

PART B PERSONNEL 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.

Alabama

- Year to year note FS 070 and FS112: The ALSDE provided guidance (Memo FY16-2063 and Memo FY16-2106) to local education agencies (LEAs) at the end of FFY 2015 and the beginning of FFY 2016. This guidance addressed ESSA changes in the use of the term “highly qualified teacher” and its elimination by June 30, 2018. Instead of highly qualified teachers, it was replaced with “teachers who meet applicable state certification and licensure requirements”. As a result of this shift in terms for LEAs, it has caused the LEAs (and state) to take a closer look at state certification and licensure documentation at the grade-level and subject area in which the teacher or paraprofessional has been assigned.

Alaska

- With the passage of the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) in December 2015, the definition for highly qualified teacher was eliminated from federal law. With this change, Alaska also eliminated the highly qualified language from its state regulations. The change resulted in a reliance on certification and endorsement area to make a highly qualified determination. The decrease in the number of not highly qualified Special Education teachers in 2016–17 is directly attributed to these changes.

American Samoa

- FS 070: There is a high turnover on the group of Special Education teachers. With the newly hired teachers, they are coming in with the minimal qualification of a two-year degree.

In the year of 2014 American Samoa Department of Education (ASDOE) started working on Teacher Certification Course Requirements that would later on become the basis of teachers becoming highly qualified. This continued on in the year of 2015. Full implementation of the qualification which are listed below did not fully come into effect until the year of 2016. (OMB Max and SSP)

Highly Qualified:

- Must have at least a B.Ed or Higher
- Have taken all certification courses:
 - ED 240 Instructional Technology

- ED 280 Introduction to Bilingual Education
- UH ED 310 OR ASCC ED 300
- UH ED 311 OR ASCC ED 301
- UH ED 312 OR ASCC 305
- Successfully complete PRAXIS 1

Arizona

- Year to year note FS 070: Arizona public education agencies shifted their focus to no longer require Highly Qualified as a standard for Special Education Teacher staff given the proposed changes to the IDEA as amended by ESSA. Those changes went into effect in June, 2017 and many public education agencies were aware of this when the regulations were first proposed in the 2016–2017 school year.

- Year to year note FS 099: Arizona is tracking this increase across the board and will review the trend of this specific related services personnel to what is reported this upcoming year. There is nothing to explain this anomaly at this time, and there were technical issues with this data collection.

Arkansas

- Year to year note FS 112: Arkansas requires all para-professionals; even those that meet Title 1 Requirements to complete additional training specific to working with students receiving special education and related services. If the additional training is not complete before December 1, the para-professional is considered not fully certified. With changes in staffing each year there is a number of para-professionals having to complete the additional training modules.

California

- Year to year note FS 070, decrease in special education teachers for ages 3–5: The CDE is conducting corrective action procedures with particular emphasis directed toward deficient LEAs with large decreases. The proposed California state budget has allocated additional funding to be used to alleviate the deficiencies.

Delaware

- Year to year note FS 070: The decrease in the number of highly qualified personnel from school year 2015–2016 to school year 2016–2017 is due to teachers retiring and from teachers changing to teaching in regular education.

Collection of highly qualified teacher data ended in the 2015–2016 school year. Thus, the increase of number of not highly qualified teachers is from new special education teachers being hired in 2016–2017 who did not take the HQT survey.

Florida

- Year to year note FS 070: The changes in these counts are attributed to methodological changes in the way the FTE were calculated. We believe that these changes provide a more accurate count.

- Year to year note FS 099: These data are not captured from the automated staff database. Therefore a web-based survey was developed to obtain these aggregate counts directly from the LEA staff. The IDEA office and the FDOE MIS staff work closely with the LEA during this survey to ensure the data are correct. These data reflect counts submitted during this survey.

Georgia

- Year to year note FS 070: Georgia reported 1,242 fewer highly qualified special education teachers in 2016–17 as compared to 2015-16, and 951.9 more not highly qualified teachers for the same years. The Georgia Department of Education works collaboratively with the Professional Standards Commission to report qualification status for special education teachers. The HiQ2 Portal that allowed LEAs to correct and update their teacher' Highly Qualified status information was not operational during the 2017 year as the state transitioned to the in-field system under State ESSA guidance. Special education teachers have always been one of the areas which is most in need of edits historically due to competing reporting requirements. Georgia is implementing the in-field requirements for Special Education teachers and fully expect reporting to reflect the qualification status of special education in the state.

- Year to year note FS 112: The Georgia Professional Standards Commission issues rules for licensure for para-professionals in Georgia's schools in compliance with Federal legislation. As enrollment of SWD in Georgia increases so does the need for more para-professionals in Georgia's schools and the challenge to find qualified individuals who meet the licensure requirements. Georgia's schools added 149.7 para-professionals to work with the increased numbers of children with disabilities. Georgia's school were fortunate to find an additional 53.6 licensed (qualified) para-professionals for children ages 6–21. Ninety-six (96.1) of the additional paras were not yet licensed. Ninety-eight percent (98%) of Georgia's para-professionals are qualified. Georgia's school districts are continually seeking qualified employees to provide services to children.

Idaho

- Year to year note FS 070, increase in special education teachers for ages 3–5: The large increase in the number of teachers 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 script used to pull information for the C070 report it was discovered that one of the main assignment codes used to document special education teachers providing instruction to ages 3–5 was not included. Including all appropriate assignment codes resulted in a substantial increase in the numbers of teachers listed for this age group.

Indiana

- Year to year note FS 070: Indiana saw a marked decrease in its number of qualified teachers in the special education preschool area. These positions appear to be replaced at a disproportionate rate by teachers who have not met the highly qualified status and are instead on emergency permits.

Maryland

- Year to year note FS 099, increase in counselors & rehabilitation counselors and medical/nursing staff:

The 90.1% increase (189.3 FTEs) in Maryland's Personnel count for counselors and rehabilitation counselors from the 2015-16 School Year (SY) to the 2016-17 SY reflect a local school system's increased focus on the provision of behavior and mental health services, meeting the challenges and needs of the student population. These data demonstrate an increase in the utilization of counselors and rehabilitation counselors to meet the related service needs of students with disabilities (SWD), ensuring the delivery of a Free and Appropriate Public Education (FAPE).

The 29.78% increase (57.68 FTEs) in Maryland's Personnel count for medical/nursing staff from the 2015-16 SY to the 2016-17 SY reflects better data and an increase in the need for related services as a result of the identified need for these related services for SWDs. This represents an increase in the medical/nursing staff data category submission. The increase occurred exclusively within the medical/nursing staff data category submission.

Maine

- Year to year note FS 112: the large year-to-year change for unqualified teachers occurred due to regulatory changes in qualification criteria.

Minnesota

- Year to year note FS 070: Increases in 'Not Highly Qualified' for special education teachers is due to an increase in the number of special education teachers employed in Minnesota as well as higher numbers of teachers reported by districts as not highly qualified in the state's Staff Automated Reporting (STAR) system. Examples for areas of increase falling under the not highly qualified category include limited license, variances, community experts, and non-renewable license.

Missouri

- Year to year note FS 070: The number of Not Highly Qualified Teachers dropped from the prior year due to ESSA. States no longer had to report on Highly Qualified Teacher status but had to report on Appropriately Certificated/Qualified status. A relatively small number of teachers in the state who were not considered Highly Qualified do meet Special Education certification requirements.

Montana

- Year to year note FS 070: The decrease in the number of Not highly qualified teachers being reported in FS070 was due to a change made in our Personnel reporting system that more accurately collected the qualification information for Special Education Teachers.

- Year to year note FS 099: The increase in the number of Medical/Nursing Service Staff reported in FS099 is due to changes in how districts were funding and reporting nursing staff.

Nevada

- Year to year note FS 070: The increase in the number of special education teachers working with students ages 6-21 who were not highly qualified is related to increases in student populations and significant special education teacher shortages in Nevada.

- Year to year note FS 099: The decrease in counselors and rehabilitation counselors is related to the increase in social workers. During 2016–2017, the state invested funding in providing social workers in Nevada's schools.

- Year to year note FS 112: The increase in the number of paraprofessionals working with students ages 6-21 who were not highly qualified is related to increases in student populations and significant special education teacher shortages in Nevada.

Oregon

- Significant change in QualStatus for both HQ (decrease) and NHQ (increase) is due to Oregon using a new source for this data. The new source calculates teacher licensure more accurately.

Puerto Rico

- Year to year note FS 070: During the past year, PRDE underwent a re-organization of schools to ensure consistent grade structure by school levels across the island (elementary, middle, and high schools). Under the new structure, PRDE facilitated for the Special Education Program to create new and more individualized environments for the students. As a result, more teachers (highly qualified and not highly qualified) were required for the ages 3 to 5. These new individualized environments created for the students, ensured that students were integrated with the regular students at the early stages. Therefore, an increase on the year to year analysis was reported for the highly qualified and not highly qualified categories.

Texas

- FS 070: Due to changes in ESSA regarding highly qualified teachers, data for 2016–17 were not collected in Texas.

- FS 112: The special education paraprofessional data are part of the highly qualified teacher data collection in Texas. Due to changes in ESSA requirements, highly qualified teacher data were not collected in Texas for 2016–17.

Utah

- Year to year note FS 099: The Utah State Legislature in collaboration with the Utah State Board of Education (USBE) and local education agencies (LEAs) have been putting an increased focus on improving the social/emotional health needs of Utah students. To better support students, Utah has made significant efforts to increase student access to related services who can provide mental health services to students, including School Counselors, School Psychologists and School Social Workers. Utah is actively working with institutes of higher education (IHEs) to increase the number of licensed professionals available to schools as well. Utah began reporting contractors in the personnel report in an effort to gather more accurate counts of the numbers of related services providing services and supports to students in LEAs. Occupational Therapists, Physical Therapists, and Therapeutic Recreation specialists as well as medical/nursing service personnel are professionals for which LEAs are contracting services. Some related services-type professionals are unwilling to work for LEAs because the salary schedule structure does not provide adequate compensation. These individuals are willing to contract with LEAs to increase their hourly compensation rate. In addition, many Utah LEAs (rural school districts and charter schools) are too small to need to hire a full time equivalent (FTE,) staff member, so they choose to contract for the small amount of service time each requires.

- Year to year note FS 112: Current Utah educator staffing trends indicate that Utah is losing significantly more teachers each year than we are gaining. In addition, there is a very high turnover rate of special education teachers in Utah, as teachers move into general education or leave the profession entirely. In the field of special education, fewer students are enrolling in institute of higher education (IHE) special education programs and thus fewer are graduating and available for local education agencies (LEAs) to hire. Utah has created programs for individuals who hold a Bachelors degree (in any field) to “re-specialize” and become licensed educators, including special educators. Historically, these programs have increased the number of educators available, but in the last couple years even re-specialization programs have not drawn enough interest to meet the demand for special education teachers. Thus, it has become increasing difficult for LEAs to even find people who are not fully qualified to fill open positions. The USBE is continuing efforts to increase the number of students enrolling in IHE special education programs and/or becoming licensed special educators, including providing tuition reimbursement for student enrolled in tradition and untraditional programs. The Utah State Legislature has also created a paraeducator to teacher tuition scholarship for students taking coursework toward a special education degree.

Virgin Islands

- Year to year note FS 099: The increase for the school year 2016–2017 in the number of full time equivalent(FTE) related services personnel specifically interpreters, occupational therapists, social workers and speech and language pathologist can be attributed to the Local Education Agencies efforts ensuring that they are meeting and improving the related service needs of children with disabilities ages 3 through 21.

- Year to year note FS 112: The increase for the school year 2016–2017 in the number of full time equivalent (FTE) highly qualified special education personnel employed or contracted to work with children with disabilities ages 3 through 5 is attributed to the Local Education Agencies efforts to increase the number of full time equivalent (FTE) employees specifically highly qualified special education personnel employed or contracted to provide services to children with disabilities ages 3 through 5 to ensure they meet the needs of all preschool school children receiving special education and related services.

The increase for the school year 2016–2017 in the number of full time equivalent(FTE) highly qualified special education personnel employed or contracted to work with children with disabilities ages 6 through 21 is attributed to the Local Education Agencies efforts to increase the number of full time equivalent(FTE) employees specifically highly qualified special education personnel employed or contracted to provide services to children with disabilities ages 6 through 21 to ensure that they meet the needs of all school-aged children receiving special education and related services.

For school year 2012/2013 and 2013-14 for FS 112 counts the number of qualified personnel for school year 2012/2013 was slightly higher, a number of personnel were inadvertently listed twice-some of

them served at two different buildings (during the same school year). Additionally, another contributing factor to the decrease in not qualified is due to the retirement of personnel.

Next the decrease in the number of personnel for file 112 not qualified can also be attributed to the fact that there were some retirements.

Washington

- Year to year note FS 099, Counselors/Rehab Counselors: After a review of the data it was determined the decrease was focused in a largely populated region (37% of special education population) of the state. It was determined the decrease was due to a regional grant ending.

Wisconsin

- Year to year note FS 070: The primary reason for the increase in high qualified staff reported is that WDPI has increased its technical assistance and oversight to districts to ensure that teachers participating in an alternate route meet all requirements specified under 34 CFR 330.156(c).

- FS 112: Personnel data for ages 3- 5 appears to be low due to positions and personnel assignment data that was not available for the last two years.

West Virginia

- WV has experienced difficulty over the last two years, 2015-16 & 2016–17 specifically, with confusion around the changes in the requirement language related to “Highly Qualified” and “Not Highly Qualified”. LEA special education directors interpreted the change in the language (Fully Certified/Not Fully Certified) as no longer being required to report this data within WV’s Special Collections Application for personnel. As a result, the WV Dept. of Education data programmers have updated the personnel collection’s application to reflect the new language and the Office of Special Education (OSE) has provided technical assistance to each LEA special education director and/or designee in assuring that all Personnel is reported as required within the state Special Collections Application. In addition, OSE’s Part B Data Manager has put a new system in place which involves follow-up during the submission window with each LEA special education director to ensure that every LEA submits their personnel data completely.