

PART B DISCIPLINE DATA NOTES

2016–17 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 or other changes that data users may find notable or of interest in the data from the previous year.

Arizona

- Year to year note FS 006 & FS088: Arizona is working to streamline one of our discipline data collections systems. During this process, which began in the 2016-2017 school year, Exceptional Student Services has put forth many efforts in getting public education agencies (PEAs) to submit accurate data into the appropriate systems in order to be reported to USED/OSEP. We believe this upward trend is due to many PEAs now reporting more accurately than in prior years.

District of Columbia

- Other health impairment count inconsistency between FS 143 Category Set A and FS 088 Category Set A: The data are accurate. There was a student with a primary disability of OHI who was disciplined by two different LEAs. Therefore, the sum of the LEA counts is not expected to total to the counts at the SEA.

Georgia

- Year to year note FS 007: Georgia reported 61 additional students in SY 2016-17 who were unilaterally removed to an interim alternative educational setting by School Personnel. In 2016-17, 77.2% of the removals were students with Specific Learning Disability and Other Health Impairment. Sixty-two percent (62%) were due to drugs, 38% due to weapons. In 2016, 75.1% of the removals were students with Specific Learning Disability and Other Health Impairment. Seventy-two percent (72.2%) were drug related and 27.8% were due to weapons. This represents an increase of only 14 removals due to drugs and 48 removals due to weapons. Sadly, this is a sign of the times in our state and our country. An analysis of the LEA data revealed that 6 LEAs accounted for 38 of the additional 61 students who were unilaterally removed. The increase in removals due to weapons is more widespread with 59 of the 207 LEAs reporting at least one removal due to weapons; our largest LEA reported 30 removals due to weapons, a large district reporting 10 and the remaining 57 LEAs reporting 7 or fewer. Georgia continues to address disciplinary issues with increased PBIS implementation across the state.

Guam

- Year to Year issue: This year the amount of disciplinary removals has increased for the total student population of Guam, non-SPED as well as SPED students. Guam schools have become more efficient in recording and referring student problem behaviors for disciplinary action. An increase on a smaller population, as on Guam, would result in higher percentages difference.

Idaho

- Year to year increase in the number of all disciplinary removals in FS 143: The large increase in the number of disciplinary issues is directly related to improved data processes and communication between Idaho's Division of Informational Technology (IT) and the Division of Special Education. In reviewing the code used to pull information for the C143 special attention was paid regarding dates of enrollment and eligibility for special education and related services increasing the overall number of students pulled in the report.

Indiana

- Year to year note FS 005, decrease in students transferred to regular education: Indiana made an effort to improve reporting on the exiting collection for 2016-17 in the belief that LEAs were over reporting students exiting transferring to a regular education program only. This result of this reporting are consistent with our expectations. (OMB Max)

- Year to year note FS 007: Indiana saw a change in amount from its largest school district (in terms of special education population) which accounted for this change. IAES procedures are under review in many school corporations in the state.

Kansas

- Year to year note FS 005: Kansas has confirmed the number of students removed to an interim alternative setting has dropped 21% from the prior school year. This drop in number and percent is a result of improved analysis of discipline data at the local level. Local LEAs have explained that disciplinary incidences reported to the SEA are being categorized more accurately and corrected if need prior to submission to the SEA level.

Kentucky

- Year to year note FS 005: From 2015-16 to 2016-17, Kentucky had an increase of 39 students who were unilaterally removed by school personnel due to drugs, weapons, or serious bodily injury, resulting in a 325% increase. We believe this is due to an increase in training and guidance regarding Interim Alternative Educational Settings (IAES).

- Year to year note FS 006: From 2015-16 to 2016-17, Kentucky had an increase of 199 students in special education who had removals more than 10 days, for a 21.49% increase. This was partly due to the increase in special education students across the state. Many of these removals were in-school removals, and we have noticed an increase in in-school removals across the state for all students. The Kentucky Department of Education is currently developing guidance around suspensions and expulsions (removals) as it relates to students with disabilities. We will release this guidance before the 2018-19 school year.

- Year to year note FS 007: From 2015-16 to 2016-17, Kentucky had an increase of 35 students in special education who were unilaterally removed by school personnel due to the possession of weapons, for an increase of 1066.67%. We believe this is due to increased guidance around IAES and how it is reported.

Massachusetts

- Massachusetts has added a third selection within gender (non-binary). Per PSC guidance we exclude these students from data rows that include gender within their criteria, and include these same students when gender is not part of the criteria. Massachusetts had a total of 47 students that used the non-binary selection, but it may cause a slight difference in some subgroups and subtotals.

Missouri

- Year to year note FS 005 & FS 007: Due to additional data verification on 2016-17 discipline data, the number of drug removals reported as unilateral removals dropped from the prior year.

North Dakota

- Year to year note FS 006, increase in student disciplinary removals for less than 10 days:

The FFY 2016-17 data indicates a total count of 562 disciplinary removals for students with disabilities from their educational placement for disciplinary purposes for less than 10 days. This represents nearly 25% increase over the FFY 2015-16 data. Districts and schools are continually dealing with increasing mental and behavioral health issues in their buildings. Strategies to address such issues show large variance in the interpretation of incidents and consequences for students between buildings, and between districts. As a result, there is a significant amount of contextual interpretations between buildings, and between districts – no one follows the same process as to whether something is actually harassment or bullying; consequences also vary from classroom teachers to principals.

North Dakota will continue to formulate and implement initiatives, professional development programs, and trainings focused on increasing awareness and meeting the mental/behavioral health needs of students. Also, schools are continually implementing safety strategies, behavior management and intervention practices, and providing resource support for school officers.

- Year to year note FS 088, increase in student disciplinary removals for 1 day or less and 2 through 10 days: The FFY 2016-17 data shows a total count of 187 disciplinary removals for disabilities from their educational placement for disciplinary purposes for 1 day or less than and 366 count of removals for 2 through 10 days. The data represent nearly 27% increase for 1 day or less and 23% for 2 through 10 days, compared to FFY 2015-16 data. Districts and schools are continually dealing with increasing mental and behavioral health issues and their buildings. Strategies to address such issues show large variance in the interpretation of incidents and consequences for students between buildings, and between districts. In addition, there is also a significant amount of contextual interpretations between buildings, and between districts – no one follows the same process as to whether something is actually harassment or bullying; consequences also vary from classroom teachers to principals.

North Dakota will continue to formulate and implement initiatives, professional development programs, and trainings focused on increasing awareness and meeting the mental/behavioral health needs of students. Also, schools are continually implementing safety strategies, behavior management and intervention practices, and providing resource support for school officers.

- Year to year note FS 143: The FFY 2016-17 data shows a total count of 567 disciplinary removals for students with all disability categories from their educational placement for disciplinary purposes. The data represent nearly 24% increase, compared to FFY 2015-16 data. A drill-down of the data shows significant increases in the count of disciplinary removal for students with Emotional Disturbance from (140 to 162), other Health Impairments (93 to 120), Specific Learning Disabilities (143 to 162), and students with Autism from 21 to 43 counts.

Districts and schools are continually dealing with increasing mental and behavioral health issues and their buildings. Strategies to address such issues show large variance in the interpretation of incidents and consequences for students between buildings, and between districts. In addition, there is also significant amount of contextual interpretations between buildings, and between districts – no one follows the same process as to whether something is actually harassment or bullying; consequences also vary from classroom teachers to principals.

North Dakota will continue to formulate and implement initiatives, professional development programs, and trainings focused on increasing awareness and meeting the mental/behavioral health needs of students. Also, schools are continually implementation safety strategies, behavior management and intervention practices, and providing resource support for school officers.

New Mexico

- Year to Year note FS 007: New Mexico had a 20% drop in the number of students being suspended or expelled due to weapons. Many districts have implemented behavior practices into their schools, which has an impact on the amount of disciplines.

Nevada

- Nevada moved to a new statewide student information system (SIS) and the 2016-2017 school year was the first year that Nevada collected discipline data using the new SIS. Also, one large urban school district had instituted a new initiative in which schools would offer alternative placement within the school to replace expulsions as behavior resolutions, and this new initiative was not coded to the state behavior codes for IAES which meant that the IAES resolutions were not reported to the state. The state has worked with the LEA to collect the IAES data and resubmitted the file.

Oklahoma

- Year to year note FS 006, FS 088 & FS 143: We suspect that the changes in reporting procedures are the major cause of the year-to-year changes in these data categories. These disparities and those in other data lines led Oklahoma to update its discipline reporting guidance and training content to improve data reporting. Our goal is that the data reported accurately reflect the nature of removals in the state.

Tennessee

- Year to Year note FS 007: In reviewing the year-to-year issue for the 2016-17 school year regarding file FS 007, Tennessee noted there was an overall increase in the count of students removed to the interim alternative educational settings. Some of this might have contributed to the increase in students removed due to incidents causing serious bodily injury. In reviewing district level data, it appears that there was an overall increase in the number of LEAs reporting information, particularly smaller LEAs. We have seen an increase in this category over the last several years, so it might be just a higher jump in an overall trend. In addition, the state has encouraged districts to be more specific about the disciplinary actions/infractions, which may lead to an increase in more specific categories as opposed to more umbrella categories the state has, such as "violation of school rules," etc.

Utah

- Year to Year note FS 006, FS 088 & FS 143: The Utah State Board of Education (USBE) has been concerned about the process local education agencies (LEAs) are using to report discipline data to the USBE. USBE has created a cross disciplinary team with membership from the special education, school counseling, youth in custody, preschool, information technology, data and statistics and student privacy section to address the concern.

The team has identified two specific areas that need to be addressed:

1. LEA Student Information System (SIS) data entry and information transfer. Many LEAs have appropriate discipline gathering data processes in place and thus have believed that their data has been transferred into the USBE UTREx system. However, the USBE recently determined that

the way LEA personnel are entering the data in certain SIS systems inhibits the system from transferring/uploading the data into the USBE UTREx. Thus, LEAs are “reporting” the data, but USBE is not receiving the report.

2. LEAs do not understand the need to enter this mandatory data in a timely and accurate manner.

The Incident Data Team is addressing these two issues by:

1. Upgrading the SIS system that USBE supports so that all information is entered completely and correctly and transfers seamlessly to the USBE UTREx system.
2. Providing LEAs with technical assistance and professional development to ensure all administrative (central office, principals, and assistant principals) and data (school registrars, data manager, and information technology) staff understand and follow the discipline data reporting requirements.

Virgin Islands

- Year to Year note FS 005, FS 006 & FS 007: The increase in total number of children with Disabilities with Out-of-School Suspensions/Expulsions Totaling >10 days for school year 2016-2017 when compared to the school year 2015-2016 can be attributed to the increase in the number of disciplinary removals (10%). As such there was an increase for the total number of children with Disabilities In-School Suspensions/Expulsions removed for drugs, and decreased in the number of children with disabilities removed for seriously bodily injury.

- Year to Year note FS088: The decrease in the total number of children with Disabilities with disciplinary Removals Totaling 1 Day or less, can attributed to levels of higher Tiered infractions. Thus, resulting in less children with disabilities with disciplinary Removals Totaling 1 day or less for school year 2016-2017 in comparison to the 2015-2016 school year.

Vermont

- FS 006 and FS 088: We believe that data quality has improved due in part to Vermont’s discipline team having made a concerted effort in the last 12 months to provide Technical Assistance to the field. Specifically, the Technical Assistance was geared towards appropriate use and reporting practices by clarifying the needs and definitions of this data collection. Vermont also attributes the decrease in suspension length to the PBIS (Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports) expanding into more schools over the last year. The program is geared towards systemic cultural improvement at the school level, acknowledging and reinforcing positive behaviors among students and appears to be related to a decrease in reported actions that require discipline.

- FS 143: Regarding the “No Category Codes”, as part of Technical Assistance plans that Vermont Discipline team will be providing, we are investigating this further and plan to clarify the appropriate use of this categorization going forward.

Washington

- Year to Year note FS 005, FS 006 & FS 007: During the 2016-17 school many additional discipline elements were added to the statewide student level data collection system due to new State Legislation. These changes will take time for LEAs to fully implement. It is expected that the data will continue to evolve over the next year or two as building level staff become more familiar with collecting these data.