

# PART C EXITING 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

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- Year to Year note: We attribute the year to year increase seen in the use of exiting reasons “Not Eligible for Part B-Exit with No Referrals” and “Withdrawal by Parent” to be a result of our increased referral rate and Child Find activities which is identifying an increased number of children with mild delays. The children are either appropriately exiting at age 3 but do not meet the eligibility criteria for the LEA and require no further intervention (Not Eligible for Part B-Exit with No Referrals) or are exiting prior to age 3 because the team no longer has any developmental concerns for the child and further eligibility evaluations are not warranted (Withdrawal by Parent). In addition, the state continues to train Service Coordinators on the correct use of closure reasons. In the past, it was found that there was some misunderstanding when using “Withdrawal by Parent” and “No longer eligible for Part C prior to reaching age three”. We have increased awareness of the differences in the last 2 years and the results of that training are being seen in the data with a continued increase in the appropriate use of “Withdrawal by Parent.”

### Arkansas

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- There was an increase in the number of children who were no longer eligible for Part C prior to reaching age three. This increase was due to the fact that there was an increase in the number of children exiting Part C in Arkansas than last year.

There was an increase in the number of children not eligible for Part B, exiting with no referral. This increase was due to the fact that there was an increase in the number of children exiting along with the families not choosing to exit to other programs

### Arizona

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- Year to Year note: Arizona reported an increase in the number of children No longer eligible for Part C prior to reaching age three as a result of a 2016 policy change. ADES/AzEIP provided technical assistance to early intervention providers on implementing the policy change. This change requires that children made eligible based solely on informed clinical opinion have an eligibility review within one year. After one year, children who were initially made eligible based on informed clinical opinion and continued to have a significant developmental delay or now had established condition remained eligible for Part C

services. Children who showed substantial growth and no longer met Arizona's definition of developmental delay were exited. Since these children were no longer eligible for Part C, fewer children were referred to Part B. Arizona considers the policy change to have been effective because it reduced the number of children who were not likely to be eligible for services referred to Part B.

## Colorado

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- EI Colorado re-categorized child exit reasons in our state data system (Early Intervention (EI) Data System) on 11/29/2016. The system has the ability to capture detailed information regarding children receiving EI services and collects information from referral through exiting EI services. When a child exits Early Intervention, a user must select a reason why the child is exiting. The exit reasons used needed further delineation and clarification to align with exit reasons updated by the Office of Special Education Programs in September 2016.

- Exit Reason 1. *No longer eligible for Part C prior to reaching age three*, has been re-categorized as a sub-category within the EI Data System under the Exit Reason 9. *Withdrawal by parent (or guardian)*.
- The Exit data reported 10/23/2017 reflects this exit reason re-categorization and a total of 658 children exited with a sub-category exit reason 'No longer eligible for Part C prior to reaching age three', under the primary exit reason 'Withdrawal by Parent' as reported in 2016–2017 IDEA Part C Exiting. This accounts for the 102.26% change in 9. *Withdrawal by Parent (+/- 4%)*.
- The state data system has the capability of reporting 1. *No longer eligible for Part C prior to reaching age three* and 9. *Withdrawal by parent (or guardian)* independently and will accurately reflect these exit reasons for Year 2017-18.
- *Attempt to contact unsuccessful* – 135/383 There was a larger number of children referred by a primary physician in which a service coordinator's attempt to contact a parent or caregiver was unsuccessful.
- *Part B Eligibility not determined* – This exit reason was further clarified in September 2016. In a review of the difference of 168 year-to-year change, 100 children exited after transition age and attempts to contact were unsuccessful resulting in transition activities from Part C to Part B. Previously, these may have been captured within the category *Attempts to Contact Unsuccessful*.

## Connecticut

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- Year to Year note: Connecticut has seen an increase in the total number of children served which may be why the number and percent of children with eligibility for Part B not determined at exit has increased.

## Florida

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- While there were 27 fewer deaths last year than the previous year, a review of state data related to low birthweight, infant mortality and other risk factors does not show a downward trend to explain the decrease. Apart from review of data on these factors, there is no way to predict or control the number of infant/toddler deaths in the state. Staff will continue to review the trends.

## Georgia

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- Year to Year note: Georgia attributes the year to year change as follows;

- No longer eligible for Part C prior to reaching age 3: Georgia's eligibility requirements state that once a child is initially eligible for services, they can remain in the program until they turn 36 months. Additionally, the children can exit early if they meet their outcomes.
- Moved out of State: Regarding the year-to-year decrease in the number of children and families who have moved out of State, there may be many factors related to this measure that are outside the control or purview of the Part C program. For instance, the cost of living in Georgia may have caused the population to stabilize statewide.
- Withdrawal by parent (or guardian): Georgia's eligibility requirements state that once a child is initially eligible for services, they can remain in the program until they turn 36 months. Furthermore, the services are consistent, and the parents are pleased with the Babies Can't Wait providers.
- Attempts to Contact Unsuccessful: Georgia's Part C program is partnering with the Immunization program and using a location program called Georgia Registry of Immunizations Transactions and services to locate parents. Georgia also has a 24-hour voice message and a website that parents use to reconnect with districts to restart service.

## Idaho

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- Year to Year note, decrease in not eligible for Part B and exiting with no referrals: Idaho experienced an overall reduction in exits since last year, along with a contrasting increase in the absolute number of eligible children exiting Part C, and an increase in withdrawals by the parent. Although Idaho's service coordinators present the same referral options to parents of Part-B-ineligible children as they have for years, ultimately parents make the decision whether to accept the referral. The reductions in overall exits and in ineligible children, along with the increase in withdrawals have shifted the kind of needs and preferences of exiting participants who are not eligible. Parents are responding to that shift by declining the referrals that are offered.

## **Indiana**

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- Year to Year note: Training on Exit Skills continued through the 2017 for providers, which lends itself to the increase in children exiting prior to age 3 and part of the decrease in children exiting as not eligible for Part B. The emphasis on family engagement through 2017 would lead to the decrease in children being withdrawn from the program by the parent or guardian. For this time period, Indiana did see a slight increase from the previous year in referrals made from sources other than the family. This could be the root of the increase in attempts to contact the family were unsuccessful, as families may not be interested in the program and choose to not return or answer attempts to contact.

## **Kansas**

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- Year to Year note: Upon review of the Kansas Part C Exiting data for 2015–16 and 2016–17, a significant increase of 26.95%, in the category Not eligible for Part B exit with no referrals, was identified. Through a root cause analysis process, Kansas examined the Part C Exiting data for all 33 local EI programs, to identify programs with an increase in children being exited as not eligible for Part B with no referrals. It was determined that many programs experienced an increase in the category. Out of 33 local EI programs, 19 had an increase in the category, children exited as not eligible for Part B with no referrals, 9 programs had the same number as the year prior, and 5 had a decrease in children exited in this category. After analyzing the figures and communicating with local programs, Kansas has determined that referrals made by local programs are not being adequately captured in the data set.

## **Louisiana**

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- Year to Year note: Louisiana has had a trend upward in the numbers of children being served across several fiscal years. This has resulted in an increase in the numbers of children exiting when they turn 3 or do not qualify upon annual re-determination.

## **Maine**

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- Maine Part C Early Intervention implemented a new data system on July 1, 2016. The data system now requires service coordinators to enter an exit reason prior to the child's record being closed. The exit reasons built into the new data system are those in the federal regulations. Training and TA has been provided to service coordinators both at implementation and ongoing on what the reasons mean. Due to the required actions and validations built into the system, the data more accurately reflects the reasons of exit.

## **Massachusetts**

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- Year to Year note, reporting by Race/Ethnicity: The FFY15 to FFY16 year-to-year decrease in the percent of children under, "Not eligible for Part B, exit with no referrals" is due to additional clarification

in language under the state's Reason for Discharge. A category of "IFSP Goals Reached (as stated in IFSP)" was added over one year ago to the data collection instrument to make clear that a child was not in need of further special education services.

## Mississippi

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- Year to Year note: Several factors have played a part on why *not eligible for Part B exit with referrals to other programs* have decreased while *not eligible for Part B exit with no referrals* have increased: parents are declining other programs once the child is determined not eligible for Part B; Service Coordinators are not receiving notice in a timely manner that the child was not eligible for Part B and parents are declining Part C to contact other possible programs.

## Missouri

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- Year to Year note: Increases in Part C exiting numbers were seen in three categories, as well as overall. This is largely explained by increasing numbers of children served in the program over the past several years. More children entering the program means more children exiting the program. More specific information follows:

- No longer eligible for Part C prior to reaching age three: There has been an increase in the number of children with developmental delays for years leading up to this exit data, especially in physical and adaptive domains. Research shows these delays are often remedied when compared to cognitive, communication or social emotional. We believe the increase in this exit category is connected to this increase in eligibility reason.
- Not eligible for Part B exit with referrals to other programs: We revised the transition handbook last year to include additional early childhood options beyond just Part B/619 for children transitioning from Part C. We believe the increase in this exit category is connected to this new guidance and related training/technical assistance.
- Attempts to contact unsuccessful: We have noticed a continuing increase in children eligible for Medicaid, which is generally related to an increase in the number of families living at or below the poverty level. We believe the increase in this exit category is connected to this increase.

## Montana

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- Year to Year note: As identified in Montana's 2015–2016 exit data, Montana's contractors of the Part C of IDEA Program were incorrectly identifying exit reasons due to the data collection tool used. Following an update to the data collection tool; the development of data collection tool guidance; and increased monitoring, further drill-down into the data indicates both increased data quality for some contractors and gaps in the collection of quality exit data.

- Not eligible for Part B, exit with referrals to other programs: Two specific contractors, Quality Life Concepts and STEP, identified 49% and 56% increase in the number of toddlers exiting the

Part C of IDEA Program in their respective catchment areas meeting this exit data criteria. Analysis of the demographics of the two regions does not indicate dramatic changes in the number of infants and toddlers served or significant increases or decreases in population.

- Moved out of state: An overall reduction of the number of infants and toddlers enrolled in Montana's Part C Program moving out of state was noted for 5/7 regional contractors for 2016–2017. The remaining two regions reflect a significant decrease in the number of infants and toddlers exiting due to moves and are both in regions where changes in population occurred to (1) decrease in oil production and (2) shifting of personnel away from a military base.
- Attempts to contact unsuccessful: An overall reduction of the number of infants and toddlers enrolled in Montana's Part C Program for this exit category was noted for 6/7 regional contractors for 2016–2017. Only one contractor increased in this category, year over year, and the increase was minimal (+1). This data quality issue was identified in 2015–2016 and each regional contractor performed analysis and identified improvement strategies to decrease the number of infants and toddlers exiting the program due to unsuccessful attempts to connect with families. Early review of the data for 2016–2017 indicates the contractors were more successful in contacting and maintaining that contact to ensure Part C services and supports are provided to infants and toddlers with disabilities and their families across Montana.

## **Nebraska**

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- Year to Year note: The increase in children exiting Part C is attributed to increased Child Find and identification efforts. Nebraska has focused on its efforts in the Part C program, resulting in a significant year to year change that the state anticipates leveling out going forward.

## **Nevada**

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- Year to Year note: The year to year increases can be related to staff turnover and the subsequent training of these new staff.

## **North Dakota**

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- Year to Year note: In relation to the large decrease in the number of children not eligible for Part B & exiting with no referrals, North Dakota implemented an Opt-Out policy in 2014 and data analysis revealed that the children opting out of the Part B referral were incorrectly being placed into this category, rather than the Part B eligibility not determined category. Training took place to correct this. Regarding the large increase in the number of children whose Part B eligibility was not determined, North Dakota implemented an Opt-Out policy in 2014 and after conducting data analysis, discovered the children who had opted out were being placed in the wrong category. Additional training was provided so those children were correctly categorized under Part B eligibility not determined. Lastly, the decrease seen in the Moved out of State category, North Dakota is experiencing a less severe transient

population, now that the oil industry has stabilized. This is the primary reason for fewer children moving out of state in any given year.

## **Oklahoma**

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- Year to Year note, Not eligible for Part B exit with referrals to other programs: Improved data collection implemented during this timeframe allows Oklahoma's Data Managers to accurately track Part C referrals to the LEA through eligibility determination in Part B. The count of children not eligible for Part B dropped as a result.

## **Puerto Rico**

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- In general, the number of children exiting the Puerto Rico Early Intervention Program between July 1<sup>st</sup>, 2016 and June 30<sup>th</sup>, 2017 increased when compared to the previous federal fiscal year. Changes in all categories are observed, but a larger change is seen in the "Part B eligibility not determined" reason for exit. There were no changes in data collection methods or in reporting periods that may have had an impact in the numbers, though the State Office often performs monitoring activities to improve the quality of the data collected at the regional programs. We can conclude that the main reason for the larger change is that leadership at the local programs may have changed as a result of the administration change after the 2016 elections. New personnel may have not been familiar with the process of determining eligibility for Part B services of the children transitioning from Part C, and providing feedback to Part C service coordinators was not as consistent.

## **Rhode Island**

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- Year to Year note, reporting by Race/Ethnicity: For SFY17, Rhode Island experienced a significant decrease in children who discharged under the category of "Completion of IFSP Prior to Reaching Maximum Age for Part C" and a significant increase in those children who discharged under the category of "Withdrawal by parent (or guardian)." This correlated difference is due to providers using the wrong category when discharging children who have met IFSP outcomes prior to age three whose parents have declined an eligibility evaluation to re-determine eligibility. For these cases, providers used the category of "Withdrawal by parent (or guardian)" instead of "Completion of IFSP Prior to Reaching Maximum Age for Part C". Providers made the change due to an error in guidance provided by the state regarding which category to use on the state's Discharge Form. The error was discovered, and the state has a plan to fix the error. A new Discharge Form is under development to clarify the correct category along with a Technical Assistance plan for the new form's implementation.

The discharge category of "Not eligible for Part B exit with referrals to other programs" showed a significant decrease in the number of children designated to this category. The percentage of children in this category compared to the total enrollment is 5.9% in FFY16 and 4.6% in FFY17. The percentage of children in this category did not significantly decrease and the significant decrease in the number of children is directly related to RI's decrease in overall enrollment from FFY16 to FFY17.

## South Carolina

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- Year to Year note: Not eligible for Part B, exit with no referrals: In South Carolina, two state agencies provide Part C service coordination. Prior to FFY 2016, one state agency provided services from birth to six years of age; in FFY 2016, both state agencies expanded services to age 6. Without an additional year's data for comparison, one possible explanation for the year-to-year increase is that for families whose children continue with these agencies' services after exit from Part C, the service coordinator would likely not document the continuation as an exit from Part C with referral to other programs.

- Year to Year note, Part B eligibility not determined: In FFY 2016, South Carolina modified the Part C data system to capture families who refused the transition conference with the LEA. We believe the year-to-year increase reflects a failure on the part of service coordinators to capture the child's Part B eligibility when the transition conference has been declined.

## Tennessee

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- Year to Year note: Exiting category 3, children continuing in Part C, is not applicable to TN. As the significant changes crossed the majority of applicable exit reasons the Lead Agency reviewed overall exiting totals for these years. There was a 22% increase in children exiting between Year 1 and 2 (2014 and 2015) and an 18% increase between Year 2 and 3 (2015 and 2016).

Because of overall exiting increases, the Lead Agency also conducted a comparison with child count numbers (including cumulative child count), reviewing data for 2014, 2015, and 2016. TEIS has continued to experience positive growth in children served. There was a 14% increase with a 32% increase for cumulative count between Year 1 and 2 (2014 and 2015). For Year 2 and 3 (2015 and 2016), there was another 14% increase and an 18% increase in cumulative count.

The Lead Agency believes the significant changes flagged in its 2016–17 exiting data are due to increasing numbers of children served in TEIS and not attributable to specific exiting categories.

## Washington

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- Year to Year note: Overall, there has been an increase number of children receiving early intervention services in Washington State. Our cumulative count increased by 8% from the previous year.

#4 Not eligible for Part B exit with referrals to other programs/ #5 Not eligible for Part B exit with no referrals: Washington State Department of Early Learning's state-to-local coordination efforts have supported the increased partnerships in local communities between early learning programs. Our State funded preschool program that serves 3 and 4 year-olds did not have any expansion efforts for the fiscal year 16-17 which may have caused a decreased number of children being referred to other programs after leaving Part C than the previous fiscal year. In addition, there may have been other variables that may have contributed to the decreased number of children being referred to other programs after leaving Part C such as,



- An increase number of exiting children from families with higher income that would not qualify for state-funded or federally funded preschool programs
- An increase number of exiting children with less significant delays and do not need additional services.
- #6 Part B eligibility not determined: This increase is most likely due to the number of parents who did not give permission to initiate the eligibility process for Part B services. Another variable that may have resulted in the increased number was an increase in late referrals (referrals that were within 90 days of child's third birthday) from the previous fiscal year.

## **West Virginia**

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- Year to Year note: Teams were instructed to use "no longer eligible" only at annual eligibility determination. If families decide at any other point their child no longer needs services, teams are to use "Withdrawal by Parent".

## **Wyoming**

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- Year to Year note: 2015–16 / 2016–17 showed a decline in children "Not eligible for Part B exit with no referrals". These exits reduction was due to more children exiting with referrals to Part B or to other programs. Less exits for "moving out of state" due to improved economy.