

Data Notes for IDEA, Part B

These data notes contain information on the ways in which States collected and reported data differently from the OSEP data formats and instructions. In addition, the notes provide explanations of significant changes in the data from the previous year. The chart below summarizes differences in collecting and reporting data for 13 States. These variations affected the way data were reported for the IDEA, Part B child count and the educational environment, exiting, and discipline collections. Additional notes on how States reported data for specific data collections follow this chart.

Table A-1
State Reporting Patterns for IDEA, Part B
Child Count Data 1999-00,
Other Data 1998-99

States	Differences from OSEP Reporting Categories			
	Multiple Disabilities	Other Health Impairments	Deaf-Blindness	Traumatic Brain Injury
Colorado		O		
Delaware	P	O		
Florida	P			
Georgia	P			
Illinois	P			
Michigan		O	H	R
Minnesota	P			
Mississippi		O		
North Dakota	P			
Oregon	P			
West Virginia	P			
Wisconsin	P			
Wyoming	P*			

* Wyoming began using the multiple disabilities category in 1999. Consequently, Wyoming child count data include multiple disabilities but non-child count data multiple disabilities are reported under the primary disability category.

Child Count

NOTE: Twelve States suggested the increases in their counts of students with other health impairments were due to increases in the identification and inclusion of students with attention deficit disorder and attention deficit hyperactivity disorders. These States include:

Florida	Maine	Pennsylvania
Georgia	Nevada	South Dakota
Indiana	New Mexico	West Virginia
Kentucky	Oklahoma	Wisconsin

Twelve States commented that the increases in counts of students with autism were a result of better diagnosis and identification of the disorder, continued reclassification of students, and improved training in methods and assessments of autism. These States include:

Alabama	Connecticut	Kansas	Missouri
California	Georgia	Kentucky	Washington
Colorado	Indiana	Minnesota	Wisconsin

Kentucky—The State thought the increase from 1998-99 to 1999-00 in the number of students with developmental delay was a result of the newness of the category.

Louisiana—The State verified the increase from 1998-99 to 1999-00 in the number of students with developmental delay. Louisiana noted that this was its first full year using this exceptionality.

Minnesota—The State attributed the increase from 1998-99 to 1999-00 in the number of children with developmental disabilities to the first-time use of this category.

New Jersey—The State indicated that in 1998 there was a change in State regulations that redefined the State category “neurologically impaired” exclusively as the Federal category traumatic brain injury (TBI). This change has resulted in a huge increase in New Jersey’s and the Nation’s TBI figures. In the past, the previous combination of “neurologically impaired” and “perceptually impaired” was reported under the Federal “specific learning disability” category. New Jersey indicated that most of the neurologically impaired pupils will eventually be reevaluated and classified under specific learning disability, communication impairments, some other category, or declassified as not eligible for special education. In order to minimize the disruption to national figures, the numbers reported here have been projected based on previous New Jersey reporting patterns.

New Mexico—The State indicated that the decrease from 1998-99 to 1999-00 in the number of students with orthopedic impairments was a result of training that provided staff with a better appreciation for the distinction between eligibility under IDEA and eligibility under Section 504. The increase from 1998-99 to 1999-00 in the number of students with developmental delay was a result of new State regulations allowing students to be reported in this category.

New York—The State indicated that race/ethnicity data for students ages 4 through 5 were reported in 1999-00 with race/ethnicity data for students ages 6 through 21.

Tennessee—The State suspects that the growth in the number of children with developmental delay served from 1998-99 to 1999-00 was a result of increased training of staff in the area of developmental delay.

Educational Environments

NOTE: In 1998-99 educational environments for children ages 3 through 5 were changed to reflect preschool environments. These States include:

Arkansas—The SEA provided in-service presentations on appropriate placements for special education students, with particular emphasis on instructions to LEAs on use of the least restrictive environment when determining the appropriate educational services for each student.

California—The State indicated that it could not report data for preschool students by educational environment or by race/ethnicity for 1998-99. However, these data will be available for 1999-00. California attributed the decrease from 1997-98 to 1998-99 in the number of children ages 6 through 21 served in a public separate school facility to efforts to serve more children in less restrictive environments.

Colorado—The State verified the increase from 1997-98 to 1998-99 in placements in private residential facilities and noted that these students, in general, were placed by social services and the courts rather than by school districts.

Connecticut—The State indicated that the increase from 1997-98 to 1998-99 in the number of children served in correctional facilities was due to an increase in the proportion of youth being incarcerated as adults and improved Child Find procedures within Connecticut State Department of Education correctional facilities.

Florida—The State verified the decrease from 1997-98 to 1998-99 in private residential facility and homebound/hospital placements. The State suspects that the prior year's data were overreported.

Illinois—The State indicated that some of Illinois' definitions regarding least restrictive environment do not match the Federal definitions. For example, those students who are reported as being in resource classrooms may be receiving services in the resource room from 1 percent up to 49 percent of the school day. Additionally, the count for students in separate classes includes students receiving special education and related services for 50 percent or more of the school day. Illinois noted that correctional facilities data in previous reports included only students served in locally operated jails or detention centers. Students served in State juvenile and adult correctional centers were reported for the first time in 1998-99.

Indiana—The State indicated that the decrease from 1997-98 to 1998-99 in public separate school facility placements and the increase from 1997-98 to 1998-99 in public residential facility placements were due to a change in how "day" students were reported by the State School for the Blind and by the State School for the Deaf. These students were previously reported under public separate school facility, but based on the current definition (i.e., served for more than 50 percent of the school day), it was thought that the public residential category was more appropriate.

Kansas—The State indicated that the increase from 1997-98 to 1998-99 in parent-initiated private school placements was due to a change in the formula used for counting these students. The formula was expanded to include those private and parochial school students who received their services in public schools; in the past these students were not reported.

Kentucky—The State attributed the increase from 1997-98 to 1998-99 in public residential facility to a change in how the State's largest district interpreted this category; the district increased its count by 150 students.

Louisiana—The State attributed the decrease from 1997-98 to 1998-99 in homebound/hospital placements to the greater use of interim alternative education settings.

Mississippi—The State verified the decrease from 1997-98 to 1998-99 in the number of students served 21 percent through 60 percent and more than 60 percent outside the regular class. Mississippi has made efforts to get more children in the general curriculum. The State has also made improvements in reporting.

Missouri—The State attributed the increase from 1997-98 to 1998-99 in regular education placements and the decrease from 1997-98 to 1998-99 in resource room and private residential placements to a combination of better understanding by districts of the placement categories and actual increases. Missouri noted that the parent-initiated private school placement data are submitted by private schools on a voluntary basis and hence are subject to fluctuation.

Nebraska—The State attributed the decreases from 1997-98 to 1998-99 in public separate school facility, homebound/hospital, and parent-initiated private school placements to a major conversion of its data systems that is expected to be completed by the end of the 2000-01 school year. The introduction of separate preschool placement categories also contributed to the decreases.

North Carolina—The State noted that data on private school placements are not available and that race/ethnicity data were not collected on preschool children.

Oregon—The State noted that it considers children 5 years old on Sept. 1 as school age and therefore includes them in the 6 through 21 age group.

Pennsylvania—The State verified the decrease from 1997-98 to 1998-99 in the number of children who were served more than 60 percent outside regular class and the decrease from 1997-98 to 1998-99 in the number of students served in homebound/hospital placements. The State attributed the changes to a change in the definitions used to report the data. The current data use the definitions from the Federal data reports, whereas the previous reports were sometimes prone to reporting amount of service rather than location of service. The State anticipates that these data will also change in the next report as more districts use the new definitions. Pennsylvania indicated that the increase from 1997-98 to 1998-99 in the number of students served in correctional facilities was due to the implementation of special education monitoring of correctional facilities which has resulted in more accurate documentation of students with disabilities.

Puerto Rico—Puerto Rico verified the increase from 1997-98 to 1998-99 in children served less than 21 percent outside the regular class and the decrease from 1997-98 to 1998-99 in children served 21 percent through 60 percent outside the regular class. The State indicated that during the 1998-99 school year, the Special Education Program provided orientation to school districts on the correct use of the placement categories. This training resulted in more accurate reporting. Puerto Rico attributed the decrease from 1997-98 to 1998-99 in parent-initiated private school placements to an effort by the school districts to contact parents who had unilaterally enrolled their children in private schools and offer them the option of receiving special education for their children in public schools close to their homes.

Tennessee—The State indicated that the decrease from 1997-98 to 1998-99 in private separate school facility placements was due to the closing of private facilities throughout the State. The State has also been encouraging districts to serve children in local schools.

Texas—The State verified the decrease from 1997-98 to 1998-99 in the number of students served in a public separate school facility. Texas attributed the increase from 1997-98 to 1998-99 in the number of children served in correctional facilities partially because the 1997-98 data included fewer schools from the Texas Youth Commission. The State indicated that race/ethnicity data for children with disabilities enrolled in private schools not placed or referred by public agencies were not available. Texas noted that State law mandated a change in the collection of data in several environments (Texas Education Code 42.151). Texas noted that self-contained, separate campus; multi-district class; and community class were collapsed into one “off home campus” environment. These students were all reported under public separate facility.

West Virginia—The State indicated that educational environment data for students ages 3 through 5 were collected using the age 6 through 21 placement options because State regulations containing these options still were in effect. Therefore, all students reported by local education agencies as having been served outside the regular class less than 21 percent of the school day were reported under the “early childhood setting,” even though some may have been served in part-time or itinerant services settings.

Personnel

Alabama—The State verified the increases from 1997-98 to 1998-99 in vocational education teachers, physical education teachers, counselors, and non-professional staff. Alabama attributed the increase to incomplete reporting from districts on the prior report.

Connecticut—The State indicated that the increase from 1997-98 to 1998-99 in speech pathologists was due to a change in reporting methodology. In the report for the 1997-98 school year, personnel certified to teach speech- or language-disabled children were reported under total special education teachers. In the 1998-99 school year, they were reported as speech pathologists under other special education and related services personnel. The State noted that the numbers on the 1997-98 report were a count of the teachers based on their first teacher assignment only. The figures reported for 1998-99 reflect the sum of the FTEs for all teaching assignments. Connecticut indicated that separate data were not available for teachers of children ages 3 through 5; teachers serving students ages 3 through 5 were reported combined with teachers of students ages 6 through 21.

Florida—The State verified the increase from 1997-98 to 1998-99 in work-study coordinators, school social workers, employed-certified occupational therapists, and counselors. Florida thought the decrease from 1997-98 to 1998-99 in vocational education teachers was due to a few districts not submitting data. The State noted that the personnel data are a paper-and-pencil report from the districts to the SEA.

Georgia—The State changed the data collection for personnel to an annual statewide, web-based data collection. The new system was not designed to capture data on contracted personnel. The SEA is working with the Technology Services Division to include these personnel in subsequent collections.

Kentucky—The State noted that the changes in the teacher aide category were a result of the State's decision to report all teacher aides in the certified category; districts had varied greatly in their reporting in this category. The State verified the increases from 1997-98 to 1998-99 in counselors and nonprofessional staff.

Mississippi—The State indicated that the increases from 1997-98 to 1998-99 in all personnel areas were a result of more accurate reporting. In previous years, data were reported inconsistently by school districts. Hence, statewide training was instituted to ensure correct data reporting.

Missouri—The State attributed the decrease from 1997-98 to 1998-99 in the number of employed, not fully certified teachers for students ages 6 through 21 to more teachers taking advantage of a tuition reimbursement program funded by the State Improvement Grant. The State attributed the increase from 1997-98 to 1998-99 in certified interpreters and the decrease from 1997-98 to 1998-99 in not fully certified interpreters to the phasing in of new standards for certified interpreters. The State expects these figures to fluctuate over the next few years as the standards are fully implemented.

Nebraska—The State attributed the decrease from 1997-98 to 1998-99 in the number of psychologists to a major conversion of its data systems that are expected to be completed by the end of the 2000-2001 school year.

Texas—The State noted that the State Board of Education Certification (SBEC) does not maintain certification/licensing for all professionals. When certification cannot be determined through SBEC, certification was reported as fully certified.

Utah—The State indicated that the changes from 1997-98 to 1998-99 in teacher aides total employed certified, total employed not certified were due to inconsistent district reporting of personnel by certification level. Utah thought the decrease from 1997-98 to 1998-99 in teachers to serve children ages 3 through 5 was due to incorrect prior year reporting.

West Virginia—The State attributed the decrease from 1997-98 to 1998-99 in the number of counselors and the increase in other professional staff were due to improvements in reporting. In the previous report, some districts had reported total counselors rather than total special education counselors. Similarly, some districts had failed to report other professional staff on the prior report.

Exiting

Kentucky—The State indicated that the increase from 1997-98 to 1998-99 in the number of students who dropped out was a result of Kentucky's efforts to improve this data item. In 1998-99, Kentucky started collecting exclusively dropped out data; these data were then combined with residual exiters (i.e., all students who did not exit through one of the established bases) for the Federal report.

Missouri—The State attributed the increase from 1997-98 to 1998-99 in the number of students reaching maximum age, particularly students with learning disabilities, to the first time inclusion of data from the Department of Corrections. There were 88 students, 67 of whom were students with learning disabilities, reported by the Department of Corrections as having reached maximum age for services.

Nebraska—The State attributed the decreases from 1997-98 to 1998-99 in the number of students who no longer received special education, who moved and were known to be continuing, and who exited overall to a major conversion of its data systems.

Nevada—The State thought that the increase from 1997-98 to 1998-99 in the number of students who received a certificate and in the number who dropped out was due to a recent increase in difficulty in the high stakes proficiency exam that all students need to pass in order to receive a regular diploma.

Pennsylvania—The State suspects that the increase from 1997-98 to 1998-99 in the number of students who moved and were known to be continuing might be partially due to students who move several times in 1 year and were reported several times by districts.

Puerto Rico—Puerto Rico attributed the decrease from 1997-98 to 1998-99 in the number of students with mental retardation who exited through reaching maximum age for services to an overall decrease in the mental retardation population. This decrease also resulted in an overall decrease in the reached maximum age basis of exit.

Tennessee—The State thought that the increase from 1997-98 to 1998-99 in the number of students who received certificates was related to a statewide growth in the number of students with mental retardation and specific learning disabilities. Tennessee noted that many of these students, especially those with mental retardation, receive a special education certificate or a certificate of attendance in lieu of graduating with a diploma.

Texas—The State indicated that the increase from 1997-98 to 1998-99 in no longer receives special education, other health impairments was a result of additional data from schools that had not previously been reported through Texas' data system. The decrease from 1997-98 to 1998-99 in the number of students who graduated with a diploma was due to improvements in data reporting. The 1998-99 graduation data had a special education indicator added to records; in the 1997-98 data report, special education graduates were identified by matching general graduation data with the special education student database. The increase from 1997-98 to 1998-99 in the number of students who moved and were known to be continuing was a result of these data not being collected in 1997-98. The decrease from 1997-98 to 1998-99 in the number of students who dropped out was a result of improvements in data reporting. The 1998-99 data were compiled using official dropout data; in 1998-99 a special education indicator was added to the dropout data. Dropout data for the 1997-98 data report were compiled by matching general dropout data with the special education student database.

Utah—The State commented that prior years' data may have undercounted students with disabilities graduating due to reporting anomalies. These errors have been corrected.

Discipline

Maryland—The State indicated that one public agency was unable to report by race/ethnicity or disability conditions, hence its figures were only reflected in the totals.

New Jersey—The State indicated that the SEA was cooperating with Safe and Drug Free Schools in the collection of these data. The 1998-99 data were collected with a paper process that did not include suspensions nor removals by a hearing officer. New Jersey stated that it had developed a web-based data collection system for the 1999-2000 data that will include both suspensions and hearing officer removals.

Rhode Island—The State indicated that it cannot report discipline data by disability condition.

Texas—The State noted that due to different methods of collecting disability data and disciplinary data, disability data were not available for some records in the discipline database; these records were excluded from the report.

Washington—The State indicated that it will not submit discipline data for 1998-99 since it did not collect data for that year. It will submit data for 1999-00.

Wisconsin—The State indicated that 137 students were identified as having disabilities and reported on the total lines but were not identified with a specific disability.