assessment, transition services, including courses of study, that will reasonably enable the student to meet those postsecondary goals, and annual IEP goals related to the student’s transition services needs. There also must be evidence that the student was invited to the IEP Team meeting where transition services are to be discussed and evidence that, if appropriate, a representative of any participating agency was invited to the IEP Team meeting with the prior consent of the parent or student who has reached the age of majority.

(20 U.S.C. 1416(a)(3)(B))

#### Historical Data

Baseline Data: 2009

FFY	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013
Target			100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%
Data						85.30%	51.50%	96.70%	92.10%	100%

Key:  Gray – Data Prior to Baseline  Yellow – Baseline

#### FFY 2014 - FFY 2018 Targets

FFY	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018
Target	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%

#### FFY 2014 SPP/APR Data

Number of youth aged 16 and above with IEPs that contain each of the required components for secondary transition	Number of youth with IEPs aged 16 and above	FFY 2013 Data*	FFY 2014 Target*	FFY 2014 Data
96	96	100%	100%	100%

What is the source of the data provided for this indicator?

- State monitoring
- State database that includes data for the entire reporting year

Describe the method used to collect these data, and if data are from the State’s monitoring, describe the procedures used to collect these data.

The OPI collected the indicator data as a part of its compliance monitoring procedures during the 2014-2015 school year. Compliance monitors reviewed a sampling of student records for students, ages 16 and older, to ensure their IEPs include appropriate measurable postsecondary goals that are annually updated and based upon an age-appropriate transition assessment, transition services, including courses of study, that will reasonably enable the student to meet those postsecondary goals, and annual IEP goals related to the student’s transition services needs. There also must be evidence that the student was invited to the IEP team meeting where transition services were to be discussed and evidence that, if appropriate, a representative of any participating agency was invited to the IEP meeting with the prior consent of the parent or student who has reached the age of majority.

**Actions required in FFY 2013 response**

None

**Correction of Findings of Noncompliance Identified in FFY 2013**

Findings of Noncompliance Identified	Findings of Noncompliance Verified as Corrected Within One Year	Findings of Noncompliance Subsequently Corrected	Findings Not Yet Verified as Corrected
null	null	null	0

**OSEP Response**

**Required Actions**

### Indicator 14: Post-School Outcomes

Monitoring Priority: Effective General Supervision Part B / Effective Transition

Results indicator: Percent of youth who are no longer in secondary school, had IEPs in effect at the time they left school, and were:

- A. Enrolled in higher education within one year of leaving high school.
- B. Enrolled in higher education or competitively employed within one year of leaving high school.
- C. Enrolled in higher education or in some other postsecondary education or training program; or competitively employed or in some other employment within one year of leaving high school.

(20 U.S.C. 1416(a)(3)(B))

#### Historical Data

	Baseline Year	FFY	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013
A	2009	Target ≥							27.00%	27.00%	27.00%	26.60%
		Data						26.60%	24.80%	54.10%	25.20%	21.57%
B	2009	Target ≥							73.00%	73.00%	73.00%	73.30%
		Data						72.00%	72.10%	58.90%	73.30%	71.24%
C	2009	Target ≥							86.00%	86.00%	86.50%	86.90%
		Data						85.40%	85.40%	100%	86.90%	84.62%

Key:  Gray – Data Prior to Baseline  Yellow – Baseline  Blue – Data Update

#### FFY 2014 - FFY 2018 Targets

FFY	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018
Target A ≥	26.60%	26.70%	26.80%	26.90%	27.00%
Target B ≥	73.40%	73.50%	73.60%	73.70%	73.80%
Target C ≥	87.00%	87.10%	87.20%	87.30%	87.40%

Key:

**Targets: Description of Stakeholder Input** - Please see the Stakeholder Involvement section of the [introduction](#).

Enter additional information about stakeholder involvement

#### FFY 2014 SPP/APR Data

Number of respondent youth who are no longer in secondary school and had IEPs in effect at the time they left school	705.00
1. Number of respondent youth who enrolled in higher education within one year of leaving high school	146.00
2. Number of respondent youth who competitively employed within one year of leaving high school	360.00
3. Number of respondent youth enrolled in some other postsecondary education or training program within one year of leaving high school (but not enrolled in higher education or competitively employed)	30.00
4. Number of respondent youth who are in some other employment within one year of leaving high school (but not enrolled in higher education, some other postsecondary education or training program, or competitively employed).	64.00

FFY 2014 Part B State Performance Plan (SPP)/Annual Performance Report (APR)

	Number of respondent youth	Number of respondent youth who are no longer in secondary school and had IEPs in effect at the time they left school	FFY 2013 Data*	FFY 2014 Target*	FFY 2014 Data
A. Enrolled in higher education (1)	146.00	705.00	21.57%	26.60%	20.71%
B. Enrolled in higher education or competitively employed within one year of leaving high school (1 +2)	506.00	705.00	71.24%	73.40%	71.77%
C. Enrolled in higher education, or in some other postsecondary education or training program; or competitively employed or in some other employment (1+2+3+4)	600.00	705.00	84.62%	87.00%	85.11%

Was sampling used? No

Provide additional information about this indicator (optional)

The data presented in Table 14.1 below is used to assess Montana's progress in meeting its FFY 2014 performance target for Indicator 14.. The state set targets for Indicator 14.A,B, and C. When assessing Montana's progress in meeting its established performance target, confidence intervals are applied to reduce the effect of variability due to small sample sizes. When the confidence intervals are applied, Montana still did not meet it's target for 14.A, but did meet it's targets for 14.B and 14.C.

Indicator #14 Table 14.1

Indicator	Indicator Rate	Confidence Interval - High	Confidence Interval - Low	SPP Performance Target	State Performance Status
14 A	20.7%	23.9%	17.9%	26.6%	Target Not Met
14 B	71.8%	75.0%	68.3%	73.4%	Met Target
14 C	85.1%	87.5%	82.3%	87.0%	Met Target

Actions required in FFY 2013 response

None

OSEP Response

Required Actions

## Indicator 15: Resolution Sessions

Monitoring Priority: Effective General Supervision Part B / General Supervision

Results indicator: Percent of hearing requests that went to resolution sessions that were resolved through resolution session settlement agreements.

(20 U.S.C. 1416(a)(3)(B))

### Historical Data

Baseline Data: 2005

FFY	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013
Target ≥								70.00%	75.00%	75.00%
Data					75.00%	0%		100%	0%	

Key:  Gray – Data Prior to Baseline  Yellow – Baseline  Blue – Data Update

### FFY 2014 - FFY 2018 Targets

FFY	2014			2015			2016			2017			2018		
Target	75.00%	-	100%	75.00%	-	100%	75.00%	-	100%	75.00%	-	100%	75.00%	-	100%

Key:

**Targets: Description of Stakeholder Input** - Please see the Stakeholder Involvement section of the [introduction](#).

 Enter additional information about stakeholder involvement

**Prepopulated Data**

Source	Date	Description	Data	Overwrite Data
SY 2014-15 EMAPS IDEA Part B Dispute Resolution Survey; Section C: Due Process Complaints	11/5/2015	<a href="#">3.1(a) Number resolution sessions resolved through settlement agreements</a>	n	null
SY 2014-15 EMAPS IDEA Part B Dispute Resolution Survey; Section C: Due Process Complaints	11/5/2015	<a href="#">3.1 Number of resolution sessions</a>	n	null

**FFY 2014 SPP/APR Data**

3.1(a) Number resolution sessions resolved through settlement agreements	3.1 Number of resolution sessions	FFY 2013 Data*	FFY 2014 Target*	FFY 2014 Data
0	2		75.00% - 100.00%	0%

**Provide additional information about this indicator (optional)**

Montana is not required to report data for this indicator because the minimum N of 10 resolution sessions was not met.

**Actions required in FFY 2013 response**

None

**OSEP Response**

The State reported fewer than ten resolution sessions held in FFY 2014. The State is not required to meet its targets until any fiscal year in which ten or more resolution sessions were held.

**Required Actions**

## Indicator 16: Mediation

Monitoring Priority: Effective General Supervision Part B / General Supervision

Results indicator: Percent of mediations held that resulted in mediation agreements.

(20 U.S.C. 1416(a)(3)(B))

### Historical Data

Baseline Data: 2005

FFY	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013
Target ≥				100%						
Data			66.67%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	

Key:  Gray – Data Prior to Baseline  Yellow – Baseline  Blue – Data Update

### FFY 2014 - FFY 2018 Targets

FFY	2014			2015			2016			2017			2018		
Target	80.00%	-	100%	80.00%	-	100%	80.00%	-	100%	80.00%	-	100%	80.00%	-	100%

Key:

**Targets: Description of Stakeholder Input** - Please see the Stakeholder Involvement section of the [introduction](#).

Enter additional information about stakeholder involvement

**Prepopulated Data**

Source	Date	Description	Data	Overwrite Data
SY 2014-15 EMAPS IDEA Part B Dispute Resolution Survey; Section B: Mediation Requests	11/5/2015	<a href="#">2.1.a.i Mediations agreements related to due process complaints</a>	n	null
SY 2014-15 EMAPS IDEA Part B Dispute Resolution Survey; Section B: Mediation Requests	11/5/2015	<a href="#">2.1.b.i Mediations agreements not related to due process complaints</a>	n	null
SY 2014-15 EMAPS IDEA Part B Dispute Resolution Survey; Section B: Mediation Requests	11/5/2015	<a href="#">2.1 Mediations held</a>	n	null

**FFY 2014 SPP/APR Data**

2.1.a.i Mediations agreements related to due process complaints	2.1.b.i Mediations agreements not related to due process complaints	2.1 Mediations held	FFY 2013 Data*	FFY 2014 Target*	FFY 2014 Data
0	1	2		80.00% - 100.00%	50.00%

**Provide additional information about this indicator (optional)**

Montana is not required to report data for this indicator because the minimum N of 10 mediations was not met.

**Actions required in FFY 2013 response**

None

**OSEP Response**

The State reported fewer than ten mediations held in FFY 2014. The State is not required to meet its targets until any fiscal year in which ten or more mediations were held.

**Required Actions**

## Indicator 17: State Systemic Improvement Plan

Monitoring Priority: General Supervision

Results indicator: The State's SPP/APR includes a State Systemic Improvement Plan (SSIP) that meets the requirements set forth for this indicator.

### Reported Data

Baseline Data: 2013

FFY	2013	2014
Target ≥		64.50%
Data	63.50%	66.40%

Key:  Gray – Data Prior to Baseline  Yellow – Baseline  
Blue – Data Update

### FFY 2015 - FFY 2018 Targets

FFY	2015	2016	2017	2018
Target ≥	65.50%	66.50%	67.50%	68.50%

Key:

### Description of Measure

1. Percent = [All American Indian special education graduates/completers in the school year (on-time, early or late) divided by all special education graduates in the school year, plus the 12th grade dropouts during the same year, plus the 11th grade dropouts in the preceding year, plus the 10th grade dropouts from 2 years prior, plus the 9th grade dropouts from 3 years prior] times 100.

**Targets: Description of Stakeholder Input** - Please see the Stakeholder Involvement section of the [introduction](#).

 Enter additional information about stakeholder involvement

### Overview

### Data Analysis

A description of how the State identified and analyzed key data, including data from SPP/APR indicators, 618 data collections, and other available data as applicable, to: (1) select the State-identified Measurable Result(s) for Children with Disabilities, and (2) identify root causes contributing to low performance. The description must include information about how the data were disaggregated by multiple variables (e.g., LEA, region, race/ethnicity, gender, disability category, placement, etc.). As part of its data analysis, the State should also consider compliance data and whether those data present potential barriers to improvement. In addition, if the State identifies any concerns about the quality of the data, the description must include how the State will address these concerns. Finally, if additional data are needed, the description should include the methods and timelines to collect and analyze the additional data.

Montana's history is inexorably linked to American Indians. Today, Montana has seven reservations with twelve recognized tribes. The tribes differ culturally and economically. American Indians are Montana's largest minority population. About 35 percent of Montana's Indian population does not live on reservations. Instead, they reside in the small communities or urban areas of Montana. The individual history and circumstances of Montana's urban American Indian people are as diverse as the people themselves. The majority of American Indian students in Montana attend public schools. In 2013-2014 there were 2,368 American Indian students receiving special education and related services. This represents 14.37% of all Montana students with disabilities. There has long been gaps between the educational outcomes of American Indian students and all students with disabilities. This is particularly evident in the rate of school completion.

Montana has an extensive data infrastructure that collects, reports and provides data for analysis. For the past six years, the state has had in place a statewide student data system called Achievement in Montana (AIM). This system is inclusive of student level enrollment, demographic, academic, special education, grades, placements, and other district collected information. The special education system, including all required documentation, is a part of the AIM system. Data regarding special education is collected and verified through this system. The system has built in reports as well as ad hoc reporting capabilities. All of Montana's 618 data and APR data come from or are tied to this single statewide data system.

The OPI employs a data governance team that is comprised of administrators throughout the agency. This team is charged with overseeing the OPI data systems and making determinations regarding the adequacy of the system to collect and report valid and reliable data. All changes within the data system require approval of the data governance team.

When the state began considering the new State Systemic Improvement Plan (SSIP), the internal team had a good understanding of the potential areas of more intense focus that might be identified for concentrated improvement. Using the data collected through this strong data system, the OPI began discussions with the State Special Education Advisory Panel and other stakeholder groups, all of which include parents of students with disabilities, regarding areas of priority from their interpretation of the data and their unique consideration from their stakeholder perspectives. This ongoing discussion, refinement of data, and analysis of more focused data has taken place at each meeting of the state advisory panel, our annual state joint meeting described in the stakeholder involvement section of the APR, our regular meetings with the state directors, and other groups for the past two years.

At the same time the SSIP work began, the Montana's State Superintendent finalized her priority Strategic Directions (attached) for the agency in January of 2014. These include four goals.

Goal 1: Student's Graduate Prepared for College and Careers

Goal 2: Raise American Indian Student Achievement

Goal 3: Improve the Health and Well-Being of Students

Goal 4: Coordinate OPI Programs to Better Serve Students, Educators and Schools

Under Goal 1 and 2, objectives include:

Increase statewide American Indian graduation rate and decrease American Indian dropout rate

In addition, the Superintendent established a new initiative called Graduation Matters Montana (GMM). The objectives of GMM are:

1. Increase the rate of Montana students graduating from high school college- and career-ready.
2. Establish a support network between schools, businesses and community organizations for student success.
3. Create school-based and community-based opportunities for student success.

The aligned priorities of American Indian graduation and post-school success reflected in the strategic

initiatives, GMM, and APR data were considered in light of the new results driven accountability emphasis. This perspective helped frame the scope and detail of specific data analysis.

Analysis began with APR longitudinal data. Analysis of data, by district, for indicators 1 and 2 show that districts with higher enrollment of American Indian students have shown lower graduation rates, higher drop-out rates, and lower achievement rates than other subgroups. This led the OPI to begin to examine the data from the APR and 618 collections more closely disaggregated by race and ethnicity.

In addition, we analyzed other data sources including CSPR, Child Count data, Title I, our compliance monitoring data and data from GMM to help identify root causes contributing to low performance. These data were disaggregated by race/ethnicity, disability category, district and regional area to examine trends and patterns that could be useful in identifying root causes and potential targets.

Based on the review of these data the OPI has determined that there are additional data that will need to be considered in the future. Some of this data currently exists including discipline data, LRE data, and achievement data. Other data will need to be collected including transiency rates and age at identification and duration of special education and related services. These data are already available within our statewide student data system but have never been disaggregated for analysis. The OPI will begin this in the coming year.

The Special Education Division of the Office of Public Instruction (OPI) provides multiple services to Montana schools to assist them in providing a quality education to all students. The programs managed through this division are aligned with State Superintendent Juneau's Graduation Matters Montana initiative, Common Core Standards, Montana's State Personnel Development Grant, our Comprehensive System of Personnel Development (CSPD), and our State Performance Plan, including its improvement activities. The special education division is organized into four work units that provide professional development, funding, data collection and analysis, and general supervision to local school districts and other special education programs in the state. These efforts are supported by an excellent group of administrative assistants that keep the division functioning smoothly.

Montana is a frontier state that is often described as a small town with very long streets. The special education and disability communities are relatively small, but close knit. Personal acquaintanceships and relationships are cultivated and nurtured. We maintain an ability to communicate and exchange information on a less formal basis at times than in many other states and agencies. To promote all the relationships we value, we hold a strong presence in the public forum where there is an intense interrelationship between agencies, associations, and advisory panels and councils, with special education staff serving both appointed and designated multiple advisory and liaison roles. The special education staff meet annually with the Montana Advisory Council on Indian Education (MACIE) to review data regarding American Indian students with disabilities. The same holds true with the membership of the state special education advisory panel with strong representation, including not only required member roles, but from a cross section of the disability community including students. Dissemination of information from all these forums is routinely distributed to participants and to the public which then encourages ongoing input and discussion.

Guidance for Montana's Improvement activities comes from this broad acculturated group of stakeholders starting with the advisory panel and supplemented with input gained firsthand from the multiple agencies, groups, and individuals our office seeks out and engages.

Discussions and Stakeholder input of the SPP, APR, SSIP, and RDA began in 2013 with our State Special Education Advisory Panel. The Panel is fully vested as required and broadly representative of Montana. Additionally, many of the panel members as well as SEA staff serve in other agency or organization leadership positions or on advisory groups in the disability community. This enables us to draw insight and advice from a very encompassing overview and understanding of Montana's unique needs, potentials, weaknesses and strengths. The advisory panel is our primary stakeholder group.

Additionally, there are a number of other stakeholder groups that we sponsor and participate in.

- Our state CSPD includes both regional and state councils that regularly meet to assess APR data

and to evaluate professional development priorities and results.

- The OPI and CSPD Council developed an **Early Childhood Partnership for Professional Development (ECPD)** committee which provides professional development opportunities for LEA staff involved in the education of preschool-age children. The ECPD brings together all agencies and organizations that are providers of early childhood education. This includes Head Start, the Governor's Best Beginnings Council, the OPI's Indian Education Division, Part C agency and providers, home day-care providers, center-based day-care providers, and Striving Readers programs.
- Also under the CSPD, the **Paraprofessional Consortium** is comprised of paraprofessionals, parents, teachers, and administrators in general and special education. The consortium provides resources to support paraprofessionals to be appropriately trained to work with students. The consortium has a Website which provides resources, information on Qualified Paraprofessionals, assessment information, evaluation, employment and recognition
- The CSPD regions work closely with the RESAs to provide professional development in both general and special education. The CSPD and RESAs coordinate their professional development activities to meet the needs of educators in their regions. The RESAs are supported through the OPI Accreditation Division. The CSPD coordinators and SPDG director participate in the RESA State Advisory Council. The RESAs and CSPD regions assist with Common Core trainings and work closely with the Striving Readers programs
- The OPI School Mental Health (SMH) coordinator worked collaboratively with the Children's Mental Health Bureau at the DPHHS to facilitate the provision of mental health services in schools through CSCT (Comprehensive School and Community Treatment Services)
- The OPI continues its collaboration with the IDEA Partnership, the School Administrators of Montana (and its affiliated groups), the MEA/MFT, the Montana Association of School Psychologists and others that make up the Montana RTI Council to provide guidance to facilitate the implementation of the RTI process in Montana. The partnership also supports the SMH community of practice
- The OPI Special Education Division staff has developed productive working relationships with other Montana Agencies that serve youth and adults with disabilities. Division staff participated as members of advisory councils for vocational rehabilitation, juvenile justice, developmental disabilities, the state independent living council and the mental health divisions of the DPHHS. These connections have allowed the OPI staff to build strong working relationships with other agencies, which resulted in multiple collaborative projects that have strengthened the commitments of all involved to working with Montana's youth to facilitate smooth transitions from birth to adulthood
- Working with staff from the Technical Assistance for Excellence in Special Education (TAESE) center, the OPI has facilitated the Montana Higher Education Consortium (HEC) for over ten years. The HEC continues to be a part of CSPD and brings together members of the School of Education faculty from each of the colleges and universities in Montana. Participation in the consortium is strong, and includes faculty members from each of the public and private colleges in Montana. This group has worked to provide greater standardization of the teacher training programs in Montana, and has worked together to improve pre-service training programs. This group also is analyzing dispositions of teacher candidates and how to address them, resulting in better qualified educators.
- The OPI continued to provide grant monies to the parent training and support center Parents, Let's Unite for Kids (PLUK). This supports the organization's efforts to provide training and information to improve parental involvement, training to parents and others regarding the requirements of the IDEA and effective strategies for parents to participate in their child's education.

Annually, the SEA brings together representatives from all these stakeholder groups for a joint meeting in May facilitated by TAESE. This meeting gathers over 80 front-line stakeholders together to share up-dates of issues and to gather input from a comprehensive representation of Montana disability community, families and parents of regular and special education children and students. For the past two years, the topic has been Montana's SSIP and activities have been conducted to solicit both general and specific stakeholder input. In May 2014, after meeting with the State Advisory Panel in January, the joint meeting conducted a SWOT (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats) analysis led by Norm Ames from Mountain Plains Regional Resource Center centered on successful school completion and graduation rates. Compiled results were analyzed and reviewed by the State Advisory Panel in June and September. Final review and input from the Panel were received and incorporated into the Montana SSIP. Specific targets were set for indicators 1-16 in September 2014.

### **Analysis of State Infrastructure to Support Improvement and Build Capacity**

A description of how the State analyzed the capacity of its current infrastructure to support improvement and build capacity in LEAs to implement, scale up, and sustain the use of evidence-based practices to improve results for children with disabilities. State systems that make up its infrastructure include, at a minimum: governance, fiscal, quality standards, professional development, data, technical assistance, and accountability/monitoring. The description must include current strengths of the systems, the extent the systems are coordinated, and areas for improvement of functioning within and across the systems. The State must also identify current State-level improvement plans and initiatives, including special and general education improvement plans and initiatives, and describe the extent that these initiatives are aligned, and how they are, or could be, integrated with, the SSIP. Finally, the State should identify representatives (e.g., offices, agencies, positions, individuals, and other stakeholders) that were involved in developing Phase I of the SSIP and that will be involved in developing and implementing Phase II of the SSIP.

Montana's analysis of our infrastructure to support improvement and build capacity is well established and on-going. In addition to our division SSIP team, including our state director, unit managers and data unit manager, we utilize our advisory panel, CSPD regional and statewide councils, the OPI Leadership Council, and Montana Providers of Professional learning Network (MPPLN) to analyze our current activities, resources, needs, priorities, and capacities. This analysis includes our data system, including data governance, the Superintendent's goals and priorities, our fiscal resources, and what the stakeholders view as the strengths, weaknesses, and opportunities and threats that exist in the state. Fiscal review is overseen by the OPI's Department of Operations. This department manages our fiscal accountability system, including auditing IDEA funding at the SEA and LEA level. In addition, the Legislative Audit Division conducts annual fiscal and program audits of the OPI. Professional development, technical assistance, and compliance monitoring analysis of the state's infrastructure is described in detail in the APR introduction.

Annually, the SEA brings together representatives from all stakeholder groups for a joint meeting in May facilitated by TAESE. This meeting gathers over 80 front-line stakeholders, including parents, together to share up-dates of issues and to gather input from a comprehensive representation of the Montana disability community, families and parents of regular and special education children and students. For the past two years, the topic has been Montana's SSIP, and activities have been conducted to solicit both general and specific stakeholder input. In May 2014, after meeting with the State Advisory Panel in January, the joint meeting conducted an extensive SWOT analysis facilitated by Norm Ames from Mountain Plains Regional

Resource Center **centered on successful school completion and graduation rates**. The compiled data, when collated and analyzed showed the following results that were supported across stakeholder groups.

Strengths- All strengths are discussed in more detail in the APR introduction

- Graduation Matters Montana Initiative and other initiatives and programs focused of graduation.
- Professional Development including Montana's CSPD especially noting the low cost or no cost availability
- The Montana Behavioral Institute
- Montana's Early Assistance Program
- Montana's Multi-tiered System of Support
- Relationships-Between agencies, LEA's programs, activities, support groups
- Children's Mental Health
- Montana's Digital Academy-Online High School Classes
- Broad multiple supports for youth and families
- PLUK- Montana's Parent Support Center
- Leadership support for students with disabilities- State elected officials and other agency leadership
- Montana is a rural state that chooses to be creative, we problem solve in diverse ways

Weaknesses-

- Distance and isolation
- Rural access to services
- Geography
- Lack of funding
- Transient population
- Age out of services at 19
- Cultural challenges and poverty
- Transportation
- Polarized political system
- Limited capacity

Opportunities-

- Build on strong established relationships
- Improve technology access and use
- Community Involvement
- Installation of existing supports in LEA's that currently do not have them
- Focus technical assistance to LEA's
- Newly acquired grant activities
- Respect for, and embracing cultural diversity
- Exploit local control that values unique heritage and values

Threats-

- Age out ceiling (state legislation) at 19
- Legislative support- funding
- Time-increased expectations
- Agencies and programs that exist in silos.
- Time
- Capacity
- Autism
- Recruitment and retention of staff in many schools

There are numerous current State-level improvement plans and initiatives in place in Montana. Each division of the OPI and other agencies have required improvement activities specific to their program requirements. Each of these plans and the associated activities are aligned to the Superintendent's

strategic initiatives. This facilitates the alignment of activities and goals across all OPI programs. Therefore data from these programs were also analyzed carefully to determine their effectiveness and the extent they are able to be integrated with SSIP activities. Specific examples include:

- Graduation Matters Montana
- Title I Schools of Promise Initiative and school improvement plans
- Accreditation-Five-year comprehensive education plans
- Grant Programs
  - Project AWARE
  - School Climate Grant
  - EnvisionIT
  - Preschool Development Grant
  - CEEDAR Center
  - Promise Grant

Analysis of the various OPI initiatives show common threads of recognition and improvement activities surrounding student achievement, school climate, student support, and successful school completion leading to post-school education, training, and employment. The initiatives all recognize the striking disaggregated data between the total school population and the American Indian population especially in school completion rates. In addition, other state agencies are poised to be integrated into the SIMR activities. Particularly the state’s vocational rehabilitation and children’s mental health agencies due to the reauthorization of the Workforce Investment and Opportunity Act.

The representatives who were involved in the development and implementation of Phase I and will be involved in the implementation of Phase II of the SSIP are those detailed in the introduction to the APR. To reemphasize, parents are a prominent component of many of our stakeholder groups and particularly on our state advisory panel which is fully vested as required by the IDEA.

**State-identified Measurable Result(s) for Children with Disabilities**

A statement of the result(s) the State intends to achieve through the implementation of the SSIP. The State-identified result(s) must be aligned to an SPP/APR indicator or a component of an SPP/APR indicator. The State-identified result(s) must be clearly based on the Data and State Infrastructure Analyses and must be a child-level outcome in contrast to a process outcome. The State may select a single result (e.g., increasing the graduation rate for children with disabilities) or a cluster of related results (e.g., increasing the graduation rate and decreasing the dropout rate for children with disabilities).

*Statement*

Montana’s SIMR (State-identified Measurable Result) is:

The number and percent of American Indian students with disabilities who successfully complete their secondary education will increase.

Measurement:

The numerator: All **American Indian** special education graduates/completers in the school year (on-time, early or late).

The denominator: All special education graduates in the school year plus the 12th grade dropouts during the same year plus the 11th grade dropouts in the preceding year plus the 10th grade dropouts from 2 years prior plus the 9th grade dropouts from 3 years prior.

The data show a significant discrepancy in the completer rates of American Indian students compared to all other students with disabilities. As the data show, the completion rate for American Indian students is

lower than the four-year cohort rate. This is the opposite of the trend for all other race/ethnicity categories. American Indian students are the largest minority population in the state and many schools with high American Indian populations are located in rural and remote areas with little resources and in many cases poor economies.

Montana’s SIMR is directly aligned to indicator 1 and 2 and is supported by improvement activities associated with indicators 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15 and 16. We chose to target a completion rate versus a graduation or dropout rate due to the unique challenges facing our American Indian population. The data suggests that the cohort measure actually masks the number of students that do not complete. We believe that regardless of time taken, successful school completion is a positive result.

Improving the results for this subgroup will lead to improved state data, and will lead to the implementation of strategies that will improve the outcome for all students with disabilities in the state.

Additional data used in identifying root causes and supporting the choice of Montana’s SIMR include:

Title I- The attached Title I Persistently Lowest Achieving Schools list shows that of the lowest performing 30 schools, 26 are schools with high populations of American Indian students. The proficiency rates for those schools reflect dramatic differences with other schools in the state.

GMM- The attached GMM Graduation and Dropout Report for 2014 show a 19% difference in graduation rates using a four year cohort between all students and American Indian students.

The attached Montana American Indian Student Achievement Data Report Fall 2014 reports-

Out of 823 public schools in Montana:

- 58 public schools report 75 – 100% American Indian students within their school population.
- 20 public schools report 50 – 75% American Indian students within their school population.
- 38 public schools report 25 – 50% American Indian students within their school population.

As of the count date (October 7, 2013) for the 2013-2014 school year 2,819 of all designated American Indian students were special education students. This leads to a special education rate among American Indian students of 14.3%. The special education rate among White students is 10.9%.

Suspension rates are also an issue with our American Indian students and is an identified root cause of low rates of school completion.

These data charts illustrate the root cause of school climate as a factor in school completion. Schools with high suspension/expulsion rates are those with unstable structure and climate conducive to a safe and encouraging learning environment. It is clear that these data show an identified need to target American Indian student’s issues that lead to successful school completion.

*Description*

**Selection of Coherent Improvement Strategies**

An explanation of how the improvement strategies were selected, and why they are sound, logical and aligned, and will lead to a measurable improvement in the State-identified result(s). The improvement strategies should include the strategies, identified through the Data and State Infrastructure Analyses, that are needed to improve the State infrastructure and to support LEA implementation of evidence-based practices to improve the State-identified Measurable Result(s) for Children with Disabilities. The State must describe how implementation of the improvement strategies will address identified root causes for low performance and ultimately build LEA capacity to achieve the State-identified Measurable Result(s) for Children with Disabilities.

Throughout the development discussion and data analysis of the SSIP, current state initiatives and activities were evaluated as to their capacity and capability to support the SIMR. It was interesting to note that most

initiatives and programs are already actively aligned with activities that address the root causes of lower school completion rates. Those root causes are reflected in multiple other APR indicator data. Of the common root causes of school non-completion including; poor achievement, discipline, school climate, poverty, lack of medical care, dysfunctional family units, transiency of students and staff, and quality of staff, many of these causes exist to a higher degree in our American Indian communities and schools. While the OPI's improvement strategies cannot ameliorate some causes, we can mitigate them to the greatest extent possible. Detailed descriptions of our improvement strategies are included in the APR introduction in the Compliance Monitoring, Technical Assistance, and Professional Development Sections.

In 1972, Montana added language to its constitution pledging to use education to preserve the unique cultural heritage of Native Americans. After nearly 30 years of inaction, this pledge was codified with the Indian Education for All (IEFA) Act, which says that every student in Montana, whether native or not, should "be encouraged to learn about the distinct and unique heritage of American Indians in a culturally responsive manner." Several years later still, in 2005, this act was logistically implemented when the state legislature gave the initiative financial backing. Our new School Climate Grants affords us the added ability to work directly with our Indian Education for All division of the OPI. Check and Connect is a comprehensive intervention activity currently being designed to enhance student engagement at school with learning for marginalized, disengaged students in grades K-12, through relationship building, problem solving and capacity building and persistence. A goal of Check and Connect is to foster school completion with academic and social competence. Check and Connect is implemented by a trained mentor whose primary goal is to keep education a salient issue for disengaged students and their teachers and family members. The mentor works with a caseload of students and families over time and follows their caseload from program to program and school to school.

Montana's Check and Connect project/training will focus on (1) consultants that work with schools on or near reservations. Through the School Climate Transformation Grant, we are hiring 4 Indian MBI Cultural Consultants to work with select school with high American Indian populations. The Montana Check and Connect training will also target principals, counselors, MBI team members, home school coordinators, Dean of Students and other identified support staff with student influence.

All of our major activities and initiatives, have been developed and implemented on the basis of evidence-based practices. In particular, Montana's Behavioral Initiative and our CSPD are nationally recognized exemplar programs. The key strategy is to focus these existing activities directly to our target schools and will be incentive based and strongly supported by the OPI. Montana is a local control state and each of our 409 school districts have locally elected school boards. School participation in state initiatives and activities must be approved by the local district. Often, lack of funding, travel, or lack of knowledge of opportunities eliminates the districts from participation. Our intention is to systematically intervene in those districts to provide information and resources as incentives for understanding the current issues the district faces, knowledge of improvement activities available, and resources to access those activities. Due to the unique and varied cultures of our people and communities, the specifics of how this process will take place will vary between districts. As a result, our outreach to districts will range from statewide information to direct communication with local school boards, administrators, teachers, parents, and other stakeholders in the communities. School completion data will be collected and analyzed comparing districts who access improvement strategies and what is impactful and to what degree. This will enable Montana to then scale-up successful initiative strategies and implementation strategies across the state.

Implementation of targeted and supported improvement activities across issues at the root of success of Montana's American Indian students with disabilities will result in higher school completion rates, students graduating college and career ready, successful school outcomes and stronger communities.

## Theory of Action

A graphic illustration that shows the rationale of how implementing the coherent set of improvement strategies selected will increase the State's capacity to lead meaningful change

in LEAs, and achieve improvement in the State-identified Measurable Result(s) for Children with Disabilities.

[Logic Model Montana](#) Logic Model Montana

 Provide a description of the provided graphic illustration (optional)

## Infrastructure Development

- (a) Specify improvements that will be made to the State infrastructure to better support EIS programs and providers to implement and scale up EBPs to improve results for infants and toddlers with disabilities and their families.
- (b) Identify the steps the State will take to further align and leverage current improvement plans and other early learning initiatives and programs in the State, including Race to the Top-Early Learning Challenge, Home Visiting Program, Early Head Start and others which impact infants and toddlers with disabilities and their families.
- (c) Identify who will be in charge of implementing the changes to infrastructure, resources needed, expected outcomes, and timelines for completing improvement efforts.
- (d) Specify how the State will involve multiple offices within the State Lead Agency, as well as other State agencies and stakeholders in the improvement of its infrastructure.

The Montana OPI has numerous agency-wide improvement strategies currently in place or in development. All of these strategies are aligned with the **State Superintendent's Strategic Directions**. (Attached to the Phase I SSIP) These directions include four goals.

Goal 1: Student's Graduate Prepared for College and Careers

Goal 2: Raise American Indian Student Achievement

Goal 3: Improve the Health and Well-Being of Students

Goal 4: Coordinate OPI Programs to Better Serve Students, Educators and Schools

Under Goal 1 and 2, objectives include: Increase statewide American Indian graduation rate and decrease American Indian dropout rate

Infrastructure improvements that are ongoing include:

- Improvements and up-dates to Montana's statewide student data system named Achievement in Montana (AIM). All special education student records and forms are contained in this system. The fact that Montana has standardized, mandatory special education forms and reporting gives our data a very high reliability and validity value. Teacher and LEAs also benefit from access to pertinent data which, when analyzed, guides the district towards remedial and improvement strategies.
- In the past year, the special education division has hired and trained 12 new part-time behavioral consultants. These consultants work under the school improvement unit to provide student specific technical assistance to LEAs. This work is specifically tied to school behavior, attendance, achievement, and school completion.
- Montana has joined the **Results-Based Accountability Cross-State Learning Collaborative** through the National Center for Systemic Improvement (NCSI). We are evaluating our general supervision responsibilities and our monitoring process and data to improve our assessment of special education program effectiveness at the LEA level. This, then, will drive not only the focus of our program reviews and monitoring, but also the scope of those activities.
- The State Personnel Development Grant (SPDG) work around braided services, now referred to as Multi-tiered Systems of Support (MTSS) continues to evolve as we are bringing our response to intervention efforts, Montana Behavioral Institute (MBI), mental health, and suicide prevention programs together into a structured and refined alliance. Ongoing professional development opportunities in this area along with all our comprehensive system of personnel development system continue to provide excellent opportunities and access for Montana's educators, parents, and families.
- Since the reauthorization of the Workforce Investment and Opportunity Act (WIOA), we have partnered with the state Disability Employment and Transition Division of the Department of Health and Human Services in implementing the new requirements allocating 15% of their grant funds for pre-employment activities in schools. We are working closely with them and their contracted implementation group at the Rural Institute of the University of Montana. This infrastructure change within the vocational rehabilitation program is another improvement activity that we can promote in our relationships with LEAs.

The current initiative **Graduation Matters Montana (GMM)** continues to scale-up across the state with new LEAs joining. The objectives of GMM are:

1. Increase the rate of Montana students graduating from high school, college and career-ready.
2. Establish a support network between schools, businesses and community organizations for student success.
3. Create school-based and community-based opportunities for student success.

Over 50 school districts have adopted Graduation Matters since it began. Montana's overall graduation rate has improved as a result currently reported at 86% in the 2015 Graduation and Dropout Report for Graduation Matters which is attached.

The special education division is working closely with the Indian Education division to support community-based initiatives in the targeted districts.

The **Systems of Care Tribal Wraparound Project**:

- is a collaboration of organizations and resources in your community that come together to serve youth and their families.
- provides opportunities for youth's needs to be identified and to be referred appropriately.
- will ensure that the services and supports given to the youth are family-driven, youth-guided and fit the cultural need of the individual youth.
- uses processes that empower youth and families to acknowledge their own power.
- provides positive opportunities for youth.
- is strength based – focusing on the youth and family's strengths to build a positive outcome.

The Wraparound process has been chosen as a proven strategy for achieving cultural competency while empowering the natural strengths of American Indian/Alaska Native families to identify and address their own prioritized needs within their cultural framework. The Office of Public Instruction special education division funds two of the wraparound

coordinators. Other agency involvement includes the Montana DPHHS State Suicide Prevention Office and the Rocky Mountain Tribal Leaders Council.

Culture is defined as the wisdom, healing traditions, and transmitted values that bind people together, from one generation to another (Duran, 2006); thus, “culture-based wraparound” aligns with the healing power of culture.

#### Systems of Care Wraparound Goals

- Goal 1: Strengthen capacity and expansion of Wraparound
- Goal 2: Strengthen and formalize interagency agreements to support Wraparound youth and families
- Goal 3: Strengthen and formalize partnerships within mental health delivery system for youth and families

In December 2015 the OPI created an **American Indian Achievement Task Force**. The charges to the task force are:

1. Articulate an agency theory of action as it relates to raising AI student achievement
2. Review current OPI efforts to raise AI student achievement
3. Consult with practitioners working in schools and communities that serve AI students
4. Identify successful strategies and highlight successful OPI efforts to raise AI student achievement
5. Specify both inter-divisional and intra-divisional actions that OPI staff and programs can engage in to help close the AI student achievement gap and keep an ongoing focus on the effort.

The task force membership includes staff from multiple agency divisions including Title I, Indian Education, Measurement and Accountability, and members of the Superintendent’s Cabinet. This work is extremely well aligned with our SSIP. The task force is using the same process that we used in Phase I to do data analysis, infrastructure analysis, stakeholder involvement, development of a plan of action, and selection of improvement strategies. The special education division has three staff seated on the task force. The improvement strategies identified will become a part of our ongoing actions to make progress on our SIMR. At this date, there have been three meetings of the task force. The timeline goal is implementation in the fall.

As informed by the analysis in Phase I, how will the changes in State infrastructure support LEAs in implementing the coherent improvement strategies and activities in a sustainable manner?

The outcomes of improvements to our infrastructure will provide us with a clearer picture of what the unique needs of individual LEAs are. Montana’s SIMR and the American Indian Task Force both focus on LEAs with high American Indian populations. Our SIMR targets all such schools and the task force targets schools specifically on one of our seven Indian Reservations. This will be accomplished by data analysis and individualized communication with LEAs, communities, and tribal governments. Once identified, focused support will be provided. This support may include access to initiative activities and resources, professional development, technical assistance, and fiscal and other services.

Community awareness, understanding, ownership and involvement in these various improvement activities is critical. These strategies and activities reach beyond the school doors. They require family, community, business, health professional, and law enforcement input, support, and involvement. The design models for these various infrastructure activities includes components to accomplish that not only to help with effectiveness but also to ensure sustainability and ability to scale up in that community and others.

Additional steps currently underway include the development of Montana’s new State Plan under the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA). The OPI’s structure for development of the new plan includes a planning group, a project management team, a coordinating council, and other subgroups. Special education division administrators and staff are heavily involved in all of aspects of the plan development. This intra-agency effort allows alignment of cross-divisional work and coordination of activities to more effectively impact children with disabilities. The new level of flexibility allowed states in the development of these plans will provide Montana the ability to address the unique attributes of the very districts that are targeted in our SIMR and our other aligned initiatives and activities.

To further align and leverage current and developing improvement plans and initiatives, the following activities are in place.

- The organizational structure of the OPI includes the State Superintendent, her personal staff, a Deputy Superintendent, three Assistant Superintendents, and then the division Administrators. The Leadership Council is charged with furthering the Superintendents Strategic Initiatives, and fomenting intra-agency coordination and cooperation. As small agency, the personal and profession relationships within our agency have an opportunity to flourish. As a result, the opportunity to work cross-divisionally flows quite easily and quickly. Our relationship with outside agencies function in much the same way as explained in the stakeholder involvement section of the Phase I SSIP. Our primary stakeholder group remains the state advisory panel. Our large stakeholder group meets annually and will meet again this May. This large group is described in detail in the Phase I SSIP. The OPI as an agency is led by an elected official. As such the agency is accountable to all the citizens of the state. The Superintendent has set strategic initiatives, detailed elsewhere in this report, and each division of the OPI must align their activities to those initiatives.
- Montana uses the **My Voice Student Survey** from the Quaglia Institute for Student Aspirations. Results from the surveys are analyzed and incorporated into the design of Montana’s Behavioral Institute. This alignment of data to direction allows schools involved in MBI, to more efficiently cater their program implementation to local needs.
- **Montana’s Comprehensive System of Personnel Development** annually analyzes APR indicators results to targets; to direct their focus for professional development offerings in their regions and statewide. This aligns professional development to the APR, the SSIP, and all other agency initiatives.
- The **Teacher Learning Hub** is Montana’s new digital professional resource. In July 2013, AFT awarded Montana an Innovation Grant to create the Montana Digital Professional Learning Network (MDPLN). This new online learning network was patterned after the Montana Digital Academy (MTDA), with the primary goal of addressing the challenges of distance, time, access, and equity in providing Montana educators access to quality professional learning opportunities statewide. The initial focus was to provide Montana English Language Arts, Literacy, and Mathematics Common Core training and ongoing coaching support for Montana teachers, as well as paraprofessional training for the MEA-MFT PASS program. MTDA worked in conjunction with MEA-MFT, Montana Office of Public Instruction, Montana University System, School Administrators of Montana, Montana School Board Association, Montana Rural Education Association, and the Montana Providers of Professional Learning Network (MPPLN) to support and promote the development of MDPLN. This statewide partnership team developed over 100 online modules and grew MDPLN to over 1,000 users. In August 2015, to ensure continued success and sustainability the MDPLN team leaders decided to transition the management of MDPLN from MTDA to the Montana Office of Public Instruction. OPI staff will continue to work closely with MTDA staff and other groups from the partnership team to expand the offerings and reach even more Montana Educators in the years to come. In November 2015, MDPLN changed its name to The Teacher Learning Hub. The Hub will still continue to offer quality online learning, but the new name helps to define the purpose of this learning platform. <http://learninghub.mrooms.net/>
- The **Montana Data Use Culture** grant was received from the US Department of Education, Institute of Education Sciences (IES) in late 2015 as part of the Statewide Longitudinal Data Systems (SLDS) 2015 grant award cycle. This award is funded through 2019. The focus of this grant is on using K-20 data to conduct rigorous analysis of all student related data in Montana. A special emphasis of this grant has been placed on under-served populations. One of the specific goals of the grant is to investigate and enhance program effectiveness for OPI intervention based programs. Several OPI led efforts have taken place in Montana that have focused on school- or community-based interventions to enhance student performance in a given subject matter, geographical area, or under-supported group. In

many of these cases, data that was collected in conjunction with these efforts has not been incorporated into the SLDS data warehouse. Inclusion of data from the Special Education Division of the OPI will provide an excellent example of this new collaboration. Programs such as the Montana Behavioral Initiative (MBI), the Response to Intervention (RTI) and the Multi-Tiered System of Support (MTSS) can be incorporated in to the activities of this grant to investigate the longitudinal impact of these efforts on students in Montana. Data concerning the level of program implementation gathered within the Positive Behavior Intervention and Support (PBIS) Apps will be utilized as one aspect of this data linkage. Data reports and analysis will be disseminated within OPI and to the larger education community through yearly reports, presentations and potentially peer-reviewed publications.

• **High-tiered Community of Practice**

- The special education mental health specialist is working with administrators and staff members from each of the residential treatment centers, Pine Hills and Riverside youth correctional facilities, Juvenile Detention centers, DOJ and DOC state offices to work on addressing the social/emotional needs of students in those settings more effectively through the implementation of MBI in the facilities. This group is also working with the Quaglia Institute to implement a program to facilitate the transition of residents back to the public school setting. This work is based on a communication tool that has been developed by Quaglia that allows the sharing of work samples, etc. with the local school district to facilitate a supportive relationship between the student and the school prior to the student transitioning back. This group has been active for about two years. There has been a lot of work on the implementation of MBI and climate change at several of the facilities.
- **School-Based Mental Health** The crisis and suicide response protocol demonstration project included contracting with an external expert. We adapted a protocol his university team developed. The Fort Peck tribes adapted this tool to develop a framework to enhance school, community and family engagement that makes sense to their tribal communities.
- Reasons we have been effective in the Fort Peck tribes and considering best practices:
- In 2013, the OPI received one-time funds for the 2015 biennium to contract services to increase school-based mental health coordination. With internal and external consultation, we structured the project to focus on suicide and crisis response protocols. The project ended formally June 30, 2015, though efforts have sustained for another year within each pilot site. One of our three pilot sites includes the Assiniboine and Sioux Tribes on the Fort Peck Reservation.
- We had ongoing face to face meeting opportunities and our budget allowed us to provide food, an important aspect of working in our tribal communities.
- Partnering with the OPIs Caring School Coordinator who oversees an OPI Systems of Care SAMHSA grant which includes the wraparound services.
- Providing updates to the Fort Peck Tribal Council.
- Bringing together a team of tribal representatives who are from the local communities. Representation on the team included: Tribal councilwoman, Fort Peck site coordinator and tribal prevention initiative, Health Promotion Disease Prevention (HPDP), youth probation and Fort Peck Tribal Health.
- Presenting the adapted protocol to the Frazier, Wolf Point, Poplar and Brockton school districts through a series of meetings. These meetings provided openings for the schools and local community leaders to share about their efforts and also give the schools something to respond to. The meetings also provided opportunities for community and school engagement. Most important, the meetings provided platforms for relationship building.
- One Fort Peck team member has become a certified suicide prevention trainer in the SafeTALK and ASIST trainings. This project has allowed for local capacity building and sustainability.
- The Special Education Division provides ongoing support to provide continued technical assistance and training which continues to enhance ongoing efforts. This internal support allows us to share what we continue to learn from the Fort Peck Tribes broadly.
- Through the collaboration, the Bureau of Indian Affairs provided continuation funding for ongoing project efforts in Fort Peck.
- Recently, one of the Fort Peck team members co-facilitated a CSPD training in Billings with OPI staff to share the Fort Peck's crisis and suicide response protocol with area-wide school professionals.
- As Fort Peck has been a part of this project, there have been ample opportunities for non-Native and Native American co-training and facilitation. This has been one pathway towards bridge building.
- The Fort Peck's protocol is a framework we share with public schools across MT.
- Additional work in public schools located on our American Indian Reservations has primarily included request to receive trauma-informed training.
- **Additional alignment and leveraging activities:**
- LEAs required 5 year continuous improvement plans include special education goals
- Special education provides joint presentations at Title I conferences
- Special education involvement in development of new state plan under the ESSA
- Special education involvement in the OPI's Preschool Development Grant
- Cross-divisional involvement of Montana's SSIP

Identification of infrastructure changes necessary for plan implementation has been done by a wide swath of professional leadership within the agency, utilization of our system of data governance, with other agencies, and with stakeholders especially including the State Special Education Advisory Panel. Successful plan outcomes are dependent upon agency staff, grant resources, existing resources, stakeholders including communities, and LEAs.

Out timelines for implementation include data changes within the year, monitoring system refinement within one to two years, and community changes over several years.

Stakeholder input and involvement will continue throughout on-going infrastructure involvement. Our professional stakeholders, state advisory panel, large stakeholder group (described in detail in the SSIP Phase I), our regional and state-wide CSPD stakeholder councils, needs assessments, and negotiated rule making process provide broad accessibility of input, information, and advise. We value that and let it guide our efforts.

**Support for EIS programs and providers Implementation of Evidence-Based Practices**

- (a) Specify how the State will support EIS providers in implementing the evidence-based practices that will result in changes in Lead Agency, EIS program, and EIS provider practices to achieve the SIMR(s) for infants and toddlers with disabilities and their families.
- (b) Identify steps and specific activities needed to implement the coherent improvement strategies, including communication strategies and stakeholder involvement; how identified barriers will be addressed; who will be in charge of implementing; how the activities will be implemented with fidelity; the resources that will be used to implement them; and timelines for completion.
- (c) Specify how the State will involve multiple offices within the Lead Agency (and other State agencies such as the SEA) to support EIS providers in scaling up and sustaining the implementation of the evidence-based practices once they have been implemented with fidelity.

All initiatives across the OPI have been developed to include evidence-based practices. Montana's MBI initiative, for example, is based on the research and program developed by the Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports Center, an OSEP Technical Assistance Center. Montana's model for our SSIP implementation is premised on the commitment to target and focus on existing supports already in place throughout the SEA. These major initiatives all were developed under strict planning, research, stakeholder involvement, and based on known evidence based practices that produce positive results.

## FFY 2014 Part B State Performance Plan (SPP)/Annual Performance Report (APR)

The LEAs targeted in our SSIP are widely different in multiple ways. Variations in reservations, tribal governance, communities, social-economic level, medical care, isolation, employment availability, etc. result in a range of school stability and functionality from good to in near systemic failure. Each LEA's circumstances are different. As a result, each school's needs vary according to need, local perception, and willingness to accept realities. Many of these schools also have a reluctance to allow "outside" people and programs in. Cultural distrust is still an issue in some cases.

This is why we are utilizing a model that establishes communication with an LEA through a "point of contact" person or persons. Establishing a level of trust is critical in assisting the school in recognizing internal issues and helping them find and access evidence-based practices to improve. This process of placing a person in the role of LEA service facilitator is our model for assessing the readiness and capacity for improvements.

Some of our targeted districts are currently involved with current initiatives and activities. Part of our goal is to support and encourage that sustained involvement. That may take the form of resources to allow staff training and/or participation in training or professional development.

This takes us to recognition of the barriers we and our stakeholders have identified to our SSIP work. Montana's size and geography create barriers to travel, time, access, and cost. Isolated communities have limited capacity to staff schools. Finding qualified substitute teachers is, in many cases, not possible. Distance realities include the common situation of having to travel eight to ten hours to attend an activity located 450 to 550 miles away. Flying within Montana is not an option. Weather also has a seasonal impact. These realities lead us to identify multiple avenues to provide assistance to LEAs. From on-site training, to assisted attendance, digital access to PD and TA, to financial support of substitutes, travel, and materials.

Another significant barrier we face is very high transiency rates for administrators and staff. It is not uncommon for some of our small districts to have a new superintendent every year, or in some cases every few months. Many of these districts have severe recruitment problems with special education teachers and specialists. This is problematic in terms of sustainability of existing improvement activities in these districts. This points to the importance of ongoing support to these schools and not a "drive-by" level of support.

Change in our targeted schools is therefore dependent on multiple implementation drivers. Leadership drivers of time, funding and support, relationship building, and professional competencies must be addressed and remediated when necessary. Competency drivers are tied to administrative, staff, school board, and community attitudes, values, and expectations. Organizational drivers are spectrum wide, from administration and local school board support, through staff and community, to facilities and data systems. All of these implementation drivers vary by LEA and are factors in our individualized approach to developing which evidence-based practices are the best option for that unique LEA.

We view our professional development (PD) and technical assistance (TA) support for improvement strategies and evidence-based practices as being tiered in focus. Our SEA professional development and technical assistance provided systematically statewide, such as our comprehensive system for professional development and our web-based learning hub, are available to everyone in our state. A slightly higher level of support occurs within these systems where regional needs are recognized and catered to by creating or offering more specific PD or TA. The next level is more LEA specific with targeted TA and/or on-going PD or programmatic support. And then our top level would be LEA or school level coaches, wrap-around facilitator, and/or targeted or required training. The state supports all these tiered activities by providing necessary staff, funding, and expertise.

The communication network Montana utilizes is a structured model that not only facilitates communication, but incorporates stakeholder sharing and opportunity to provide input and insight, ask questions, and build capacity. In addition to the leadership model described earlier, this provides fluid communication at the agency. Some other examples of strategies utilized includes:

- CSPD State Council
- CSPD Regional Councils
- OPI Leadership Council
- American Indian Achievement Task Force
- Regional LEA Superintendent monthly meetings (The OPI has a designated representative at each of these)
- Regional Special Education Director meetings
- State Special Education Advisory Panel
- Large Stakeholder Annual Meeting (Facilitated by the Technical Assistance for Excellence in Special Education (TAESE) Center)

All these communication and stakeholder sharing venues provide input regarding needs.

Local School Boards are a critical element in supporting programmatic improvement strategies as well.

The use of coaches and development of unique improvement plans will determine specific training, PD and TA needed in the LEA. Short-term and long-term activities are outlined in the evaluation theory of action as well as assigned timelines.

The communication, stakeholder involvement, supervision and programmatic infrastructures described earlier in both the SEA and with other agencies and organizations ensure ongoing involvement of agency divisions, and multiple outside offices. This web of connectivity Montana embraces provides a solid foundation upon which we can scale up and sustain improvement plan activities. Our structured connections and contact with each other provide us an on-going validation accountability to timelines. Our general supervision and monitoring activities are an open book for review, discussion, and input.

Montana is confident that we have designed a model of school improvement that will be effective in improving results to our SIMR. We are fortunate indeed, to work with like-minded people across the state to improve results for students with disabilities.

## Evaluation

- Specify how the evaluation is aligned to the theory of action and other components of the SSIP and the extent to which it includes short-term and long-term objectives to measure implementation of the SSIP and its impact on achieving measurable improvement in SIMR(s) for infants and toddlers with disabilities and their families.
- Specify how the evaluation includes stakeholders and how information from the evaluation will be disseminated to stakeholders.
- Specify the methods that the State will use to collect and analyze data to evaluate implementation and outcomes of the SSIP and the progress toward achieving intended improvements in the SIMR(s).
- Specify how the State will use the evaluation data to examine the effectiveness of the implementation; assess the State's progress toward achieving intended improvements; and to make modifications to the SSIP as necessary.

Montana's SSIP evaluation will be conducted internally at the OPI by the SSIP core team. Data systems are in place and accessible to use for collection of necessary data. In addition to data directly available to the special education division, we also use data from the Measurement and Accountability Division of the OPI. The evaluation team includes the

## FFY 2014 Part B State Performance Plan (SPP)/Annual Performance Report (APR)

state director, the data manager, and the Part B Program Manager. Specific methods for collection of data are identified on the Detailed Evaluation Questions.

Data used in the evaluation is collected throughout the year. It is reviewed upon completion. Data analysis for evaluation of the SSIP will likewise be conducted throughout the year and comprehensively in the two months prior to the required reporting deadline. Additionally, LEA coaches evaluate program implementation and fidelity. Our professional development system has a built in evaluation mechanism.

The OPI has a data governance committee that provides oversight of our data systems and initiates infrastructure changes as needed. The state department of administration is also currently conducting a data system audit.

Montana's stakeholder involvement model has proven to be very effective. As detailed in the SSIP Phase I submittal, the expanding scope of involvement starting with the SSIP team out to the special education division, the SEA leadership group, the State Special Education Advisory Panel, our large stakeholder group, and our relationship-based communication with multiple agencies, organizations, and groups is very strong. We intend to utilize the same methodology throughout the complete SSIP implementation and evaluation processes and in the future with any SSIP modifications.

Our Theory of Action and Detailed Evaluation Questions are directly aligned to all components of the SSIP. The nature of Montana's SIMR and the unique characteristics of each targeted LEA will result in different components of improvement strategies at varying levels of involvement. For example, some LEAs may already be implementing a specific improvement strategy while another LEA may not be. This factor, combined with our intent to allow LEAs to set their own priorities, will result in a wide variation of improvement strategies being implemented across our target schools. We will also remain flexible to support additional improvement strategies identified by LEAs. One such strategy currently in development in Montana is the EdReady program. EdReady is a personalized college math readiness application designed to help learners test their college readiness, see study options, and gain a personalized learning path to fill in knowledge gaps.

Montana's SSIP targeted schools are those LEAs with 25% or more American Indian enrollments. Many, but not all of these LEAs are located on one of Montana's seven Indian reservations. We also are including one additional targeted LEA below the 25% threshold that is a large district with a significant American Indian population. This results in a large sample relative to the entire population. Improvement strategies are available to all targeted schools.

**Montana's SIMR description of measure has been clarified so that the measure relates specifically to American Indian special education graduates/completers. This clarification does not affect the data.**

### Technical Assistance and Support

Describe the support the State needs to develop and implement an effective SSIP. Areas to consider include: Infrastructure development; Support for EIS programs and providers implementation of EBP; Evaluation; and Stakeholder involvement in Phase II.

At the current time, Montana has the supports in place for successful implementation of an effective SSIP. Our internal infrastructure provides us the capability to address implementation, evaluation, and reporting. Our involvement with the NCSI and the Technical Assistance for Excellence in Special Education Center supports our efforts as well.

### OSEP Response

### Required Actions

## Certify and Submit your SPP/APR

I certify that I am the Chief State School Officer of the State, or his or her designee, and that the State's submission of its IDEA Part B State Performance Plan/Annual Performance Report is accurate.

**Selected:** Chief State School Officer

Name and title of the individual certifying the accuracy of the State's submission of its IDEA Part B State Performance Plan/Annual Performance Report.

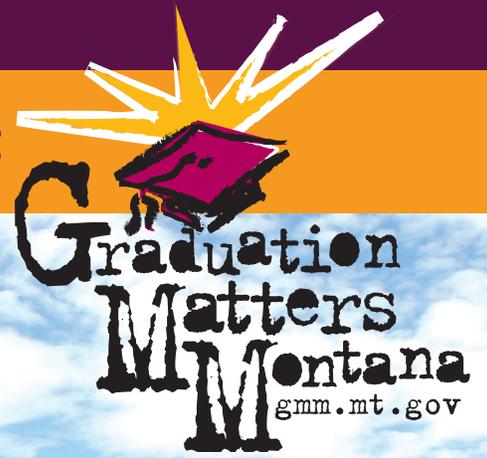
Name: Denise Juneau

Title: State Superintendent

Email: opisupt@mt.gov

Phone: 406-444-5658

# 2015 Graduation and Dropout Report



[opi.mt.gov](http://opi.mt.gov)



**MT's graduation rate increases to 86%!**

**\$6 million annual boost to economy**



**Graduates' lifetime earnings increase \$90 million**



## 2015 GRADUATION AND DROPOUT REPORT

More Montana students are graduating from high school than ever before. That translates into a stronger economy, higher wages, and more opportunities for Montana's young people.

In 2009, 2,272 students were dropping out of school, and the graduation rate was 80.7 percent.

"I saw those numbers and knew that we could do better – that we must do better," Juneau said. "That's why I launched Graduation Matters Montana, a statewide initiative built on business and community support, to make sure more Montana students were graduating from high school prepared to succeed in the rest of their lives."

**Since 2009, Montana's dropout rate has been cut by more than a third. The state's graduation rate reached another historic high in 2014-2015 at 86 percent.**

The improvement hasn't happened by accident. In 53 Montana communities, Graduation Matters Montana has taken hold in ways that are easy to see. Students now participate in "I Pledge to Graduate" events. Graduation Matters banners decorate their hallways. Teachers, parents and community leaders are reinforcing the message that a high school diploma is indeed the first step on the path to success. A common language has developed among Montana's 53 Graduation Matters communities, placing an emphasis on the importance of a high school diploma that prepares students for life.

**Montana's Graduation and Dropout Rate Data 2008-2015**

	Graduation Rate	Completion Rate	High School Dropouts	High School Dropout Rate
2008-2009	80.7%	81.7%	2,272	5.0%
2009-2010	80.2%	82.0%	1,896	4.3%
2010-2011	82.2%	82.2%	1,859	4.3%
2011-2012	83.9%	83.7%	1,744	4.1%
2012-2013	84.4%	84.2%	1,500	3.6%
2013-2014	85.4%	85.0%	1,539	3.7%
2014-2015	86.0%	85.7%	1,421	3.4%

## GRADUATION MATTERS MONTANA

Graduation Matters Missoula was the seed from which Graduation Matters Montana grew. The statewide initiative started with the support of Montana's seven-largest school systems, and today includes 53 communities.

The idea was simple: make sure more Montana students are graduating from high school prepared for college and careers. But the challenge was, and continues to be, developing enough community support to sustain a project that lives beyond one school year, or one graduating class. For real systemic change to take hold, Graduation Matters Montana needs to become engrained in classrooms and dinner tables across the state.

Superintendent Juneau has built a lasting community-based model by partnering with local businesses, schools, and influential leaders to implement best practices and unique strategies.

For example, Graduation Matters Hardin has developed a Freshman Academy for at-risk students and a peer-mentoring program. Graduation Matters Laurel is using the Office of Public Instruction's Early Warning System to better identify students who are at risk of

dropping out. Graduation Matters Stevensville students host monthly school assemblies meant to give teens a forum to talk about strategies for succeeding.

“Many of the schools I visit feel different today than they did five years ago,” Juneau said. “The emphasis on engaging student voice, and using data tools to make sure kids aren’t falling through the cracks, has made such a positive change.”

As part of Graduation Matters Montana, Juneau has convened Student Advisory Boards twice per year over the last five years, bringing together a diverse group of high school students to help shape state policy goals and engage with students on the issues that matter most to them. Since 2010, 185 high school students from 75 Montana high schools have served on Juneau’s Student Advisory Board.



## **BUSINESS AND COMMUNITY SUPPORT**

Building a statewide initiative like Graduation Matters Montana requires a significant investment of time and resources to develop an innovative and lasting program. Over the last five years, Montana businesses and foundations have generously donated more than \$1.3 million to help Graduation Matters Montana communities launch their local efforts.

The Dennis and Phyllis Washington Foundation has been a major financial supporter of Graduation Matters Montana, gifting \$900,000 over the last few years. Financial support has also come from Student Assistance Foundation, BNSF Railway, AT&T, IBM, State Farm, D.A. Davidson, Northwestern Energy, Steele-Reese Foundation, First Interstate Bank, Charter Communications, MEA-MFT, and Applied Materials.

The money from these organizations has seed-funded local Graduation Matters Montana efforts through a competitive grant process. Graduation Matters communities have used the money to launch unique programs, including a career and college readiness center now located at Bozeman High School.

Superintendent Juneau was able to partner with some of Montana’s most well-known businesses to build a lasting framework that will live beyond her time in office.

# PREPARING THE NEXT GENERATION FOR SUCCESS

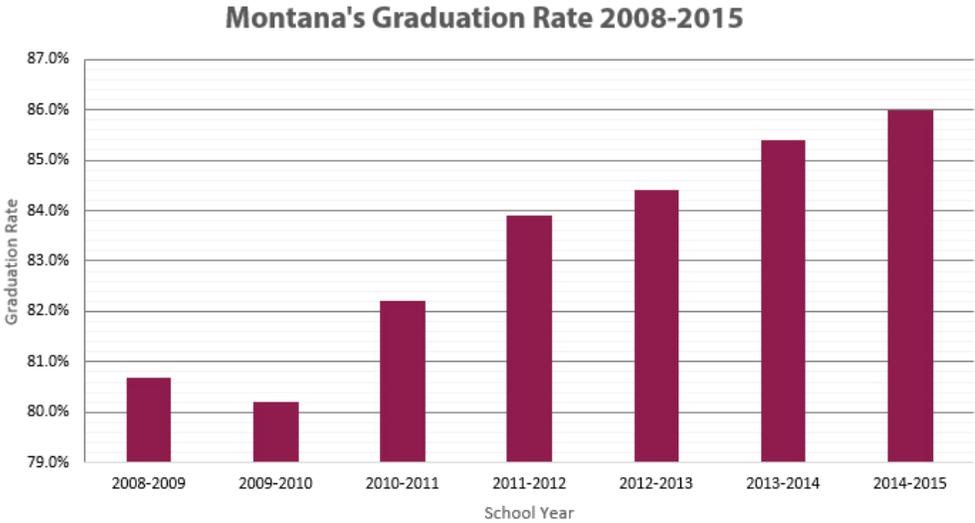
Since 2010, more than 11,000 Montana students have taken the pledge to graduate from high school. It may seem like a simple exercise, but when a student is asked to make a commitment in front of their friends, family, school and community, that student is suddenly surrounded by a group of people who want to hold them accountable.

Many of Montana’s 53 Graduation Matters communities host annual “I Pledge” events for their incoming freshman. Some schools pair high school students with elementary-aged students and work on pledges at a very early age.

“This year I visited a Billings elementary school and watched as nearly 300 young children pledged to graduate from high school,” Juneau said. “All of Montana is rooting for those students, and it’s that kind of community effort that’s required to support our public school students.”

In 2008-2009, 2,272 high school students dropped out, equaling a 5 percent dropout rate. **The dropout rate has been cut by more than a third, with 1,421 high school students dropping out in 2014-2015 for a rate of 3.4 percent.**

**Montana’s graduation rate has steadily increased from 80.7 percent in 2008-2009, to 86 percent in 2014-2015. Montana can now boast its highest graduation rate ever recorded since the Office of Public Instruction began keeping track in 2000.**





*Many of Montana's 53 Graduation Matters communities host annual "I Pledge" events for their incoming freshman. Some schools pair high school students with elementary-aged students and work on pledges at a very early age.*

“There is still more work to be done,” Superintendent Juneau said. “But I’m confident that we’re on the right track and communities now have better tools to continue this important work.”

Not only are more students walking across the graduation stage, they’re also better prepared for college and careers. Since 2010, Montana’s English and math standards were revised to be more rigorous, and the Office of Public Instruction is also working to increase the standards for a handful of other subject areas.

All high school juniors now take the ACT college entrance exam free-of-cost, opening the door to higher education for more of Montana’s students. And thanks to Graduation Matters Montana’s partnership with the Student Assistance Foundation, more students are now completing the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA), ensuring more teens have access to college and aren’t leaving millions of federal dollars on the table.

### Graduation and Dropout Data by AA District

	Cohort Graduation Rate	Graduates	Cohort Count	Continuing	Dropouts
AA Districts Total	85.4%	4,500	5,268	136	632
Billings HS	82.1%	1,092	1,330	30	208
Bozeman HS	86.3%	421	488	16	51
Butte HS	83.4%	292	350	*	53
Flathead HS	88.3%	651	737	10	76
Great Falls HS	84.5%	639	756	36	81
Helena HS	85.3%	627	735	*	106
Missoula HS	89.2%	778	872	37	57

*\*Masked for privacy because the number is less than five.*

### UNDERSTANDING MONTANA’S DROPOUT RATE

The dropout count includes students who were enrolled in school on the date of the previous year’s fall enrollment count, or at some time during the previous school year, and were not enrolled on the date of the current school year’s fall count. The dropout rate is calculated as the number of dropouts divided by the enrollment for the previous year.



*Not only are more students walking across the graduation stage, they're also better prepared for college and careers.*

## Definitions

**Dropout Rate:** Counts students who were enrolled in school on the date of the previous year's October enrollment count or at some time during the previous school year and were not enrolled on the date of the current school year's October count.

**Graduation Rate:** Prior to the 2010-2011 school year, the graduation rate included the number of students who completed a district's graduation requirements in four years or less from the time the student enrolled in the 9th grade or had an Individualized Education Program (IEP) allowing for more than four years to graduate. Beginning in the 2010-2011 school year, the graduation rate has been calculated using the four-year adjusted cohort graduation rate calculation.

**Four-Year Adjusted Cohort Graduation Rate:** The four-year adjusted cohort graduation rate is the number of students who graduate in four years with a regular high school diploma divided by the number of students who form the adjusted cohort for the graduating class. From the beginning of 9th grade, students who are entering that grade for the first time form a cohort that is subsequently "adjusted" by adding any students who transfer into the cohort later during the 9th grade and the next three years and subtracting any students who transfer out, emigrate to another country, or pass away during that same period.

**Completion Rate:** Counts students who complete the high school graduation requirements of a school district, including early graduates, during the previous school year, or complete the high school graduation requirements of a school district at the end of summer prior to the current school year.

**Migrant Student:** Migrant students are those participating in the migrant education program under Title I Part C.

**Economically Disadvantaged:** These are students who are eligible for free or reduced lunch. Students are in this category for the graduation rate only if they're identified as eligible for free or reduced lunch at any time during high school.

## 2015 Montana Dropout Rate Summary

	Dropout Rate	Dropout Count	Enrollment
<b>Total (Grades 7-12)</b>	<b>2.3%</b>	<b>1,465</b>	<b>63,565</b>
<b>High School Total</b>	<b>3.4%</b>	<b>1,421</b>	<b>41,816</b>
Grade 12	5.0%	488	9,825
Grade 11	4.5%	460	10,255
Grade 10	3.0%	321	10,828
Grade 9	1.4%	152	10,908
Grade 8	0.2%	27	10,807
Grade 7	0.2%	17	10,942
<b>Gender</b>			
Male	2.6%	858	32,792
Female	2.0%	607	30,773
<b>Race/Ethnicity</b>			
American Indian	6.3%	418	6,598
Asian	1.3%	7	546
Black	2.0%	14	700
Hispanic	2.8%	72	2,547
Pacific Islander	5.1%	8	157
White	1.8%	915	51,686
Other	2.3%	31	1,331

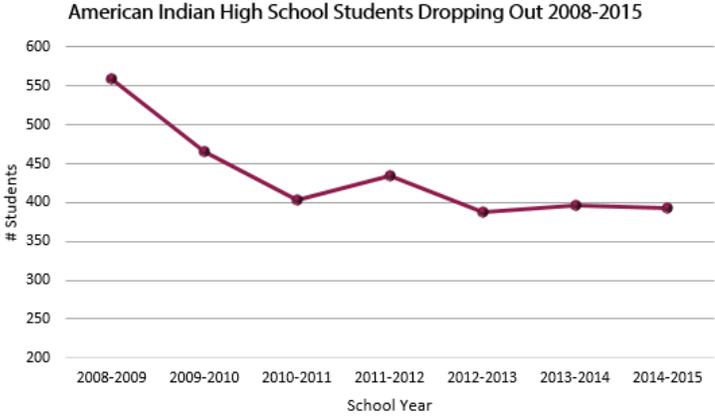
The number of Montana students dropping out has been cut by a third since 2009. Over the last seven years, the dropout rate has declined from 5 percent to 3.4 percent, resulting in 851 fewer dropouts in 2015 compared to 2009.

High school seniors are far more likely to drop out of school than freshmen. Males are more likely to drop out than females.

## CREATING OPPORTUNITIES FOR ALL STUDENTS

It's true more Montana students now have access to a wider range of post-high-school opportunities, but a disproportionate share of low income and minority students aren't completing their high school education.

Twenty-nine percent of Montana’s dropouts are American Indian, while American Indian students make up only 10 percent of the state’s public school population. Montana’s American Indian dropout rate continues to improve, but it remains far behind the rate of white students. **Still, the number of American Indian students dropping out of high school has dropped by nearly a third since 2008.**



**American Indian Graduation and Dropout Rate Data**

Cohort	High School Graduation Rate	High School Dropout Rate	High School Dropout Count	High School Enrollment	Dropout Rate Grades7-12
2008-2009	60.8%	12.3%	559	4537	8.4%
2009-2010	59.7%	10.3%	465	4506	6.9%
2010-2011	63.0%	9.8%	404	4112	6.6%
2011-2012	62.9%	10.4%	434	4195	6.9%
2012-2013	65.4%	9.5%	387	4059	6.3%
2013-2014	65.0%	9.7%	396	4074	6.5%
2014-2015	66.6%	9.5%	393	4128	6.3%

Fewer of Montana’s low income students are graduating from high school, however that rate continues to improve. In 2009-2010, 74.6 percent of low income students were graduating from high school, that rate has ticked up 2.3 percentage points to 76.9 percent.

## 2015 4-Year Cohort Graduation Rate

Student Groups					Cohort	
	Graduates	Dropouts	Continuing	Cohort Count	Graduation Rate	
All Students	9,161	1,199	287	10,647	86.0%	
American Indian	775	297	91	1,163	66.6%	
Asian	110	*	*	116	94.8%	
Black	122	16	10	148	82.4%	
Hispanic	333	51	16	400	83.3%	
Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander	31	*	-	33	93.9%	
White	7,790	828	169	8,787	88.7%	
Economically Disadvantaged	3,675	899	204	4,778	76.9%	
Special Education	966	246	72	1,284	75.2%	
Limited English Learners	237	101	43	381	62.2%	
Homeless	323	124	47	494	65.4%	
Migrant	19	*	*	23	82.6%	

*\*Masked for privacy because the number is less than five.*

## A HIGH SCHOOL DIPLOMA OPENS DOORS TO ECONOMIC SUCCESS

The U.S. Census Bureau's most recent American Community Survey finds the median salary for Montanans who did not graduate from high school earn \$18,384 annually, that's \$6,734 less than someone with a high school diploma and \$18,863 less than someone with a college degree. Montanans without a high school diploma are more likely to live in poverty. The poverty rate for someone who didn't graduate from high school is nearly twice that of someone with a high school diploma.

According to calculations made by the Alliance for Excellent Education, Montana is likely to see significant economic gains as a result of increases in its high school graduation rate from 2009 to 2015, which resulted in 540 additional high school graduates. **Because more students are graduating from high school, the Alliance estimates Montana will see a \$6 million annual boost to the state's economy.** Those graduates will contribute an additional \$10.3 million in spending on homes, and a \$700,000 increase in auto sales.

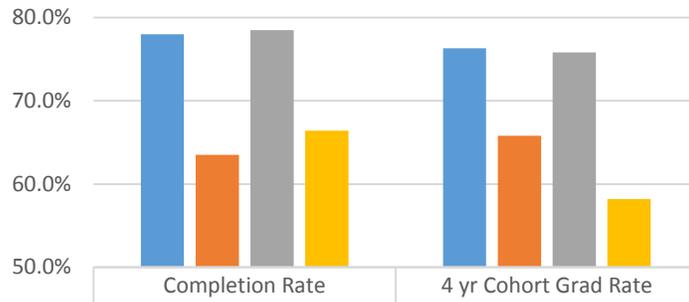
Collectively, those added graduates will likely earn an additional \$90 million over the course of their lifetimes, compared to if they had not graduated from high school.

Raising Montana's graduation rate has never been just about a number. It's about making sure every student in Montana, no matter their zip code, has an equal shot at success. Graduation Matters Montana is rooted in the idea that each of us has a stake in our public education system. When Montana kids succeed, we all benefit.



*"There is still more work to be done," Superintendent Juneau said. "But I'm confident that we're on the right track and communities now have better tools to continue this important work."*

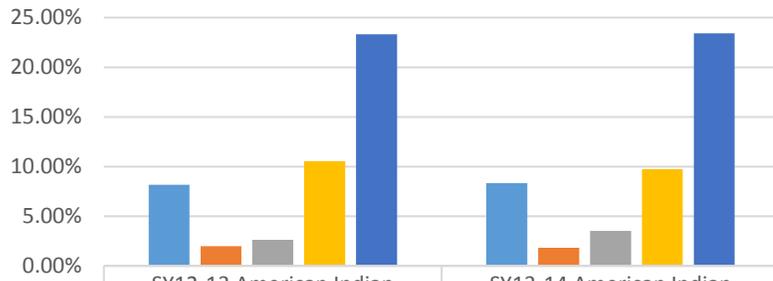
## Special Education Completer and Graduation Rates



	Completion Rate	4 yr Cohort Grad Rate
■ SY12-13 All	78.0%	76.3%
■ SY12-13 American Indian	63.5%	65.8%
■ SY13-14 All	78.5%	75.8%
■ SY13-14 American Indian	66.4%	58.2%

■ SY12-13 All   ■ SY12-13 American Indian   ■ SY13-14 All   ■ SY13-14 American Indian

## Percent of American Indian Special Education Students Suspended or Expelled



	SY12-13 American Indian Special Education Students	SY13-14 American Indian Special Education Students
■ Schools with 0-25% American Indian Enrollment	8.16%	8.32%
■ Schools with 25-50% American Indian Enrollment	1.99%	1.83%
■ Schools with 50-75% American Indian Enrollment	2.62%	3.53%
■ Schools with 75-100% American Indian Enrollment	10.54%	9.73%
■ Statewide	23.31%	23.41%