

PART B CHILD COUNT AND EDUCATIONAL ENVIRONMENTS

DATA NOTES

FFY 2017/SY 2017–18 Reporting Year

This document provides information or data notes on the ways in which states collected and reported data differently from the Office of Special Education Programs (OSEP) data formats and instructions. In addition, the data notes provide explanations of substantial changes from previous year's submissions as well as other information that data users may find notable or of interest when reviewing and using these data.

Arizona

- Year to Year note FS 002: Arizona has had an increase of private day schools approved to provide services for 6–21-year-old students which is a result of an increase in separate school placements. Additionally, Arizona has provided clarification to PEAs delineating what constitutes a separate school placement and more PEAs are reporting accurately. Autism has shown a significant increase in the past several years and this trend is expected to continue in the future.

- Year to Year note FS 089: The decrease in the Specific Learning Disability category reflects a small change in absolute values with a low denominator. A shift of 30 students is not a concern for Arizona after evaluating all disability trends in the state. Autism has shown a significant increase in the past several years and this trend is expected to continue in the future.

Arkansas

- Year to Year note FS 089: There are three disability categories not used in Arkansas for preschool – Intellectual Disability (ID), Emotional Disturbance (ED), and Specific Learning Disability (SLD). These three categories reported in the preschool child count represent 5-year-old students in kindergarten. Arkansas has seen an increase in the number of 5-year-old students identified in the disability category of intellectual disability (ID).

- In FFY 2017, Arkansas has 255 school age programs, of which 92 had 5-year-old students identified as ID. This is an increase from FFY 2016 count of districts serving 5-year-old students identified as ID. The increase appears to be across the state and often represents having a zero count in FFY 2016 to a count of 1 in FFY 2017.

- The state is undertaking additional analysis of the ID category across K–12 and will be talking with Local Education Agencies (LEAs) to ensure they have applied the disability criteria appropriately.

California

- Year to Year note FS 089: The 29.27% year-over-year increase in Emotional Disturbance and the 52.10% increase in Service Provider Location are due to miscoding and will be corrected in subsequent years.

Colorado

- Year to Year note FS 089: The increase in the count of children in separate class was mainly due to 3 LEAs having changes in their early childhood programs. One large LEA which accounted for 45% of the year-to-year count difference reported that their increase in separate class was because they added Autism Spectrum Disorder class and Deaf-or-Hard-of-Hearing class to their early childhood program. Another mid-sized LEA which showed an increase in separate class count that accounted for 17% of the year-to-year count difference explained that they added 3 new classrooms for preschoolers with significant needs. Another large LEA which accounted for 17% of the year-to-year count had a school closure which seemed to have redistributed students into a more restrictive setting.

- Year to Year note FS 089: 24% of the year-to-year count difference was accounted by the LEA mentioned above, which added Autism Spectrum Disorder class and Deaf-or-Hard-of-Hearing class; this year, after they added the classes, their count for “less than 10hrs AND in some other location” decreased to zero, while their separate class count increased. Another LEA accounted for 61% of the year-to-year count difference. This LEA added a preschool during SY2016-17 which made it possible to serve children with greater needs in a more inclusive setting – in fact, their count for “regular class more than 10 hrs” has increased in turn of their decrease in the current setting.

Connecticut

- Year to Year note FS 002: Our state department of children and families closed one of its residential hospital programs this year, resulting in a significant loss of "beds" and in a reduction in the number of students placed in hospital settings. Data are accurate.

Georgia

- FS 002: In FFY2017 (SY2017-2018) Georgia reported a 23.99% decrease in SWD in residential facilities. The Georgia Department of Education (GADOE) reviewed these data and found the data to be accurate. The GADOE found it difficult to determine why fewer students were placed in residential facilities; this is a positive trend in the state’s data as residential settings are very restrictive settings. The GADOE can only hypothesize that an increased focus on mental health across the state and the expansion of PBIS in Georgia is showing a positive impact. These data, along with other data elements, will continue to be monitored and analyzed to determine the impact of the work being done in Georgia to support all students.

- FS 002: In FFY2017 (SY2017-2018) Georgia reported a 76.67% decrease in SWD in correctional facilities. The Georgia Department of Education (GADOE) reviewed these data and found the data to be accurate. The GADOE found it difficult to determine why fewer students were incarcerated; this is a positive trend in the state's data. The GADOE can only hypothesize that an increased focus on mental health across the state and the expansion of PBIS in Georgia is showing a positive impact. These data, along with other data elements, will continue to be monitored and analyzed to determine the impact of the work being done in Georgia to support all students.

- FS 089: In FFY17 (SY2017-2018), Georgia reported a 45.6% decrease fewer young children identified as having an Intellectual Disability than in the previous year. The Georgia Department of Education (GADOE) reviewed these data and found accurate reporting. Georgia has several LEAs with significant disproportionality for identification, many in the area of Intellectual Disability. The GADOE provides technical assistance to LEAs to ensure appropriate procedures, policies and practices regarding eligibility determination. Because the determination of area of disability is the eligibility team's decision, the GADOE can only surmise that LEAs are improving their practices, especially for young children resulting in fewer determinations of Intellectual Disability. The GADOE found it interesting that there was an increase in young children identified as SLD. The GADOE will continue to monitor these data.

- FS 089: In FFY17 (SY2017-2018), Georgia reported 227.77% more young children identified as having a Specific Learning Disability than in the previous year (227.27%). The Georgia Department of Education (GADOE) reviewed these data and found accurate reporting. Georgia has several LEAs with significant disproportionality and therefore the GADOE provides technical assistance to LEAs to ensure appropriate procedures, policies and practices regarding eligibility determination. Because the determination of area of disability is the eligibility team's decision, the GADOE can only surmise that LEAs are improving their practices, especially for young children which resulted in 25 more determinations of Specific Learning Disability. The GADOE will continue to monitor these data.

Idaho

- Year to Year note FS 089: Coordination at the SEA level between Special Education and Technology Services has improved data quality through communication and training of LEA personnel in both program and data entry. As a result, the 2017-18 Child Count reported a large increase in the number of students for the "Services in Other Location than Regular Early Childhood Program (attend less than 10 hours)" environment code.

- Year to Year note FS 002: Coordination at the SEA level between Special Education and Technology Services has improved data quality through communication and training of LEA personnel in both program and data entry. As a result, the 2017-18 Child Count reported a large increase in the number of students for the Parentally Placed in Private Schools environment code.

- Year to Year note FS 002: Idaho's Department of Juvenile Corrections and Department of Corrections are not required to report using the state's statewide longitudinal data system for education. Through

improved communication and tracking, Idaho Department of Education and Idaho's correctional agencies have improved reporting on students with disabilities. As a result, Child Count for the 2017–18 school year, first Friday in November 2017, reported fewer students for the Department of Corrections and thus the Correctional Facilities environment code. The number reported for 2017-18 accurately reflects the number of students active only on the state's Child Count date

Kentucky

- Year to Year note FS 002: Kentucky showed a 63% increase of students with disabilities in correctional facilities from 2016 to 2017. This data was correct and was largely due to an increase in awareness of students with IEPs in correctional facilities. The Kentucky Department of Education (KDE) has provided targeted training around implementation of IEPs in correctional facilities. Additionally, the population in correctional facilities changes daily due to the nature of the juvenile justice system, so some of the change may be by chance as it is a one-day snapshot.

Massachusetts

- Due to Massachusetts accepting non-binary as a gender selection, categories that report gender may have different counts.

Maine

- Year to Year note FS 089: The large year-to-year changes are the result of 1) the implementation of a new data system that has increased the fidelity of early childhood educational environment data and 2) increased fidelity in documenting preschool settings based on targeted technical assistance to LEAs through state-level and national technical assistance.

Missouri

- Year to Year note FS 089: The increase of early childhood children in the Home educational environment was the result of small increases (mostly 1 or 2 children) across 45 of the 560+ LEAs in the state.

Mississippi

- Year to Year note FS 002: Changes to a state funding program to assist reimbursement for students placed in private facilities by either parents or districts caused a decrease in usage of the program and caused an increase in homebound and separate school placements as districts chose to serve students outside of private settings.

- Year to Year note FS 089: Due to budget cuts a large number of head start centers across the state closed. These gave students access to Regular Early Childhood Programs. Most of these occurred in

districts that do not run preschool programs for students without disabilities, so their access to Regular Early Childhood Programs decreased, which caused an increase in services in special education settings.

New Jersey

- Year to Year note FS 002: The increase in the number of students reported as being educated in CF in 2017-2018 resulted from the correction of a reporting error by one LEA in the State that caused the count in the 2016-2017 school year to be lower than it should have been.

Northern Marianas

- Year to Year note FS 089: The increase in the number of students with whom are receiving services in Regular Early Childhood Program (attend at least 10 hours) and an increase in count difference in the number of students whom are NLEP was due to the increase in student population in the 3 to 5-year-old child count.

Oregon

- Year to Year note FS 002: Oregon has long term care and treatment centers and approved private schools that provide specialized services to students. It is believed that improved awareness of the need to address mental health issues resulted in an increase in separate school placements.

- Year to Year note FS 089: It is believed that training and technical assistance are leading to better decisions regarding eligibility and accounts for the decrease in emotional disturbance counts. Also, the increase in services provided in the home (and decrease in services provided in the service provider location) are thought to be the result of an overall increase in ECSE population with services initially provided in the home. The intent is to transition to other settings upon determining the needs of the child.

Puerto Rico

- As you may be aware, Puerto Rico was hit by two significant hurricanes back-to-back (Hurricanes Irma and María) during September 2017. The devastation caused by these hurricanes, particularly Hurricane María which made landfall on Puerto Rico as a high-end Category 4, nearly Category 5, hurricane was extensive, significantly damaging infrastructure, disabling radar and cell towers, and completely knocking out electricity across the island. Communications within the island were severely impacted. Puerto Rico is still working to restore electricity across the island. As has been widely reported, Puerto Rico experienced a significant increase in migration off the island in the weeks and months following these two hurricanes. This resulted in a significant decrease in student population, particularly as of the time of Puerto Rico's child count date (December 1, 2017). Puerto Rico's total child count (ages 3–21) from 2016 to 2017 reflects a decrease of 11%. The data reported herein is consistent with the decrease in the overall general student population PRDE experienced following the hurricanes. While many

families have returned to Puerto Rico and many more may hope to do so in the future, the hurricanes greatly impacted the student population, particularly as of the time of this year's child count.

South Dakota

- FS 002: South Dakota's state definition of developmental delay is limited to students with a disability age 3 through 5. Due to the transfer of an out-of-state student from a state with a broader age range for developmental delay, South Dakota is reporting one student who exceeded the age range. This student was receiving comparable services over the child count date and the district was in the process of determining eligibility based on South Dakota disability categories.

Tennessee

- Year to Year note FS 002: Correctional facilities is an environment category that is prone to fluctuation from year-to year, and we have for the most part seen a decline in the counts of students in this category over the last several years. There are have been no pervasive changes in protocols or requirements for placements in correctional facilities, but based on the numbers reported for the 2017-18 school year, it appears fewer students are being placed in correctional facilities, at least as of our December 1 census date.

- Year to Year note FS 089: We have encouraged LEAs to be more diligent in accurately reflecting the LEP status of students in our statewide data management system, which is influencing the increase reported in this area. The state has been developing a more robust monitoring program for EL programs across the state, and accordingly it is imperative to know how many students are identified as EL. In addition to this guidance, there has been in overall increase in the number of students identified with disabilities ages 3-5, which likely has an impact on this count increase as well.

Utah

- Year to Year note FS 002: The Utah Department of Human Services, through Juvenile Justice Services (JJS) and Division of Child and Family Services (DCFS), has moved to a kinship and community-based approach when placing youth in care (YIC). Placing youth in secure lock down facilities in Utah has decreased over the last several years. The continuum of placements moving from least to most restrictive is maintained in the home, kinship care, foster care, proctor care, community/therapeutic placement, and secure lock down. In 2012, 1 of 339 youth in JJS were placed in a secure facility and 1 in 97 were placed in a community placement. In 2016 1 in 436 youth in JJS were placed in a secure facility and 1 in 110 were placed in community placements. The decrease in secure lockdown is consistent with JJS reform laws passed in the Utah 2017 legislative session seeking to emphasize early intervention and maintaining youth in their homes.

- Year to Year note FS 089: Many parents are coming to IEPs with the required documents for the classification of Autism at a younger age and students are moving from Developmental Delay to Autism at an earlier age.

- Year to Year note FS 089: Through Utah's SSIP we have been providing TA to LEAs regarding the importance of students having access to grade level content provided by content experts. In order to receive such instruction, students need to be placed in settings where content experts are accessible. To provide needed students with disabilities necessary intervention, support, and specially designed instruction to be successful in the general education courses, general educators and special educators are increasingly "coteaching." Utah has provided training to about 40 coteaching team each year and is increasing the number of students with disabilities receiving instruction in the general education class this way.

Virgin Islands

- Year to Year note: In September 2017, the United States Virgin Islands was greatly impacted by two Category 5 hurricanes, as a result, the Territories infrastructure including residential properties suffered severe damages. This resulted in a number of families as well as families of children with disabilities. As a result, the State's December 1, 2017 (SY 17–18) Child count data (e.g. disability categories and educational environments) resulted in a 7.5% overall decrease when compared to the December 1, 2016 Child Count data.

Virginia

- Year to Year note FS 089: VDOE continues to provide comprehensive and current technical assistance to LEAs to encourage services with the student's same age peers in the regular early childhood program (which saw an increase in placement counts).

Wisconsin

- Year to Year note FS 002: Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction implemented a new data system and have built in new business rules with data checks that alert districts to check and correct their data which leads to better data quality as we migrated to a new system. Additionally, Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction expanded the use of the Disability Category "Developmental Delay" up to age 9. Districts are able to use this category code longer which is increasing our numbers for this category.

West Virginia

- Year to Year note FS 002: A significant portion of the Residential Facility placements for students with disabilities is a result of WVDHHR and WV Court System placements in out of state facilities. These are non-educational placements based on individual students' need for specialized mental health treatment, incarceration, or for students who have been neglected or abused and no in-state

placements can be found. While the LEAs are expected to be a part of the multi-disciplinary team that meets to discuss the needs of these students, the decision to place students in residential facilities is ultimately made by a judge and educational needs are considered to be secondary to the students' treatment or safety needs.

- Year to Year note FS 089: The increasing number of students with autism spectrum disorder in West Virginia public schools has steadily increased one percent each year for the last three years, according to past and current West Virginia Child Count Data, including the students 3 -5 years of age too. The change to the DSM-5 diagnostic criteria and early detection to provide appropriate educational services and supports for young children (3–5) with autism is impacting the prevalence in the preschool population.