

Appendix B

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 10 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 table.

Table B-1
 State Reporting Patterns for IDEA, Part B
 Child Count Data, 2002
 Educational Environments Data, 2001 and 2002
 Exiting and Discipline Data, 2001-02

States	Differences from OSEP Reporting Categories ^a			
	Multiple Disabilities	Other Health Impairments	Deaf-Blindness	Traumatic Brain Injury
Colorado		O		
Delaware	P	O		
Florida	P			
Georgia	P			
Michigan ^{b,c}		O	H	R
Mississippi ^b		O		
North Dakota	P			
Oregon	P			
West Virginia	P			
Wisconsin	P			

^a States report according to state law. The U.S. Department of Education does not have authority to override state law.
^b Michigan and Mississippi began reporting children in the other health impairments category on the 2002 child count and educational environments tables. In previous years, they reported children with other health impairments in the orthopedic impairments category. This includes the 2001 educational environments, 2001-02 exiting, and 2001-02 discipline tables.
^c Michigan began using the traumatic brain injury category on the 2002 child count and educational environments tables. In previous years, it reported children with traumatic brain injury in other disability categories. This includes the 2001 educational environments, 2001-02 exiting, and 2001-02 discipline tables.

Note: Table numbers given below refer to tables in vol. 2 of this report.

Tables 1-1 through 1-16: Part B, Child Count

Alabama—The state attributed the increase in the number of children ages 6 through 9 in the developmental delay category to a change in the state definition of the category. In 2000, the state changed its definition of developmental delay to include students up to age 9. This is the second year that the child count reflects the new age range.

The state attributed the increase in the number of children ages 6 through 21 with autism to extensive statewide training on the autism spectrum. The state believes this training resulted in more accurate identification and placement of children with this disability.

Arizona—The state attributed the increase in the number of students with other health impairments to the greater number of children identified with attention deficit disorder (ADD) and attention deficit/hyperactivity disorder (ADHD).

California—The state attributed the increase in the number of students ages 6 through 21 with autism to an increase in the total number of children served in special education this year. The state reported that a large number of the new students fall into the autism category. In addition, the state attributed the increase in autism to better identification of children with this disability.

Delaware—The state does not collect data on multiple disabilities or other health impairments. Children with multiple disabilities are reported according to their primary disability, and students with other health impairments are reported in the orthopedic impairments category.

Florida—The state does not collect data on multiple disabilities. Children with multiple disabilities are reported according to their primary disability.

Georgia—The state does not collect data on multiple disabilities. Children with multiple disabilities are reported according to their primary disability.

Hawaii—The state attributed the increase in the number of students ages 6 through 21 in the autism category to a number of factors. First, teachers are better trained to identify students with this disability. Second, pediatricians are more aware of the signs of autism, recognize it, and refer children to psychologists for assessment and diagnosis. In addition, some students previously included in other disability categories were reclassified autistic. Finally, the state broadened the definition of autism when the *Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders-IV* was released. The broader definition results in more students identified with this disability.

The state attributed the increase in the number of students ages 6 through 9 in the developmental delay category to new training provided to teachers. The training includes how to identify students eligible for this disability category. In addition, Hawaii uses this category for most students ages 3 through 5 who are eligible for special education services. The state reported that as these children get older, the number of children ages 6 through 9 identified with developmental delay increases.

The state attributed the increase in the number of students ages 6 through 21 with other health impairments to a change in the way the state determines eligibility for special education. In the past, district individualized education program (IEP) teams determined students' eligibility. Now, school-based teams are responsible for determining eligibility. The state believes that these school-based teams may be finding an increased number of students eligible for this category because they are more knowledgeable

about their students' history and specific needs. The Department of Education of the State of Hawaii plans to continue teacher training on eligibility criteria. In addition, it plans to monitor data to ensure that students are not overidentified in any disability category.

Idaho—The state attributed the increase in the number of students ages 6 through 21 with autism to a change in the state definition of autism. The state definition now includes Autism Spectrum Disorder. As a result, local education agencies (LEAs) are now including a wider range of diagnoses in the autism category, including Asperger's syndrome.

The state reported 261 children with noncategorical eligibility. Of these, 17 were ages 3 through 5, and 244 were ages 6 through 21. When reporting to OSEP, the state distributed these children into disability categories based upon the distribution of students whose disabilities were known.

Illinois—The state attributed the increase in the number of students ages 6 through 21 with multiple disabilities to the newness of the category. This is only the second year that the state used the multiple disabilities category.

Indiana—The state attributed the increase in the number of children ages 3 through 5 with developmental delay to the newness of the category. This is only the third year the state used the category. It became a recognized exceptionality area in Indiana for the 2000 school year. The state reported that most students currently reported in the developmental delay category received special education previously, but were reported in different disability categories.

The state attributed the increase in the number of students ages 6 through 21 in the other health impairments category to an increase in the identification of students with ADD and ADHD. In addition, the state reported that students in the other health impairments category who have certain medical conditions are living longer and being served in school rather than at home.

The state attributed the increase in the number of students ages 6 through 21 in the autism category to improvements in Indiana's data collection system. The improvements resulted in a more accurate count of students with autism. Previously, Indiana reported many of these students in different disability categories. The state also reported a growing awareness and recognition of autism as a separate disability. In addition, more of the higher functioning children with autism (e.g., those with Asperger's syndrome) are now in special education.

Iowa—The state serves children with disabilities noncategorically. Iowa uses incidence figures to estimate disability data for federal reports. During 2001, the state conducted a study to reassess the incidence percentages it uses. The 2002 child count is the first data report based on the new incidence figures implemented as a result of this study. As a result of the new calculations, the number of children reported in various disability categories changed significantly.

Kansas—The state attributed the increase in the number of students ages 6 through 9 with developmental delay to younger students originally identified with developmental delay getting older. In addition, the state reported that LEAs are beginning to use the developmental delay category for children initially evaluated and identified between the ages of 6 through 9.

Maine—Maine reported that the increase in the number of students ages 6 through 21 in the autism category occurred in two age groups: ages 7 through 11 (roughly 2nd grade through 6th grade) and 14 through 16 (roughly freshman through junior year of high school). The state attributed the increase to new programs for students with autism and to growing awareness of autism. The state reported that the Maine Autistic Society provides information and training on autism and the autism spectrum. In addition,

doctors and professional evaluators are more knowledgeable about this population. Finally, the increase is also attributable to a change in the disability classification of some students. Some students previously classified as mentally retarded, learning disabled, or emotionally disturbed are now identified as students with autism.

Maryland—Maryland attributed the increase in the number of 3- through 5-year-olds and 6- through 21-year-olds with developmental delay to a change in the state’s age range for that disability category and to additional training of school systems about the use of the category. In 2002, the maximum age for developmental delay increased from 5 to 9 years old. In addition, the state provided technical assistance to local school systems at annual data managers’ meetings, Preschool Special Education Coordinators Administrative Briefings, and through the publication of a Technical Assistance Bulletin and Implementation Guidelines in fall 2002. The state believes that the additional attention to this category, along with the increased age range, resulted in an increased use of the category by local school systems.

The state attributed the increase in the number of students ages 6 through 21 with autism to a number of factors. First, the state expanded the definition of autism to include Autism Spectrum Disorders such as pervasive developmental delay and Asperger’s syndrome. Second, there is a greater awareness of autism both among parents and diagnosing professionals. As a result, children are now diagnosed at younger ages. Third, there may be a genuine increase in the prevalence of autism, possibly attributed to environmental triggers. Fourth, there is currently less resistance by parents to the diagnosis of autism. Autism may even be a preferred diagnosis since there is a belief that, with early intervention and intense services, a child can experience significant improvement. Finally, the increase in autism may be due to families of children with autism moving to Maryland to access state programs for these children. The state reported that several local school systems are nationally regarded for providing exemplary programs and services to children with autism.

Massachusetts—The 2002 child count is the second year that Massachusetts used actual student-level data to report students by disability and race/ethnicity. In previous years, Massachusetts did not require individualized education program (IEP) teams to identify the type of disability for each student, only to state that in the opinion of the team, the student had a disability. To report disability data to OSEP, Massachusetts calculated disability and race/ethnicity using ratios based on a survey conducted in 1992, in which districts identified the probable disability for each of their students using the “best information available” to them. The state estimates that the transition from estimated data to actual student-level disability data will be completed in approximately 3 years. During this time, IEP teams in the state will identify all students’ specific disabilities, either when they are first determined to be eligible for special education or at the time of their 3-year reevaluations. The state expects that for the 2004 child count, all children will be reported according to their identified (rather than estimated) disabilities.

Massachusetts includes children with neurological impairments in the traumatic brain injury (TBI) category. The state’s definition of neurological impairments is broader than the federal definition of TBI. This may account for the unexpectedly large number of children reported in the TBI category.

The state attributed the increase in the number of children ages 6 through 21 with speech or language impairments to training sessions that clarified the distinction between this disability category and specific learning disabilities. The number of students reported with specific learning disabilities decreased by 2,958 cases while the number of students with speech or language impairments increased by 3,071.

Massachusetts attributed the increase in the number of students ages 6 through 21 with developmental delay to the newness of this category. The state believes that districts now have a better understanding of which children to report in this category.

Michigan—Michigan used the disability categories other health impairments and TBI for the first time on the 2002 child count. Prior to 2002, the state reported students with other health impairments in the orthopedic impairments category and reported students with TBI in other disability categories. The state expects these categories to grow over the next 3 years as districts implement the categories.

Minnesota—The state reported that the increase in the number of children ages 3 through 5 and 6 through 21 reported in the autism category is due to increased awareness of autism. More tools are available to identify these students, and evaluation measures have improved. In addition, the state reported that it increased the capacity of teachers in this area.

Mississippi—Mississippi used the disability category other health impairments for the first time on the 2002 child count. Prior to 2002, the state reported students with other health impairments in the orthopedic impairments category.

The 2002 school year is also the first year that Mississippi reported data using its new statewide web-based data collection system. The state believes this system will greatly improve its data accuracy.

Missouri—The state attributed the increase in the number of 3- through 5-year-olds with speech or language impairments to changes in the eligibility criteria for sound system disorders. These changes went into effect in October 2001. The previous criterion was that a child's sound production level must be 1 year beyond upper limits of developmental ranges as established by normative data. The current criterion is that a child's sound production level must be equal to or less than the child's actual chronological age as established by accepted normative data. This change essentially removed the "one year beyond" requirement, and made children eligible for special education if their sound production level is "equal to or less than the child's chronological age." The state anticipated that this will increase the number of young children identified with sound system disorders. However, by identifying children at an earlier age when remediation of articulation problems is easier, in the long run the number of children with speech or language impairments at older ages should decrease. That is, the distribution across age groups will change, but the number served will not.

The state reported that it began using the developmental delay category in October 2001. Districts can serve children under that diagnosis until 1 year after the child leaves kindergarten.

Montana—In Montana, a state statute allows school districts to identify a child ages 3 through 5 as a "child with disabilities" (CWD), without specifying a specific disability category. However, Montana encourages schools to use one of the federal disability categories. As a result, districts reported a specific disability for 60 percent of the 3- through 5-year-olds served. The state imputed disability for the remaining 40 percent using the disability distribution for the 3- through 5-year-olds for whom disability data were reported. This is the second year that Montana used this method. Previously the missing disability data for 3- through 5-year-olds was imputed based on the disability distribution for 6-year-olds.

Nebraska—The state attributed the increase in the number of students ages 3 through 5 and 6 through 9 in the developmental delay category to the technical assistance it provided to school districts. Technical assistance targeted early screening, evaluation, and identification of children with special needs. Collaboration with other agencies, such as Health and Human Services, also increased the focus on early childhood intervention strategies and preschool educational services for children birth through the age of 8.

Nevada—The state reported that it is experiencing increased identification of children ages 6 through 21 with autism and that this increase is similar to current national trends.

New Jersey—The state reported that the increase in the number of 6- through 21-year-olds in the other health impairments category and the decrease in the number reported in the TBI category are unusual. The state believes that districts may be using these categories interchangeably. It plans to clarify reporting instructions and further investigate the cause of these changes.

New Mexico—Based on a recommendation from the state legislature, New Mexico did not estimate race/ethnicity data for unknown or missing race/ethnicity cases. The state has missing race/ethnicity data for:

- 3- through 5-year-olds in the following categories: speech or language impairments (12), other health impairments (1), specific learning disabilities (1), multiple disabilities (1), and developmental delay (54); and
- 6- through 21-year-olds in the following categories: mental retardation (16), hearing impairments (3), speech or language impairments (81), visual impairments (2), emotional disturbance (32), orthopedic impairments (1), other health impairments (22), specific learning disabilities (192), multiple disabilities (7), autism (4), TBI (2), and developmental delay (20).

The state attributed the increase in the number of 3- through 5-year-olds with speech and language impairments to a change in data collection methods. The number of students in this age group did not change significantly, but there was a change in the disability categories where they are reported. Prior to 2000, New Mexico's state-level data system was programmed so that the developmental delay category was the only disability option available for reporting 3- and 4-year-olds. The state changed this in 2000 when it revised its state regulations. The developmental delay category is now only used when no other disability category is more appropriate. The state reports that its LEAs now collect more accurate disability information for 3- and 4-year-olds.

The state attributed the increase in the number of students ages 6 through 21 with developmental delay to an increase in the state age range for this category. In 2000, New Mexico changed the upper age range for developmental delay from age 4 to age 9. School year 2001 was the final year for phasing in the new age range. In addition, the state reported that it is not surprised to see increases in developmental delay because the criteria for developmental delay are relatively flexible compared to other disability categories.

New York—New York does not classify preschool children by specific disability. The state reported all children ages 3 through 5 in the developmental delay disability category. Of these, 37,111 are considered by the state to be preschool students, and 17,217 are school age (e.g., kindergarten) students.

New York does not have an individual student record system. It collects aggregated counts of students from local school districts. These aggregate counts do not include a count of the race/ethnicity of 4- and 5-year-old children in school-age environments (e.g., kindergarten) separately from the race/ethnicity count for all school-age students (ages 4 through 21). The state based the race/ethnicity distribution for the 17,217 school-age 4- and 5-year-olds on the race/ethnicity distribution for 3- through 5-year-olds in preschool environments.

The race/ethnicity distribution for 386,187 students ages 6 through 21 is based on the race/ethnicity distribution for students ages 4 through 21 with disabilities.

North Carolina—The state attributed the increase in the number of children ages 3 through 5 with autism to a number of factors. First, the state definition of autism changed to include additional characteristics. Second, the state now identifies children with autism at a younger age. Finally, parents of children with

autism move into the state to get services for their child through the TEACCH program (Treatment and Education of Autistic and Related Communication Handicapped Children).

The state attributed the increase in the number of children ages 6 through 9 in the developmental delay category to the 2001 increase of the state's maximum allowable age (from age 5 to age 7) for a student to be classified as having developmental delay.

The state attributed the increase in the number of American Indian/Alaska Native children reported on its child count of 3- through 5-year-olds to an increase in the American Indian population in the state.

North Dakota—North Dakota has defined and established eligibility criteria for developmental delay for ages children 3 through 5. The state is still piloting this category for ages 6 through 9. Its developmental delay data for ages 6 through 9 are representative of pilot projects only.

North Dakota attributed the increase in the number of students ages 6 through 21 in the other health impairments category to an increase in the number of children with ADD and ADHD. The state continues to train districts on properly reporting students with ADD and ADHD.

The state attributed the increase in the number of American Indian/Alaska Native children ages 3 through 5 served in the state to a new and more effective system for identifying children with disabilities in areas with a high concentration of American Indian students.

North Dakota does not use the multiple disabilities category. Children with multiple disabilities are reported according to their primary disability.

Ohio—The state attributed the increase in the number of children ages 6 through 21 with other health impairments to increased awareness and identification of children with ADD and ADHD. The state reports that the increase is not located in any one particular geographic area, but is equally distributed across the state.

The state reported that the increase in the number of children with autism, ages 6 through 21, is consistent with national trends. It cited a 2002 report to the California legislature, titled *The Epidemiology of Autism in California*, which reports that while autism was once considered relatively rare, “the Centers for Disease Control reports autism prevalence data as 1 in 500 persons in the population.”

Oregon—The state reported that it does not collect data on multiple disabilities. Children with multiple disabilities are reported according to their primary disability.

Puerto Rico—Puerto Rico was unable to correct some errors on its child count table. As a result, the race/ethnicity totals are lower than totals by disability in two categories for ages 3 through 5: speech and language impairments and developmental delay.

Rhode Island—The state reported that the increase in the number of students ages 6 through 21 in the other health impairments category is due to increased identification of children with ADD and ADHD.

Rhode Island's definition of developmental delay only includes children ages 3 through 5.

South Carolina—The state attributed the decrease in the number of students ages 6 through 21 reported in the multiple disabilities category to a change in how one residential facility reported students. In 2001, this facility reported 137 students with multiple disabilities, 123 students with hearing impairments, and

42 students with visual impairments. In 2002, this LEA did not report any students with multiple disabilities, but reported all students with either hearing impairments or visual impairments.

South Dakota—The state attributed the increase in the number of students ages 6 through 21 with other health impairments to an increase in the number of students diagnosed with ADD and ADHD.

Tennessee—The state attributed the increase in the number of students ages 6 through 21 with autism to improved awareness and training in this area and to a change in the state definition of autism. In previous years, Asperger’s syndrome, Rhett’s syndrome and Pervasive Developmental Disorder-Not Otherwise Specified (PDD-NOS) were not in the state’s definition of autism.

Utah—The state attributed the increase in the number of students ages 6 through 21 in the other health impairments category and the number of students ages 6 through 9 in the developmental delay category to the data from two of the state’s largest districts. The state plans to monitor these districts and provide additional training to them.

West Virginia—West Virginia does not collect data on students with multiple disabilities. Students with multiple disabilities are reported according to their primary disability.

Wisconsin—Wisconsin does not collect data on students with multiple disabilities. Students with multiple disabilities are reported according to their primary disability.

Wyoming—The state reported that it only uses the developmental delay category to report children between the ages of 3 and 5 who are in preschool.

Tables 2-1 through 2-10: Part B, Educational Environments, 2002

Arizona—The state attributed the increase in the number of children ages 3 through 5 in the *early childhood special education* category to a number of factors. First, 2002 was the first year that Arizona used student detail reporting within its new accountability system. The increase could be due to inaccurate reporting resulting from the change in data collection methods. Second, the state reported that it is possible that more severely disabled 3- through 5-year-olds are now accepting special education. Finally, local education agencies may need more assistance in setting up inclusive environments.

Connecticut—The state reported that it calculates the percentage of time outside the regular classroom for students ages 6 through 21 based on a number of variables, including total hours of education, hours of special education, and hours with nondisabled peers.

The state attributed the increase in the number of children ages 3 through 5 who receive *itinerant services outside the home* to an overall increase in demand for services and to better communication between Part B and Part C providers.

The state reported that it collects data using an additional race/ethnicity category of “other.” The state proportionately distributed students in this category into OSEP’s five race/ethnicity categories based on the known race/ethnicity distribution.

Georgia—Georgia reported that 2002 was the first year that it collected service plan information through its electronic data collection system. The state used this information to obtain the duplicated count of *students in private schools, not placed or referred by a public agency*. This change in reporting methodology may explain the large decline in the number of students reported in this category.

The state attributed the increase in the number of students reported *outside of the regular classroom less than 21 percent of the school day* to a concerted effort by the Georgia Department of Education to improve the accuracy of data on educational environments submitted by local school systems.

Hawaii—The state attributed changes on its 2002 educational environments data to the use of a new staffing allocation formula for deriving educational environment in the 2002 school year. This tool uses information, such as levels of support provided to students and the location where special education services are delivered, to create reports. The state expects data accuracy to improve as school personnel continue to train and practice on the staffing allocation formula.

Idaho—The state attributed the increase in the number of children ages 3 through 5 reported in *early childhood* settings and the decrease in the number reported in *reverse mainstream* settings to a change in the state data system. In 2002, Idaho's special education student enrollment data system underwent a major upgrade. In the new data system, each age group has its own unique set of code numbers for educational environments. Prior to 2002, it used the same code numbers for preschool and school-age environments. However, the definition of the code was dependent on the age of the child. For example, code 01 for 3- through 5-year-olds meant *reverse mainstream* setting; when used for 6- through 21-year-olds, it meant *less than 21 percent of the school day outside regular classroom*. The use of the same code numbers for both preschool and school-age environments confused some LEAs and may have led to incorrect reporting of preschool children. The state believes the use of unique codes led to more accurate data in 2002.

Illinois—The state attributed the increase in the number of students reported in *correctional facilities* to one detention center in Chicago. In 2001, the district reported students in this detention center in the various unduplicated environments on the table, but not in the duplicated *correctional facilities* category. In 2002, the district also included these students in the duplicated count of students in *correctional facilities*.

Indiana—The state attributed the decrease in the number of children ages 3 through 5 in *early childhood* settings and the increase in the number in *part-time early childhood/part-time early childhood special education* to more accurate reporting at the district level. In the past, some districts reported 5-year-old kindergarten children in the *early childhood* setting because they incorrectly applied the definition of regular class (outside the classroom less than 21 percent) to this category. As a result, kindergarten children who received a small percentage of speech outside the kindergarten class were sometimes incorrectly reported in the *early childhood* setting rather than in the *part-time early childhood/part-time early childhood special education* setting. To correct this error, the Indiana Department of Education sent a memorandum to districts prior to the 2002 child count to clarify the use of preschool educational environment codes. As a result, the districts reported 5-year-old kindergartners more accurately.

Kentucky—The state attributed the decrease in the number of children ages 3 through 5 in *early childhood* settings and the increase in the number of children in *part-time early childhood/part-time early childhood special education* settings to state efforts to clarify the definitions of these categories. In the past, some districts believed that the early childhood settings definitions were equivalent to the school-age category definitions. As a result, they reported students who received services in an *early childhood special education* setting for a limited time (e.g., speech services or other pullouts for less than 21 percent of their day) in the *early childhood* setting. In 2002, the state emphasized that the *early childhood* category meant 100 percent of children's time was in an *early childhood* setting and that any amount of time in an *early childhood special education* setting precluded these students from being reported in this category. As a result, the number of children reported in *early childhood* settings decreased, and the number reported in *part-time early childhood/part-time early childhood special education* settings

increased. In addition, the state had an increase in the total number of children ages 3 through 5 that it served. This also contributed to the increase in the latter category.

Louisiana—In 2002, Louisiana began using the category *itinerant services outside the home*. It attributed the decrease in the number of children reported in *early childhood* settings to the reporting of these children in the *itinerant services* category who were previously reported in *early childhood* settings.

Maine—The state reported that it does not collect data for children in *correctional facilities* or in *private schools, not placed or referred by public agencies*.

Maryland—The state attributed the changes on the educational environments table to state efforts to improve the accuracy of data reported by local school systems. Because data are used for monitoring practices, local education agencies are striving to increase data accuracy. The state reported that it provided training for data collection/reporting regarding identification of students in *private schools, not placed or referred by a public agency*. The state expects that the data will continue to change as accuracy increases.

Massachusetts—Beginning in September of 2001, Massachusetts required *correctional facilities* to contact districts to ensure that students in their facilities had valid IEPs. The state anticipates that in the long term, this will lead to additional contact between the facilities and districts, better data on these students, and an increase in the number of students reported in correctional facilities. However, the state reported that a short-term consequence of the new policy is that many students have an “IEP in limbo” because it has not yet been signed or coordinated with the district. These students are not reported in the OSEP data. As a result, in 2002 Massachusetts reported fewer students in *correctional facilities*. In addition, Massachusetts reported that, in prior years, its *correctional facilities* count included students with emotional disturbance who were served in *public residential facilities*. The state corrected this error on the 2002 educational environments count.

The state attributed the increase in the number of 3- through 5-year-olds in *part-time early childhood/part-time early childhood special education* settings to a change in data collection methodology. The state collects data on educational environments on October 1 and updates the data in December in order to report to OSEP. Prior to 2002, preschool students receiving less than 2 hours of services were not reported in the October data but were reported in the December data. In 2002, the state included these students in the October data collection, which the state believes resulted in more accurate data in December.

The state attributed the increase in the number of students in *early childhood special education* settings to better data reporting by districts. Last year, when the state’s new data collection system was implemented, many 3- through 5-year-olds were not reported because some districts were unclear on reporting guidelines.

The state reported that the changes from 2001 to 2002 in the number of 6- through 21-year-olds reported in *separate facilities* and *residential facilities* are due to incorrect data on the 2001 report. Districts were confused about which separate facilities were public and which were private. The state set up data validations and trained the districts on how to report students in these categories. As a result, *private separate facilities* decreased by 468 children, *public separate facilities* and *public residential facilities* (combined) increased by 453 children.

The state reported that the decrease in the duplicated count of *private schools, not placed or referred by a public agency*, is due to more accurate reporting. The Massachusetts Department of Education instructed districts to report students in this category only if they have IEPs and receive special education and

related services at the public expense. The state believes that in the past, some districts may have reported all children with IEPs sent to a private school.

Minnesota—The state attributed the increase in the number of children ages 3 through 5 in *part-time early childhood/part-time early childhood special education* settings to efforts to establish stronger local partnerships between early childhood special education programs and other community-based early childhood programs.

Missouri—The state attributed the decrease in the *separate school* category for ages 3 through 5 to the data from two of the largest districts in the state. Both reported fewer children in separate schools. The state believes the decrease is the result of more accurate reporting by those districts.

Missouri had a decrease in the duplicated count of students in *private schools, not placed or referred by a public agency*. The state reported that its count of these students comes from a voluntary survey of non-public schools, and non-reporting by the schools could lead to fluctuations in the numbers of students in this category.

Montana—Educational environments are reported as a cross-tabulation by disability category. Montana has a state statute that allows school districts to identify children ages 3 through 5 under “child with disabilities,” without specifying a disability category. Montana encourages schools to use one of the federal disability categories, and, as a result, 60 percent of students ages 3 through 5 were reported with a disability category. The state imputed disability for the remaining 40 percent using the distribution of 3-through 5-year-olds whose disabilities were reported.

New Jersey—New Jersey did not collect race/ethnicity data for 14,327 students whose parents placed them in *private schools*. As a result, in 2002 the state reported no race/ethnicity data for the duplicated count of students in *private schools*. In addition, the state did not report the race/ethnicity for these students in the unduplicated count for environment data. As a result, the race/ethnicity total for students ages 6 through 21 is lower than the total reported by disability. The environments categories affected are *outside the regular classroom less than 21 percent of the school day* and *outside the regular classroom 21-60 percent of the school day*. New Jersey plans to collect race/ethnicity data for these students in 2003.

New Mexico—Based on a recommendation from the state legislature, New Mexico did not estimate race/ethnicity data for students with an unknown or missing race/ethnicity. The state has missing race/ethnicity data for:

- Twenty-nine 3- through 5-year olds in the *early childhood* category, 36 in *early childhood special education*, one at the *home*, two in *part-time early childhood/part-time early childhood special education*, and one in a *separate school*;
- One hundred fifty-five 6- through 21-year-olds in the *outside the regular classroom less than 20 percent* category, 104 *outside the regular classroom 21-60 percent*, 120 *outside the regular classroom greater than 60 percent*, one in *public residential*, one in *private residential*, and one in *homebound/hospital* categories; and
- Twelve students through age 21 in the duplicated counts for students in *correctional facilities* and two in *private schools, not placed or referred by a public agency* categories.

New York—New York collects aggregated race/ethnicity counts for all school-age students with disabilities (ages 4 through 21), but does not separately collect race/ethnicity counts for students with disabilities who are ages 6 through 21. The reported race/ethnicity for 6- through 21-year-olds was

computed using race/ethnicity data from students with disabilities ages 4 through 21. The race/ethnicity of 17,217 4- and 5-year-old children in school-age environments (e.g., kindergarten) is based on the race/ethnicity distribution for 3- through 5-year-olds in preschool educational environments.

New York does not classify preschool children by particular disabilities. The state reported all children ages 3 through 5 in the developmental delay disability category. Of these, 37,111 are considered by the state to be preschool students, and 17,217 are school age (e.g., kindergarten) students.

Ohio—Ohio attributed the decrease in the number of 3- through 5-year-olds in *separate schools* to the additional training it provided to districts to clarify the definition of *separate school*.

The state attributed the decrease in the number of 6- through 21-year olds in *public residential facilities* to the additional training it provided to districts to clarify the definition of *public residential facility*. In addition, the state reported that enrollment in *residential facilities* also declined.

Ohio reported that it allows districts to report students in a “mixed race” category. When it reports these students to OSEP, the state assigns them to any one of the other five race/ethnicity categories. The state believes that the number of American Indian/Alaska Native children ages 3 through 5 may have declined because districts used the mixed race category for many of the children previously reported in this category. The state plans to work with districts to clarify the race/ethnicity categories.

Oregon—The state reported that the decrease in the number of students reported in *public residential facilities* from 2001 to 2002 was due to a change in the way the state reported students in *correctional facilities*. Prior to 2002, the state incorrectly reported students served in *correctional facilities* in the *public residential facilities* category, as well as in the duplicated count of students in *correctional facilities*. In 2002, based on input from OSEP, the state reported students in *correctional facilities* according to time outside the regular classroom, in addition to reporting them in the duplicated count. As a result, the total number of students in *public residential facilities* decreased.

In 2002, the state began reporting the duplicated count of children with disabilities in *private schools, not placed or referred by public agencies*.

The state noted that its age ranges are different from the OSEP definitions. Oregon considers children who are 5 years old on or before September 1 to be school age. These 5-year-olds are included in the school-age educational environments with the 6- through 11-year-old age group rather than in the preschool environments with 3- through 5-year-olds.

Pennsylvania—Pennsylvania Act 212 of 1990 provides the opportunity for parents to continue their child in an early intervention program for an additional year at school district cost. Because of their age, 179 6-year-olds with developmental delay served in preschool environments were reported in school-age environments. In Pennsylvania, the category developmental delay is only used for children in preschool. However, because those 179 children are reported on the school-age form, it appears that developmental delay is a legitimate school-age disability category.

Puerto Rico—Puerto Rico did not submit 2002 educational environments data.

South Carolina—The state reported an unduplicated, rather than duplicated, count of children in *correctional facilities*. Students reported in *correctional facilities* are not reported by educational environment.

Tennessee—The state attributed the decrease in the number of students ages 3 through 5 reported in the *part-time early childhood/part-time early childhood special education* category and the number reported in the *separate school* category to an overall decrease in the number of preschool students with disabilities served.

Texas—The state does not collect race/ethnicity data for students in *private schools, not placed or referred by a public agency*.

Virginia—The state attributed the increase in the number of children ages 3 through 5 receiving *itinerant services outside the home* to more consistent use of this code for children who receive only speech and language services.

The state attributed the increase in the number of students ages 6 through 21 reported in *public residential facilities* to an increase in numbers of students in *correctional facilities*. Virginia incorrectly counts students in *correctional facilities* in the *public residential facility* category as well as in the duplicated count of students served in *correctional facilities*.

Virginia attributed the increase in the number of students reported in *correctional facilities* to an increase in the number of students served in local jails.

The state attributed the increase in the number of students ages 6 through 21 reported in the *homebound/hospital* category to more accurate reporting of *homebound* placements.

Tables F-1 through F-10: Part B, Educational Environments, 2001

Arizona—The state did not use the *reverse mainstream* setting in 2001. The state reported that some children in *reverse mainstream* settings may be included in the *early childhood special education* category. This contributed to the increase in the *early childhood special education* category. The state plans to use the *reverse mainstream* setting in 2002.

Bureau of Indian Affairs—BIA was unable to correct some of the errors on its 2001 educational environments table. Totals by race/ethnicity do not match totals by disability in six categories for ages 3 through 5, in eight categories for ages 6 through 21, and on the duplicated count of children in correctional facilities.

Colorado—The state reported that the increases in the number of children served in *early childhood special education* settings and in the number served in the *itinerant services outside the home* setting are not due to a service delivery shift in a specific LEA or area of the state. The change is cumulative across the state.

Connecticut—The state reported that it calculates the percentage of time outside the regular classroom for students ages 6 through 21 based on a number of variables, including total hours of education, hours of special education, and hours with nondisabled peers.

The state attributed the increase in the number of children ages 3 through 5 reported in the *itinerant services outside the home* category to new data consistency checks, which yielded cleaner and more accurate data.

Connecticut collects race/ethnicity data using an additional category, “other.” The state distributed students in this category proportionally in other race/ethnicity categories.

Georgia—Georgia attributed the decrease in the duplicated count of children in *private schools, not placed or referred by a public agency* to more accurate data. The state clarified the definition of this category for districts. In previous years, many districts were incorrectly including students who were not privately placed in this count.

Illinois—The state reported that districts had the option of reporting 3- through 5-year-olds in either the preschool or school-age educational environments, and most of these students were reported by the districts in the school-age categories. The state crosswalks these students into the preschool categories for federal reporting purposes. Students reported *outside the classroom less than 20 percent* are crosswalked into the *early childhood* category. Students reported *outside the classroom 21-60 percent and more than 60 percent* are crosswalked into the *part-time early childhood/part-time early childhood special education* category.

In previous years, in addition to the duplicated count, students in *correctional facilities* were incorrectly reported in the *public residential facility* category. This year, the state reported these students in the *category outside the regular class more than 60 percent of the day*.

Indiana—The state attributed the 64 percent increase in the number of 3- through 5-year-olds in the *part-time early childhood/part-time early childhood special education* category to more accurate data. Prior to the December 1, 2001, child count, the Indiana Department of Education issued a memorandum to districts clarifying the use of the preschool educational environment codes. The memo was issued because the state was concerned that schools were reporting 5-year-old kindergarten children based on the definitions used for children ages 6 through 21 (e.g., less than 21 percent outside the regular classroom). This meant that 5-year-olds in kindergarten who received some speech services outside the classroom but spent the majority of their time in the general education kindergarten class were incorrectly counted in the *early childhood* environment rather than in the *part-time early childhood/part-time early childhood special education* environment. The memorandum specified that for children to be included in the *early childhood* category, they must receive 100 percent of their instruction with children without disabilities.

The state also had an increase in the number of students ages 6 through 21 served *outside the regular classroom 21-60 percent of the school day*. The state attributed this change to state efforts to educate students in the least restrictive environment. The state attributed most of the increase in this category to the decrease in the number of students served *outside the classroom more than 60 percent of the school day*.

Maine—The state reported that it does not collect data for children in *correctional facilities* or in *private schools, not placed or referred by public agencies*.

The state attributed the decrease in the number of children ages 3 through 5 served in *separate schools* to significant discussions by Early Childhood Teams about the least restrictive environment for each child. Maine is making an effort to ensure that children are served in the general education setting.

Massachusetts—The state attributed year-to-year changes in the number of children reported in different educational environment categories to a change from aggregate reporting in 2000 to student-level reporting in 2001.

Massachusetts reported that the 2001 school year is the second year that the districts reported environments data according to special education placement categories rather than the state's "prototype" categories. The state expects the transition to the new reporting system to take 3 years.

Minnesota—The state reported that it is unable to disaggregate data for students in *correctional facilities*; therefore, these students are not reported in the duplicated count of children in *correctional facilities*. These students are counted in the other unduplicated educational environment categories.

The state attributed the increase in the number of children in part-time *early childhood/part-time early childhood special education* settings to efforts to establish stronger local partnerships between early childhood special education programs and other community-based early childhood programs.

The state attributed the increase in the number of students who received *itinerant services outside the home* to increased use of one-on-one or small group speech-language services. These services are delivered in the school setting rather than in a center-based program.

Mississippi—Mississippi was unable to explain the increase in the number of students in *private schools, not placed or referred by a public agency*. The state reported that the number of students in this category depends upon the number of parents who enroll their children in a private facility and on LEAs accurately reporting these data.

Missouri—The state attributed the increase in the *part-time early childhood/part-time early childhood special education* and the *itinerant services outside the home* categories to an overall increase in the child count for ages 3 through 5 and to a continued emphasis on serving children in the least restrictive environments.

The state attributed the decrease in the *separate school* setting for ages 3 through 5 to the use of more specific definitions of educational environment categories.

Montana—Educational environments are reported as a cross-tabulation by disability category. Montana, by statute, allows schools to report students ages 3 through 5 under the general disability category of “child with a disability,” in addition to, or in place of, one of the specific federal disability categories. Because federal reporting requirements require states to report students ages 3 through 5 by disability, Montana encouraged school districts to report specific disability categories for this age group. This year about 60 percent of the students in this age group were reported by disability. The state imputed disability for the remaining 40 percent using the disability data reported for the 60 percent.

The state attributed the increases in the number of 3- through 5-year-olds in the *part-time early childhood/part-time early childhood special education* category and the *itinerant services outside the home* category to changes in state data collection methodology and to additional district training on category definitions. In the past, each service provider submitted a report of students, and the Office of Public Instruction processed the data to eliminate any duplicated students. One problem with this method was that the different service providers could report two different environments for the same child. In 2001, school districts provided an unduplicated count of eligible students. Districts entered these data on an Internet application, and the state provided training to districts on how to use it. One section of the training focused on clarifying definitions for the preschool environment categories. The state believes this training resulted in more consistent and accurate reporting of the educational environments data in 2001.

New Jersey—New Jersey does not collect race/ethnicity data for *students in private schools, not placed or referred by a public agency*. As a result, the state reported no race/ethnicity data for 14,161 students reported in the duplicated count. As a result, the race/ethnicity total for ages 6 through 21 is lower than the total by disability in the categories *outside the regular classroom less than 21 percent of the school day and outside the regular classroom 21-60 percent of the school day*. New Jersey plans to collect race/ethnicity data for these students in 2003.

New Jersey attributed the increase in the number of 3- through 5-year olds in *part-time early childhood/part-time early childhood special education* settings to districts implementing state policy to place more students in less restrictive settings.

The state attributed the increase in the number of Asian/Pacific Islanders ages 3 through 5 served under IDEA to a substantial increase in the acceptance of special education classification among this population.

New York—New York reported that this year it used a different methodology to report children ages 3 through 5 who were served in school-aged environments. Prior to 2001, New York did not report educational environments of 4- and 5-year-olds served in school-aged environments, which resulted in a large (17,000) discrepancy between the child count and environments data. This year, the state proportionally assigned 17,169 school-age 4- and 5-year-olds into preschool categories based on the distribution of the 3- through 5-year-olds served in preschool settings. This method was approved by OSEP.

New York does not classify preschool children by particular disabilities. The state reported all 53,313 children ages 3 through 5 in the developmental delay disability category.

New York does not collect the race/ethnicity of 4- and 5-year-old children in school-age environments (e.g., kindergarten) separately from the race/ethnicity of all school-age students (ages 4 through 21). The race/ethnicity of 17,169 school-age 4- and 5-year-olds is on the race/ethnicity distribution for 3- through 5-year-olds who received preschool special education services.

New York collects data on race/ethnicity of all school-age students with disabilities (ages 4 through 21), but does not separately collect race/ethnicity data for students with disabilities who are ages 6 through 21. The reported race/ethnicity for 6- through 21-year-olds was computed using race/ethnicity data from students with disabilities ages 4 through 21.

North Carolina—North Carolina does not collect ethnicity data on children with disabilities enrolled in *private schools, not placed or referred by public agencies*.

North Dakota—North Dakota had a significant increase in the number of American Indian students, ages 3 through 5, on the educational environments table. The state reported that over 40 percent of the increase occurred in one, predominantly American Indian, school district. The administrator of this multi-district special education unit reported that this was the result of increased efforts to identify, report, and serve preschool children in the district, as well as the result of the increased accountability required of the district.

Oregon—The state noted that its age ranges differ from the OSEP definitions. Oregon considers children who are 5 years old on September 1 to be school age and includes them in the count of 6- through 21-year-olds rather than the count of 3- through 5-year-olds.

Oregon does not collect data on children with disabilities *in private schools, not placed or referred by public agencies*.

Oregon does not use the multiple disabilities category.

Puerto Rico—Puerto Rico reported that educational environments are based on children's individual needs and are reevaluated every year by the IEP team. Therefore, the same child may move in and out of different educational environments each year based on need. The team first considers the placement option that is as close as possible to regular education.

South Carolina—The state attributed the increase in the number of students served *outside the regular classroom less than 21 percent of the school day* to an emphasis in South Carolina on serving children in the least restrictive environment. Prior to the 2001 data collection, the state provided training to LEAs on the placement of children in the least restrictive environment, and emphasized the importance of following the federal definitions for each environment category.

The state also reported that it changed one of its educational environments definitions in 2001. Prior to 2001, South Carolina collected data on children who spent more than 50 percent of their time outside of the regular classroom. In 2001, the state changed the cut-off from 50 percent to 60 percent of time outside the regular classroom, in order to match the federal definitions.

The state attributed the decrease in the number of students reported in homebound/hospital environments to the effect of a committee that was formed to examine students in these environments and state training of LEAs on the correct use of this category.

The state attributed the increase in the number of children reported in the duplicated count of children *in private schools, not placed or referred by a public agency* to a reporting error. The state mistakenly included the students from one district in this count. The correct count of students in this category in 2001 is 310 students rather than 2,822 students.

Tennessee—The state attributed the increase in the number of children ages 3 through 5 reported in *early childhood settings* category to increased inclusion of students with disabilities, rather than educating these students in separate special education settings.

Texas—In 2001, the state changed its categories used for reporting the amount of time students ages 6 through 21 spent outside the regular classroom. The state's categories now match the federal categories. Prior to 2001, the state's categories did not match federal definitions, and when Texas crosswalked its state categories into the federal categories, many students were reported as spending more time outside the regular classroom than they actually did. For example, the definition of the mainstream instructional arrangement in Texas included only those students who received their full instructional day in a general education setting with special education support. Specific data about students receiving "pull-out" services for less than 21 percent of the day were unavailable; therefore, many students who could have been reported *outside the classroom less than 21 percent* were reported *outside the classroom 21 to 60 percent of the school day*. In addition, the definition of self-contained classroom used prior to 2001 included students who spent 50 percent or more of their school day outside the regular classroom whereas the federal definition uses 60 percent as the cutoff. Students in Texas who were outside the regular classroom for 50 to 60 percent of the day were reported *outside the regular classroom greater than 60 percent of the school day*. Now that the state categories match the federal categories, the state experienced significant changes in its educational environments data, including an increase in the number of students *outside the regular classroom less than 21 percent* and decreases in the number of students *outside the regular classroom 21 to 60 percent* and *outside the classroom greater than 60 percent of the school day*.

Texas does not collect data on race/ethnicity for children with disabilities enrolled *in private schools, not placed or referred by public agencies*.

Washington—The state attributed the increase in the number of students ages 3 through 5 reported in *reverse mainstream settings* to a change in the way one medium- to large-sized district serves preschoolers. This district moved from providing special education to preschoolers in an *early childhood special education* setting to providing it in *reverse mainstream* programming. The district believes this philosophical change will positively affect more children overall.

Wyoming—The state included home-schooled children in the duplicated count of students *in private schools, not placed or referred by public agencies*. The state also reported home-schooled children in the other unduplicated categories on the table.

Tables 3-1 through 3-3: Part B, Personnel, 2001

Alabama—The state attributed the increase in the number of fully certified counselors, other professional staff, and non-professional staff to LEAs filling positions that were left vacant last year. These vacant positions were the result of proration (a reduction by 6.7 percent of the expected budget for the 2000 school year).

The state attributed the increases in the number of special education teachers for ages 6 through 21, counselors, and non-professional staff to school systems that rehired personnel previously terminated. The state reported that although school budgets were not increased through state funding in 2001, school systems made adjustments in their budgets (i.e., finding alternative funding sources, realigning budgets so that staff could be rehired). These adjustments facilitated the rehiring of some staff previously terminated.

Arizona—The state attributed the various year-to-year changes on the personnel table to LEA confusion resulting from a change in data reporting procedures. The 2001 school year was the first year the state required LEAs to report personnel data by school or site rather than by district. Next year, the state plans to go back to requiring LEAs to report the data at the district level.

The state reported that overall personnel increases were due to an increase in the student population and an increase in the number of LEAs. More personnel were hired to serve these students.

The state reported that the decrease in the number of special education teachers for ages 3 through 5 may be due to LEAs erroneously reporting a head count of all personnel last year, instead of full-time equivalents (FTEs). Reporting a head count would have resulted in an overcount last year.

Arizona reported that the increases in other professional staff and non-professional staff are due to training sessions that clarified the definitions of these categories.

Arkansas—Arkansas attributed the increase in the number of personnel for several related services personnel categories to the addition of data on personnel serving 3- through 5-year-olds. The 2001 school year was the first year that preschool programs for ages 3 through 5 submitted data on related services personnel. In prior years, these programs did not submit data on related services personnel.

The state counted personnel who provide speech services as special education teachers rather than as related services personnel. Speech is not considered a related service in Arkansas.

California—The state attributed the increase in the number of certified occupational therapists, recreation specialists, interpreters, and both certified and not fully certified occupational therapists and recreation specialists to the increase in special education enrollment.

Connecticut—Personnel in Connecticut are counted according to the grade level they serve rather than the age they serve. The state's count of special education teachers for ages 3 through 5 includes teachers who work in pre-kindergarten and kindergarten. Special education teachers for ages 6 through 21 include teachers who work in grades 1 through 12.

Georgia—The state reported that it changed its definition of fully certified to include only those individuals who do not have additional unfulfilled requirements or conditions attached to the certification. Teachers reported as fully certified for 2001 hold appropriate certification in their fields of instruction and have completed all certification requirements for their positions. Last year, teachers were reported as fully certified if they held appropriate certification in their fields of instruction even if they had not necessarily completed all certification requirements for their positions.

Hawaii—The state attributed the increase in the number of fully certified school social workers and the decrease in not fully certified school counselors to Hawaii's efforts to hire personnel who are fully qualified in their areas of expertise.

Illinois—Illinois does not collect personnel data by ages served. The count of special education teachers reported as serving ages 3 through 5 only includes those serving early childhood or preschool students. All other special education teachers serving ages 3 through 5 are reported as serving ages 6 through 21.

Illinois's personnel data do not include staff employed by and providing services in nonpublic schools. Counts of these personnel are not available.

The state's personnel data also do not include home-hospital personnel. Illinois does not collect FTE data for these personnel. The total number of home/hospital personnel claimed by local school districts during 2001 was 3,005.

The state reported that the total number of SEA administrators reported (47.79 FTE) is the actual number of staff paid with IDEA, Part B funds.

Iowa—Iowa reported that the decrease in the number of interpreters is an error. In 2001, the state incorrectly reported these personnel in the category for teacher aides.

Louisiana—The state attributed the increase in other professional staff to increased funding and to the reorganization of one of the larger districts in the state. Increased funding at the local level led to hiring of personnel in professional positions, such as transition coordinators, job coaches, and behavior interventionists. The reorganization at one of the largest districts in the state changed how some personnel are reported. Several positions that were reported as supervisor/administrators last year were reported in the other professional staff category this year.

Massachusetts—The state attributed the decrease in fully certified psychologists and other professional staff and the increase in fully certified teacher aides, physical therapists, and supervisor/administrators (LEA) to a change in data collection methodology, rather than a true change in the number of personnel in these categories. In 1999 and 2000, Massachusetts began collecting personnel data in an aggregated, detailed, web-based data collection rather than on a paper form. In 2001, the state returned to the paper form. The state considers the current data, collected on paper, to be more reliable and accurate than the data collected from the web-based form.

Minnesota—Minnesota reported that it changed its method for reporting special education teachers for ages 3 through 5. As a result, Minnesota did not report a separate count of these teachers. Prior to 2001, the state collected data on these teachers using a paper data collection form submitted by LEAs. In 2001, the state began using an existing data source that includes data on special education teachers for ages 3 through 21. An advancement in programming allowed crosstabulation of licensure status with special education assignment. While the new report provides more accurate data, the state is no longer able to disaggregate teachers who work with ages 3 through 5. Special education teachers who serve children ages 3 through 5 are now included in the count of teachers serving ages 6 through 21.

The state attributed the increase in non-professional staff to a new state policy. Beginning in 2001, Minnesota began reimbursing districts for the cost of clerical staff who support special education teachers. As a result, many school districts hired additional support staff.

The state attributed the decrease in the number of counselors to an error on last year's report. Last year, districts incorrectly included in their count those school counselors employed for all students. This year, districts only counted counselors employed by school districts exclusively for special education. These counselors typically provide services to students with disabilities through contractual arrangements with the LEAs.

The state attributed the decrease in the number of LEA supervisor/administrators to better data for the 2001 school year. In 2000 the counts of supervisor/administrators also included coordinators, due process facilitators, and administrators. In 2001, the data only include true administrators.

The state reported that some districts may have underreported occupational therapists. These districts erroneously reported some occupational therapists in personnel categories such as other professional or non-professional staff. This misreporting led to a decrease in the occupational therapists category.

Minnesota no longer reimburses school districts for non-certified interpreters. The state attributes the decrease in not fully certified interpreters to the fact that it no longer employs them.

The state attributes the increase in the number of other professional staff to a correction in its data reporting procedures. This year, coordinators and lead teachers are included in this category. Last year, districts mistakenly counted coordinators in the supervisor/administrator category. The state did not report lead teachers anywhere on the personnel form last year.

In Minnesota, the Handicapped Vocational data system is separate from the Special Education data system. The state reported that the systems are currently in transition, which makes it difficult to obtain accurate data on vocational education teachers, work-study coordinators, and rehabilitation counselors.

Missouri—Missouri reported that the supervisor/administrator category at the LEA level includes two categories of personnel: special education administrators and process coordinators. Both of these categories have certification requirements. This year, all LEA supervisors/administrators were fully certified. This is a significant increase over the last year. The state is unsure why such a large number were not fully certified in previous years, but mentioned that it has difficulty matching certification data with Exceptional Pupil Aid payment data and personnel assignment data. Missouri is looking into ways to better collect and report personnel data.

Missouri reported that the diagnostic and evaluation staff category includes school psychological examiners and educational diagnosticians. Both have certification requirements. If these requirements are not met, the state reports the personnel as not fully certified. This year, some of these personnel were reported as fully certified, and others were reported as not fully certified. Last year all were reported as fully certified. The state is unsure why all diagnostic and evaluation staff were reported as fully certified in previous years.

Montana—The state reported that it changed its data collection methodology for the 2001 school year. It integrated the data collection process into a larger, agency-wide collection that school districts complete in the fall of the year.

The state reported that Montana special education teachers frequently teach students of all ages. When reporting personnel counts to OSEP, the state used the proportion of students in each age group to determine the breakout of teachers by age group.

The state attributed the decrease in the total number of personnel to improved data accuracy resulting from its new agency-wide data collection process. Previously, it used the agency-wide collection process to count special education teachers for accreditation purposes. Because those reporting the accreditation information are more likely to know the exact FTE of special education teachers in each district, the state believes the data reported to OSEP are now more accurate.

Montana reports that in previous years, it incorrectly interpreted the supervisor/administrator, state education agency (SEA) category. The state interpreted this category to include only personnel who administer a school that was taken over by the state. Because this has never occurred in Montana, the state did not report any personnel in the supervisor/administrator (SEA) category. This year the state provided data for this category based on OSEP's definition of supervisor/administrator (SEA).

The state attributed the decrease in the number of non-professional staff to a new state data collection process implemented in 2001. The state reported that this new process requires a finer level of detail and places additional constraints on data entry (i.e., does not allow duplicate records), which improves data accuracy. Many of the reporting changes focused specifically on aides (i.e., mobility, speech, behavior), who are reported in the non-professional staff category. Following are changes that the state made to the reporting methods for aides, which may have led to the decrease in the non-professional staff category:

- In the past, school districts reported the number and types of aides (i.e., mobility, speech, behavior) as part of a teacher's reporting form. During the state's validation process, the state asked schools to check total FTE for aides to ensure an unduplicated count. Although the process did catch some duplication, the state believes that it did not catch all duplication. As a result, aides may have been overreported in the past.
- Prior to 2001, school districts were allowed to count time spent prior to and after the regular school day providing services to the student (i.e., riding with the student to and from school). Therefore, an aide could report an FTE greater than 1.0. Beginning with the 2001 data collection, school districts could no longer report aides as being over 1.0 FTE. The state reported that the majority of the reduction in aide FTE can be attributed to a change in the reporting of FTE, rather than a change in the number of aides.

The state reported that these changes not only affect the FTE count for aides reported in the non-professional staff category, but for those in the teacher's aide category as well. The FTE Montana reported for teacher's aides also decreased in 2001.

Nebraska—The state attributed the increase in fully certified diagnostic and evaluation staff and the decrease in other professional staff to a change in reporting methods. This year, the state removed school psychological and speech technicians from the other professional staff category and counted them in the diagnostic and evaluation staff category.

The state reported that in previous years, it did not collect data on interpreters, and these personnel may have been reported as other professional staff. In 2001 the state began collecting data on interpreters. As a result, the reported number of interpreters increased, and the number of other professional staff decreased.

Nevada—This year, Nevada reported an increase in the number of counselors and a decrease in the number of interpreters. The state reported that these data are correct. Variations in counselors and interpreters are common in Nevada. The number employed depends on their availability, and the need for their services is based on changes in service delivery patterns.

New Jersey—New Jersey attributed the increase in the number of not fully certified speech pathologists to the use of emergency certified staff. The state reported that it has difficulty finding and hiring certified staff in these positions. As a result, staff turnover is high and reporting of these staff is inconsistent.

The state attributed the increase in the number of fully certified audiologists to normal fluctuation in the numbers of these staff. The state reported 30 more personnel in the category this year, which it believes is not an unusual fluctuation.

The state attributed the increase in the number of fully certified non-professional staff to inconsistent reporting in this category. The state reported that this category includes many different positions for which there may be a demand or surplus during any given year. For this reason, the state believes that the increase in this category is not unusual.

New Jersey attributed the increase in the number of not fully certified diagnostic and evaluation staff to inconsistent reporting from districts.

New Mexico—In 2000 and in 2001, New Mexico was unable to obtain certification information on audiologists and speech pathologists from the agency that collects these data. In 2001, the state estimated the ratio of certified to uncertified personnel in these categories using certification rates for 2002. The total number of personnel in these two categories is based on actual counts submitted to the state.

New York—New York reported that it included the following positions in the category special education teachers for ages 3 through 5: Preschool Teacher of Special Education, Preschool Teacher of Special Education-Bilingual, Teacher of English as a Second Language, Teacher of the Speech and Hearing Handicapped-Certified Only, Teacher of the Speech and Hearing Handicapped-Bilingual-Certified Only, Teacher of the Deaf and Hearing Impaired, Teacher of the Deaf and Hearing Impaired-Bilingual, Teacher of the Blind and Partially Sighted and Teacher of the Blind and Partially Sighted-Bilingual.

New York also reported that it included the following positions in the category special education teachers for ages 6 through 21: Teacher of Special Education, Teacher of Special Education-Bilingual, Teacher of English as a Second Language, Teacher of the Speech and Hearing Handicapped-Certified Only, Teacher of the Speech and Hearing Handicapped-Bilingual-Certified Only, Teacher of the Deaf and Hearing Impaired, Teacher of the Deaf and Hearing Impaired-Bilingual, Teacher of the Blind and Partially Sighted and Teacher of the Blind and Partially Sighted-Bilingual.

The state included the following positions in the category other professional staff: Teacher Assistant, Teacher Assistant-Bilingual, Physical Therapist Assistant, Physical Therapist Assistant-Bilingual, Occupational Therapist Assistant, Occupational Therapist Assistant-Bilingual, Orientation and Mobility Instructor, Orientation and Mobility Instructor-Bilingual, Registered Nurse, Registered Nurse-Bilingual, Licensed Practical Nurse, Licensed Practical Nurse-Bilingual, and Other Professional Staff.

The state included the following positions in the non-professional staff category: Instructional Volunteer, Instructional Volunteer-Bilingual, Non-Professional Staff, and Administrative Volunteer.

North Carolina—The state explained the decline in some of the personnel categories from 2000 to 2001 as the result of state employees losing their jobs to budget cuts.

South Dakota—South Dakota reported that it changed to a computerized data collection system. The state attributed changes in the data reported for various personnel categories to increased data accuracy.

Texas—The state included the following positions in the other professional staff category: Art Therapist, Corrective Therapist, Music Therapist, Orientation/Mobility Instructor, Vocational Ed Coordinator, Teacher Facilitator, Other Campus Professional Personnel, Other Non-campus Professional Personnel, School Nurse, Visiting Teacher, and Department Head.

Vermont—The state reported that the category other professional staff includes behavior specialists and other professional staff.

Virginia—The state reported speech pathologists and other personnel who provide services to students with speech/language impairments in the count of special education teachers. No speech pathologists were included in the related services personnel count.

Virgin Islands—The Virgin Islands attributed the increase in LEA supervisor/administrators to an error on last year's report. In 2000, Virgin Islands did not report school administrators. These personnel were reported in 2001.

Wyoming—Wyoming reported that it revised its personnel categories to match the federal categories for vocational education teachers, work-study coordinators, and recreation specialists. Last year, these personnel were reported as either other professional or non-professional staff. This year, they are reported in the correct category.

The state reported that it includes psychological therapists in the other professional staff category.

The state does not include contracted services personnel on the personnel table.

The state reported that it included the following positions in the other non-professional staff category: special education clerks, job coaches, related service aides, and other non-professionals.

The state reported that it included psychological therapists in the other professional staff category.

Wyoming reported that its data are taken from its end-of-the-year report. That is, the counts are not for December 1. However, the state feels this provides the most accurate count of staff.

Tables 4-1 through 4-4: Part B, Exiting

Alabama—The state attributed the increase in the number of students with specific learning disabilities that exited with a *certificate* to the availability of an Alabama Occupational Diploma (AOD). This exiting option prepares students for employment. The state reported that the increase in the number of certificates is an indication that more students are choosing to graduate with the AOD. Alabama's high standards for *graduation with a regular diploma* (course content requirements and a graduation exam including reading, language, mathematics, and science) make it difficult for many students with disabilities to receive a regular high school diploma.

The state also attributed the decrease in students who *dropped out* to the AOD. The biggest decrease was in the disability area of specific learning disabilities, the population of students most likely to choose the AOD as an exit. In addition, more higher functioning students with emotional disturbance and mental retardation are choosing the AOD as an exit option. As a result, these students are staying in school rather than dropping out.

Arkansas—The state reported that the decrease in the total number of students on the exiting table may be due to errors associated with implementing a new data collection system in 2001. The agency handling the data collection implemented a new special education module that districts used to enter student withdrawals from special education. Many of the districts reported to the state that they did not understand how this system worked. They continued entering student graduations, dropouts, and other exits with general education exits, thinking that these records would be imported into the special education module. This was not the case. The state believes that many of its special education exits were not captured in the data collection and is working with districts to correct the situation for the 2002 school year and to revise data from 2001.

California—The state attributed the increases in the number of students exiting in the *graduated with a regular high school diploma* category and the number of students with specific learning disabilities exiting in that category to an increase in special education enrollment. The state also reported that in the past 5 years it has worked closely with districts, focusing on the educational benefits for students with disabilities rather than just procedural compliance. Among the focused monitoring indicators used by the state to measure educational benefit are: an increase in the number of students *graduating with a diploma*, a decrease in the number of students *dropping out*, and an increase in the number of students with disabilities who receive instruction with their nondisabled peers. The state believes that the rapid increase in the number of students reported in the category *graduated with a high school diploma* is a direct result of these efforts.

The state reported that the decrease in the number of students with specific learning disabilities who *received a certificate* was a direct result of the increase in the number of these students who *received a regular high school diploma*. The state attributed the increase in the number of students with mental retardation who *received a certificate* to an increase in special education enrollment.

The state attributed the increase in the number of students with specific learning disabilities and all disabilities combined in the *moved, not known to continue* category to an increase in special education enrollment.

The state attributed the decrease in the number of students with specific learning disabilities and all disabilities combined who *dropped out* to the state's quality assurance process. This process has been in place for 4 years and encourages students to get diplomas and certificates.

Colorado—Data reported for 2001-02 are for students exiting between December 2000 and December 2001.

Connecticut—Connecticut reported that its reporting period is from December 1, 2001, to November 30, 2002. It incorrectly calculated students' ages as of December 1, 2002, rather than December 1, 2001.

The state attributed the increase in the number of students who *moved and were known to continue* and the decrease in the number of students who *moved and were not known to continue* to new edit checks conducted by the state. This year, the state verified that students who were initially reported as *moved, not known to be continuing* were not enrolled in another school district. If the state found that one of these students was enrolled in another district, the state re-coded the student as *moved, known to be continuing*. The state conducted similar checks for students to check whether students reported as *dropouts* were actually enrolled in another school district. As a result, the number of *dropouts* reported by the state decreased slightly.

Georgia—Georgia had a significant decrease in the number of students reported as *dropping out* and *moved, not known to continue*. The state reported that in previous years, these counts frequently were duplicated counts based on the number of occurrences rather than unduplicated counts of students. This year, enrollment in the fall was checked against students reported as *dropouts* the prior year. If a student was reported as a *dropout* in the prior year, but enrolled in the fall, he/she was not considered a *dropout* or counted in the *moved, not known to continue* category.

The state attributed the increase in the number of students with disabilities *receiving a regular diploma* to better data collection and an increased emphasis by the Department of Education on test results and inclusion.

Georgia attributed the decrease in the number of students who *no longer receive special education* to a change in the state's data reporting methods. In 2001, the state eliminated duplicated students from its data report. The state did not report students who returned to the regular education environment during the year, but were in special education at the end of the reporting year. In previous years, a student in this situation might have been reported in the *no longer receives special education* category.

Hawaii—In 2000, Hawaii trained teachers on the eligibility criteria for the speech and language impairments category. As a result, 1,220 students in this category exited special education to be served under Section 504 rather than IDEA. In 2001, significantly fewer students with speech and language impairments were reported as *no longer receiving special education*. The state believes that these data are accurate and that the number of students with this disability exiting special education has stabilized.

The state attributed the increase in the number of students with specific learning disabilities reported in the category *no longer receives special education* to the implementation of a Comprehensive Student Support System. Under this new system, students are provided with comprehensive, coordinated, integrated, and customized supports that are accessible, timely, and strength-based to enable them to achieve in school and return to regular education. The increase may also be attributed to a change in data collection methods in 2001 for students who returned to regular education. Data for these students were gathered using the Integrated Special Education Database, a process-based system which was implemented in 2001.

Illinois—The state reported that it calculated student age for the 2001 exiting report as of the 2001 child count date (December 1, 2001). In the past, Illinois calculated student age based on the school year during which the student exited. The state used the age of the student as of the child count for that school year to calculate the age. For example: If the student exited May 2000, age was calculated from the December 1999 child count. If the student exited October 2000 the age was calculated from the December 2000 child count.

Illinois began using the multiple disabilities category for the 2001 school year.

Louisiana—Louisiana attributed the decrease in the *moved, not known to continue* category to policy and system changes in the state. In prior years, the state allowed local school systems to use the code “other” as a valid exit reason. For federal reporting purposes, students coded as “other” were reported in the *moved, not known to continue* category. In early 2001, the “other” code was eliminated due to a state policy change that required school systems to more accurately track student exits.

The state attributes the slight decrease in the number of *dropouts* to a state policy that requires school districts to implement changes at the local level to reduce *dropouts*. The dropout rate is included in Louisiana's accountability and school performance scores. A school's dropout rate affects its school performance scores and possibly funding.

Maine—Maine reported that its exiting data for 2001 were actually collected between December 1, 2000, and November 30, 2001.

Missouri—The state attributed the increase in the *moved, known to be continuing* category to better understanding of the difference between the two moved categories. This has resulted in more appropriate use of these two moved categories.

Oregon—The state attributed the decrease in the *moved, known to be continuing* category to improved SEA-generated reports, which were sent to LEAs to help eliminate duplicate exit records.

Oregon attributed the decrease in the number of students reported as *moved, known to be continuing* and *moved, not known to be continuing* to better data cleaning at the state level. The state reported that in 2001, it improved its methods for tracking exits by eliminating duplicated exit reasons. In addition, the state implemented a hierarchy of exit codes. For example, a student who moved and *graduated with a diploma* would only be reported as having graduated. Similarly, a student who moved twice and exited with a certificate would only be reported as *exiting with a certificate*. Finally, the state told districts that students in the *moved, not known to be continuing* category would be considered dropouts when the state calculated the district dropout rates. This encouraged districts to use another exit category whenever possible.

Texas—Each fall, the state collects exiting data for the previous year. Data reported for school year 2001 are actually for students exiting between August 2000 and August 2001.

The state reported that it counts students who complete an IEP in the *graduated with a regular high school diploma* category.

Texas does not use the category *received a certificate*.

The state attributed the increase in the number of students reported as *moved, known to be continuing* to changes in the in the TYC (Texas Youth Commission School) methodology for determining if a youth continues in school after release. TYC campuses improved their methods for gathering post-release information about students with respect to continuing education.

Texas reported that 2,044 students on the exiting table were missing disability information. The state imputed disability for these students based on the known disabilities of other students on the table.

Utah—The state attributed the increase in the number of students with disabilities who graduated and the increase in the number who *reached maximum age* to a change in data collection methodology. Prior to 2000, data were collected on paper forms. In 2000, the state began collecting exit data electronically, and districts were unfamiliar with the electronic forms. As a result, the state believes the data were not accurate. The state reports that districts are now more familiar with the electronic forms, and as a result the current data are more accurate.

The state attributed the decrease in the number of students with specific learning disabilities who *no longer receive special education* to better data and to a focus on accountability and making sure that student IEP goals are met.

The state attributed the increase in the number of students reported as *moved, known to be continuing* to better data. The statewide clearinghouse warehouse system makes it possible to better track and follow students as they move from district to district.

Vermont—Data reported for school year 2001 are actually data for students exiting between December 2000 and December 2001.

Wisconsin—Data reported for school year 2001 are actually data for students exiting between December 2000 and December 2001.

Tables 5-1 through 5-4: Part B, Discipline

Arizona—Arizona was unable to correct some errors on its discipline table. The race/ethnicity totals in the following categories do not match the totals by disability: the *unduplicated count of children removed for drug and weapon offenses*, the *unduplicated count of children removed by a hearing officer*, and the *unduplicated count of children with multiple short-term suspensions*.

The state attributed the decrease in the number of children *unilaterally removed by school personnel* to more accurate data resulting from additional training. LEAs were trained on how to properly report data and how to differentiate between suspension/expulsions and removals to alternative educational settings.

The state attributed the decrease in the number of students reported as *unilaterally removed by a hearing officer* to a change in data collection methods. In 2000, public education agencies were responsible for reporting data on removals by hearing officers. The state believes that many public education agencies may have misinterpreted the term hearing officer. They may have been erroneously reporting removals by local hearing officers, rather than state hearing officers. In 2001, the dispute resolution team began collecting these data, utilizing the correct definition of hearing officer. The state believes the data are more accurate for 2001 than for 2000.

Arkansas—Arkansas had an increase in the number of students *unilaterally removed by school personnel for drug and weapon offenses*. The state reported that this increase was due to an increase in the number of removals for drug offenses and not to an increase in the number of removals for weapon offenses. The state reported a statewide effort to make schools weapon and drug free, leading to more disciplinary actions for these types of offenses. School administrators are making an effort to discipline children caught with drugs.

California—The state attributed the decrease in the number of students reported in all categories on the discipline table to an error on previous reports. In previous years, California reported all students with disabilities who had been suspended, rather than only those who were suspended for 10 days or more. This year, the state only reported students who were suspended for more than 10 days.

Colorado—The state attributed the decrease in the number of students who were *unilaterally removed by school personnel to an interim alternative educational setting* to more accurate reporting by LEAs. The state emphasized to the districts that they should only report students in this category if they were removed by school personnel. The state attributed most of this change to data from one of the largest LEAs in the state.

Connecticut—Connecticut reported that data on all in-school and out-of-school suspensions; expulsions; and alcohol, drug, and weapon offenses for both regular and special education for the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act, the Gun-Free Schools Act, and the Drug Free Schools Act are in one individual student database system. To ensure data accuracy, the state implemented a validation system to identify incomplete and erroneous data submitted by school districts. The state then sends reports to districts requesting corrections of their data.

Delaware—The state attributed the decrease in the number of children with multiple short-term suspensions to new edit checks conducted by the state. The state queried the data to check for errors and sent inaccurate data back to districts for correction. In the past, corrections were made at the state level.

Georgia—The state attributed the decrease in the number of children *unilaterally removed by a hearing officer* to a change in the terminology used in the state’s data collection system. It replaced the term “hearing officer” with the term “administrative law judge” because, in Georgia, an administrative law judge is required in the removal process for likely injury. This change in terminology helped local school systems better understand which students they should report. The state believes that previously districts incorrectly counted students disciplined by internal (school system) hearing officers.

Hawaii—The state attributed the decrease in the number of students *unilaterally removed by school personnel for drug and weapon offenses* to a new discipline data tracking system. In 2001, the state used its “Chapter 19 Database” to provide the state’s discipline data for the first time. The state reports that although it trained users on this system, further training is needed. It expects to report more accurate data in future reports.

Illinois—The state reported that it collected the 2001 discipline data using the old data collection format from 2000. As a result, the data reported by the state differ from the federal categories:

- The state reported the number of children with single suspensions greater than 10 days, rather than the *number of suspensions greater than 10 days*. This may result in an undercount of suspensions.
- The state was unable to report an accurate unduplicated count of all children with suspensions and calculated this unduplicated count by adding the number of children with single suspensions greater than 10 days and the *number of children with multiple short-term suspensions*. The calculated count may be higher than a true unduplicated count.
- The state reported the number of drug and weapon acts precipitating removal by school personnel rather than the actual *number of removals for drug and weapon offenses*.

The state was unable to correct logic errors in the unduplicated counts of students reported by race/ethnicity. The unduplicated counts of white and Hispanic students reported as removed by school personnel for drug and weapon offenses was not logical (too high) based on the number of removals reported.

Indiana—The state reported that the decrease in the number of children *unilaterally removed by a hearing officer* (from 46 to 0) is due to an increase in data accuracy in 2001-02. The Indiana Department of Education reviewed the local discipline reports submitted by LEAs for 2000-01 and found that districts reported students disciplined by a “local expulsion examiner” in the *removed by a hearing officer* category. The state corrected this misunderstanding for the 2001-02 report, and these data will be correct in future reports.

Kentucky—The state attributed the decrease in the number of students *unilaterally removed by school personnel to an interim alternative educational setting (IAES) for drug or weapon offenses* to districts’ better understanding of state law. The state reported that Kentucky Revised Statute (state law) is more restrictive than federal law on the authority of school personnel to remove students to an IAES for drug or weapon offenses. Under state law, a student can only be sent to an IAES for 10 days at a time, no matter what the reason for the removal was. In order for a student to be removed for more than 10 days (and thus be reported on the federal discipline table), the student would have to commit multiple offenses. This state

law is fairly new. The state believes that in 2000, districts were not fully aware of the law, and their data were largely based on single events. Districts are becoming more aware that they cannot remove a student for more than 10 days unless there are multiple incidents, which has resulted in a decrease in the category of unilateral removals by school personnel.

Louisiana—The state attributed the increase in the number of students *removed by school personnel for drug and weapon offenses* to district changes in disciplinary policies, coupled with system improvements in data tracking and reporting methods at the local level.

Maryland—Maryland reported that, after the data were published, it discovered an error in the race/ethnicity portion of its discipline data. Asian students were reported as white, non-Hispanic, Native American students were reported as black, non-Hispanic, white, non-Hispanic students were reported as Asian/Pacific Islander, and Hispanic students were reported as Native American.

Maryland attributed the decrease in the number of children *removed by a hearing officer* to new administrative procedures and behavior programs put in place by local school systems. The state reported that last year, all of the removals by hearing officers occurred in 7 of the 24 local school systems in Maryland. This year, the state contacted these districts to determine the reason for the decrease in the number of students they reported as *removed by hearing officials*. Three of the local school systems had a decrease of one or two cases, which the state considers to be a non-significant change. Three other school systems had more significant decreases. Of these, one reported that it developed and implemented definitive criteria that must be used by schools prior to seeking such a removal for a 45-day interim placement by a hearing officer. Another reported that it is the district's aim to maintain all children in school as long as possible, and therefore, it only removes children to a 45-day IAES when it is absolutely necessary to do so. The third reported that it has expanded its efforts in the middle and high schools to provide a high level of effective intervention in the classroom. It implemented class- and grade-wide incentive models and behavior support interventions. All students with IEPs who display problem behavior receive the highest quality of behavior support in the classroom. In addition, IEP teams develop behavior support plans with the appropriate professional specialists to address these behaviors.

Massachusetts—The state reported that it collected the 2001 discipline data using the old data collection format from 2000. As a result, the data reported by the state differ from the federal categories:

- The state reported the number of children with single suspensions greater than 10 days, rather than the *number of suspensions greater than 10 days*. This may result in an undercount of suspensions.
- The state was unable to report an accurate unduplicated count of all children with suspensions and calculated this unduplicated count by adding the number of children with single suspensions greater than 10 days and the *number of children with multiple short-term suspensions*. The calculated count may be higher than a true unduplicated count.

Michigan—Michigan reported that it is unable to provide an accurate unduplicated count of students *removed by school personnel for drug or weapon offenses*. The state currently is unable to identify students who had *multiple removals for drug or weapon offenses*. The state calculated this unduplicated count by adding the number of removals for drugs and the number of removals for weapons. This count may be higher than a true unduplicated count.

Minnesota—The state reported that its counts do not include data from several districts, including one of the largest districts in the state.

The state had a 25 percent increase in the number of children subject to *multiple short-term suspensions*. The state attributes this increase to improved data collection procedures. In addition, the state reported that it is also possible that more students are receiving multiple suspensions summing to more than 10 days.

Missouri—From 2000 to 2001, Missouri had a significant increase in the number of students with *multiple short-term suspensions summing to greater than 10 days*. The state reported that the 2001 school year was the second year the state used a web-based data collection on discipline incidents that was designed to collect information on students with and without disabilities. Since the data collection method is so new, it is difficult to determine the reason for the increase. Missouri reported that there have been no state policy changes related to discipline which would cause this increase, but suggested that the change may be due to better reporting. The state reported that this is supported by an overall increase in the total number of reported incidents for students with and without disabilities as well as an increase in the number of reported *multiple short-term suspensions* for students with and without disabilities.

Nevada—The state attributed the increase in the number of students *unilaterally removed by school personnel* to increased familiarity with discipline regulations (such as making manifestation determinations [Section 615(k)(4) of IDEA, 1997] that are defensible) at the district level. As a result of their increased familiarity with the regulations, districts are more willing to “engage the process” rather than adopting an unstated rule that students with disabilities will not be disciplined by removals.

Oklahoma—The state attributed the increase in the number of students *removed to IAES’s by school personnel for drug or weapon offenses* to two factors. First, the state conducted training with the LEAs on how to report the data. The state believes that this led to more accurate reporting. Second, more schools instituted a “zero tolerance” policy towards drug or weapon offenses; therefore, students who commit these offenses are automatically removed.

Pennsylvania—Pennsylvania had increases in the number of children who were *unilaterally removed by school personnel* and who received *multiple, short-term suspensions summing to more than 10 days*. In addition, the state had a decrease in the number of children *removed by a hearing officer*. The state attributes these changes to statewide and regional training, an improved communication system from state to regional offices to districts, and assistance from a statewide advisory committee. In addition, this is the second year it used the current data system, and districts reported that this year they were more familiar with the system.

South Carolina—The state attributed the increase in the number of students reported as *unilaterally removed by school personnel for drug or weapons offenses* and the increase in the number reported as *removed by hearing officer determination regarding likely injury*, as well as the decrease in the number of students with *multiple short-term suspensions*, to changes in data collection methods. Last year, the discipline data were generated from a database with definitions for the unilateral removal categories that did not match OSEP definitions. As a result of the differences, some removals were not included in the reported data. This year, the state corrected the definitions.

Tennessee—In 2001, the number of students *removed by school personnel for drug and weapons offenses* increased, and the number of students with *multiple short-term suspensions* decreased. The state reported that it experienced an overall increase in the number of offenses in its schools. The state provided additional information and guidance to the school systems about how to respond to these offenses, and as a result, it has become the norm for IEP teams to place special education students in the LEA’s alternative school when a child is suspended or expelled from school, rather than to dismiss the student from school. The state law under Rule 0520-1-9-.15 (4) specifies that FAPE must be provided to children suspended or expelled from school: (b) “In the case of a child eligible for special education who has been removed

from their current placement for more than ten (10) school days in that school year, the local school system, for the remainder of the removals, must: (1) Provide services to the extent necessary to enable the child to appropriately progress in the general curriculum and advance toward achieving the goals set out in the child's IEP, if the removal is: (i) Under the school personnel's authority to remove for not more than ten (10) consecutive school days as long as that removal does not constitute a change of placement; (2) Provide services in the appropriate interim alternative educational setting, if the removal is for drug or weapons offenses or based on a hearing officer's determination that maintaining the current placement of the child is substantially likely to result in injury to the child or to others if he or she remains in the current placement."

