

# **STATE PERFORMANCE PLAN / ANNUAL PERFORMANCE REPORT: PART B**

**for STATE FORMULA GRANT PROGRAMS under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act**

**For reporting on  
FFY 2020**

**Vermont**



**PART B DUE February 1, 2022**

**U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION  
WASHINGTON, DC 20202**

## Introduction

### Instructions

Provide sufficient detail to ensure that the Secretary and the public are informed of and understand the State's systems designed to drive improved results for students with disabilities and to ensure that the State Educational Agency (SEA) and Local Educational Agencies (LEAs) meet the requirements of IDEA Part B. This introduction must include descriptions of the State's General Supervision System, Technical Assistance System, Professional Development System, Stakeholder Involvement, and Reporting to the Public.

### Intro - Indicator Data

#### Executive Summary

Please see attachment entitled "VT SPPAPR FFY20 Introduction ES"

#### Additional information related to data collection and reporting

As part of a comprehensive and robust General Supervision System, our data inform the work of the VT AOE Special Education Team. The data contained in this SPP/APR were obtained through the following collection methods. Note that some indicators utilize data from more than one source, and are listed multiple times.

#### Formal Data Collections:

- DC#06/Fall Student Census (Indicators 1, 9, and 10)
- DC#04/End of Year Census (Indicators 1, and 4. Some indicator 3 inputs typically originate here, but data were waived for FFY2019.)
- Child Count (Indicators 1, 2, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, and 14. Some indicator 3 inputs typically originate here, but data were waived for FFY2019.)
- Child Count Exiting (Indicators 2, 7, and 14)

#### Surveys:

- Parent Involvement Survey (Indicator 8)
- Post-Secondary Outcomes Survey (Indicator 14)

#### Other Data Sources:

- Monitoring Cycle (Indicators 11, 12, 13)
- Assessment Extracts (Indicator 3)
- Dispute Records (Indicators 15, 16)

During FFY20, VT AOE was able to continue with data collections largely as planned, with reporting timeframes unaffected. Vermont's Child Count was amended slightly to allow LEAs to share with the VT AOE that timelines for re-evaluations were affected by school closures during the State of Emergency or parent reluctance to present children for assessment. Vermont observed that during the COVID-19 pandemic, rates of home study increased approximately 243% (163 students), while the total number of children aged 3-21 actively receiving special education and related services declined by approximately 3% (401 students).

There continues to be collaborative and interactive meetings among the VT AOE Special Education Team and members of Data, Finance, Legal, and other VT AOE areas to understand data sources, and analyze patterns and trends to determine unmet need, targeted technical assistance, need for policy and/or guidance, and improvement activities at the VT AOE and LEA levels. Examples of this work include the Data Quarterly meeting, the SPP/APR Weekly Work Sessions, Bi-Weekly Data Work Group, and the OSEP State Determination Task Force. All groups continued to meet without interruption during the pandemic.

#### Number of Districts in your State/Territory during reporting year

53

#### General Supervision System:

#### The systems that are in place to ensure that IDEA Part B requirements are met, e.g., monitoring, dispute resolution, etc.

Please see attachment entitled "VT SPPAPR FFY20 Introduction GSS"

All components of Vermont's General Supervision System have been developed according to the high standards set forth by OSEP to assess and ensure the effectiveness of efforts to educate children and students with disabilities [34 CFR §300.1(d)]. The VT AOE's General Supervision System reflects its commitment to providing leadership and oversight, to ensure all students have equitable access to educational opportunities. This system frames compliance and improvement conversations with LEAs, with the goal of ensuring that each and every student is receiving FAPE. The purpose of our system is to ensure LEAs appropriately implement the IDEA and Vermont Special Education Rules, and to improve outcomes for students with disabilities. Through our General Supervision System, we are accountable for the IDEA Part B grant implementation to OSEP. Our system is comprised of eight components that interface, intersect, and inform each other: integrated monitoring activities, state performance plan and improvement activities, fiscal, data, effective policies and procedures, targeted technical assistance, improvement/corrections/sanctions, and dispute resolutions. For example, integrated monitoring activities, which pulls together efforts in early childhood special education, school aged special education, and finance, are influenced by the state performance plan indicators, policy implementation, data on processes and results, effective dispute resolution, and improvement, corrections, incentives and sanctions. In turn, integrated monitoring informs fiscal management, targeted technical assistance, and corrections and sanctions. All components of the general supervision system "speak" to each other with the whole being greater than the sum of its parts. This system – a set of components working together as parts of an interconnecting network – is in place to ensure that IDEA Part B requirements are met. Across programs and Division, special education, finance, and dispute resolution issues a written finding when evidence, collected from the district during monitoring and/or on-site reviews (or through dispute resolution data system), indicates that federal or state statutes were violated either individually or systemically. In some cases, with the exception of Dispute Resolution, individual instances involving the same legal requirement may be grouped as one finding in an LEA, while in others it is more appropriate to make a finding for individual instances on noncompliance separately. Depending on the monitoring activity and the requirement under investigation, a finding can be identified through multiple components either as one finding or as multiple findings. Typically, across all areas of our General Supervision System, findings of noncompliance are made as soon as they are identified; however, regarding work specific to compliance indicators and noncompliance uncovered through technical assistance, the LEA may have the opportunity to correct prior to written notification as corrected findings. When VT AOE identifies noncompliance, we notify the LEA in writing of the noncompliance as soon as possible (generally, OSEP expects written findings to be issued less than three months from discovery [OSEP FAQ, Question 7]) after we concludes that LEA is noncompliant. Written notification includes the citation for the requirement(s) with which the program is noncompliant and a requirement that the LEA correct the noncompliance as soon as possible, and in no case more than one year after the date of the

notification Early Childhood Special Education (619 Coordinator) verifies the following to determine if correction of noncompliance has occurred as soon as possible but no later than one year from the written notification: Correction of each child specific instance of noncompliance, unless the child is no longer in the jurisdiction of the or LEA. We may review a sample of the records with noncompliance or each record (see OSEP FAQ, Question 14). For timeline requirements, we verify that the required actions (e.g., evaluation/assessment and initial IEP meeting, Part C to Part B transition- IEP in place by the child's third birthday transition plan, transition notice, transition conference) were completed although late (see OSEP Memo 09-02 – Prong 1). Subsequent data demonstrating the program is correctly implementing the requirement(s) where the program had noncompliance (i.e., 100% compliance) (see OSEP Memo 09-02 – Prong 2). Data may be from subsequent desk reviews, on-site monitoring, or a database. We maintain written documentation of the verification of correction. VT AOE has consistent processes and tools for documenting the verification of correction of noncompliance. For SPP/APR indicators, we report on the verification of correction of noncompliance with SPP/APR indicators to OSEP. We notify each LEA that correction of noncompliance has been verified. Verification of the correction of noncompliance occurs no later than one year from the date of the written notification of findings of noncompliance. A state may issue the notice of correction beyond the one-year timeline. Verification for programming compliance is conducted on documents uploaded by the LEA in a secure SharePoint folder (one folder is assigned to each LEA). The legal division has dedicated staff to track and monitor any corrective action ordered through due process decisions, including facilitated IEPs (if ordered) and through follow-up with LEAs if required through written state complaint decisions. Any orders to an LEA requiring corrective action are tracked with a finite timeline, usually 30, 60 or 90 days depending on the specifics of the order (i.e., reconvening the evaluation team, IEP team or providing technical assistance or requiring professional development for LEA staff. All staff supporting the General Supervision System meet monthly for updates and shared information and decision-making; data from the General Supervision system is reviewed by the same staff quarterly and reviewed for patterns, trends, and priority-setting. The focus on compliance with state and federal requirements comes with a concerted effort toward supporting districts in continuous improvement. Our targeted TA and universal resources are deployed in response to individual district needs and the trends we glean from the data review. Data also inform our policies and guidance to the field, as well as SPP/APR improvement activities. Our system description with more in-depth narrative on the eight components and how they intersect and our procedures for identifying and correcting noncompliance are documented in our Vermont General Supervision System manual: <https://education.vermont.gov/sites/aoe/files/documents/edu-vt-general-supervision-system-for-special-education.pdf>

#### **Technical Assistance System:**

#### **The mechanisms that the State has in place to ensure the timely delivery of high quality, evidenced based technical assistance and support to LEAs.**

In order to provide a more unified approach to technical assistance, monitoring and professional learning opportunities, VT AOE has developed cross-team and cross-division collaboratives. The cross-team and cross-division internal structure allows for better alignment and greater flexibility of professional learning and braided funding opportunities. VT AOE teams work together to develop a network of consultants with expertise in providing support to schools in implementing evidence-based practices, school-wide improvement models, and prevention models to improve instruction and learning for every student in Vermont. The VT AOE Special Education Team is an active part of the cross-team and cross-division collaboratives in order to ensure that technical assistance and professional learning provided in support of IDEA and state rules and regulations are aligned across state initiatives. These activities are designed to ensure access, opportunity, and equity with the goal of improving student outcomes. The VT AOE Special Education Team provides a range of professional development and technical assistance activities to LEAs, professionals, and families with the intention improving student outcomes and compliance with IDEA. Technical assistance and professional learning are provided by the special education program team staff at three levels of engagement:

Universal: Available to all LEAs, professional staff, and families. Universal TA is based on statewide priorities, posted on our website. Examples include:

- technical assistance email/phone options for providing regular and open communication between the special education team and LEA administrators, teachers, and parents (available 24 hours a day, seven days a week)
- referrals to Vermont's parent information center, Vermont Family Network (VFN)
- an online centralized bank of vetted resources (<https://education.vermont.gov/student-support/vermont-special-education/technical-assistance-requests-and-professional-development>) on topics such as SPP/APR indicators, special education implications for state laws, evidence-based practices in instruction and systemic supports.
- statewide guidelines and guidance documents, memos, and FAQs
- statewide conferences, webinars, online office hours, and
- the provision of professional development in early intervention and educational services through collaboration with the early education team.

All LEAs have access to VT AOE tools, products, webinars, and resources.

Targeted: Offered individually to LEAs based on the results of a targeted monitoring activity, performance on Local Special Education Determinations (LSED), participation in SSIP, or performance on other federal program requirements, which may require short or long-term engagement between LEA and the VT AOE Special Education Team to improve student outcomes. The specific nature of the technical assistance will depend on the urgency or severity of identified need but could include remote or in-person coaching, targeted workshops, webinars, and office hours.

Targeted support was required for districts who fell into the Needs Intervention category of the LSED and one additional district as part of their corrective action plan. These targeted TA topics included: IEP development and goal writing, post-secondary transition planning and support, co-teaching, data literacy implementation, improvement science strategies, and special education implications for VTmtss, Vermont's Education Quality Standards (EQS) and the Vermont Early Learning Standards (VELS). In these specific cases TA was provided by Program staff with the cross-team and cross-division collaboration utilizing some webinar and presentation formats, but typically through ongoing collaborative coaching relationships.

Targeted TA can also take the form of supporting districts on a specific topic through Cross State Learning Collaboratives. Targeted TA plans may be arranged with and LEA or group of LEAs to meet customized needs and often include these kinds of activities:

- In person or virtual presentations at regional or district-specific event(s)
- Developing events and meetings to further SSIP efforts
- Supporting survey development or other engagement efforts
- Finding, adapting, or developing resources to address areas of LEA need or general inquiry
- Short-term consultation related to SSIP planning, implementation, and evaluation
- Regularly scheduled check-in calls with SSIP participants

Intensive: Required for a small number of LEAs based on the results of noncompliance and/or performance issues supported by multiple data sources, often as a result of a targeted monitoring activity or the annual assignment of Needs Intervention/Needs Substantial Intervention status. Intensive TA may require sustained and in-depth engagement between LEA and VT AOE Special Education Team to improve student outcomes. These supports will be coordinated and/or delivered to the LEA by special education and extended special education staff members as part of a LEA improvement or corrective action plan. The specific nature of the intensive technical assistance will depend on the urgency or severity of identified need but could include remote or in-person coaching, targeted workshops, webinars, and office hours. Intensive TA plans are developed for LEAs that have the need and capacity to engage in an ongoing, deep systems transformation endeavor with VT AOE. This category of TA should result in changes to policy, program,

practice, or operations that support increased LEA capacity and/or improved outcomes at multiple systems levels. Any LEA with a Needs Intervention or Needs Substantial Intervention Determination from VT AOE is offered Intensive TA, which is customized for each LEA and described in a collaboratively developed Intensive TA Plan. Additionally the State may also engage in Intensive TA based on an intake process that includes collaboratively assessing with the LEA, their needs and readiness to engage in Intensive TA.

The VT AOE Early Childhood Special Education Team is comprised of special education specialists who also reside on the Early Education team and provide ongoing technical assistance and support throughout the state to all public and private early childhood programs.

Close collaboration between the VT AOE Special Education Team is common with multiple divisions and teams at VT AOE. Collaboration is not limited to the Finance and Data Divisions, but relationships have been developed with representatives of the other teams in the Student Support Division (Early Education, Multi-Tiered Systems of Support), the Federal Student Education Programs Division (Title funding staff members and Interagency Coordinator), the Education Quality Division (independent school coordinator, licensing and school improvement specialists), and the Student Pathways Division (general education staff).

The ongoing impacts of the global pandemic, COVID-19, continue to strain the educational system and the TA structures in place at VT AOE. LEAs, teachers, and parents utilize our Universal TA supports on a consistent basis from website analytics. The number and nature of questions collected through the email and phone line are still elevated and frequently require additional time a guidance to supply answers. The topics continue to shift as well with pandemic specific questions related to; an LEA's quarantine protocols and their impacts on students with disabilities, how to address student's needs given LEAs incredible lack of staffing, and increasing numbers of students engaging in disruptive behaviors; including but not limited to elopement, property destruction, aggression etc.

#### **Professional Development System:**

**The mechanisms the State has in place to ensure that service providers have the skills to effectively provide services that improve results for children with disabilities.**

The VT AOE Special Education Team considered a variety of data sources when determining the professional development components of a statewide TA/DPD plan for service providers across Vermont. In reviewing the data, the team identified patterns around shared needs from data collected by a variety of teams/divisions within the VT AOE. On an ongoing basis, the VT AOE Special Education Team reviews data and findings from integrated monitoring activities, field reviews and site visits; reflects on statewide feedback collected informally and through regional events like regional meetings with LEA Special Education Directors; evaluates technical assistance requests; and researches national trends in special education. Based on these data, the team outlines a plan for professional development and establishes a calendar of implementation and data-based decision making. Throughout the process, there is an emphasis on utilizing principles of implementation science with respect to program design and evaluation. In addition to the ongoing COVID-19 Guidance and statewide support, the Team offerings for this year included: Educational Benefit Training, statewide training on specific indicators (ex. Indicator 13), IEP Goal Writing, PBIS and Social Emotional Supports, a series on Supporting Paraeducators, Universal Resources Website Library, Targeted technical assistance for districts in Needs Intervention. Other examples of professional learning topics include: Multi-State Panels on topics such as Reopening in COVID-19, Restraint and Seclusion, and Disproportionality, Professional Learning Sessions on Discipline for students with disabilities, Inclusive Practices, Universal Design for Learning (UDL), Writing Effective State Performance Plans, Making and Implementing Participation and Accommodations Decisions for English Learners with Disabilities, Formative Assessment in Remote Learning, ESSA and WIOA Requirements: Alternate Assessments, and Inclusion of All Students, Requirements for Post-Secondary Transition, and Strategies and Practices in Providing Related Services to Enhance the Continuity of Learning During COVID-19. Further, the State Director implemented a Case Study Lunch group for special education directors, where the group convenes to review and discuss due process decisions and state complaints concerning COVID-19 and candidly deliberate on "what would you do" if your district was impacted by the topic. The VT AOE partnered with VTmtss team to provide intensive TA to districts, ranging from our largest district revising its system in response to monitoring findings to co-presenting on the intersectionality of MTSS and special education. The Special Education Team designed and is implementing a TA/DPD plan for addressing the July 1, 2022 rule changes, which includes Live Office Hours to address pre-recorded topics and related materials/resources. The VT AOE provides supports, leadership, oversight, and expertise for the VTPBIS Summer Institute in June and our VTPBIS Annual Forum in August.

As part of any general supervision system, it is key for the VT AOE staff to work closely with OSEP funded national Technical Assistance Providers to inform and improve practices and to receive feedback on guidance, tools, and materials prior to statewide dissemination.

As a result of working with NCSI, the VT AOE experienced:

- The team lead (Kat Pfannenstiel) meets with the SSIP coordinator and SSIP Core Teams to ensure there is targeted support for SSIP implementation.
- Monthly meetings with Monitoring manager, TA/DPD manager, and monitoring staff members to problem solve and provide resources.
- Targeted feedback on the Special Education General Supervision System Manual.
- RBAS collaborative bi-monthly meetings.
- EBP collaborative meets monthly around systems change, using evidence-based practices
- State Consultancy Calls (bi-monthly) VT AOE was one of first to share with other states when this started in August.
- SEAL/RBAS monthly virtual check-ins and problem solving about COVID-19.
- Consultation with Team on Strengthening Vermont's General Supervision System with Kat and Sara

As a result of working with CADRE, the VT AOE:

- Developed an action plan for engaging stakeholders and making the Written State Complaint System more accessible to families.
- Actively participated in the Written State Complaint System Intensive Work Group.
- Continued an internal Dispute Resolution Improvement Group.
- Implemented its Action Plan with CADRE guidance, which included revising the Administrative State Complaint form and developing an improved data system using a Salesforce platform.

As a result of working with CIFR, the VT AOE received and improved practices from:

- Training on IDEA fiscal communities of practice for State Director
- Consultation on the IDEA Part B ARP funding and application process
- Feedback on the Act 173 census funding model
- Timely and responsive answers to new special education finance staff.

As a result of working with IDC, the VT AOE improved its General Supervision System based on IDC supports as follows (not an exhaustive list)

- Mentoring staff new to significant disproportionality work through biweekly meeting (Tom/Sylvia)
- Modeled facilitation and coaching of LEA teams working on significant disproportionality (Tom/Sylvia)
- Presented IDC Success Gaps toolkit to Special Education Team (Sylvia)
- Cross-role Data Quality Peer Group meetings. with (Tamara, Jennifer) to support SSIP coordinators, writers
- Development of LSED processes using IDC Template with Sylvia and Terry
- Participated in and co-presented at IDC virtual conference April 2021

- Quarterly meetings with State Director on ensuring staff competence with data literacy (Silvia)
- Ongoing consultations on our data collection and data process documentation.
- Support on Child Count Data collections.
- Assistance in our work with Significant Disproportionate Trainings (CCEIS) provided to identified LEAs not meeting the threshold in the state; working with us to provide guidance that VT AOE staff will be able to utilize for years to come.
- SPP/APR Target setting
- Feedback on SPP/APR drafts

As a result of working with IRIS Center the VT AOE:

- Developed and implemented a virtual training experience (30 hours) for special education teachers on provisional licenses within the first 30 days of service.

As a result of working with Early Childhood Personnel Center (ECPC), the VT AOE:

- Accessed resources on leadership knowledge and skills for professional development.

As a result of working with National Center for Pyramid Model Innovations (NCPMI), the VT. AOE:

- Accessed resource library to provide Early MTSS resources for regular Universal PreK Coordinator calls and weekly PreK Café resource for the field.

As a result of working with CEEDAR, the VT AOE:

- Received some important tools CEEDAR developed around attract, recruit, and retain that will be utilized as VT AOE prioritizes addressing critical shortage areas in rural communities. Subsequently, Vermont has decided to become a CEEDAR state and is in early phases of planning a course of action for this statewide initiative involving multiple stakeholders.
- Formed a state leadership team to address recruitment and retention needs and now have a state plan as the newest CEEDAR state.

#### **Broad Stakeholder Input:**

#### **The mechanisms for soliciting broad stakeholder input on the State's targets in the SPP/APR and any subsequent revisions that the State has made to those targets, and the development and implementation of Indicator 17, the State's Systemic Improvement Plan (SSIP).**

VT AOE solicited broad stakeholder input on the State's targets in the SPP/APR from January 2021 until December 2021. The VT AOE Special Education team began meeting with the Special Education Advisory Panel in January 2021 to discuss the changes to the SPP/APR FFY20-25 package, changes to data sources and indicator calculation, indicator targets and improvement activities. Along with collaboration with the Special Education Advisory Panel, VT AOE Special Education team solicited input from the Vermont's Parent Support Center (Vermont Family Network) and the Vermont Council of Special Education Administrators Executive. Beyond target input from these groups, the VT AOE Special education team also created a public webpage in which community partners and interested parties can access resources regarding the SPP/APR, information on the target setting process and electronic and mail-in forms to provide input on the State's targets in the SPP/APR. The public webpage regarding the SPP/APR Target Setting can be found at <https://education.vermont.gov/student-support/vermont-special-education/recent-guidance-news-and-events/target-setting-for-the-spp-apr>

Vermont prefers to use the terms "community partners" or "interested parties" rather than stakeholders. With that said, we continue to make progress towards our goal of Improved outcomes in utilizing feedback and input, which will lead to better products reflective of representative community partner input, and an increased understanding of how the SPP/APR grounds the work of the State. During 2021, key community partner input was obtained through the engaging the Vermont Special Education Advisory Panel (VT-SEAP) and the Vermont Council of Special Education Administrators Executive Board; as well as through check-in sessions hosted by the State Director of Special Education designed for dialogue and technical assistance with Special Education Administrators throughout the state.

Since they were approved in May of 2021, the State has been developing and executing an implementation and training plan for changes to the Special Education Rules scheduled to take effect July 1, 2022. The initial training plan, and subsequent amendments, have been designed based on ongoing feedback from our community partners, in particular our special education administrators and the Vermont Family Network. The State convened two round table meetings with representation from the Vermont Family Network, the Special Education Advisory Panel, the Vermont Association of School Psychologists, and the Vermont Council of Special Education Administrators, Representatives from these organizations also provided direct feedback on each resource package released in response to the rule changes.

Community Partners -the groups named above along with staff from institutes of higher education, an external evaluator, special education directors and leadership from all participating SSIP LEAs - have consistent opportunities to provide input, suggestions, and insight on the implementation of the SSIP. Targeted engagement includes sharing and engaging in discussion about the annual SSIP report, comment and suggestions on direction of SSIP implementation, evaluation and tool development, data analysis, root cause analysis; sharing problems of practice, challenges and successes of implementation efforts; target setting, State Identified Measurable Result (SiMR) setting and scale-up opportunities.

VT AOE staff serving as individual Indicator Stewards worked with community partners to examine trends, make comparison to targets, and engage in root causes analyses in order to promote the benefits of using the SPP/APR as a tool for understanding compliance needs and prioritizing continuous improvement. This primarily occurred through the Local Special Education Determinations process – while providing TA, indicator stewards were able to receive feedback on the target set for the indicator in comparison to individual LEA performance. The State Director also worked with the VT-SEAP to review indicator performance after the February 1, 2021 SPP/APR submission. A plan has already been formulated for a busy 2021 calendar year for establishing new rigorous targets based on Vermont trend data.

Additionally, VT AOE has also utilized parent focus groups to provide input and feedback on work related to the indicators, which ultimately reflect on how we will revise targets. An example of engaging stakeholders is the collaboration with VT-SEAP, VCSEA, VFN, and an independent parent focus group all of whom provided feedback on the administrative complaint process and strategies for ensuring VT AOE has timely responses, and user-friendly tools and procedures for Dispute Resolution. These stakeholders provided great insight into the parent engagement survey/response rates/targets (indicator 8), the SSIP work (Indicator 17) and our data collection for Indicators 11, 12, and 13 (through our state monitoring system).

The Special Education Team met with the VT-SEAP on their report identifying unmet needs of students with disabilities and incorporated recommendations as part of the rule changes work. The State Director reports out on progress at VT-SEAP meetings.

For target setting, a public webpage was developed and promoted so parents from local and statewide advocacy and advisory committees and individual parents can engage in setting targets, analyzing data, developing, and recommending improvement strategies and evaluating progress. The target setting webpage can be found at <https://education.vermont.gov/student-support/vermont-special-education/recent-guidance-news-and-events/target-setting-for-the-spp-apr>, which includes a link to the webpage that houses Vermont's SPP/APR reports, which can be found at <https://education.vermont.gov/data-and-reporting/school-reports/special-education-reports>

## **Apply stakeholder involvement from introduction to all Part B results indicators (y/n)**

YES

### **Number of Parent Members:**

20

### **Parent Members Engagement:**

#### **Describe how the parent members of the State Advisory Panel, parent center staff, parents from local and statewide advocacy and advisory committees, and individual parents were engaged in setting targets, analyzing data, developing improvement strategies, and evaluating progress.**

Parent Members of the State Advisory Panel engaged with other Panel members and AOE staff in looking at current and historical data related to the SPP/APR. This elicited the request for additional data sources and spurred recommendations from the Panel on areas of unmet need and suggestions for improvement efforts. AOE staff who were experts in data and who represented the indicator being presented attended monthly meetings with the Panel to ensure they were confident with the task at hand. The Panel has been instrumental in advising on changes to instruments and methodologies. Parent Center Staff, are part of the State Advisory panel. Additionally, members of the Vermont Family Network meet quarterly with the State Director to discuss concerns and needs of families and identify ways the VFN can partner and collaborate with the AOE on statewide initiatives. As appropriate, data sources are used to ground the conversation.

For target setting, a public webpage was developed and promoted so parents from local and statewide advocacy and advisory committees and individual parents can engage in setting targets, analyzing data, developing, and recommending improvement strategies and evaluating progress. The target setting webpage can be found at <https://education.vermont.gov/student-support/vermont-special-education/recent-guidance-news-and-events/target-setting-for-the-spp-apr>, which includes a link to the webpage that houses Vermont's SPP/APR reports, which can be found at <https://education.vermont.gov/data-and-reporting/school-reports/special-education-reports>

#### **Activities to Improve Outcomes for Children with Disabilities:**

##### **The activities conducted to increase the capacity of diverse groups of parents to support the development of implementation activities designed to improve outcomes for children with disabilities.**

The Special Education Advisory Panel has a membership committee dedicated to maintaining 51% parent membership and is recruiting for diversity. As an incentive to participate, parents receive a \$50 stipend per meeting, including subcommittee meetings. The AOE supports membership recruitment through advertisements in its Weekly Field Memo and a monthly communication called The Nuggets. The Panel receives annual training on its role, mission, vision, and data literacy through WestEd and was featured on a national webinar in September 2021. The Panel is effective in identifying needs to improve their capacity to serve as AOE advisors and has a budget to draw from. In order to accommodate individuals who cannot access technology during virtual meeting sessions, members or AOE staff physically open a meeting room with technology during virtual meetings. The Panel has moved to night-time meetings to better accommodate parents. It is anticipated that the annual training retreat will occur full day and in person in 2022.

The AOE staff routinely partner with the Vermont Family Network to offer training and information sessions with families or with school staff concerning the needs of families. The AOE recently contracted with VFN to develop training materials for new special educators on how to support and build capacity with parents and families.

#### **Soliciting Public Input:**

##### **The mechanisms and timelines for soliciting public input for setting targets, analyzing data, developing improvement strategies, and evaluating progress.**

Beginning in January 2021, the Special Education Advisory Panel (SEAP) received an introduction to SPP/APR using FFY 2019 data, February 2021 changes to the SPP/APR FFY20-25 package, data sources and calculations. VT AOE continued monthly meetings with the SEAP to review specific indicator data, disaggregated data, data source and measurement of the indicator, improvement activities and long-term considerations for evaluating indicator progress. VT AOE provided information, resources along with direct links to SPP/APR target setting webpage, SPP/APR reports, and data request form for further data needs. The SEAP not only contemplated targets but began making recommendation on improvement activities from their representative perspectives. The SEAP unanimously approved their recommendations on November 17, 2021 and submitted to the AOE.

For the Vermont Council of Special Education Administrators, the VT AOE presented on June 2021 regarding the target setting process and provided information and resources along with direct links to the SPP/APR target setting webpage. VT AOE subsequently reached out for further input from VCSEA and the Executive Director. On December 21, 2021 the Executive Director of VCSEA accepting of the targets for the SPP/APR FFY20-25 package.

For the Vermont Family Network, the VT AOE began soliciting feedback and provided information and resources along with direct links to the SPP/APR target setting webpage. The VFN is represented on the Special Education Advisory Panel and on December 2, 2021 agreed with the recommendations put forth by SEAP.

The AOE Team evaluated progress each month with the SPP/APR and data indicator report out to the Special Education Team. Progress was also monitored as part of the Biweekly Data Team meeting. AOE leadership was consulted at the beginning and at the end of the project.

#### **Making Results Available to the Public:**

##### **The mechanisms and timelines for making the results of the target setting, data analysis, development of the improvement strategies, and evaluation available to the public.**

The opportunity for public input closed November 15, 2021 after ten months of target setting activities.

VT AOE analyzed all community partner input and review with internal staff, then made recommendations to the Secretary and Deputy Secretary of Education. Proposed targets were agreed upon, which were shared at an internal team meeting. Proposed targets were shared with special education directors, VCSEA, VFN and SEAP for final comments.. The final targets were presented as part of LEA Directors' Bi-weekly Check-In January 2022 and sent to SEAP, VCSEA, and VFN in January 2022.

A memo from the Secretary of Education describing the background of the SPP/APR, the target setting process and the targets for results and compliance indicators can be found at <https://education.vermont.gov/documents/memo-french-spp-arpr-indicator-targets>.

Final Indicator targets for the FFY20-25 package are publicly posted at <https://education.vermont.gov/student-support/vermont-special-education/compliance-and-monitoring/apr-indicator-list-and-descriptions>.

Improvement activities for each Indicator will be articulated throughout the 2022 Calendar Year through frequent SPP/APR meetings among AOE staff.

## **Reporting to the Public**

**How and where the State reported to the public on the FFY 2019 performance of each LEA located in the State on the targets in the SPP/APR as soon as practicable, but no later than 120 days following the State's submission of its FFY 2019 APR, as required by 34 CFR §300.602(b)(1)(i)(A); and a description of where, on its Web site, a complete copy of the State's SPP/APR, including any revision if the State has revised the targets that it submitted with its FFY 2019 APR in 2021, is available.**

Vermont LEA SPP/APR reports are located here under Local Annual Performance Reports: <https://education.vermont.gov/data-and-reporting/school-reports/special-education-reports>

## **Intro - Prior FFY Required Actions**

None

## **Intro - OSEP Response**

## **Intro - Required Actions**

The State's IDEA Part B determination for both 2021 and 2022 is Needs Assistance. In the State's 2022 determination letter, the Department advised the State of available sources of technical assistance, including OSEP-funded technical assistance centers, and required the State to work with appropriate entities. The Department directed the State to determine the results elements and/or compliance indicators, and improvement strategies, on which it will focus its use of available technical assistance, in order to improve its performance. The State must report, with its FFY 2021 SPP/APR submission, due February 1, 2023, on: (1) the technical assistance sources from which the State received assistance; and (2) the actions the State took as a result of that technical assistance.

# Indicator 1: Graduation

## Instructions and Measurement

**Monitoring Priority:** FAPE in the LRE

**Results indicator:** Percent of youth with Individualized Education Programs (IEPs) exiting special education due to graduating with a regular high school diploma. (20 U.S.C. 1416 (a)(3)(A))

### Data Source

Same data as used for reporting to the Department under section 618 of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), using the definitions in EDFacts file specification FS009.

### Measurement

States must report a percentage using the number of youth with IEPs (ages 14-21) who exited special education due to graduating with a regular high school diploma in the numerator and the number of all youth with IEPs who exited high school (ages 14-21) in the denominator.

### Instructions

*Sampling is not allowed.*

Data for this indicator are "lag" data. Describe the results of the State's examination of the data for the year before the reporting year (e.g., for the FFY 2020 SPP/APR, use data from 2019-2020), and compare the results to the target. Provide the actual numbers used in the calculation.

Include in the denominator the following exiting categories: (a) graduated with a regular high school diploma; (b) graduated with a state-defined alternate diploma; (c) received a certificate; (d) reached maximum age; or (e) dropped out.

Do not include in the denominator the number of youths with IEPs who exited special education due to: (a) transferring to regular education; or (b) who moved but are known to be continuing in an educational program.

Provide a narrative that describes the conditions youth must meet in order to graduate with a regular high school diploma. If the conditions that youth with IEPs must meet in order to graduate with a regular high school diploma are different, please explain.

## 1 - Indicator Data

### Historical Data

Baseline Year	Baseline Data
2020	77.73%

FFY	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019
Target >=	86.00%	86.00%	86.00%	86.00%	86.00%
Data	79.85%	80.77%	82.14%	79.88%	82.91%

### Targets

FFY	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025
Target >=	77.00%	77.00%	79.00%	81.00%	83.00%	85.00%

### Targets: Description of Stakeholder Input

VT AOE solicited broad stakeholder input on the State's targets in the SPP/APR from January 2021 until December 2021. The VT AOE Special Education team began meeting with the Special Education Advisory Panel in January 2021 to discuss the changes to the SPP/APR FFY20-25 package, changes to data sources and indicator calculation, indicator targets and improvement activities. Along with collaboration with the Special Education Advisory Panel, VT AOE Special Education team solicited input from the Vermont's Parent Support Center (Vermont Family Network) and the Vermont Council of Special Education Administrators Executive. Beyond target input from these groups, the VT AOE Special education team also created a public webpage in which community partners and interested parties can access resources regarding the SPP/APR, information on the target setting process and electronic and mail-in forms to provide input on the State's targets in the SPP/APR. The public webpage regarding the SPP/APR Target Setting can be found at <https://education.vermont.gov/student-support/vermont-special-education/recent-guidance-news-and-events/target-setting-for-the-spp-apr>

Vermont prefers to use the terms "community partners" or "interested parties" rather than stakeholders. With that said, we continue to make progress towards our goal of Improved outcomes in utilizing feedback and input, which will lead to better products reflective of representative community partner input, and an increased understanding of how the SPP/APR grounds the work of the State. During 2021, key community partner input was obtained through the engaging the Vermont Special Education Advisory Panel (VT-SEAP) and the Vermont Council of Special Education Administrators Executive Board; as well as through check-in sessions hosted by the State Director of Special Education designed for dialogue and technical assistance with Special Education Administrators throughout the state.

Since they were approved in May of 2021, the State has been developing and executing an implementation and training plan for changes to the Special Education Rules scheduled to take effect July 1, 2022. The initial training plan, and subsequent amendments, have been designed based on ongoing feedback from our community partners, in particular our special education administrators and the Vermont Family Network. The State convened two round table meetings with representation from the Vermont Family Network, the Special Education Advisory Panel, the Vermont Association of School Psychologists, and the Vermont Council of Special Education Administrators. Representatives from these organizations also provided direct feedback on each resource package released in response to the rule changes.

Community Partners -the groups named above along with staff from institutes of higher education, an external evaluator, special education directors and leadership from all participating SSIP LEAs - have consistent opportunities to provide input, suggestions, and insight on the implementation of the SSIP. Targeted engagement includes sharing and engaging in discussion about the annual SSIP report, comment and suggestions on direction of SSIP implementation, evaluation and tool development, data analysis, root cause analysis; sharing problems of practice, challenges and successes of



implementation efforts; target setting, State Identified Measurable Result (SiMR) setting and scale-up opportunities.

VT AOE staff serving as individual Indicator Stewards worked with community partners to examine trends, make comparison to targets, and engage in root causes analyses in order to promote the benefits of using the SPP/APR as a tool for understanding compliance needs and prioritizing continuous improvement. This primarily occurred through the Local Special Education Determinations process – while providing TA, indicator stewards were able to receive feedback on the target set for the indicator in comparison to individual LEA performance. The State Director also worked with the VT-SEAP to review indicator performance after the February 1, 2021 SPP/APR submission. A plan has already been formulated for a busy 2021 calendar year for establishing new rigorous targets based on Vermont trend data.

Additionally, VT AOE has also utilized parent focus groups to provide input and feedback on work related to the indicators, which ultimately reflect on how we will revise targets. An example of engaging stakeholders is the collaboration with VT-SEAP, VCSEA, VFN, and an independent parent focus group all of whom provided feedback on the administrative complaint process and strategies for ensuring VT AOE has timely responses, and user-friendly tools and procedures for Dispute Resolution. These stakeholders provided great insight into the parent engagement survey/response rates/targets (indicator 8), the SSIP work (Indicator 17) and our data collection for Indicators 11, 12, and 13 (through our state monitoring system).

The Special Education Team met with the VT-SEAP on their report identifying unmet needs of students with disabilities and incorporated recommendations as part of the rule changes work. The State Director reports out on progress at VT-SEAP meetings.

For target setting, a public webpage was developed and promoted so parents from local and statewide advocacy and advisory committees and individual parents can engage in setting targets, analyzing data, developing, and recommending improvement strategies and evaluating progress. The target setting webpage can be found at <https://education.vermont.gov/student-support/vermont-special-education/recent-guidance-news-and-events/target-setting-for-the-spp-apr>, which includes a link to the webpage that houses Vermont’s SPP/APR reports, which can be found at <https://education.vermont.gov/data-and-reporting/school-reports/special-education-reports>

**Prepopulated Data**

Source	Date	Description	Data
SY 2019-20 Exiting Data Groups (EDFacts file spec FS009; Data Group 85)	05/26/2021	Number of youth with IEPs (ages 14-21) who exited special education by graduating with a regular high school diploma (a)	555
SY 2019-20 Exiting Data Groups (EDFacts file spec FS009; Data Group 85)	05/26/2021	Number of youth with IEPs (ages 14-21) who exited special education by graduating with a state-defined alternate diploma (b)	0
SY 2019-20 Exiting Data Groups (EDFacts file spec FS009; Data Group 85)	05/26/2021	Number of youth with IEPs (ages 14-21) who exited special education by receiving a certificate (c)	8
SY 2019-20 Exiting Data Groups (EDFacts file spec FS009; Data Group 85)	05/26/2021	Number of youth with IEPs (ages 14-21) who exited special education by reaching maximum age (d)	6
SY 2019-20 Exiting Data Groups (EDFacts file spec FS009; Data Group 85)	05/26/2021	Number of youth with IEPs (ages 14-21) who exited special education due to dropping out (e)	145

**FFY 2020 SPP/APR Data**

Number of youth with IEPs (ages 14-21) who exited special education due to graduating with a regular high school diploma	Number of all youth with IEPs who exited special education (ages 14-21)	FFY 2019 Data	FFY 2020 Target	FFY 2020 Data	Status	Slippage
555	714	82.91%	77.00%	77.73%	N/A	N/A

**Graduation Conditions**

**Provide a narrative that describes the conditions youth must meet in order to graduate with a regular high school diploma.**

In Vermont, each high school has their local graduation requirements. In situations where a student’s disability is impacting their access to the graduation requirements, IEP teams have the flexibility to improve how that student accesses the proficiency based graduation requirements. This allows for some modifications of the performance indicators – that is, how the student will showcase they have met the proficiency based graduation requirements. This system was developed with key VT education experts as well as NTACTION and some other OSEP designated TA providers. For more information on the PBGR Access Plan system please visit: <https://education.vermont.gov/sites/aoe/files/documents/edu-proficiency-based-graduation-requirements-pbgr-access-plan.pdf>

**Are the conditions that youth with IEPs must meet to graduate with a regular high school diploma different from the conditions noted above? (yes/no)**

NO

**Provide additional information about this indicator (optional)**

The COVID-19 pandemic has had a significant impact on high school graduates accessing higher education and employment however Vermont achieved an increased high school graduation rate for students with disabilities despite the COVID-19 pandemic. Vermont LEAs have been working incredibly hard to ensure access to high quality specialized instruction and access to the general education curriculum for students with disabilities.

VT AOE created the Proficiency-Based Graduation Requirements (PBGR) – Access Plan in order to help LEAs make the graduation requirements accessible for all students including those with intensive needs. The PGBR-Access Plan can be found at <https://education.vermont.gov/documents/edu-proficiency-based-graduation-requirements-pbgr-access-plan> .

VT AOE provided guidance around participation in graduation ceremonies for students who have extended education access due to their disability on July 31, 2020, it can be found at <https://education.vermont.gov/documents/participation-in-graduation-activities-for-students-eligible-for-special-education>.

VT AOE maintains and updates a webpage for resources related to graduation for special education administrators and educators which can be found at: <https://education.vermont.gov/student-support/vermont-special-education/technical-assistance-requests-and-professional-development/state-performance-plan-resources-by-indicator#indicator-1>

### **1 - Prior FFY Required Actions**

None

### **1 - OSEP Response**

The State has revised the baseline for this indicator, using data from FFY 2020, and OSEP accepts that revision.

The State provided targets for FFYs 2020 through 2025 for this indicator, and OSEP accepts those targets.

### **1 - Required Actions**

## Indicator 2: Drop Out

### Instructions and Measurement

**Monitoring Priority:** FAPE in the LRE

**Results indicator:** Percent of youth with IEPs who exited special education due to dropping out. (20 U.S.C. 1416 (a)(3)(A))

#### Data Source

OPTION 1:

Same data as used for reporting to the Department under section 618 of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), using the definitions in EDFacts file specification FS009.

OPTION 2 (For FFY 2020 ONLY):

Use same data source and measurement that the State used to report in its FFY 2010 SPP/APR that was submitted on February 1, 2012.

#### Measurement

OPTION 1:

States must report a percentage using the number of youth with IEPs (ages 14-21) who exited special education due to dropping out in the numerator and the number of all youth with IEPs who exited special education (ages 14-21) in the denominator.

OPTION 2 (For FFY 2020 ONLY):

Use same data source and measurement that the State used to report in its FFY 2010 SPP/APR that was submitted on February 1, 2012.

#### Instructions

*Sampling is not allowed.*

Data for this indicator are "lag" data. Describe the results of the State's examination of the data for the year before the reporting year (e.g., for the FFY 2020 SPP/APR, use data from 2019-2020), and compare the results to the target.

With the FFY 2020 SPP/APR, due February 1, 2022, States may use either option 1 or 2. States using Option 2 must provide the actual numbers used in the calculation.

OPTION 1:

**Use 618 exiting data** for the year before the reporting year (e.g., for the FFY 2020 SPP/APR, use data from 2019-2020). Include in the denominator the following exiting categories: (a) graduated with a regular high school diploma; (b) graduated with a state-defined alternate diploma; (c) received a certificate; (d) reached maximum age; or (e) dropped out.

Do not include in the denominator the number of youths with IEPs who exited special education due to: (a) transferring to regular education; or (b) who moved, but are known to be continuing in an educational program.

OPTION 2:

Use the annual event school dropout rate for students leaving a school in a single year determined in accordance with the National Center for Education Statistic's Common Core of Data.

If the State has made or proposes to make changes to the data source or measurement under Option 2, when compared to the information reported in its FFY 2010 SPP/APR submitted on February 1, 2012, the State should include a justification as to why such changes are warranted.

Options 1 and 2:

Provide a narrative that describes what counts as dropping out for all youth. Please explain if there is a difference between what counts as dropping out for all students and what counts as dropping out for students with IEPs.

**Beginning with the FFY 2021 SPP/APR, due February 1, 2023,** States must report data using Option 1 (i.e., the same data as used for reporting to the Department under section 618 of the IDEA). Option 2 will not be available beginning with the FFY 2021 SPP/APR.

## 2 - Indicator Data

### Historical Data

Baseline Year	Baseline Data
2020	20.31%

FFY	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019
Target <=	3.25%	3.25%	3.25%	3.20%	3.20%
Data	3.45%	1.81%	4.17%	3.05%	3.35%

### Targets

FFY	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025
Target <=	20.00%	20.00%	18.00%	17.00%	16.00%	15.00%

### Targets: Description of Stakeholder Input

VT AOE solicited broad stakeholder input on the State's targets in the SPP/APR from January 2021 until December 2021. The VT AOE Special Education team began meeting with the Special Education Advisory Panel in January 2021 to discuss the changes to the SPP/APR FFY20-25 package, changes to data sources and indicator calculation, indicator targets and improvement activities. Along with collaboration with the Special Education Advisory Panel, VT AOE Special Education team solicited input from the Vermont's Parent Support Center (Vermont Family Network) and the Vermont Council of Special Education Administrators Executive. Beyond target input from these groups, the VT AOE Special education team also created a public webpage in which community partners and interested parties can access resources regarding the SPP/APR, information on the target setting

process and electronic and mail-in forms to provide input on the State's targets in the SPP/APR. The public webpage regarding the SPP/APR Target Setting can be found at <https://education.vermont.gov/student-support/vermont-special-education/recent-guidance-news-and-events/target-setting-for-the-spp-apr>

Vermont prefers to use the terms “community partners” or “interested parties” rather than stakeholders. With that said, we continue to make progress towards our goal of Improved outcomes in utilizing feedback and input, which will lead to better products reflective of representative community partner input, and an increased understanding of how the SPP/APR grounds the work of the State. During 2021, key community partner input was obtained through the engaging the Vermont Special Education Advisory Panel (VT-SEAP) and the Vermont Council of Special Education Administrators Executive Board; as well as through check-in sessions hosted by the State Director of Special Education designed for dialogue and technical assistance with Special Education Administrators throughout the state.

Since they were approved in May of 2021, the State has been developing and executing an implementation and training plan for changes to the Special Education Rules scheduled to take effect July 1, 2022. The initial training plan, and subsequent amendments, have been designed based on ongoing feedback from our community partners, in particular our special education administrators and the Vermont Family Network. The State convened two round table meetings with representation from the Vermont Family Network, the Special Education Advisory Panel, the Vermont Association of School Psychologists, and the Vermont Council of Special Education Administrators, Representatives from these organizations also provided direct feedback on each resource package released in response to the rule changes.

Community Partners -the groups named above along with staff from institutes of higher education, an external evaluator, special education directors and leadership from all participating SSIP LEAs - have consistent opportunities to provide input, suggestions, and insight on the implementation of the SSIP. Targeted engagement includes sharing and engaging in discussion about the annual SSIP report, comment and suggestions on direction of SSIP implementation, evaluation and tool development, data analysis, root cause analysis; sharing problems of practice, challenges and successes of implementation efforts; target setting, State Identified Measurable Result (SiMR) setting and scale-up opportunities.

VT AOE staff serving as individual Indicator Stewards worked with community partners to examine trends, make comparison to targets, and engage in root causes analyses in order to promote the benefits of using the SPP/APR as a tool for understanding compliance needs and prioritizing continuous improvement. This primarily occurred through the Local Special Education Determinations process – while providing TA, indicator stewards were able to receive feedback on the target set for the indicator in comparison to individual LEA performance. The State Director also worked with the VT-SEAP to review indicator performance after the February 1, 2021 SPP/APR submission. A plan has already been formulated for a busy 2021 calendar year for establishing new rigorous targets based on Vermont trend data.

Additionally, VT AOE has also utilized parent focus groups to provide input and feedback on work related to the indicators, which ultimately reflect on how we will revise targets. An example of engaging stakeholders is the collaboration with VT-SEAP, VCSEA, VFN, and an independent parent focus group all of whom provided feedback on the administrative complaint process and strategies for ensuring VT AOE has timely responses, and user-friendly tools and procedures for Dispute Resolution. These stakeholders provided great insight into the parent engagement survey/response rates/targets (indicator 8), the SSIP work (Indicator 17) and our data collection for Indicators 11, 12, and 13 (through our state monitoring system).

The Special Education Team met with the VT-SEAP on their report identifying unmet needs of students with disabilities and incorporated recommendations as part of the rule changes work. The State Director reports out on progress at VT-SEAP meetings.

For target setting, a public webpage was developed and promoted so parents from local and statewide advocacy and advisory committees and individual parents can engage in setting targets, analyzing data, developing, and recommending improvement strategies and evaluating progress. The target setting webpage can be found at <https://education.vermont.gov/student-support/vermont-special-education/recent-guidance-news-and-events/target-setting-for-the-spp-apr>, which includes a link to the webpage that houses Vermont's SPP/APR reports, which can be found at <https://education.vermont.gov/data-and-reporting/school-reports/special-education-reports>

**Please indicate the reporting option used on this indicator**

Option 1

**Prepopulated Data**

Source	Date	Description	Data
SY 2019-20 Exiting Data Groups (EDFacts file spec FS009; Data Group 85)	05/26/2021	Number of youth with IEPs (ages 14-21) who exited special education by graduating with a regular high school diploma (a)	555
SY 2019-20 Exiting Data Groups (EDFacts file spec FS009; Data Group 85)	05/26/2021	Number of youth with IEPs (ages 14-21) who exited special education by graduating with a state-defined alternate diploma (b)	0
SY 2019-20 Exiting Data Groups (EDFacts file spec FS009; Data Group 85)	05/26/2021	Number of youth with IEPs (ages 14-21) who exited special education by receiving a certificate (c)	8
SY 2019-20 Exiting Data Groups (EDFacts file spec FS009; Data Group 85)	05/26/2021	Number of youth with IEPs (ages 14-21) who exited special education by reaching maximum age (d)	6
SY 2019-20 Exiting Data Groups (EDFacts file spec FS009; Data Group 85)	05/26/2021	Number of youth with IEPs (ages 14-21) who exited special education due to dropping out (e)	145

**FFY 2020 SPP/APR Data**

Number of youth with IEPs (ages 14-21) who exited special education due to dropping out	Number of all youth with IEPs who exited special education (ages 14-21)	FFY 2019 Data	FFY 2020 Target	FFY 2020 Data	Status	Slippage
145	714	3.35%	20.00%	20.31%	N/A	N/A

**Provide a narrative that describes what counts as dropping out for all youth**

Vermont’s definition of dropout: An individual student who is not enrolled in an approved educational program and who has not graduated from high school. In Vermont, a student who is absent for more than ten consecutive school days without authorization is classified as withdrawn. If a truant officer is unable to verify that the student has transferred to a different school or approved educational program (e.g. home school) before the end of the year, the student is considered a dropout.

**Is there a difference in what counts as dropping out for youth with IEPs? (yes/no)**

YES

**If yes, explain the difference in what counts as dropping out for youth with IEPs.**

Vermont defines a drop out as Students who were enrolled at the start of the reporting period, were not enrolled at the end of the reporting period, and did not exit special education through any of the other exit reasons. This includes dropouts, runaways, expulsions, status unknown, and students who moved and are not known to be continuing in another educational program. Students with 10 consecutive days of unexcused absences are included in the report as dropouts. For students with a documented medical or mental health issue that requires them to be given homebound services for more than 10 days, they are not counted as dropping out.

**Provide additional information about this indicator (optional)**

The VT AOE created and facilitated the implementation of the high school completion program which is a highly flexible personalized plan for graduation. It continues to be a solution for some students who may otherwise dropout. VT AOE also created the graduation readiness tool for IEP teams. This tool facilitates an IEP team discussion (annually beginning in freshman year) on student engagement across all areas of secondary transition planning. The tool also allows the IEP team to quantify the level of student access across many different areas pertinent to successful transition planning. The graduation readiness tool is on the AOE website in the secondary transition section in the resources for special educators section, this can be found at <https://education.vermont.gov/documents/vermont-graduation-readiness-tool> .

The VT AOE Special Education Team partners with the VT AOE Student Pathways Division and continues efforts to look at ways of measuring student engagement as an effort to find correlation with drop out/retention and ultimately lower the dropout rate.

VT AOE maintains and updates a webpage for resources related to dropout for special education administrators and educators which can be found at <https://education.vermont.gov/student-support/vermont-special-education/technical-assistance-requests-and-professional-development/state-performance-plan-resources-by-indicator#indicator-2>

COVID implications – Despite the pandemic, the drop-out rate went down. If the VT AOE had used the same calculation as in past years, the drop-out rate would have been 3.03%, a decrease from the prior year.

**2 - Prior FFY Required Actions**

None

**2 - OSEP Response**

The State has revised the baseline for this indicator, using data from FFY 2020, and OSEP accepts that revision.

The State provided targets for FFYs 2020 through 2025 for this indicator, and OSEP accepts those targets.

**2 - Required Actions**

## Indicator 3A: Participation for Children with IEPs

### Instructions and Measurement

**Monitoring Priority:** FAPE in the LRE

**Results indicator:** Participation and performance of children with IEPs on statewide assessments:

- A. Participation rate for children with IEPs.
- B. Proficiency rate for children with IEPs against grade level academic achievement standards.
- C. Proficiency rate for children with IEPs against alternate academic achievement standards.
- D. Gap in proficiency rates for children with IEPs and all students against grade level academic achievement standards.

(20 U.S.C. 1416 (a)(3)(A))

#### Data Source

3A. Same data as used for reporting to the Department under Title I of the ESEA, using EDFacts file specifications FS185 and 188.

#### Measurement

A. Participation rate percent = [(# of children with IEPs participating in an assessment) divided by the (total # of children with IEPs enrolled during the testing window)]. Calculate separately for reading and math. Calculate separately for grades 4, 8, and high school. The participation rate is based on all children with IEPs, including both children with IEPs enrolled for a full academic year and those not enrolled for a full academic year.

#### Instructions

Describe the results of the calculations and compare the results to the targets. Provide the actual numbers used in the calculation.

Include information regarding where to find public reports of assessment participation and performance results, as required by 34 CFR §300.160(f), *i.e.*, a link to the Web site where these data are reported.

Indicator 3A: Provide separate reading/language arts and mathematics participation rates for children with IEPs for each of the following grades: 4, 8, & high school. Account for ALL children with IEPs, in grades 4, 8, and high school, including children not participating in assessments and those not enrolled for a full academic year. Only include children with disabilities who had an IEP at the time of testing.

### 3A - Indicator Data

#### Historical Data:

Subject	Group	Group Name	Baseline Year	Baseline Data
Reading	A	Grade 4	2018	96.50%
Reading	B	Grade 8	2018	94.00%
Reading	C	Grade HS	2018	86.80%
Math	A	Grade 4	2018	96.60%
Math	B	Grade 8	2018	94.30%
Math	C	Grade HS	2018	86.80%

#### Targets

Subject	Group	Group Name	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025
Reading	A >=	Grade 4	95.00%	95.00%	95.00%	95.00%	95.00%	95.00%
Reading	B >=	Grade 8	95.00%	95.00%	95.00%	95.00%	95.00%	95.00%
Reading	C >=	Grade HS	95.00%	95.00%	95.00%	95.00%	95.00%	95.00%
Math	A >=	Grade 4	95.00%	95.00%	95.00%	95.00%	95.00%	95.00%
Math	B >=	Grade 8	95.00%	95.00%	95.00%	95.00%	95.00%	95.00%
Math	C >=	Grade HS	95.00%	95.00%	95.00%	95.00%	95.00%	95.00%

**Targets: Description of Stakeholder Input**

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Additionally, VT AOE has also utilized parent focus groups to provide input and feedback on work related to the indicators, which ultimately reflect on how we will revise targets. An example of engaging stakeholders is the collaboration with VT-SEAP, VCSEA, VFN, and an independent parent focus group all of whom provided feedback on the administrative complaint process and strategies for ensuring VT AOE has timely responses, and user-friendly tools and procedures for Dispute Resolution. These stakeholders provided great insight into the parent engagement survey/response rates/targets (indicator 8), the SSIP work (Indicator 17) and our data collection for Indicators 11, 12, and 13 (through our state monitoring system).

The Special Education Team met with the VT-SEAP on their report identifying unmet needs of students with disabilities and incorporated recommendations as part of the rule changes work. The State Director reports out on progress at VT-SEAP meetings.

For target setting, a public webpage was developed and promoted so parents from local and statewide advocacy and advisory committees and individual parents can engage in setting targets, analyzing data, developing, and recommending improvement strategies and evaluating progress. The target setting webpage can be found at <https://education.vermont.gov/student-support/vermont-special-education/recent-guidance-news-and-events/target-setting-for-the-spp-apr>, which includes a link to the webpage that houses Vermont’s SPP/APR reports, which can be found at <https://education.vermont.gov/data-and-reporting/school-reports/special-education-reports>

**FFY 2020 Data Disaggregation from EDFacts**

**Data Source:**

SY 2020-21 Assessment Data Groups - Reading (EDFacts file spec FS188; Data Group: 589)

**Date:**

03/30/2022

**Reading Assessment Participation Data by Grade**

Group	Grade 4	Grade 8	Grade HS
a. Children with IEPs*	1,087	1,114	1,135
b. Children with IEPs in regular assessment with no accommodations	654	589	600
c. Children with IEPs in regular assessment with accommodations	264	296	188
d. Children with IEPs in alternate assessment against alternate standards	62	48	50

**Data Source:**

SY 2020-21 Assessment Data Groups - Math (EDFacts file spec FS185; Data Group: 588)

**Date:**

03/30/2022

**Math Assessment Participation Data by Grade**

Group	Grade 4	Grade 8	Grade HS
a. Children with IEPs*	1,087	1,114	1,135
b. Children with IEPs in regular assessment with no accommodations	549	428	496
c. Children with IEPs in regular assessment with accommodations	373	446	284
d. Children with IEPs in alternate assessment against alternate standards	63	47	49

\*The children with IEPs count excludes children with disabilities who were reported as exempt due to significant medical emergency in row a for all the prefilled data in this indicator.

**FFY 2020 SPP/APR Data: Reading Assessment**

Group	Group Name	Number of Children with IEPs Participating	Number of Children with IEPs	FFY 2019 Data	FFY 2020 Target	FFY 2020 Data	Status	Slippage
A	Grade 4	980	1,087		95.00%	90.16%	Did not meet target	N/A
B	Grade 8	933	1,114		95.00%	83.75%	Did not meet target	N/A
C	Grade HS	838	1,135		95.00%	73.83%	Did not meet target	N/A

**FFY 2020 SPP/APR Data: Math Assessment**

Group	Group Name	Number of Children with IEPs Participating	Number of Children with IEPs	FFY 2019 Data	FFY 2020 Target	FFY 2020 Data	Status	Slippage
A	Grade 4	985	1,087		95.00%	90.62%	Did not meet target	N/A
B	Grade 8	921	1,114		95.00%	82.68%	Did not meet target	N/A
C	Grade HS	829	1,135		95.00%	73.04%	Did not meet target	N/A

**Regulatory Information**

The SEA, (or, in the case of a district-wide assessment, LEA) must make available to the public, and report to the public with the same frequency and in the same detail as it reports on the assessment of nondisabled children: (1) the number of children with disabilities participating in: (a) regular assessments, and the number of those children who were provided accommodations in order to participate in those assessments; and (b) alternate assessments aligned with alternate achievement standards; and (2) the performance of children with disabilities on regular assessments and on alternate assessments, compared with the achievement of all children, including children with disabilities, on those assessments. [20 U.S.C. 1412 (a)(16)(D); 34 CFR §300.160(f)]

**Public Reporting Information**

Provide links to the page(s) where you provide public reports of assessment results.

Vermont's practice is, to the extent possible, to provide public reports of assessment results for students with disabilities in the same place as it provides comparable data for nondisabled students. Please see the following areas of our website (see below) for:

(1) the number of children with disabilities participating in



(a) regular assessments with and without accommodations: <https://education.vermont.gov/data-and-reporting/school-reports/special-education-reports> (under the "Assessment Report" heading.)

(b) alternate assessments aligned with alternate achievement standards: <https://schoolsnapshot.vermont.gov/> (For each school, select "Academic Proficiency," "Additional Information," and View "AA-AAAS Assessed Students.")

(2) the performance of children with disabilities on regular assessments and on alternate assessments, compared with the achievement of all children on those assessments: <https://education.vermont.gov/data-and-reporting/vermont-education-dashboard> (Select "Assessment," select a school, year and test, then select the school results question "Differences in achievement by disability status?")

#### **Provide additional information about this indicator (optional)**

With consideration for stakeholder feedback and recommendations from the Special Education Advisory Panel, VT AOE chose to revise the baseline for indicator 3A using FFY2018 assessment results and to align indicator 3A with ESSA participation targets with a focus on high participation rates for all grades. VT AOE made the choice to revise baselines for indicator 3A in response to the shift in this measurement to select 3 separate grade levels instead of all grades. New baselines were necessary for each of the three grades because Vermont experiences different patterns in participation across grades. Based on a comprehensive review of data generated from Vermont's administration of statewide assessments in FFY2020, VT AOE leadership and subject matter experts recommended against using FFY2020 data as a baseline due to lowered participation related to the COVID-19 pandemic. Extraordinary circumstances led to a range of factors that make this year's results statistically invalid when compared across years. For example, all summative assessments were administered in person and participation was variable for non-random reasons (for example, among medically fragile children).

Due to the effects of COVID-19, executive orders issued by the governor, and limited in-person instruction, participation rates of students with IEPs are low. VT AOE provided categories of explanation for non-testing students, 1) Those that could not test because of medical fragility or those that live with a family member that is medically fragile, and 2) Those that elected to receive their education remotely. For both of these instances, students were unable to enter the school building to test, and VT AOE does not have an assessment that can administered online.

The VT AOE presented Fall 2020 Regional Training Presentation for educators, the recording can be found: <https://vt.portal.cambiumast.com/resources/training-materials/fall-2020-regional-training-presentation---recording>. The VT AOE provided Live Regional Trainings. Sign-in sheets for an in-person training are kept on file and sign-in records are sent to the state, by the vendor, for record of virtual attendance.

The VT AOE released a document regarding Participation in Statewide Summative Assessments of ELA, Mathematics, and Science information from the Director of Assessment released 03/22/2021 can be found: [https://vt.portal.cambiumast.com/-/media/project/client-portals/vermont/pdf/2021/participation\\_updated031721ag.pdf](https://vt.portal.cambiumast.com/-/media/project/client-portals/vermont/pdf/2021/participation_updated031721ag.pdf)

The VT AOE released a Test Administration Accommodation Comparison document , this chart compares the 2019-2020 test accommodations and accessibility features with the 2020-2021 version. It shows updated accessibility features and added features can be found: <https://vt.portal.cambiumast.com/resources/smarter-balanced-resources/test-administration-accommodation-comparison>

The VT AOE released the 2021 Assessment Language for Schools, Students, and Caregivers document, this FAQ document addresses questions regarding statewide assessment from School Leaders, Students, and Caregivers, and provides language to be used in communication with those groups can be found: <https://vt.portal.cambiumast.com/resources/tools-and-documents-for-school-leaders/2021-assessment-language-for-schools,-students,-and-caregivers>

The VT AOE provided a training on proper test selection titled Selecting the Appropriate Assessment & Learner Characteristic Inventory Training the PowerPoint can be found at <https://education.vermont.gov/sites/aoe/files/documents/edu-vtaa-selection-process-and-the-learner-characteristic-inventory.pdf>

The VT AOE provided a training on the VT Comprehensive Assessment Program on Accommodations and Supports for Special Populations on the General Assessments Training. This training addressed appropriate accommodations by assessment, for English Learners as well as provides the statement that all students must assess.

The VT AOE released Vermont Comprehensive Monitoring System LEA Roles & Responsibilities/Assurances Document, which lists the training and documentation responsibilities of the field, which includes DA/ADA training, School Coordinator training and Test Administrator Training. This also includes documents required to be kept on site (for site visits) and affidavits that must be submitted to the state.

The VT AOE provided Test Administrators Training on the VT Alternate Assessment (VTAA) . Test Administrators ( ATA's) must view each module in its entirety and pass the quiz with an 80% or higher in order to be able to open and administer the VTAA summative. ATAs must also take and pass the TA General Certification which provides an overview on the test delivery system. ATA training includes policies and rules specific to the alternate assessment. VTAA Training modules are interactive and animated, which includes three modules and a quiz.

The VT AOE Assessment team holds monthly virtual Town Halls for District Test Administrators and Alternate Assessment District Test Administrators on testing updates and provides time for general questions and answers from the field. The Assessment teams also published a monthly newsletter with testing updates and links to manuals and professional development.

The VT AOE maintains and updates a webpage for resources related to assessment for special education administrators and educators which can be found at: <https://education.vermont.gov/student-support/vermont-special-education/technical-assistance-requests-and-professional-development/state-performance-plan-resources-by-indicator#indicator-3>

The VT AOE special education team has identified Closing the Achievement Gap/Addressing the Success Gap as a top priority and initiative for the deployment of resources and expertise. The Team recently welcomed a full-time staff member for oversight of this indicator, this priority, and the Alternate Assessment program.

### **3A - Prior FFY Required Actions**

None

**3A - OSEP Response**

The State has revised the baseline for this indicator, using data from FFY 2018, and OSEP accepts that revision.

The State provided targets for FFYs 2020 through 2025 for this indicator, and OSEP accepts those targets.

**3A - Required Actions**

## Indicator 3B: Proficiency for Children with IEPs (Grade Level Academic Achievement Standards)

### Instructions and Measurement

**Monitoring Priority:** FAPE in the LRE

**Results indicator:** Participation and performance of children with IEPs on statewide assessments:

- A. Participation rate for children with IEPs.
- B. Proficiency rate for children with IEPs against grade level academic achievement standards.
- C. Proficiency rate for children with IEPs against alternate academic achievement standards.
- D. Gap in proficiency rates for children with IEPs and all students against grade level academic achievement standards.

(20 U.S.C. 1416 (a)(3)(A))

#### Data Source

3B. Same data as used for reporting to the Department under Title I of the ESEA, using EDFacts file specifications FS175 and 178.

#### Measurement

B. Proficiency rate percent = [(# of children with IEPs scoring at or above proficient against grade level academic achievement standards) divided by the (total # of children with IEPs who received a valid score and for whom a proficiency level was assigned for the regular assessment)]. Calculate separately for reading and math. Calculate separately for grades 4, 8, and high school. The proficiency rate includes both children with IEPs enrolled for a full academic year and those not enrolled for a full academic year.

#### Instructions

Describe the results of the calculations and compare the results to the targets. Provide the actual numbers used in the calculation.

Include information regarding where to find public reports of assessment participation and performance results, as required by 34 CFR §300.160(f), i.e., a link to the Web site where these data are reported.

Indicator 3B: Proficiency calculations in this SPP/APR must result in proficiency rates for children with IEPs on the regular assessment in reading/language arts and mathematics assessments (separately) in each of the following grades: 4, 8, and high school, including both children with IEPs enrolled for a full academic year and those not enrolled for a full academic year. Only include children with disabilities who had an IEP at the time of testing.

### 3B - Indicator Data

#### Historical Data:

Subject	Group	Group Name	Baseline Year	Baseline Data
Reading	A	Grade 4	2018	12.80%
Reading	B	Grade 8	2018	9.50%
Reading	C	Grade HS	2018	10.80%
Math	A	Grade 4	2018	12.40%
Math	B	Grade 8	2018	5.90%
Math	C	Grade HS	2018	3.10%

#### Targets

Subject	Group	Group Name	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025
Reading	A >=	Grade 4	12.80%	12.80%	12.80%	13.80%	13.80%	14.80%
Reading	B >=	Grade 8	9.50%	9.50%	9.50%	10.50%	10.50%	11.50%
Reading	C >=	Grade HS	10.80%	10.80%	10.80%	11.80%	11.80%	12.80%
Math	A >=	Grade 4	12.40%	12.40%	12.40%	13.40%	13.40%	14.40%
Math	B >=	Grade 8	5.90%	5.90%	5.90%	6.90%	6.90%	7.90%
Math	C >=	Grade HS	3.10%	3.10%	3.10%	4.10%	4.10%	5.10%

#### Targets: Description of Stakeholder Input

VT AOE solicited broad stakeholder input on the State's targets in the SPP/APR from January 2021 until December 2021. The VT AOE Special Education team began meeting with the Special Education Advisory Panel in January 2021 to discuss the changes to the SPP/APR FFY20-25 package, changes to data sources and indicator calculation, indicator targets and improvement activities. Along with collaboration with the Special Education Advisory Panel, VT AOE Special Education team solicited input from the Vermont's Parent Support Center (Vermont Family Network) and the Vermont Council of Special Education Administrators Executive. Beyond target input from these groups, the VT AOE Special education team also created a public webpage in which community partners and interested parties can access resources regarding the SPP/APR, information on the target setting process and electronic and mail-in forms to provide input on the State's targets in the SPP/APR. The public webpage regarding the SPP/APR Target Setting can be found at <https://education.vermont.gov/student-support/vermont-special-education/recent-guidance-news-and-events/target-setting-for-the-spp-apr>

Vermont prefers to use the terms "community partners" or "interested parties" rather than stakeholders. With that said, we continue to make progress

towards our goal of Improved outcomes in utilizing feedback and input, which will lead to better products reflective of representative community partner input, and an increased understanding of how the SPP/APR grounds the work of the State. During 2021, key community partner input was obtained through the engaging the Vermont Special Education Advisory Panel (VT-SEAP) and the Vermont Council of Special Education Administrators Executive Board; as well as through check-in sessions hosted by the State Director of Special Education designed for dialogue and technical assistance with Special Education Administrators throughout the state.

Since they were approved in May of 2021, the State has been developing and executing an implementation and training plan for changes to the Special Education Rules scheduled to take effect July 1, 2022. The initial training plan, and subsequent amendments, have been designed based on ongoing feedback from our community partners, in particular our special education administrators and the Vermont Family Network. The State convened two round table meetings with representation from the Vermont Family Network, the Special Education Advisory Panel, the Vermont Association of School Psychologists, and the Vermont Council of Special Education Administrators, Representatives from these organizations also provided direct feedback on each resource package released in response to the rule changes.

Community Partners -the groups named above along with staff from institutes of higher education, an external evaluator, special education directors and leadership from all participating SSIP LEAs - have consistent opportunities to provide input, suggestions, and insight on the implementation of the SSIP. Targeted engagement includes sharing and engaging in discussion about the annual SSIP report, comment and suggestions on direction of SSIP implementation, evaluation and tool development, data analysis, root cause analysis; sharing problems of practice, challenges and successes of implementation efforts; target setting, State Identified Measurable Result (SiMR) setting and scale-up opportunities.

VT AOE staff serving as individual Indicator Stewards worked with community partners to examine trends, make comparison to targets, and engage in root causes analyses in order to promote the benefits of using the SPP/APR as a tool for understanding compliance needs and prioritizing continuous improvement. This primarily occurred through the Local Special Education Determinations process – while providing TA, indicator stewards were able to receive feedback on the target set for the indicator in comparison to individual LEA performance. The State Director also worked with the VT-SEAP to review indicator performance after the February 1, 2021 SPP/APR submission. A plan has already been formulated for a busy 2021 calendar year for establishing new rigorous targets based on Vermont trend data.

Additionally, VT AOE has also utilized parent focus groups to provide input and feedback on work related to the indicators, which ultimately reflect on how we will revise targets. An example of engaging stakeholders is the collaboration with VT-SEAP, VCSEA, VFN, and an independent parent focus group all of whom provided feedback on the administrative complaint process and strategies for ensuring VT AOE has timely responses, and user-friendly tools and procedures for Dispute Resolution. These stakeholders provided great insight into the parent engagement survey/response rates/targets (indicator 8), the SSIP work (Indicator 17) and our data collection for Indicators 11, 12, and 13 (through our state monitoring system).

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**FFY 2020 Data Disaggregation from EDFacts**

**Data Source:**

SY 2020-21 Assessment Data Groups - Reading (EDFacts file spec FS178; Data Group: 584)

**Date:**

03/03/2022

**Reading Assessment Proficiency Data by Grade**

Group	Grade 4	Grade 8	Grade HS
a. Children with IEPs who received a valid score and a proficiency level was assigned for the regular assessment	918	885	788
b. Children with IEPs in regular assessment with no accommodations scored at or above proficient against grade level	72	46	64
c. Children with IEPs in regular assessment with accommodations scored at or above proficient against grade level	31	24	8

**Data Source:**

SY 2020-21 Assessment Data Groups - Math (EDFacts file spec FS175; Data Group: 583)

**Date:**

03/03/2022

**Math Assessment Proficiency Data by Grade**

Group	Grade 4	Grade 8	Grade HS
a. Children with IEPs who received a valid score and a proficiency level was assigned for the regular assessment	922	874	780
b. Children with IEPs in regular assessment with no accommodations scored at or above proficient against grade level	59	22	14
c. Children with IEPs in regular assessment with accommodations scored at or above proficient against grade level	19	14	0

**FFY 2020 SPP/APR Data: Reading Assessment**

Group	Group Name	Number of Children with IEPs Scoring At or Above Proficient Against Grade Level Academic Achievement Standards	Number of Children with IEPs who Received a Valid Score and for whom a Proficiency Level was Assigned for the Regular Assessment	FFY 2019 Data	FFY 2020 Target	FFY 2020 Data	Status	Slippage
A	Grade 4	103	918		12.80%	11.22%	Did not meet target	N/A
B	Grade 8	70	885		9.50%	7.91%	Did not meet target	N/A
C	Grade HS	72	788		10.80%	9.14%	Did not meet target	N/A

**FFY 2020 SPP/APR Data: Math Assessment**

Group	Group Name	Number of Children with IEPs Scoring At or Above Proficient Against Grade Level Academic Achievement Standards	Number of Children with IEPs who Received a Valid Score and for whom a Proficiency Level was Assigned for the Regular Assessment	FFY 2019 Data	FFY 2020 Target	FFY 2020 Data	Status	Slippage
A	Grade 4	78	922		12.40%	8.46%	Did not meet target	N/A
B	Grade 8	36	874		5.90%	4.12%	Did not meet target	N/A
C	Grade HS	14	780		3.10%	1.79%	Did not meet target	N/A

## Regulatory Information

The SEA, (or, in the case of a district-wide assessment, LEA) must make available to the public, and report to the public with the same frequency and in the same detail as it reports on the assessment of nondisabled children: (1) the number of children with disabilities participating in: (a) regular assessments, and the number of those children who were provided accommodations in order to participate in those assessments; and (b) alternate assessments aligned with alternate achievement standards; and (2) the performance of children with disabilities on regular assessments and on alternate assessments, compared with the achievement of all children, including children with disabilities, on those assessments. [20 U.S.C. 1412 (a)(16)(D); 34 CFR §300.160(f)]

## Public Reporting Information

**Provide links to the page(s) where you provide public reports of assessment results.**

Vermont's practice is, to the extent possible, to provide public reports of assessment results for students with disabilities in the same place as it provides comparable data for nondisabled students. Please see the following areas of our website for:

(1) the number of children with disabilities participating in

(a) regular assessments with and without accommodations: <https://education.vermont.gov/data-and-reporting/school-reports/special-education-reports> (under the "Assessment Report" heading.)

(b) alternate assessments aligned with alternate achievement standards: <https://schoolsnapshot.vermont.gov/> (For each school, select "Academic Proficiency," "Additional Information," and View "AA-AAAS Assessed Students.")

(2) the performance of children with disabilities on regular assessments and on alternate assessments, compared with the achievement of all children on those assessments: <https://education.vermont.gov/data-and-reporting/vermont-education-dashboard> (Select "Assessment," select a school, year and test, then select the school results question "Differences in achievement by disability status?")

**Provide additional information about this indicator (optional)**

With consideration for stakeholder feedback and recommendations from the Special Education Advisory Panel, VT AOE chose to revise the baseline for indicator 3B using FFY2018 assessment results. VT AOE made the choice to revise baselines for indicator 3B in response to the shift in this measurement to separate regular assessments and alternate assessments and to select three separate grade levels instead of all grades. New baselines were necessary for each of the three grades because Vermont experiences different patterns in proficiency across the regular and alternate assessments and across the three selected grades. Based on a comprehensive review of data generated from Vermont's administration of statewide assessments in FFY2020, VT AOE leadership and subject matter experts recommended against using FFY2020 data as a baseline due to lowered participation (and consequently a lower n-size) related to the COVID-19 pandemic. Extraordinary circumstances led to a range of factors that make this year's results statistically invalid when compared across years. For example, all summative assessments were administered in person and participation was variable for non-random reasons (for example, among medically fragile children or those participating in fully remote schooling).

Due to the effects of COVID-19, executive orders issued by the governor, and limited in-person instruction, proficiency rates of students with IEPs are low. During the FFY20 school year students throughout the state had interrupted learning experiences, delivery of instruction, and limited in-person instruction. These issues varied between many students and access to learning declined for many students even in remote learning.

The VT AOE presented Fall 2020 Regional Training Presentation for educators, the recording can be found:

<https://vt.portal.cambiumast.com/resources/training-materials/fall-2020-regional-training-presentation---recording>. The VT AOE provided Live Regional Trainings. Sign-in sheets for an in-person training are kept on file and sign-in records are sent to the state, by the vendor, for record of virtual attendance.

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The VT AOE maintains and updates a webpage for resources related to assessment for special education administrators and educators which can be found at: <https://education.vermont.gov/student-support/vermont-special-education/technical-assistance-requests-and-professional-development/state-performance-plan-resources-by-indicator#indicator-3>

### **3B - Prior FFY Required Actions**

None

### **3B - OSEP Response**

The State has revised the baseline for this indicator, using data from FFY 2018, and OSEP accepts that revision.

The State provided targets for FFYs 2020 through 2025 for this indicator, and OSEP accepts those targets.

### **3B - Required Actions**

## Indicator 3C: Proficiency for Children with IEPs (Alternate Academic Achievement Standards)

### Instructions and Measurement

**Monitoring Priority:** FAPE in the LRE

**Results indicator:** Participation and performance of children with IEPs on statewide assessments:

- A. Participation rate for children with IEPs.
- B. Proficiency rate for children with IEPs against grade level academic achievement standards.
- C. Proficiency rate for children with IEPs against alternate academic achievement standards.
- D. Gap in proficiency rates for children with IEPs and all students against grade level academic achievement standards.

(20 U.S.C. 1416 (a)(3)(A))

#### Data Source

3C. Same data as used for reporting to the Department under Title I of the ESEA, using EDFacts file specifications FS175 and 178.

#### Measurement

C. Proficiency rate percent = [(# of children with IEPs scoring at or above proficient against alternate academic achievement standards) divided by the (total # of children with IEPs who received a valid score and for whom a proficiency level was assigned for the alternate assessment)]. Calculate separately for reading and math. Calculate separately for grades 4, 8, and high school. The proficiency rate includes both children with IEPs enrolled for a full academic year and those not enrolled for a full academic year.

#### Instructions

Describe the results of the calculations and compare the results to the targets. Provide the actual numbers used in the calculation.

Include information regarding where to find public reports of assessment participation and performance results, as required by 34 CFR §300.160(f), i.e., a link to the Web site where these data are reported.

Indicator 3C: Proficiency calculations in this SPP/APR must result in proficiency rates for children with IEPs on the alternate assessment in reading/language arts and mathematics assessments (separately) in each of the following grades: 4, 8, and high school, including both children with IEPs enrolled for a full academic year and those not enrolled for a full academic year. Only include children with disabilities who had an IEP at the time of testing.

### 3C - Indicator Data

#### Historical Data:

Subject	Group	Group Name	Baseline Year	Baseline Data
Reading	A	Grade 4	2018	55.40%
Reading	B	Grade 8	2018	54.40%
Reading	C	Grade HS	2018	46.50%
Math	A	Grade 4	2018	45.60%
Math	B	Grade 8	2018	37.10%
Math	C	Grade HS	2018	42.20%

#### Targets

Subject	Group	Group Name	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025
Reading	A >=	Grade 4	55.40%	55.40%	57.00%	59.00%	61.00%	63.00%
Reading	B >=	Grade 8	54.40%	54.40%	56.40%	58.40%	60.40%	62.40%
Reading	C >=	Grade HS	46.50%	46.50%	48.50%	50.50%	52.50%	54.50%
Math	A >=	Grade 4	45.60%	45.60%	47.60%	49.60%	51.60%	51.60%
Math	B >=	Grade 8	37.10%	39.10%	41.10%	43.10%	45.10%	47.10%
Math	C >=	Grade HS	42.20%	44.20%	46.20%	48.20%	50.20%	52.20%



## Targets: Description of Stakeholder Input

VT AOE solicited broad stakeholder input on the State's targets in the SPP/APR from January 2021 until December 2021. The VT AOE Special Education team began meeting with the Special Education Advisory Panel in January 2021 to discuss the changes to the SPP/APR FFY20-25 package, changes to data sources and indicator calculation, indicator targets and improvement activities. Along with collaboration with the Special Education Advisory Panel, VT AOE Special Education team solicited input from the Vermont's Parent Support Center (Vermont Family Network) and the Vermont Council of Special Education Administrators Executive. Beyond target input from these groups, the VT AOE Special education team also created a public webpage in which community partners and interested parties can access resources regarding the SPP/APR, information on the target setting process and electronic and mail-in forms to provide input on the State's targets in the SPP/APR. The public webpage regarding the SPP/APR Target Setting can be found at <https://education.vermont.gov/student-support/vermont-special-education/recent-guidance-news-and-events/target-setting-for-the-spp-apr>

Vermont prefers to use the terms "community partners" or "interested parties" rather than stakeholders. With that said, we continue to make progress towards our goal of Improved outcomes in utilizing feedback and input, which will lead to better products reflective of representative community partner input, and an increased understanding of how the SPP/APR grounds the work of the State. During 2021, key community partner input was obtained through the engaging the Vermont Special Education Advisory Panel (VT-SEAP) and the Vermont Council of Special Education Administrators Executive Board; as well as through check-in sessions hosted by the State Director of Special Education designed for dialogue and technical assistance with Special Education Administrators throughout the state.

Since they were approved in May of 2021, the State has been developing and executing an implementation and training plan for changes to the Special Education Rules scheduled to take effect July 1, 2022. The initial training plan, and subsequent amendments, have been designed based on ongoing feedback from our community partners, in particular our special education administrators and the Vermont Family Network. The State convened two round table meetings with representation from the Vermont Family Network, the Special Education Advisory Panel, the Vermont Association of School Psychologists, and the Vermont Council of Special Education Administrators, Representatives from these organizations also provided direct feedback on each resource package released in response to the rule changes.

Community Partners -the groups named above along with staff from institutes of higher education, an external evaluator, special education directors and leadership from all participating SSIP LEAs - have consistent opportunities to provide input, suggestions, and insight on the implementation of the SSIP. Targeted engagement includes sharing and engaging in discussion about the annual SSIP report, comment and suggestions on direction of SSIP implementation, evaluation and tool development, data analysis, root cause analysis; sharing problems of practice, challenges and successes of implementation efforts; target setting, State Identified Measurable Result (SiMR) setting and scale-up opportunities.

VT AOE staff serving as individual Indicator Stewards worked with community partners to examine trends, make comparison to targets, and engage in root causes analyses in order to promote the benefits of using the SPP/APR as a tool for understanding compliance needs and prioritizing continuous improvement. This primarily occurred through the Local Special Education Determinations process – while providing TA, indicator stewards were able to receive feedback on the target set for the indicator in comparison to individual LEA performance. The State Director also worked with the VT-SEAP to review indicator performance after the February 1, 2021 SPP/APR submission. A plan has already been formulated for a busy 2021 calendar year for establishing new rigorous targets based on Vermont trend data.

Additionally, VT AOE has also utilized parent focus groups to provide input and feedback on work related to the indicators, which ultimately reflect on how we will revise targets. An example of engaging stakeholders is the collaboration with VT-SEAP, VCSEA, VFN, and an independent parent focus group all of whom provided feedback on the administrative complaint process and strategies for ensuring VT AOE has timely responses, and user-friendly tools and procedures for Dispute Resolution. These stakeholders provided great insight into the parent engagement survey/response rates/targets (indicator 8), the SSIP work (Indicator 17) and our data collection for Indicators 11, 12, and 13 (through our state monitoring system).

The Special Education Team met with the VT-SEAP on their report identifying unmet needs of students with disabilities and incorporated recommendations as part of the rule changes work. The State Director reports out on progress at VT-SEAP meetings.

For target setting, a public webpage was developed and promoted so parents from local and statewide advocacy and advisory committees and individual parents can engage in setting targets, analyzing data, developing, and recommending improvement strategies and evaluating progress. The target setting webpage can be found at <https://education.vermont.gov/student-support/vermont-special-education/recent-guidance-news-and-events/target-setting-for-the-spp-apr>, which includes a link to the webpage that houses Vermont's SPP/APR reports, which can be found at <https://education.vermont.gov/data-and-reporting/school-reports/special-education-reports>

## FFY 2020 Data Disaggregation from EDFacts

### Data Source:

SY 2020-21 Assessment Data Groups - Reading (EDFacts file spec FS178; Data Group: 584)

### Date:

03/03/2022

## Reading Assessment Proficiency Data by Grade

Group	Grade 4	Grade 8	Grade HS
a. Children with IEPs who received a valid score and a proficiency level was assigned for the alternate assessment	62	48	50
b. Children with IEPs in alternate assessment against alternate standards scored at or above proficient	32	21	32

### Data Source:

SY 2020-21 Assessment Data Groups - Math (EDFacts file spec FS175; Data Group: 583)

**Date:**

03/03/2022

**Math Assessment Proficiency Data by Grade**

Group	Grade 4	Grade 8	Grade HS
a. Children with IEPs who received a valid score and a proficiency level was assigned for the alternate assessment	63	47	49
b. Children with IEPs in alternate assessment against alternate standards scored at or above proficient	33	14	18

**FFY 2020 SPP/APR Data: Reading Assessment**

Group	Group Name	Number of Children with IEPs Scoring At or Above Proficient Against Alternate Academic Achievement Standards	Number of Children with IEPs who Received a Valid Score and for whom a Proficiency Level was Assigned for the Alternate Assessment	FFY 2019 Data	FFY 2020 Target	FFY 2020 Data	Status	Slippage
A	Grade 4	32	62		55.40%	51.61%	Did not meet target	N/A
B	Grade 8	21	48		54.40%	43.75%	Did not meet target	N/A
C	Grade HS	32	50		46.50%	64.00%	Met target	N/A

**FFY 2020 SPP/APR Data: Math Assessment**

Group	Group Name	Number of Children with IEPs Scoring At or Above Proficient Against Alternate Academic Achievement Standards	Number of Children with IEPs who Received a Valid Score and for whom a Proficiency Level was Assigned for the Alternate Assessment	FFY 2019 Data	FFY 2020 Target	FFY 2020 Data	Status	Slippage
A	Grade 4	33	63		45.60%	52.38%	Met target	N/A
B	Grade 8	14	47		37.10%	29.79%	Did not meet target	N/A
C	Grade HS	18	49		42.20%	36.73%	Did not meet target	N/A

**Regulatory Information**

The SEA, (or, in the case of a district-wide assessment, LEA) must make available to the public, and report to the public with the same frequency and in the same detail as it reports on the assessment of nondisabled children: (1) the number of children with disabilities participating in: (a) regular assessments, and the number of those children who were provided accommodations in order to participate in those assessments; and (b) alternate assessments aligned with alternate achievement standards; and (2) the performance of children with disabilities on regular assessments and on alternate assessments, compared with the achievement of all children, including children with disabilities, on those assessments. [20 U.S.C. 1412 (a)(16)(D); 34 CFR §300.160(f)]

**Public Reporting Information**

Provide links to the page(s) where you provide public reports of assessment results.

Vermont's practice is, to the extent possible, to provide public reports of assessment results for students with disabilities in the same place as it provides comparable data for nondisabled students. Please see the following areas of our website for:

(1) the number of children with disabilities participating in

(a) regular assessments with and without accommodations: <https://education.vermont.gov/data-and-reporting/school-reports/special-education-reports> (under the "Assessment Report" heading.)

(b) alternate assessments aligned with alternate achievement standards: <https://schoolsnapshot.vermont.gov/> (For each school, select "Academic

Proficiency," "Additional Information," and View "AA-AAAS Assessed Students.")

(2) the performance of children with disabilities on regular assessments and on alternate assessments, compared with the achievement of all children on those assessments: <https://education.vermont.gov/data-and-reporting/vermont-education-dashboard> (Select "Assessment," select a school, year and test, then select the school results question "Differences in achievement by disability status?")

### **Provide additional information about this indicator (optional)**

With consideration for stakeholder feedback and recommendations from the Special Education Advisory Panel, VT AOE chose to revise the baseline for indicator 3C using FFY2018 assessment results. VT AOE made the choice to revise baselines for indicator 3C in response to the shift in this measurement to separate regular assessments and alternate assessments and to select three separate grade levels instead of all grades. New baselines were necessary for each of the three grades because Vermont experiences different patterns in proficiency across the regular and alternate assessments and across the three selected grades. Based on a comprehensive review of data generated from Vermont's administration of statewide assessments in FFY2020, VT AOE leadership and subject matter experts recommended against using FFY2020 data as a baseline due to lowered participation (and consequently a lower n-size) related to the COVID-19 pandemic. Extraordinary circumstances led to a range of factors that make this year's results statistically invalid when compared across years. For example, all summative assessments were administered in person and participation was variable for non-random reasons (for example, among medically fragile children or those participating in fully remote schooling).

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The VT AOE Assessment team holds monthly virtual Town Halls for District Test Administrators and Alternate Assessment District Test Administrators on testing updates and provides time for general questions and answers from the field. The Assessment teams also published a monthly newsletter with testing updates and links to manuals and professional development.

The VT AOE special education team has identified Closing the Achievement Gap/Addressing the Success Gap as a top priority and initiative for the deployment of resources and expertise. The Team recently welcomed a full-time staff member for oversight of this indicator, this priority, and the Alternate Assessment program.

The VT AOE maintains and updates a webpage for resources related to assessment for special education administrators and educators which can be found at: <https://education.vermont.gov/student-support/vermont-special-education/technical-assistance-requests-and-professional-development/state-performance-plan-resources-by-indicator#indicator-3>

### **3C - Prior FFY Required Actions**

None

### **3C - OSEP Response**

The State has revised the baseline for this indicator, using data from FFY 2018, and OSEP accepts that revision.

The State provided targets for FFYs 2020 through 2025 for this indicator, and OSEP accepts those targets.

### 3C - Required Actions

## Indicator 3D: Gap in Proficiency Rates (Grade Level Academic Achievement Standards)

### Instructions and Measurement

**Monitoring Priority:** FAPE in the LRE

**Results indicator:** Participation and performance of children with IEPs on statewide assessments:

- A. Participation rate for children with IEPs.
- B. Proficiency rate for children with IEPs against grade level academic achievement standards.
- C. Proficiency rate for children with IEPs against alternate academic achievement standards.
- D. Gap in proficiency rates for children with IEPs and all students against grade level academic achievement standards.

(20 U.S.C. 1416 (a)(3)(A))

#### Data Source

3D. Same data as used for reporting to the Department under Title I of the ESEA, using EDFacts file specifications FS175 and 178.

#### Measurement

D. Proficiency rate gap = [(proficiency rate for children with IEPs scoring at or above proficient against grade level academic achievement standards for the 2020-2021 school year) subtracted from the (proficiency rate for all students scoring at or above proficient against grade level academic achievement standards for the 2020-2021 school year)]. Calculate separately for reading and math. Calculate separately for grades 4, 8, and high school. The proficiency rate includes all children enrolled for a full academic year and those not enrolled for a full academic year.

#### Instructions

Describe the results of the calculations and compare the results to the targets. Provide the actual numbers used in the calculation.

Include information regarding where to find public reports of assessment participation and performance results, as required by 34 CFR §300.160(f), *i.e.*, a link to the Web site where these data are reported.

Indicator 3D: Gap calculations in this SPP/APR must result in the proficiency rate for children with IEPs were proficient against grade level academic achievement standards for the 2020-2021 school year compared to the proficiency rate for all students who were proficient against grade level academic achievement standards for the 2020-2021 school year. Calculate separately for reading/language arts and math in each of the following grades: 4, 8, and high school, including both children enrolled for a full academic year and those not enrolled for a full academic year. Only include children with disabilities who had an IEP at the time of testing.

### 3D - Indicator Data

#### Historical Data:

Subject	Group	Group Name	Baseline Year	Baseline Data
Reading	A	Grade 4	2018	37.90
Reading	B	Grade 8	2018	43.38
Reading	C	Grade HS	2018	45.78
Math	A	Grade 4	2018	34.17
Math	B	Grade 8	2018	34.07
Math	C	Grade HS	2018	31.82

#### Targets

Subject	Group	Group Name	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025
Reading	A <=	Grade 4	37.90	37.90	37.90	36.90	36.90	35.90
Reading	B <=	Grade 8	43.40	43.40	43.40	42.40	42.40	41.40
Reading	C <=	Grade HS	45.80	45.80	45.80	44.80	44.80	43.80
Math	A <=	Grade 4	34.20	34.20	34.20	33.20	33.20	32.20
Math	B <=	Grade 8	34.10	34.10	34.10	33.10	33.10	32.10
Math	C <=	Grade HS	31.80	31.80	31.80	30.80	30.80	29.80

#### Targets: Description of Stakeholder Input

VT AOE solicited broad stakeholder input on the State's targets in the SPP/APR from January 2021 until December 2021. The VT AOE Special Education team began meeting with the Special Education Advisory Panel in January 2021 to discuss the changes to the SPP/APR FFY20-25 package, changes to data sources and indicator calculation, indicator targets and improvement activities. Along with collaboration with the Special Education Advisory Panel, VT AOE Special Education team solicited input from the Vermont's Parent Support Center (Vermont Family Network) and the Vermont Council of Special Education Administrators Executive. Beyond target input from these groups, the VT AOE Special education team also created a public webpage in which community partners and interested parties can access resources regarding the SPP/APR, information on the target setting process and electronic and mail-in forms to provide input on the State's targets in the SPP/APR. The public webpage regarding the SPP/APR Target

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## FFY 2020 Data Disaggregation from EDFacts

### Data Source:

SY 2020-21 Assessment Data Groups - Reading (EDFacts file spec FS178; Data Group: 584)

### Date:

03/03/2022

### Reading Assessment Proficiency Data by Grade

Group	Grade 4	Grade 8	Grade HS
a. All Students who received a valid score and a proficiency was assigned for the regular assessment	5,174	5,380	4,951
b. Children with IEPs who received a valid score and a proficiency was assigned for the regular assessment	918	885	788
c. All students in regular assessment with no accommodations scored at or above proficient against grade level	2,275	2,745	2,684
d. All students in regular assessment with accommodations scored at or above proficient against grade level	38	28	16
e. Children with IEPs in regular assessment with no accommodations scored at or above proficient against grade level	72	46	64

f. Children with IEPs in regular assessment with accommodations scored at or above proficient against grade level	31	24	8
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**Data Source:**

SY 2020-21 Assessment Data Groups - Math (EDFacts file spec FS175; Data Group: 583)

**Date:**

03/03/2022

**Math Assessment Proficiency Data by Grade**

Group	Grade 4	Grade 8	Grade HS
a. All Students who received a valid score and a proficiency was assigned for the regular assessment	5,190	5,387	4,935
b. Children with IEPs who received a valid score and a proficiency was assigned for the regular assessment	922	874	780
c. All students in regular assessment with no accommodations scored at or above proficient against grade level	1,923	1,704	1,479
d. All students in regular assessment with accommodations scored at or above proficient against grade level	21	16	3
e. Children with IEPs in regular assessment with no accommodations scored at or above proficient against grade level	59	22	14
f. Children with IEPs in regular assessment with accommodations scored at or above proficient against grade level	19	14	0

**FFY 2020 SPP/APR Data: Reading Assessment**

Group	Group Name	Proficiency rate for children with IEPs scoring at or above proficient against grade level academic achievement standards	Proficiency rate for all students scoring at or above proficient against grade level academic achievement standards	FFY 2019 Data	FFY 2020 Target	FFY 2020 Data	Status	Slippage
A	Grade 4	11.22%	44.70%		37.90	33.48	Met target	N/A
B	Grade 8	7.91%	51.54%		43.40	43.63	Did not meet target	N/A
C	Grade HS	9.14%	54.53%		45.80	45.40	Met target	N/A

**FFY 2020 SPP/APR Data: Math Assessment**

Group	Group Name	Proficiency rate for children with IEPs scoring at or above proficient against grade level academic achievement standards	Proficiency rate for all students scoring at or above proficient against grade level academic achievement standards	FFY 2019 Data	FFY 2020 Target	FFY 2020 Data	Status	Slippage
A	Grade 4	8.46%	37.46%		34.20	29.00	Met target	N/A
B	Grade 8	4.12%	31.93%		34.10	27.81	Met target	N/A
C	Grade HS	1.79%	30.03%		31.80	28.24	Met target	N/A

**Provide additional information about this indicator (optional)**

With consideration for stakeholder feedback and recommendations from the Special Education Advisory Panel, VT AOE chose to calculate the baseline for the newly introduced indicator 3D using FFY2018 assessment results. VT AOE used the EDFacts files FS175 and FS178 on record to calculate baseline consistent with the measurement table. The details of these calculations are as follows:

$[(\text{students proficient} / \text{students assessed}) * 100 = \% \text{ of all students proficient}] - [(\text{students with IEPs proficient} / \text{students with IEPs assessed}) * 100 = \% \text{ of students with IEPs proficient}] = \text{proficiency rate gap \%}$   
Reading Grade 4:  $[(2,906 / 5,732) * 100 = 50.70\%] - [(129 / 1,008) * 100 = 12.80\%] = 37.90\%$   
Reading Grade 8:  $[(3,122 / 5,898) * 100 = 52.93\%] - [(93 / 974) * 100 = 9.55\%] = 43.38\%$   
Reading HS:  $[(3,290 / 5,810) * 100 = 56.63\%] - [(94 / 867) * 100 = 10.84\%] = 45.78\%$   
Math Grade 4:  $[(2,670 / 5,735) * 100 = 46.56\%] - [(125 / 1,009) * 100 = 12.39\%] = 34.17\%$   
Math Grade 8:  $[(2,357 / 5,890) * 100 = 40.02\%] - [(58 / 976) * 100 = 5.94\%] = 34.07\%$   
Math HS:  $[(2,036 / 5,827) * 100 = 34.94\%] - [(27 / 866) * 100 = 3.12\%] = 31.82\%$

VT AOE chose to use FFY2018 as the baseline year for indicator 3D because, based on a comprehensive review of data generated from Vermont's administration of statewide assessments in FFY2020, VT AOE leadership and subject matter experts recommended against using FFY2020 data as a baseline due to lowered participation (and consequently a lower n-size) related to the COVID-19 pandemic. Extraordinary circumstances led to a range of factors that make this year's results statistically invalid when compared across years. For example, all summative assessments were administered in person and participation was variable for non-random reasons (for example, among medically fragile children or those participating in fully remote schooling).

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The VT AOE provided Test Administrators Training on the VT Alternate Assessment (VTAA). Test Administrators (ATA's) must view each module in its entirety and pass the quiz with an 80% or higher in order to be able to open and administer the VTAA summative. ATAs must also take and pass the TA General Certification which provides an overview on the test delivery system. ATA training includes policies and rules specific to the alternate assessment. VTAA Training modules are interactive and animated, which includes three modules and a quiz.

The VT AOE Assessment team holds monthly virtual Town Halls for District Test Administrators and Alternate Assessment District Test Administrators on testing updates and provides time for general questions and answers from the field. The Assessment teams also published a monthly newsletter with testing updates and links to manuals and professional development.

The VT AOE special education team has identified Closing the Achievement Gap/Addressing the Success Gap as a top priority and initiative for the deployment of resources and expertise. The Team recently welcomed a full-time staff member for oversight of this indicator, this priority, and the Alternate Assessment program.

The VT AOE maintains and updates a webpage for resources related to assessment for special education administrators and educators which can be found at: <https://education.vermont.gov/student-support/vermont-special-education/technical-assistance-requests-and-professional-development/state-performance-plan-resources-by-indicator#indicator-3>

### 3D - Prior FFY Required Actions

None

### 3D - OSEP Response

The State has established the baseline for this indicator, using data from FFY 2018, and OSEP accepts that revision.

The State provided targets for FFYs 2020 through 2025 for this indicator, and OSEP accepts those targets.



### 3D - Required Actions

## Indicator 4A: Suspension/Expulsion

### Instructions and Measurement

**Monitoring Priority:** FAPE in the LRE

**Results Indicator:** Rates of suspension and expulsion:

- A. Percent of local educational agencies (LEA) that have a significant discrepancy, as defined by the State, in the rate of suspensions and expulsions of greater than 10 days in a school year for children with IEPs; and
- B. Percent of LEAs that have: (a) a significant discrepancy, as defined by the State, by race or ethnicity, in the rate of suspensions and expulsions of greater than 10 days in a school year for children with IEPs; and (b) policies, procedures or practices that contribute to the significant discrepancy, as defined by the State, and do not comply with requirements relating to the development and implementation of IEPs, the use of positive behavioral interventions and supports, and procedural safeguards.

(20 U.S.C. 1416(a)(3)(A); 1412(a)(22))

#### Data Source

State discipline data, including State's analysis of State's Discipline data collected under IDEA Section 618, where applicable. Discrepancy can be computed by either comparing the rates of suspensions and expulsions for children with IEPs to rates for nondisabled children within the LEA or by comparing the rates of suspensions and expulsions for children with IEPs among LEAs within the State.

#### Measurement

Percent = [(# of LEAs that meet the State-established n and/or cell size (if applicable) that have a significant discrepancy, as defined by the State, in the rates of suspensions and expulsions for more than 10 days during the school year of children with IEPs) divided by the (# of LEAs in the State that meet the State-established n and/or cell size (if applicable))] times 100.

Include State's definition of "significant discrepancy."

#### Instructions

If the State has established a minimum n and/or cell size requirement, the State may only include, in both the numerator and the denominator, LEAs that met that State-established n and/or cell size. If the State used a minimum n and/or cell size requirement, report the number of LEAs excluded from the calculation as a result of this requirement.

Describe the results of the State's examination of the data for the year before the reporting year (e.g., for the FFY 2020 SPP/APR, use data from 2019-2020), including data disaggregated by race and ethnicity to determine if significant discrepancies, as defined by the State, are occurring in the rates of long-term suspensions and expulsions (more than 10 days during the school year) of children with IEPs, as required at 20 U.S.C. 1412(a)(22). The State's examination must include one of the following comparisons:

- The rates of suspensions and expulsions for children with IEPs among LEAs within the State; or
- The rates of suspensions and expulsions for children with IEPs to nondisabled children within the LEAs

In the description, specify which method the State used to determine possible discrepancies and explain what constitutes those discrepancies.

Because the measurement table requires that the data examined for this indicator are lag year data, States should examine the 618 data that was submitted by LEAs that were in operation during the school year before the reporting year. For example, if a State has 100 LEAs operating in the 2019-2020 school year, those 100 LEAs would have reported 618 data in 2019-2020 on the number of children suspended/expelled. If the State then opens 15 new LEAs in 2020-2021, suspension/expulsion data from those 15 new LEAs would not be in the 2019-2020 618 data set, and therefore, those 15 new LEAs should not be included in the denominator of the calculation. States must use the number of LEAs from the year before the reporting year in its calculation for this indicator. For the FFY 2020 SPP/APR submission, States must use the number of LEAs reported in 2019-2020 (which can be found in the FFY 2019 SPP/APR introduction).

Indicator 4A: Provide the actual numbers used in the calculation (based upon districts that met the minimum n and/or cell size requirement, if applicable). If significant discrepancies occurred, describe how the State educational agency reviewed and, if appropriate, revised (or required the affected local educational agency to revise) its policies, procedures, and practices relating to the development and implementation of IEPs, the use of positive behavioral interventions and supports, and procedural safeguards, to ensure that such policies, procedures, and practices comply with applicable requirements.

Provide detailed information about the timely correction of noncompliance as noted in OSEP's response for the previous SPP/APR. If discrepancies occurred and the LEA with discrepancies had policies, procedures or practices that contributed to the significant discrepancy, as defined by the State, and that do not comply with requirements relating to the development and implementation of IEPs, the use of positive behavioral interventions and supports, and procedural safeguards, describe how the State ensured that such policies, procedures, and practices were revised to comply with applicable requirements consistent with (OSEP) Memorandum 09-02, dated October 17, 2008.

If the State did not ensure timely correction of the previous noncompliance, provide information on the extent to which noncompliance was subsequently corrected (more than one year after identification). In addition, provide information regarding the nature of any continuing noncompliance, improvement activities completed (e.g., review of policies and procedures, technical assistance, training, etc.) and any enforcement actions that were taken.

If the State reported less than 100% compliance for the previous reporting period (e.g., for the FFY 2020 SPP/APR, the data for FFY 2019), and the State did not identify any findings of noncompliance, provide an explanation of why the State did not identify any findings of noncompliance.

## 4A - Indicator Data

### Historical Data

Baseline Year	Baseline Data
2005	1.67%

FFY	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019
Target <=	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%
Data	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%

**Targets**

FFY	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025
Target <=	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%

**Targets: Description of Stakeholder Input**

VT AOE solicited broad stakeholder input on the State’s targets in the SPP/APR from January 2021 until December 2021. The VT AOE Special Education team began meeting with the Special Education Advisory Panel in January 2021 to discuss the changes to the SPP/APR FFY20-25 package, changes to data sources and indicator calculation, indicator targets and improvement activities. Along with collaboration with the Special Education Advisory Panel, VT AOE Special Education team solicited input from the Vermont’s Parent Support Center (Vermont Family Network) and the Vermont Council of Special Education Administrators Executive. Beyond target input from these groups, the VT AOE Special education team also created a public webpage in which community partners and interested parties can access resources regarding the SPP/APR, information on the target setting process and electronic and mail-in forms to provide input on the State’s targets in the SPP/APR. The public webpage regarding the SPP/APR Target Setting can be found at <https://education.vermont.gov/student-support/vermont-special-education/recent-guidance-news-and-events/target-setting-for-the-spp-apr>

Vermont prefers to use the terms “community partners” or “interested parties” rather than stakeholders. With that said, we continue to make progress towards our goal of Improved outcomes in utilizing feedback and input, which will lead to better products reflective of representative community partner input, and an increased understanding of how the SPP/APR grounds the work of the State. During 2021, key community partner input was obtained through the engaging the Vermont Special Education Advisory Panel (VT-SEAP) and the Vermont Council of Special Education Administrators Executive Board; as well as through check-in sessions hosted by the State Director of Special Education designed for dialogue and technical assistance with Special Education Administrators throughout the state.

Since they were approved in May of 2021, the State has been developing and executing an implementation and training plan for changes to the Special Education Rules scheduled to take effect July 1, 2022. The initial training plan, and subsequent amendments, have been designed based on ongoing feedback from our community partners, in particular our special education administrators and the Vermont Family Network. The State convened two round table meetings with representation from the Vermont Family Network, the Special Education Advisory Panel, the Vermont Association of School Psychologists, and the Vermont Council of Special Education Administrators, Representatives from these organizations also provided direct feedback on each resource package released in response to the rule changes.

Community Partners -the groups named above along with staff from institutes of higher education, an external evaluator, special education directors and leadership from all participating SSIP LEAs - have consistent opportunities to provide input, suggestions, and insight on the implementation of the SSIP. Targeted engagement includes sharing and engaging in discussion about the annual SSIP report, comment and suggestions on direction of SSIP implementation, evaluation and tool development, data analysis, root cause analysis; sharing problems of practice, challenges and successes of implementation efforts; target setting, State Identified Measurable Result (SIMR) setting and scale-up opportunities.

VT AOE staff serving as individual Indicator Stewards worked with community partners to examine trends, make comparison to targets, and engage in root causes analyses in order to promote the benefits of using the SPP/APR as a tool for understanding compliance needs and prioritizing continuous improvement. This primarily occurred through the Local Special Education Determinations process – while providing TA, indicator stewards were able to receive feedback on the target set for the indicator in comparison to individual LEA performance. The State Director also worked with the VT-SEAP to review indicator performance after the February 1, 2021 SPP/APR submission. A plan has already been formulated for a busy 2021 calendar year for establishing new rigorous targets based on Vermont trend data.

Additionally, VT AOE has also utilized parent focus groups to provide input and feedback on work related to the indicators, which ultimately reflect on how we will revise targets. An example of engaging stakeholders is the collaboration with VT-SEAP, VCSEA, VFN, and an independent parent focus group all of whom provided feedback on the administrative complaint process and strategies for ensuring VT AOE has timely responses, and user-friendly tools and procedures for Dispute Resolution. These stakeholders provided great insight into the parent engagement survey/response rates/targets (indicator 8), the SSIP work (Indicator 17) and our data collection for Indicators 11, 12, and 13 (through our state monitoring system).

The Special Education Team met with the VT-SEAP on their report identifying unmet needs of students with disabilities and incorporated recommendations as part of the rule changes work. The State Director reports out on progress at VT-SEAP meetings.

For target setting, a public webpage was developed and promoted so parents from local and statewide advocacy and advisory committees and individual parents can engage in setting targets, analyzing data, developing, and recommending improvement strategies and evaluating progress. The target setting webpage can be found at <https://education.vermont.gov/student-support/vermont-special-education/recent-guidance-news-and-events/target-setting-for-the-spp-apr>, which includes a link to the webpage that houses Vermont’s SPP/APR reports, which can be found at <https://education.vermont.gov/data-and-reporting/school-reports/special-education-reports>

**FFY 2020 SPP/APR Data**

**Has the state established a minimum n/cell-size requirement? (yes/no)**

NO

Number of LEAs that have a significant discrepancy	Number of LEAs in the State	FFY 2019 Data	FFY 2020 Target	FFY 2020 Data	Status	Slippage
0	52	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	Met target	No Slippage

**Choose one of the following comparison methodologies to determine whether significant discrepancies are occurring (34 CFR §300.170(a))**

Compare the rates of suspensions and expulsions of greater than 10 days in a school year for children with IEPs among LEAs in the State

**State’s definition of “significant discrepancy” and methodology**

Vermont defines a significant discrepancy for any individual LEA as a rate of out-of-school suspension/expulsions greater than ten days that is more than 3 percent of that LEA's total special education population. For FFY20, this is approximately 60 times the rate for the state of Vermont as a whole (0.05 percent). The out-of-school suspension/expulsion rate is derived from the total number of out-of-school suspension/expulsions more than 10 days for special education students in an LEA (numerator) divided by the total number of special education students in the LEA (denominator). The source information for the numerator in the LEA calculations was the same as that used to populate the "Children with Disabilities (IDEA) Suspensions/Expulsions" EdFacts file for school year 2019-2020. The source information for the denominator in the LEA calculations was the same as that used to populate the "Children with Disabilities (IDEA) School Age" and "Children with Disabilities (IDEA) Early Childhood" EdFacts files for the school year 2019-2020.

**Provide additional information about this indicator (optional)**

The VT AOE has developed model discipline procedure document to assist building and district administrators in making decisions regarding exclusionary discipline. Additionally, the Vermont Legislature has introduced a bill to (a) prohibit the suspension or expulsion of students under eight years of age; (b) develop a task force to generate strategies designed to end suspensions and expulsions for all but the most serious student behaviors; (c) compile data regarding school discipline in Vermont schools, with data disaggregated for race and ethnicity, among other things. Additionally, given the COVID-19 pandemic and students receiving remote instruction at times, a guidance document was developed to guide families and caregivers in managing the behaviors of children in home and day-care settings during remote instruction while technical assistance was provided to LEAs regarding what did and did not constitute a suspension during a global pandemic. Overall rates of disciplinary actions were low during ongoing COVID-19 pandemic.

VT AOE maintains and updates a webpage for resources related to Suspension/Exclusion for special education administrators and educators which can be found at: <https://education.vermont.gov/student-support/vermont-special-education/technical-assistance-requests-and-professional-development/state-performance-plan-resources-by-indicator#indicator-4>

**Review of Policies, Procedures, and Practices (completed in FFY 2020 using 2019-2020 data)**

**Provide a description of the review of policies, procedures, and practices relating to the development and implementation of IEPs, the use of positive behavioral interventions and supports, and procedural safeguards.**

The Vermont AOE has developed an assessment template to be used in the review of an LEA's policies and practices with regard to procedural safeguards. This template can be used to review individual student files to ascertain whether due process safeguards were in place for each disciplinary action taken, which can be found at <https://education.vermont.gov/documents/edu-discipline-policies-lea-self-assessment>.

The State DID NOT identify noncompliance with Part B requirements as a result of the review required by 34 CFR §300.170(b)

**Correction of Findings of Noncompliance Identified in FFY 2019**

Findings of Noncompliance Identified	Findings of Noncompliance Verified as Corrected Within One Year	Findings of Noncompliance Subsequently Corrected	Findings Not Yet Verified as Corrected

**Correction of Findings of Noncompliance Identified Prior to FFY 2019**

Year Findings of Noncompliance Were Identified	Findings of Noncompliance Not Yet Verified as Corrected as of FFY 2019 APR	Findings of Noncompliance Verified as Corrected	Findings Not Yet Verified as Corrected

**4A - Prior FFY Required Actions**

None

**4A - OSEP Response**

The State provided targets for FFYs 2020 through 2025 for this indicator, and OSEP accepts those targets.

**4A - Required Actions**

## Indicator 4B: Suspension/Expulsion

### Instructions and Measurement

**Monitoring Priority:** FAPE in the LRE

**Compliance Indicator:** Rates of suspension and expulsion:

- A. Percent of local educational agencies (LEA) that have a significant discrepancy, as defined by the State, in the rate of suspensions and expulsions of greater than 10 days in a school year for children with IEPs; and
- B. Percent of LEAs that have: (a) a significant discrepancy, as defined by the State, by race or ethnicity, in the rate of suspensions and expulsions of greater than 10 days in a school year for children with IEPs; and (b) policies, procedures or practices that contribute to the significant discrepancy, as defined by the State, and do not comply with requirements relating to the development and implementation of IEPs, the use of positive behavioral interventions and supports, and procedural safeguards.

(20 U.S.C. 1416(a)(3)(A); 1412(a)(22))

#### Data Source

State discipline data, including State's analysis of State's Discipline data collected under IDEA Section 618, where applicable. Discrepancy can be computed by either comparing the rates of suspensions and expulsions for children with IEPs to rates for nondisabled children within the LEA or by comparing the rates of suspensions and expulsions for children with IEPs among LEAs within the State.

#### Measurement

Percent = [(# of LEAs that meet the State-established n and/or cell size (if applicable) for one or more racial/ethnic groups that have: (a) a significant discrepancy, as defined by the State, by race or ethnicity, in the rates of suspensions and expulsions of more than 10 days during the school year of children with IEPs; and (b) policies, procedures or practices that contribute to the significant discrepancy, as defined by the State, and do not comply with requirements relating to the development and implementation of IEPs, the use of positive behavioral interventions and supports, and procedural safeguards) divided by the (# of LEAs in the State that meet the State-established n and/or cell size (if applicable) for one or more racial/ethnic groups)] times 100.

Include State's definition of "significant discrepancy."

#### Instructions

If the State has established a minimum n and/or cell size requirement, the State may only include, in both the numerator and the denominator, LEAs that met that State-established n and/or cell size. If the State used a minimum n and/or cell size requirement, report the number of LEAs totally excluded from the calculation as a result of this requirement.

Describe the results of the State's examination of the data for the year before the reporting year (e.g., for the FFY 2020 SPP/APR, use data from 2019-2020), including data disaggregated by race and ethnicity to determine if significant discrepancies, as defined by the State, are occurring in the rates of long-term suspensions and expulsions (more than 10 days during the school year) of children with IEPs, as required at 20 U.S.C. 1412(a)(22). The State's examination must include one of the following comparisons:

- The rates of suspensions and expulsions for children with IEPs among LEAs within the State; or
- The rates of suspensions and expulsions for children with IEPs to nondisabled children within the LEAs

In the description, specify which method the State used to determine possible discrepancies and explain what constitutes those discrepancies.

Because the measurement table requires that the data examined for this indicator are lag year data, States should examine the 618 data that was submitted by LEAs that were in operation during the school year before the reporting year. For example, if a State has 100 LEAs operating in the 2019-2020 school year, those 100 LEAs would have reported 618 data in 2019-2020 on the number of children suspended/expelled. If the State then opens 15 new LEAs in 2020-2021, suspension/expulsion data from those 15 new LEAs would not be in the 2019-2020 618 data set, and therefore, those 15 new LEAs should not be included in the denominator of the calculation. States must use the number of LEAs from the year before the reporting year in its calculation for this indicator. For the FFY 2020 SPP/APR submission, States must use the number of LEAs reported in 2019-2020 (which can be found in the FFY 2019 SPP/APR introduction).

Indicator 4B: Provide the following: (a) the number of LEAs that met the State-established n and/or cell size (if applicable) for one or more racial/ethnic groups that have a significant discrepancy, as defined by the State, by race or ethnicity, in the rates of long-term suspensions and expulsions (more than 10 days during the school year) for children with IEPs; and (b) the number of those LEAs in which policies, procedures or practices contribute to the significant discrepancy and do not comply with requirements relating to the development and implementation of IEPs, the use of positive behavioral interventions and supports, and procedural safeguards.

Provide detailed information about the timely correction of noncompliance as noted in OSEP's response for the previous SPP/APR. If discrepancies occurred and the LEA with discrepancies had policies, procedures or practices that contributed to the significant discrepancy, as defined by the State, and that do not comply with requirements relating to the development and implementation of IEPs, the use of positive behavioral interventions and supports, and procedural safeguards, describe how the State ensured that such policies, procedures, and practices were revised to comply with applicable requirements consistent with (OSEP) Memorandum 09-02, dated October 17, 2008.

If the State did not ensure timely correction of the previous noncompliance, provide information on the extent to which noncompliance was subsequently corrected (more than one year after identification). In addition, provide information regarding the nature of any continuing noncompliance, improvement activities completed (e.g., review of policies and procedures, technical assistance, training, etc.) and any enforcement actions that were taken.

If the State reported less than 100% compliance for the previous reporting period (e.g., for the FFY 2020 SPP/APR, the data for FFY 2019), and the State did not identify any findings of noncompliance, provide an explanation of why the State did not identify any findings of noncompliance.

Targets must be 0% for 4B.

## 4B - Indicator Data

### Not Applicable

Select yes if this indicator is not applicable.

NO

### Historical Data

Baseline Year	Baseline Data
2009	0.00%

FFY	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019
Target	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%
Data	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%

**Targets**

FFY	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025
Target	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%

**FFY 2020 SPP/APR Data**

**Has the state established a minimum n/cell-size requirement? (yes/no)**

YES

**If yes, the State may only include, in both the numerator and the denominator, LEAs that met the State-established n/cell size. Report the number of LEAs excluded from the calculation as a result of the requirement.**

52

Number of LEAs that have a significant discrepancy, by race or ethnicity	Number of those LEAs that have policies, procedure or practices that contribute to the significant discrepancy and do not comply with requirements	Number of LEAs that met the State's minimum n/cell size	FFY 2019 Data	FFY 2020 Target	FFY 2020 Data	Status	Slippage
0	0	0	0.00%	0%		N/A	N/A

**Were all races and ethnicities included in the review?**

YES

**State's definition of "significant discrepancy" and methodology**

Vermont's definition of significant discrepancy in the rates of long-term out-of-school suspensions and expulsions, by race or ethnicity, is a rate of greater than 3 percent of students with IEPs in any race or ethnicity group experiencing out-of-school suspension or expulsion for more than 10 school days during the year. For FFY20, this is approximately 60 times the rate for the state of Vermont as a whole (0.05 percent). VT AOE's methodology entails the following steps: First, VT AOE applies a minimum cell size of 4: In each LEA, race and ethnicity categories in which fewer than 4 students with disabilities experience long-term out-of-school suspensions and expulsions are excluded. In 52 of 52 districts, all race and ethnicity categories were excluded due to cell size. Then, separately, for each race and ethnicity category, VT AOE aggregates each LEA's total number of IEP students who were suspended or expelled out of school for greater than 10 days, and divides by the total number of IEP students of that race or ethnicity in the LEA. This process produces the rate of long-term out-of-school suspensions and expulsions by race and ethnicity for each LEA. Finally, separately, for each race and ethnicity category, VT AOE identifies LEAs which have a long-term out-of-school suspension/expulsion rate of greater than 3 percent.

**Provide additional information about this indicator (optional)**

The VT AOE has developed model discipline procedure document to assist building and district administrators in making decisions regarding exclusionary discipline. Additionally, the Vermont legislature has introduced a bill to (a) prohibit the suspension or expulsion of students under eight years of age; (b) develop a task force to generate strategies designed to end suspensions and expulsions for all but the most serious student behaviors; (c) compile data regarding school discipline in Vermont schools, with data disaggregated for race and ethnicity, among other things. Additionally, given the Covid-19 pandemic and students receiving remote instruction at times, a guidance document was developed to guide families and caregivers in managing the behaviors of children in home and day-care settings during remote instruction while technical assistance was provided to LEAs regarding what did and did not constitute a suspension during a global pandemic. Of the 52 LEAs, none met the minimum n-size for any racial/ethnic group; reported discipline dropped during the COVID-19 pandemic.

VT AOE maintains and updates a webpage for resources related to suspension/exclusion for special education administrators and educators which can be found at: <https://education.vermont.gov/student-support/vermont-special-education/technical-assistance-requests-and-professional-development/state-performance-plan-resources-by-indicator#indicator-4>

**Review of Policies, Procedures, and Practices (completed in FFY 2020 using 2019-2020 data)**

**Provide a description of the review of policies, procedures, and practices relating to the development and implementation of IEPs, the use of positive behavioral interventions and supports, and procedural safeguards.**

The VT AOE has developed an assessment template to be used in the review of an LEA's policies and practices with regard to procedural safeguards. This template can be used to review individual student files to ascertain whether due process safeguards were in place for each disciplinary action taken, which can be found at <https://education.vermont.gov/documents/edu-discipline-policies-lea-self-assessment>.

The State DID NOT identify noncompliance with Part B requirements as a result of the review required by 34 CFR §300.170(b)

**Correction of Findings of Noncompliance Identified in FFY 2019**

Findings of Noncompliance Identified	Findings of Noncompliance Verified as Corrected Within One Year	Findings of Noncompliance Subsequently Corrected	Findings Not Yet Verified as Corrected

**Correction of Findings of Noncompliance Identified Prior to FFY 2019**

Year Findings of Noncompliance Were Identified	Findings of Noncompliance Not Yet Verified as Corrected as of FFY 2019 APR	Findings of Noncompliance Verified as Corrected	Findings Not Yet Verified as Corrected

**4B - Prior FFY Required Actions**

None

**4B - OSEP Response**

**4B- Required Actions**

## Indicator 5: Education Environments (children 5 (Kindergarten) - 21)

### Instructions and Measurement

**Monitoring Priority:** FAPE in the LRE

**Results indicator:** Percent of children with IEPs aged 5 who are enrolled in kindergarten and aged 6 through 21 served:

- A. Inside the regular class 80% or more of the day;
- B. Inside the regular class less than 40% of the day; and
- C. In separate schools, residential facilities, or homebound/hospital placements.

(20 U.S.C. 1416(a)(3)(A))

#### Data Source

Same data as used for reporting to the Department under section 618 of the IDEA, using the definitions in EDFacts file specification FS002.

#### Measurement

- A. Percent = [(# of children with IEPs aged 5 who are enrolled in kindergarten and aged 6 through 21 served inside the regular class 80% or more of the day) divided by the (total # of students aged 5 who are enrolled in kindergarten and aged 6 through 21 with IEPs)] times 100.
- B. Percent = [(# of children with IEPs aged 5 who are enrolled in kindergarten and aged 6 through 21 served inside the regular class less than 40% of the day) divided by the (total # of students aged 5 who are enrolled in kindergarten and aged 6 through 21 with IEPs)] times 100.
- C. Percent = [(# of children with IEPs aged 5 who are enrolled in kindergarten and aged 6 through 21 served in separate schools, residential facilities, or homebound/hospital placements) divided by the (total # of students aged 5 who are enrolled in kindergarten and aged 6 through 21 with IEPs)] times 100.

#### Instructions

*Sampling from the State's 618 data is not allowed.*

States must report five-year-old children with disabilities who are enrolled in kindergarten in this indicator. Five-year-old children with disabilities who are enrolled in preschool programs are included in Indicator 6. Describe the results of the calculations and compare the results to the target.

If the data reported in this indicator are not the same as the State's data reported under section 618 of the IDEA, explain.

## 5 - Indicator Data

### Historical Data

Part	Baseline	FFY	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019
A	2020	Target >=	79.00%	79.00%	79.00%	79.00%	79.00%
A	80.22%	Data	75.76%	76.77%	77.82%	77.86%	78.87%
B	2020	Target <=	7.00%	7.00%	7.00%	7.00%	7.00%
B	4.96%	Data	5.72%	5.15%	4.61%	4.56%	4.48%
C	2020	Target <=	3.75%	3.75%	3.75%	3.75%	3.75%
C	6.09%	Data	5.94%	6.05%	6.03%	6.36%	6.49%

### Targets

FFY	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025
Target A >=	80.00%	80.00%	81.00%	81.00%	82.00%	82.00%
Target B <=	4.50%	4.50%	4.10%	4.10%	3.80%	3.80%
Target C <=	6.50%	6.50%	6.25%	6.25%	6.00%	6.00%

### Targets: Description of Stakeholder Input

VT AOE solicited broad stakeholder input on the State's targets in the SPP/APR from January 2021 until December 2021. The VT AOE Special Education team began meeting with the Special Education Advisory Panel in January 2021 to discuss the changes to the SPP/APR FFY20-25 package, changes to data sources and indicator calculation, indicator targets and improvement activities. Along with collaboration with the Special Education Advisory Panel, VT AOE Special Education team solicited input from the Vermont's Parent Support Center (Vermont Family Network) and the Vermont Council of Special Education Administrators Executive. Beyond target input from these groups, the VT AOE Special education team also created a public webpage in which community partners and interested parties can access resources regarding the SPP/APR, information on the target setting process and electronic and mail-in forms to provide input on the State's targets in the SPP/APR. The public webpage regarding the SPP/APR Target Setting can be found at <https://education.vermont.gov/student-support/vermont-special-education/recent-guidance-news-and-events/target-setting-for-the-spp-apr>

Vermont prefers to use the terms "community partners" or "interested parties" rather than stakeholders. With that said, we continue to make progress towards our goal of improved outcomes in utilizing feedback and input, which will lead to better products reflective of representative community partner input, and an increased understanding of how the SPP/APR grounds the work of the State. During 2021, key community partner input was obtained through the engaging the Vermont Special Education Advisory Panel (VT-SEAP) and the Vermont Council of Special Education Administrators Executive Board; as well as through check-in sessions hosted by the State Director of Special Education designed for dialogue and technical assistance with Special Education Administrators throughout the state.



Since they were approved in May of 2021, the State has been developing and executing an implementation and training plan for changes to the Special Education Rules scheduled to take effect July 1, 2022. The initial training plan, and subsequent amendments, have been designed based on ongoing feedback from our community partners, in particular our special education administrators and the Vermont Family Network. The State convened two round table meetings with representation from the Vermont Family Network, the Special Education Advisory Panel, the Vermont Association of School Psychologists, and the Vermont Council of Special Education Administrators, Representatives from these organizations also provided direct feedback on each resource package released in response to the rule changes.

Community Partners -the groups named above along with staff from institutes of higher education, an external evaluator, special education directors and leadership from all participating SSIP LEAs - have consistent opportunities to provide input, suggestions, and insight on the implementation of the SSIP. Targeted engagement includes sharing and engaging in discussion about the annual SSIP report, comment and suggestions on direction of SSIP implementation, evaluation and tool development, data analysis, root cause analysis; sharing problems of practice, challenges and successes of implementation efforts; target setting, State Identified Measurable Result (SiMR) setting and scale-up opportunities.

VT AOE staff serving as individual Indicator Stewards worked with community partners to examine trends, make comparison to targets, and engage in root causes analyses in order to promote the benefits of using the SPP/APR as a tool for understanding compliance needs and prioritizing continuous improvement. This primarily occurred through the Local Special Education Determinations process – while providing TA, indicator stewards were able to receive feedback on the target set for the indicator in comparison to individual LEA performance. The State Director also worked with the VT-SEAP to review indicator performance after the February 1, 2021 SPP/APR submission. A plan has already been formulated for a busy 2021 calendar year for establishing new rigorous targets based on Vermont trend data.

Additionally, VT AOE has also utilized parent focus groups to provide input and feedback on work related to the indicators, which ultimately reflect on how we will revise targets. An example of engaging stakeholders is the collaboration with VT-SEAP, VCSEA, VFN, and an independent parent focus group all of whom provided feedback on the administrative complaint process and strategies for ensuring VT AOE has timely responses, and user-friendly tools and procedures for Dispute Resolution. These stakeholders provided great insight into the parent engagement survey/response rates/targets (indicator 8), the SSIP work (Indicator 17) and our data collection for Indicators 11, 12, and 13 (through our state monitoring system).

The Special Education Team met with the VT-SEAP on their report identifying unmet needs of students with disabilities and incorporated recommendations as part of the rule changes work. The State Director reports out on progress at VT-SEAP meetings.

For target setting, a public webpage was developed and promoted so parents from local and statewide advocacy and advisory committees and individual parents can engage in setting targets, analyzing data, developing, and recommending improvement strategies and evaluating progress. The target setting webpage can be found at <https://education.vermont.gov/student-support/vermont-special-education/recent-guidance-news-and-events/target-setting-for-the-spp-apr>, which includes a link to the webpage that houses Vermont’s SPP/APR reports, which can be found at <https://education.vermont.gov/data-and-reporting/school-reports/special-education-reports>

**Prepopulated Data**

Source	Date	Description	Data
SY 2020-21 Child Count/Educational Environment Data Groups (EDFacts file spec FS002; Data group 74)	07/07/2021	Total number of children with IEPs aged 5 (kindergarten) through 21	13,793
SY 2020-21 Child Count/Educational Environment Data Groups (EDFacts file spec FS002; Data group 74)	07/07/2021	A. Number of children with IEPs aged 5 (kindergarten) through 21 inside the regular class 80% or more of the day	11,065
SY 2020-21 Child Count/Educational Environment Data Groups (EDFacts file spec FS002; Data group 74)	07/07/2021	B. Number of children with IEPs aged 5 (kindergarten) through 21 inside the regular class less than 40% of the day	684
SY 2020-21 Child Count/Educational Environment Data Groups (EDFacts file spec FS002; Data group 74)	07/07/2021	c1. Number of children with IEPs aged 5 (kindergarten) through 21 in separate schools	679
SY 2020-21 Child Count/Educational Environment Data Groups (EDFacts file spec FS002; Data group 74)	07/07/2021	c2. Number of children with IEPs aged 5 (kindergarten) through 21 in residential facilities	145
SY 2020-21 Child Count/Educational Environment Data Groups (EDFacts file spec FS002; Data group 74)	07/07/2021	c3. Number of children with IEPs aged 5 (kindergarten) through 21 in homebound/hospital placements	16

Select yes if the data reported in this indicator are not the same as the State’s data reported under section 618 of the IDEA.

NO

**FFY 2020 SPP/APR Data**

Education Environments	Number of children with IEPs aged 5 (kindergarten) through 21 served	Total number of children with IEPs aged 5 (kindergarten) through 21	FFY 2019 Data	FFY 2020 Target	FFY 2020 Data	Status	Slippage
A. Number of children with IEPs aged 5 (kindergarten) through 21 inside the regular class 80% or more of the day	11,065	13,793	78.87%	80.00%	80.22%	N/A	N/A
B. Number of children with IEPs aged 5 (kindergarten) through 21 inside the regular class less than 40% of the day	684	13,793	4.48%	4.50%	4.96%	N/A	N/A
C. Number of children with IEPs aged 5 (kindergarten) through 21 inside separate schools, residential facilities, or homebound/hospital placements [c1+c2+c3]	840	13,793	6.49%	6.50%	6.09%	N/A	N/A

**Provide additional information about this indicator (optional)**

FFY20 data for this indicator are based on VT’s Child Count collection with a Dec 1, 2020 reference date. As the data refer to a period during the State of Emergency brought about by COVID-19, and in fact were collected during the emergency, this indicator for FFY20 was affected by COVID-19. The VT AOE offered a virtual training on Child Count reporting in November 2021.

As part of the Bi-weekly director check-in-meetings with all LEA special education directors, the State Director discussed OSEP guidance regarding FAPE in the LRE during the COVID-19 pandemic and posted this information through multiple channels including the website and the nuggets (monthly communication to the field), and part of the State of the State webinar of October 2021.

The VT AOE created a Least Restrictive Environment (LRE) workgroup that met multiple times over summer of 2021 to begin developing a tool regarding the LRE continuum to be used by IEP teams in considering a student’s placement. This LRE work group included a parent and representatives from the Special Education Advisory Panel.

The VT AOE created School-Aged Educational Environment Calculation Example document which explains that an educational environment represents the setting in which a school aged child (5 in kindergarten to 21) with disabilities has been placed for educational services by their Individualized Education Program (IEP) as determined by their IEP team. Child Count data is reported by a student’s educational environment, which represents the setting in which a student with disabilities has been placed for educational services by his or her IEP. Educators use this document as a guide to calculate a student’s educational placement for Child Count. This tool can be found at <https://education.vermont.gov/documents/edu-school-age-educational-environment-calculation-example>

The VT AOE maintains and updates a webpage for resources related to LRE for special education administrators and educators which can be found at: <https://education.vermont.gov/student-support/vermont-special-education/technical-assistance-requests-and-professional-development/state-performance-plan-resources-by-indicator#indicator-5>

**5 - Prior FFY Required Actions**

None

**5 - OSEP Response**

The State has revised the baseline for this indicator, using data from FFY 2020, and OSEP accepts that revision.

The State provided targets for FFYs 2020 through 2025 for this indicator, and OSEP accepts those targets.

The State provided an explanation of how COVID-19 impacted its ability to collect FFY 2020 data for this indicator and steps the State has taken to mitigate the impact of COVID-19 on data collection.

**5 - Required Actions**

## Indicator 6: Preschool Environments

### Instructions and Measurement

**Monitoring Priority:** FAPE in the LRE

**Results indicator:** Percent of children with IEPs aged 3, 4, and aged 5 who are enrolled in a preschool program attending a:

- A. Regular early childhood program and receiving the majority of special education and related services in the regular early childhood program; and
- B. Separate special education class, separate school or residential facility.
- C. Receiving special education and related services in the home.

(20 U.S.C. 1416(a)(3)(A))

#### Data Source

Same data as used for reporting to the Department under section 618 of the IDEA, using the definitions in EDFacts file specification FS089.

#### Measurement

- A. Percent =  $[(\# \text{ of children ages 3, 4, and 5 with IEPs attending a regular early childhood program and receiving the majority of special education and related services in the regular early childhood program}) \div (\text{total } \# \text{ of children ages 3, 4, and 5 with IEPs})] \times 100$ .
- B. Percent =  $[(\# \text{ of children ages 3, 4, and 5 with IEPs attending a separate special education class, separate school or residential facility}) \div (\text{total } \# \text{ of children ages 3, 4, and 5 with IEPs})] \times 100$ .
- C. Percent =  $[(\# \text{ of children ages 3, 4, and 5 with IEPs receiving special education and related services in the home}) \div (\text{total } \# \text{ of children ages 3, 4, and 5 with IEPs})] \times 100$ .

#### Instructions

*Sampling from the State's 618 data is not allowed.*

States must report five-year-old children with disabilities who are enrolled in preschool programs in this indicator. Five-year-old children with disabilities who are enrolled in kindergarten are included in Indicator 5.

States may choose to set one target that is inclusive of children ages 3, 4, and 5, or set individual targets for each age.

For Indicator 6C: States are not required to establish a baseline or targets if the number of children receiving special education and related services in the home is less than 10, regardless of whether the State chooses to set one target that is inclusive of children ages 3, 4, and 5, or set individual targets for each age. In a reporting period during which the number of children receiving special education and related services in the home reaches 10 or greater, States are required to develop baseline and targets and report on them in the corresponding SPP/APR.

For Indicator 6C: States may express their targets in a range (*e.g.*, 75-85%). Describe the results of the calculations and compare the results to the target.

If the data reported in this indicator are not the same as the State's data reported under IDEA section 618, explain.

## 6 - Indicator Data

### Not Applicable

Select yes if this indicator is not applicable.

NO

### Historical Data – 6A, 6B

Part	FFY	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019
A	Target >=	71.78%	71.78%	71.78%	71.78%	71.78%
A	Data	76.44%	75.81%	75.61%	73.12%	71.95%
B	Target <=	6.19%	6.19%	6.19%	6.19%	6.19%
B	Data	1.80%	1.00%	0.70%	0.63%	0.38%

### Targets: Description of Stakeholder Input

VT AOE solicited broad stakeholder input on the State's targets in the SPP/APR from January 2021 until December 2021. The VT AOE Special Education team began meeting with the Special Education Advisory Panel in January 2021 to discuss the changes to the SPP/APR FFY20-25 package, changes to data sources and indicator calculation, indicator targets and improvement activities. Along with collaboration with the Special Education Advisory Panel, VT AOE Special Education team solicited input from the Vermont's Parent Support Center (Vermont Family Network) and the Vermont Council of Special Education Administrators Executive. Beyond target input from these groups, the VT AOE Special education team also created a public webpage in which community partners and interested parties can access resources regarding the SPP/APR, information on the target setting process and electronic and mail-in forms to provide input on the State's targets in the SPP/APR. The public webpage regarding the SPP/APR Target Setting can be found at <https://education.vermont.gov/student-support/vermont-special-education/recent-guidance-news-and-events/target-setting-for-the-spp-apr>

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Since they were approved in May of 2021, the State has been developing and executing an implementation and training plan for changes to the Special Education Rules scheduled to take effect July 1, 2022. The initial training plan, and subsequent amendments, have been designed based on ongoing feedback from our community partners, in particular our special education administrators and the Vermont Family Network. The State convened two round table meetings with representation from the Vermont Family Network, the Special Education Advisory Panel, the Vermont Association of School Psychologists, and the Vermont Council of Special Education Administrators, Representatives from these organizations also provided direct feedback on each resource package released in response to the rule changes.

Community Partners -the groups named above along with staff from institutes of higher education, an external evaluator, special education directors and leadership from all participating SSIP LEAs - have consistent opportunities to provide input, suggestions, and insight on the implementation of the SSIP. Targeted engagement includes sharing and engaging in discussion about the annual SSIP report, comment and suggestions on direction of SSIP implementation, evaluation and tool development, data analysis, root cause analysis; sharing problems of practice, challenges and successes of implementation efforts; target setting, State Identified Measurable Result (SiMR) setting and scale-up opportunities.

VT AOE staff serving as individual Indicator Stewards worked with community partners to examine trends, make comparison to targets, and engage in root causes analyses in order to promote the benefits of using the SPP/APR as a tool for understanding compliance needs and prioritizing continuous improvement. This primarily occurred through the Local Special Education Determinations process – while providing TA, indicator stewards were able to receive feedback on the target set for the indicator in comparison to individual LEA performance. The State Director also worked with the VT-SEAP to review indicator performance after the February 1, 2021 SPP/APR submission. A plan has already been formulated for a busy 2021 calendar year for establishing new rigorous targets based on Vermont trend data.

Additionally, VT AOE has also utilized parent focus groups to provide input and feedback on work related to the indicators, which ultimately reflect on how we will revise targets. An example of engaging stakeholders is the collaboration with VT-SEAP, VCSEA, VFN, and an independent parent focus group all of whom provided feedback on the administrative complaint process and strategies for ensuring VT AOE has timely responses, and user-friendly tools and procedures for Dispute Resolution. These stakeholders provided great insight into the parent engagement survey/response rates/targets (indicator 8), the SSIP work (Indicator 17) and our data collection for Indicators 11, 12, and 13 (through our state monitoring system).

The Special Education Team met with the VT-SEAP on their report identifying unmet needs of students with disabilities and incorporated recommendations as part of the rule changes work. The State Director reports out on progress at VT-SEAP meetings.

For target setting, a public webpage was developed and promoted so parents from local and statewide advocacy and advisory committees and individual parents can engage in setting targets, analyzing data, developing, and recommending improvement strategies and evaluating progress. The target setting webpage can be found at <https://education.vermont.gov/student-support/vermont-special-education/recent-guidance-news-and-events/target-setting-for-the-spp-apr>, which includes a link to the webpage that houses Vermont’s SPP/APR reports, which can be found at <https://education.vermont.gov/data-and-reporting/school-reports/special-education-reports>

**Targets**

**Please select if the State wants to set baseline and targets based on individual age ranges (i.e. separate baseline and targets for each age), or inclusive of all children ages 3, 4, and 5.**

Inclusive Targets

**Please select if the State wants to use target ranges for 6C.**

Target Range not used

**Baselines for Inclusive Targets option (A, B, C)**

Part	Baseline Year	Baseline Data
A	2020	68.70%
B	2020	0.81%
C	2020	8.23%

**Inclusive Targets – 6A, 6B**

FFY	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025
Target A >=	68.00%	68.00%	69.00%	69.00%	70.00%	70.00%
Target B <=	0.81%	0.81%	0.71%	0.61%	0.51%	0.51%

**Inclusive Targets – 6C**

FFY	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025
Target C <=	8.23%	8.23%	8.23%	8.23%	8.23%	8.23%

**Prepopulated Data**

**Data Source:**

SY 2020-21 Child Count/Educational Environment Data Groups (EDFacts file spec FS089; Data group 613)

**Date:**

Description	3	4	5	3 through 5 - Total
Total number of children with IEPs	454	689	218	1,361
a1. Number of children attending a regular early childhood program and receiving the majority of special education and related services in the regular early childhood program	274	502	159	935
b1. Number of children attending separate special education class	4	1	0	5
b2. Number of children attending separate school	2	4	0	6
b3. Number of children attending residential facility	0	0	0	0
c1. Number of children receiving special education and related services in the home	45	46	21	112

Select yes if the data reported in this indicator are not the same as the State's data reported under section 618 of the IDEA.

NO

#### FFY 2020 SPP/APR Data - Aged 3 through 5

Preschool Environments	Number of children with IEPs aged 3 through 5 served	Total number of children with IEPs aged 3 through 5	FFY 2019 Data	FFY 2020 Target	FFY 2020 Data	Status	Slippage
A. A regular early childhood program and receiving the majority of special education and related services in the regular early childhood program	935	1,361	71.95%	68.00%	68.70%	N/A	N/A
B. Separate special education class, separate school or residential facility	11	1,361	0.38%	0.81%	0.81%	N/A	N/A
C. Home	112	1,361		8.23%	8.23%	N/A	N/A

#### Provide additional information about this indicator (optional)

In consultation with a diverse stakeholder group including parents, advocates, and LEA administrators, VT AOE chose to keep 6C targets stable because the home setting is an appropriate and rich learning environment for preschoolers along with given coaching, supports, and services. VT AOE chose to set one set of targets for 6C inclusive of children ages 3, 4, and 5. After consulting the OSEP SPP/APR Universal Assistance guide, which states targets for the "home" category in most States should decrease over time, VT AOE has a strong rationale for holding targets steady. After engaging community partners through the stakeholder involvement process described above, VT AOE's diverse stakeholder group communicated widespread support for IEP teams' individual determination of placement based on a full continuum of placements and the unique abilities and needs as described in the child's IEP 34 CFR § 300.116(b)(2).

All State targets were met for Indicator 6: Preschool Environments. There was a small drop from the previous year which could be attributed to the change in 5-year-old Kindergarteners being reported in the kindergarten environment. We expect that COVID-19 and the apprehension to send 3,4, and 5-year-old learners, including those medically fragile students, to attend in an early learning environment is influencing/impacting 6c data. In other words, families may be opting to receive services at home. Regular monitoring meetings continued with the Part B Data Manager in order to establish consistent communication and monitoring between the data and programmatic sides of the indicator. Individual TA was administered to Supervisory Unions/ School Districts improve their practices based on current data analysis. For example, SU/SDs not meeting the State target received technical assistance in which a root cause analysis was performed using critical questions. In addition, TA included review of the IDC B-6 Data reporting tools: Educational Environments. Ages 3 through 5 and the ECTA Determining LRE Placements Reference Points and Discussion Prompts document. In November 2021, an online webinar was given by the 619 Coordinator and Inclusion Coordinator on Indicator 6, including training on the purpose and background of the indicator, reporting requirements and how to report, and various resources to help teams evaluate and improve their practices and processes. This module and additional resources are in the process of being uploaded to the Early Education website.

The 619 Coordinator attended several Indicator 6 data sessions through NASDSE and ECTA/DaSy in order to improve practice and TA. Vermont currently has an Inclusion Coordinator who is actively involved in the ECTA's Inclusion Community of Practice. The 619 Coordinator and Part B Data Manager participate in ongoing IDC's Data Quality Peer Group on Indicator 6.

FFY20 data for this indicator are based on VT's Child Count collection with a Dec 1, 2020, reference date. As the data refer to a period during the State

of Emergency brought about by COVID-19, and in fact were collected during the emergency, this indicator for FFY20 was affected by COVID-19. VT AOE offered a virtual training on Child Count reporting in November 2021. The early childhood education team, including the 619 coordinator and inclusion coordinator addressed COVID-19 impact on LRE and inclusion during UPK virtual conversations, newsletters, and individual calls with LEAs. Additional resources on remote screening, evaluation, assessment, and inclusion as well as the reinforcement of the importance of Child Find activities were provided.

The VT AOE maintains and updates a webpage for resources related to preschool environments for special education administrators and educators which can be found at: <https://education.vermont.gov/student-support/vermont-special-education/technical-assistance-requests-and-professional-development/state-performance-plan-resources-by-indicator#indicator-6>

## **6 - Prior FFY Required Actions**

None

## **6 - OSEP Response**

The State has revised the baseline for 6A and 6B and established the baseline for 6C, using data from FFY 2020, and OSEP accepts that revision.

The State provided targets for FFYs 2020 through 2025 for this indicator, and OSEP accepts those targets.

The State provided an explanation of how COVID-19 impacted its ability to collect FFY 2020 data for this indicator and steps the State has taken to mitigate the impact of COVID-19 on data collection.

## **6 - Required Actions**

## Indicator 7: Preschool Outcomes

### Instructions and Measurement

**Monitoring Priority:** FAPE in the LRE

**Results indicator:** Percent of preschool children aged 3 through 5 with IEPs who demonstrate improved:

- A. Positive social-emotional skills (including social relationships);
- B. Acquisition and use of knowledge and skills (including early language/ communication and early literacy); and
- C. Use of appropriate behaviors to meet their needs.

(20 U.S.C. 1416 (a)(3)(A))

#### Data Source

State selected data source.

#### Measurement

Outcomes:

- A. Positive social-emotional skills (including social relationships);
- B. Acquisition and use of knowledge and skills (including early language/communication and early literacy); and
- C. Use of appropriate behaviors to meet their needs.

Progress categories for A, B and C:

- a. Percent of preschool children who did not improve functioning = [(# of preschool children who did not improve functioning) divided by (# of preschool children with IEPs assessed)] times 100.
- b. Percent of preschool children who improved functioning but not sufficient to move nearer to functioning comparable to same-aged peers = [(# of preschool children who improved functioning but not sufficient to move nearer to functioning comparable to same-aged peers) divided by (# of preschool children with IEPs assessed)] times 100.
- c. Percent of preschool children who improved functioning to a level nearer to same-aged peers but did not reach it = [(# of preschool children who improved functioning to a level nearer to same-aged peers but did not reach it) divided by (# of preschool children with IEPs assessed)] times 100.
- d. Percent of preschool children who improved functioning to reach a level comparable to same-aged peers = [(# of preschool children who improved functioning to reach a level comparable to same-aged peers) divided by (# of preschool children with IEPs assessed)] times 100.
- e. Percent of preschool children who maintained functioning at a level comparable to same-aged peers = [(# of preschool children who maintained functioning at a level comparable to same-aged peers) divided by (# of preschool children with IEPs assessed)] times 100.

#### Summary Statements for Each of the Three Outcomes:

**Summary Statement 1:** Of those preschool children who entered the preschool program below age expectations in each Outcome, the percent who substantially increased their rate of growth by the time they turned 6 years of age or exited the program.

**Measurement for Summary Statement 1:** Percent = [(# of preschool children reported in progress category (c) plus # of preschool children reported in category (d)) divided by (# of preschool children reported in progress category (a) plus # of preschool children reported in progress category (b) plus # of preschool children reported in progress category (c) plus # of preschool children reported in progress category (d))] times 100.

**Summary Statement 2:** The percent of preschool children who were functioning within age expectations in each Outcome by the time they turned 6 years of age or exited the program.

**Measurement for Summary Statement 2:** Percent = [(# of preschool children reported in progress category (d) plus # of preschool children reported in progress category (e)) divided by (the total # of preschool children reported in progress categories (a) + (b) + (c) + (d) + (e))] times 100.

#### Instructions

Sampling of **children for assessment** is allowed. When sampling is used, submit a description of the sampling methodology outlining how the design will yield valid and reliable estimates. (See [General Instructions](#) on page 2 for additional instructions on sampling.)

In the measurement include, in the numerator and denominator, only children who received special education and related services for at least six months during the age span of three through five years.

Describe the results of the calculations and compare the results to the targets. States will use the progress categories for each of the three Outcomes to calculate and report the two Summary Statements. States have provided targets for the two Summary Statements for the three Outcomes (six numbers for targets for each FFY).

Report progress data and calculate Summary Statements to compare against the six targets. Provide the actual numbers and percentages for the five reporting categories for each of the three outcomes.

In presenting results, provide the criteria for defining "comparable to same-aged peers." If a State is using the Early Childhood Outcomes Center (ECO) Child Outcomes Summary (COS), then the criteria for defining "comparable to same-aged peers" has been defined as a child who has been assigned a score of 6 or 7 on the COS.

In addition, list the instruments and procedures used to gather data for this indicator, including if the State is using the ECO COS.

## 7 - Indicator Data

### Not Applicable

Select yes if this indicator is not applicable.

NO

#### Historical Data

Part	Baseline	FFY	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019
A1	2014	Target >=	86.63%	86.63%	86.63%	87.13%	87.13%
A1	86.63%	Data	85.17%	76.67%	81.75%	NVR	78.34%
A2	2014	Target >=	40.91%	40.91%	40.91%	41.41%	41.41%

A2	40.91%	Data	51.06%	68.75%	48.64%	NVR	48.04%
B1	2014	Target >=	87.30%	87.30%	87.30%	87.80%	87.80%
B1	87.30%	Data	84.44%	80.65%	84.65%	NVR	83.20%
B2	2014	Target >=	32.49%	32.49%	32.49%	32.99%	32.99%
B2	32.49%	Data	39.44%	58.33%	36.05%	NVR	32.40%
C1	2014	Target >=	86.00%	86.00%	86.00%	86.50%	86.50%
C1	86.00%	Data	79.27%	75.00%	85.21%	NVR	78.28%
C2	2014	Target >=	54.71%	54.71%	54.71%	55.21%	55.21%
C2	54.71%	Data	61.27%	76.04%	57.28%	NVR	55.87%

## Targets

FFY	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025
Target A1 >=	83.67%	83.67%	84.67%	85.67%	86.67%	87.67%
Target A2 >=	48.04%	50.04%	52.04%	54.04%	56.04%	58.04%
Target B1 >=	87.80%	87.80%	87.80%	87.80%	87.80%	87.80%
Target B2 >=	32.40%	34.40%	36.40%	38.40%	40.40%	42.40%
Target C1 >=	86.50%	86.50%	86.50%	86.50%	86.50%	86.50%
Target C2 >=	55.87%	57.87%	59.87%	61.87%	63.87%	65.87%

### Targets: Description of Stakeholder Input

VT AOE solicited broad stakeholder input on the State's targets in the SPP/APR from January 2021 until December 2021. The VT AOE Special Education team began meeting with the Special Education Advisory Panel in January 2021 to discuss the changes to the SPP/APR FFY20-25 package, changes to data sources and indicator calculation, indicator targets and improvement activities. Along with collaboration with the Special Education Advisory Panel, VT AOE Special Education team solicited input from the Vermont's Parent Support Center (Vermont Family Network) and the Vermont Council of Special Education Administrators Executive. Beyond target input from these groups, the VT AOE Special education team also created a public webpage in which community partners and interested parties can access resources regarding the SPP/APR, information on the target setting process and electronic and mail-in forms to provide input on the State's targets in the SPP/APR. The public webpage regarding the SPP/APR Target Setting can be found at <https://education.vermont.gov/student-support/vermont-special-education/recent-guidance-news-and-events/target-setting-for-the-spp-apr>

Vermont prefers to use the terms "community partners" or "interested parties" rather than stakeholders. With that said, we continue to make progress towards our goal of Improved outcomes in utilizing feedback and input, which will lead to better products reflective of representative community partner input, and an increased understanding of how the SPP/APR grounds the work of the State. During 2021, key community partner input was obtained through the engaging the Vermont Special Education Advisory Panel (VT-SEAP) and the Vermont Council of Special Education Administrators Executive Board; as well as through check-in sessions hosted by the State Director of Special Education designed for dialogue and technical assistance with Special Education Administrators throughout the state.

Since they were approved in May of 2021, the State has been developing and executing an implementation and training plan for changes to the Special Education Rules scheduled to take effect July 1, 2022. The initial training plan, and subsequent amendments, have been designed based on ongoing feedback from our community partners, in particular our special education administrators and the Vermont Family Network. The State convened two round table meetings with representation from the Vermont Family Network, the Special Education Advisory Panel, the Vermont Association of School Psychologists, and the Vermont Council of Special Education Administrators, Representatives from these organizations also provided direct feedback on each resource package released in response to the rule changes.

Community Partners -the groups named above along with staff from institutes of higher education, an external evaluator, special education directors and leadership from all participating SSIP LEAs - have consistent opportunities to provide input, suggestions, and insight on the implementation of the SSIP. Targeted engagement includes sharing and engaging in discussion about the annual SSIP report, comment and suggestions on direction of SSIP implementation, evaluation and tool development, data analysis, root cause analysis; sharing problems of practice, challenges and successes of implementation efforts; target setting, State Identified Measurable Result (SiMR) setting and scale-up opportunities.

VT AOE staff serving as individual Indicator Stewards worked with community partners to examine trends, make comparison to targets, and engage in root causes analyses in order to promote the benefits of using the SPP/APR as a tool for understanding compliance needs and prioritizing continuous improvement. This primarily occurred through the Local Special Education Determinations process – while providing TA, indicator stewards were able to receive feedback on the target set for the indicator in comparison to individual LEA performance. The State Director also worked with the VT-SEAP to review indicator performance after the February 1, 2021 SPP/APR submission. A plan has already been formulated for a busy 2021 calendar year for establishing new rigorous targets based on Vermont trend data.

Additionally, VT AOE has also utilized parent focus groups to provide input and feedback on work related to the indicators, which ultimately reflect on how we will revise targets. An example of engaging stakeholders is the collaboration with VT-SEAP, VCSEA, VFN, and an independent parent focus group all of whom provided feedback on the administrative complaint process and strategies for ensuring VT AOE has timely responses, and user-



friendly tools and procedures for Dispute Resolution. These stakeholders provided great insight into the parent engagement survey/response rates/targets (indicator 8), the SSIP work (Indicator 17) and our data collection for Indicators 11, 12, and 13 (through our state monitoring system).

The Special Education Team met with the VT-SEAP on their report identifying unmet needs of students with disabilities and incorporated recommendations as part of the rule changes work. The State Director reports out on progress at VT-SEAP meetings.

For target setting, a public webpage was developed and promoted so parents from local and statewide advocacy and advisory committees and individual parents can engage in setting targets, analyzing data, developing, and recommending improvement strategies and evaluating progress. The target setting webpage can be found at <https://education.vermont.gov/student-support/vermont-special-education/recent-guidance-news-and-events/target-setting-for-the-spp-apr>, which includes a link to the webpage that houses Vermont's SPP/APR reports, which can be found at <https://education.vermont.gov/data-and-reporting/school-reports/special-education-reports>

**FFY 2020 SPP/APR Data**

**Number of preschool children aged 3 through 5 with IEPs assessed**

571

**Outcome A: Positive social-emotional skills (including social relationships)**

Outcome A Progress Category	Number of children	Percentage of Children
a. Preschool children who did not improve functioning	3	0.53%
b. Preschool children who improved functioning but not sufficient to move nearer to functioning comparable to same-aged peers	62	10.86%
c. Preschool children who improved functioning to a level nearer to same-aged peers but did not reach it	186	32.57%
d. Preschool children who improved functioning to reach a level comparable to same-aged peers	147	25.74%
e. Preschool children who maintained functioning at a level comparable to same-aged peers	173	30.30%

Outcome A	Numerator	Denominator	FFY 2019 Data	FFY 2020 Target	FFY 2020 Data	Status	Slippage
A1. Of those children who entered or exited the program below age expectations in Outcome A, the percent who substantially increased their rate of growth by the time they turned 6 years of age or exited the program. <i>Calculation: (c+d)/(a+b+c+d)</i>	333	398	78.34%	83.67%	83.67%	Met target	No Slippage
A2. The percent of preschool children who were functioning within age expectations in Outcome A by the time they turned 6 years of age or exited the program. <i>Calculation: (d+e)/(a+b+c+d+e)</i>	320	571	48.04%	48.04%	56.04%	Met target	No Slippage

**Outcome B: Acquisition and use of knowledge and skills (including early language/communication)**

Outcome B Progress Category	Number of Children	Percentage of Children
a. Preschool children who did not improve functioning	1	0.18%
b. Preschool children who improved functioning but not sufficient to move nearer to functioning comparable to same-aged peers	69	12.08%
c. Preschool children who improved functioning to a level nearer to same-aged peers but did not reach it	295	51.66%
d. Preschool children who improved functioning to reach a level comparable to same-aged peers	180	31.52%
e. Preschool children who maintained functioning at a level comparable to same-aged peers	26	4.55%

Outcome B	Numerator	Denominator	FFY 2019 Data	FFY 2020 Target	FFY 2020 Data	Status	Slippage
B1. Of those children who entered or exited the program below age expectations in Outcome B, the percent who substantially increased their rate of growth by the time they turned 6 years of age or exited the program. <i>Calculation: (c+d)/(a+b+c+d)</i>	475	545	83.20%	87.80%	87.16%	Did not meet target	No Slippage
B2. The percent of preschool children who were functioning within age expectations in Outcome B by the time they turned 6 years of age or exited the program. <i>Calculation: (d+e)/(a+b+c+d+e)</i>	206	571	32.40%	32.40%	36.08%	Met target	No Slippage

**Outcome C: Use of appropriate behaviors to meet their needs**

Outcome C Progress Category	Number of Children	Percentage of Children
a. Preschool children who did not improve functioning	3	0.53%
b. Preschool children who improved functioning but not sufficient to move nearer to functioning comparable to same-aged peers	61	10.68%
c. Preschool children who improved functioning to a level nearer to same-aged peers but did not reach it	135	23.64%
d. Preschool children who improved functioning to reach a level comparable to same-aged peers	155	27.15%
e. Preschool children who maintained functioning at a level comparable to same-aged peers	217	38.00%

Outcome C	Numerator	Denominator	FFY 2019 Data	FFY 2020 Target	FFY 2020 Data	Status	Slippage
C1. Of those children who entered or exited the program below age expectations in Outcome C, the percent who substantially increased their rate of growth by the time they turned 6 years of age or exited the program. <i>Calculation: (c+d)/(a+b+c+d)</i>	290	354	78.28%	86.50%	81.92%	Did not meet target	No Slippage
C2. The percent of preschool children who were functioning within age expectations in Outcome C by the time they turned 6 years of age or exited the program. <i>Calculation: (d+e)/(a+b+c+d+e)</i>	372	571	55.87%	55.87%	65.15%	Met target	No Slippage

Does the State include in the numerator and denominator only children who received special education and related services for at least six months during the age span of three through five years? (yes/no)

YES

Sampling Question	Yes / No
Was sampling used?	NO

Did you use the Early Childhood Outcomes Center (ECO) Child Outcomes Summary Form (COS) process? (yes/no)

YES

**List the instruments and procedures used to gather data for this indicator.**

Early Childhood Outcomes (ECO) entry, exit and progress data is determined and collected by LEA IEP teams through the IEP process. In 2013, VT AOE began to implement the use of the integrated ECO IEP. Instruments used to gather ECO entry, exit, and progress data are a local IEP decision; however, Teaching Strategies Gold (TSGOLD) is the state approved universal PreK progress monitoring assessment that is required two times per year. VT AOE does not use TSGOLD conversion tables. IEP teams are instructed to use TSGOLD as one source among multiple sources come to consensus; and inform entry, exit, and progress data. ECO data is collected via the Child Count data collection two times per year and entered into the Child Outcomes Summary (COS) calculator for SPP APR preparation. VT AOE's ECO Practice and Procedures Manual, along with ECTA resources, provide guidance, tools, and support for IEP teams to make determinations and reporting.

**Provide additional information about this indicator (optional)**

FFY 2020 shows more complete data with an increase of 34 students and consistent denominators across all outcome areas and summary statements, with no slippage in Summary Statements and Outcomes. The Part B Data manager reached out to LEAs who did not submit complete Indicator 7 data during the July 2021 collection. Through outreach, 100% submission of Indicator 7 data was achieved. Regular data meetings on Indicator 7 were established and attended between the Part B data manager and 619 Coordinator to enhance coordination within AOE. 619 Coordinator and Inclusion Coordinator analyzed impossibilities of the data and provided technical assistance to LEAs on appropriate use of the decision tree, ECO Practices and Procedures Manual, COS Calculation Tool that did not meet LEA target for Indicator 7. Monthly meeting calls with Center for IDEA Early Childhood Data Systems (DaSy) and the Early Childhood Technical Assistance Center (ECTA) TA specialists continued to occur. The 619 Coordinator attended conferences and weekly 619 NASDSW/ECTA meetings. The Early Childhood Outcomes are embedded into the ECSE IEP process. This fall, an online module on Indicator 7 was presented to ECSE staff, Special Education Directors, Related Specialists, and Administrators by the 619 Coordinator and ECSE Inclusion Coordinator on background, important documents, resources, and reporting Early Child Outcomes. Given ongoing TA provided to LEAs since this data collection, we expect to continued movement closer to our targets for FFY2021 for B1 and C1.

VT AOE maintains and updates a webpage for resources related to preschool outcomes for special education administrators and educators which can be found at: <https://education.vermont.gov/student-support/vermont-special-education/technical-assistance-requests-and-professional-development/state-performance-plan-resources-by-indicator#indicator-7>

**7 - Prior FFY Required Actions**

None

**7 - OSEP Response**

The State provided targets for FFYs 2020 through 2025 for this indicator, and OSEP accepts those targets.

**7 - Required Actions**

## Indicator 8: Parent involvement

### Instructions and Measurement

**Monitoring Priority:** FAPE in the LRE

**Results indicator:** Percent of parents with a child receiving special education services who report that schools facilitated parent involvement as a means of improving services and results for children with disabilities.

(20 U.S.C. 1416(a)(3)(A))

#### Data Source

State selected data source.

#### Measurement

Percent = [(# of respondent parents who report schools facilitated parent involvement as a means of improving services and results for children with disabilities) divided by the (total # of respondent parents of children with disabilities)] times 100.

#### Instructions

*Sampling of parents from whom response is requested is allowed. When sampling is used, submit a description of the sampling methodology outlining how the design will yield valid and reliable estimates. (See [General Instructions](#) on page 2 for additional instructions on sampling.)*

Describe the results of the calculations and compare the results to the target.

Provide the actual numbers used in the calculation.

If the State is using a separate data collection methodology for preschool children, the State must provide separate baseline data, targets, and actual target data or discuss the procedures used to combine data from school age and preschool data collection methodologies in a manner that is valid and reliable.

While a survey is not required for this indicator, a State using a survey must submit a copy of any new or revised survey with its SPP/APR.

Report the number of parents to whom the surveys were distributed and the number of respondent parents. The survey response rate is automatically calculated using the submitted data.

States must compare the response rate for the reporting year to the response rate for the previous year (e.g., in the FFY 2020 SPP/APR, compare the FFY 2020 response rate to the FFY 2019 response rate) and describe strategies that will be implemented which are expected to increase the response rate, particularly for those groups that are underrepresented.

The State must also analyze the response rate to identify potential nonresponse bias and take steps to reduce any identified bias and promote response from a broad cross section of parents of children with disabilities.

Include in the State's analysis the extent to which the demographics of the children for whom parents responded are representative of the demographics of children receiving special education services. States should consider categories such as race/ethnicity, age of student, disability category, and geographic location in the State.

States must describe the metric used to determine representativeness (e.g., +/- 3% discrepancy in the proportion of responders compared to target group).

If the analysis shows that the demographics of the children for whom parents responding are not representative of the demographics of children receiving special education services in the State, describe the strategies that the State will use to ensure that in the future the response data are representative of those demographics. In identifying such strategies, the State should consider factors such as how the State distributed the survey to parents (e.g., by mail, by e-mail, on-line, by telephone, in-person through school personnel), and how responses were collected.

**Beginning with the FFY 2021 SPP/APR, due February 1, 2023**, when reporting the extent to which the demographics of the children for whom parents responded are representative of the demographics of children receiving special education services, States must include race/ethnicity in their analysis. In addition, the State's analysis must also include at least one of the following demographics: age of the student, disability category, gender, geographic location, and/or another demographic category approved through the stakeholder input process.

States are encouraged to work in collaboration with their OSEP-funded parent centers in collecting data.

### 8 - Indicator Data

Question	Yes / No
Do you use a separate data collection methodology for preschool children?	NO

#### Targets: Description of Stakeholder Input

VT AOE solicited broad stakeholder input on the State's targets in the SPP/APR from January 2021 until December 2021. The VT AOE Special Education team began meeting with the Special Education Advisory Panel in January 2021 to discuss the changes to the SPP/APR FFY20-25 package, changes to data sources and indicator calculation, indicator targets and improvement activities. Along with collaboration with the Special Education Advisory Panel, VT AOE Special Education team solicited input from the Vermont's Parent Support Center (Vermont Family Network) and the Vermont Council of Special Education Administrators Executive. Beyond target input from these groups, the VT AOE Special education team also created a public webpage in which community partners and interested parties can access resources regarding the SPP/APR, information on the target setting process and electronic and mail-in forms to provide input on the State's targets in the SPP/APR. The public webpage regarding the SPP/APR Target Setting can be found at <https://education.vermont.gov/student-support/vermont-special-education/recent-guidance-news-and-events/target-setting-for-the-spp-apr>

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#### Historical Data

Baseline Year	Baseline Data
2020	79.80%

FFY	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019
Target >=	38.12%	38.12%	38.12%	38.12%	38.12%
Data	36.08%	36.75%	37.03%	34.31%	34.94%

#### Targets

FFY	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025
Target >=	79.80%	79.80%	79.80%	80.80%	81.80%	82.80%

#### FFY 2020 SPP/APR Data

Number of respondent parents who report schools facilitated parent involvement as a means of improving services and results for children with disabilities	Total number of respondent parents of children with disabilities	FFY 2019 Data	FFY 2020 Target	FFY 2020 Data	Status	Slippage
1,268	1,589	34.94%	79.80%	79.80%	N/A	N/A

**Since the State did not report preschool children separately, discuss the procedures used to combine data from school age and preschool surveys in a manner that is valid and reliable.**

The same set of 16 statements was sent to all parents pre-k through age 21 who had a child with an IEP during the 2020-21 school year as well as to adult students. One question only for students age 16 and older asked about transition services. This question was for informational purposes only and not for scoring or analysis. The same set of questions for all age children were scored and analyzed. Analysis was completed to determine how the fifteen statements on the survey ranked relative to parents' positive response to the statements. A positive response to a statement was defined as an "Always" or "Often" response. Surveys to 14,751 parents of Pre-Kindergarten through 12th grade children were mailed. Included with the survey form was a cover letter and a self-addressed, stamped business reply envelope for return of the completed survey, the log-in ID number needed to complete the survey via the Internet, as well as the web address of the online survey. The significant increase in data is the result of a new survey along with a different method of analysis- percent positive (vs Rasch). Since this is a new survey with a different definition of positive parental involvement, this calculation has become our new baseline and should not be compared to historical data.

**The number of parents to whom the surveys were distributed.**

14,751

**Percentage of respondent parents**

10.77%

**Response Rate**

FFY	2019	2020
Response Rate	11.19%	10.77%

**Describe strategies that will be implemented which are expected to increase the response rate year over year, particularly for those groups that are underrepresented.**

VT AOE received input from the VTSEAP about organizations who work more closely with our families with children who have an Emotional Disturbance as with the middle school age student families; (i.e., mental health centers, communications contact at middle schools themselves, guidance counselors) - and how we might employ their help with messaging and encouraging families to complete the parent involvement survey. As part of the bi-weekly check in with special education directors, the State Director messaged the survey, the envelope for mail options, and discussed strategies for LEAs to engage with to promote survey completion. We will increase messaging through our Vermont Family Network, special education directors, now through Superintendents and our MTSS team's yearly survey to superintendents. A flyer has been created as a means of informing the public of the importance, the purpose and use of data collected through the survey.

**Describe the analysis of the response rate including any nonresponse bias that was identified, and the steps taken to reduce any identified bias and promote response from a broad cross section of parents of children with disabilities.**

When analyzing responses for bias of only 1,589 respondents, we discovered that a need for survey translations may have prevented families from responding, a discussion has started with the vendor about including translated surveys in coming submissions, two surveys were completed with the vendor (in Spanish), by phone, we make clear that this is an option. Another discovery about methods of delivery options; we will work with LEAs to incorporate a link at the school where a parent could sit and do the survey; discuss ways to fix the 1,172 surveys that were undeliverable due to wrong addresses. With LEAs, discuss ways to reach the population of families with no stable housing.

**Include in the State's analysis the extent to which the demographics of the children for whom parents responded are representative of the demographics of children receiving special education services. States should consider categories such as race/ethnicity, age of student, disability category, and geographic location in the State.**

Complete demographic information was collected for 1,589 respondents from a target population of 14,751. This constitutes a 10.77% response rate. The response rate, when coupled with selected demographic analyses of respondents provides a clear understanding of the validity and accuracy of the survey data. Overall, the response data did not meet Vermont's standard for representativeness. Data are representative of the target population when examined by race/ethnicity and gender; however, Vermont recognizes the need to continue to improve upon the representativeness of the disability and age groups.

With regards to disability categories, families of children with emotional disturbance represented a portion of the respondent group 3.41 percentage points lower than the surveyed population. Families of children with specific learning disability represented a portion of the respondent group 0.97 percentage points lower than the surveyed population. Families of children with other health impairment represented a portion of the respondent group 0.75 percentage points lower than the surveyed population. Families of children with multiple disabilities represented a portion of the respondent group 0.33 percentage points lower than the surveyed population. Families of children with intellectual disabilities represented a portion of the respondent group 0.26 percentage points lower than the surveyed population. Families of children with hearing loss and hard of hearing represented a portion of the respondent group 0.27 percentage points larger than the surveyed population. Families of children with speech or language impairment represented a portion of the respondent group 0.38 percentage points larger than the surveyed population. Families of children of all other disabilities, including Deaf, Deaf-Blindness, Orthopedic Impairment, Traumatic Brain Injury, and Visual Impairment, represented a portion of the respondent group 0.68 percentage points larger than the surveyed population. Families of children with autism spectrum disorder represented a portion of the respondent group 1.80 percentage points larger than the surveyed population. Families of children with developmental delay represented a portion of the respondent group 2.60 percentage points larger than the surveyed population.

Families of children aged 12 to 17 represented a portion of the respondent group 3.48 percentage points lower than the surveyed population. Families of children aged 18 to 21 represented a portion of the respondent group 0.11 percentage points lower than the surveyed population. Families of children aged 6 to 11 represented a portion of the respondent group 0.05 percentage points lower than the surveyed population. Families of children aged 2 to 5 represented a portion of the respondent group 3.64 percentage points larger than the surveyed population.

Families of Non-white children represented a portion of the respondent group 0.68 percentage points lower than the surveyed population. All races and ethnicities were examined for representativeness. Non-White includes Hispanic, African American, American Indian or Alaskan Native and Asian or Pacific. Families of white children represented a portion of the respondent group 0.68 percentage points larger than the surveyed population.

Families of male children represented a portion of the respondent group 0.35 percentage points lower than the surveyed population, while families of female children represented a portion of the respondent group 0.35 percentage points larger than the surveyed population.

The VT AOE's messaging efforts are underway to better target families of students with emotional disturbance and families of 12–17-year-old students.

**The demographics of the parents responding are representative of the demographics of children receiving special education services. (yes/no)**

NO

**If no, describe the strategies that the State will use to ensure that in the future the response data are representative of those demographics.**

As described above, VTAOE will work more closely with our mental health centers, communications contacts at middle schools themselves, guidance counselors – to employ their help with messaging and encouraging families to complete the parent involvement survey. We will increase messaging through our Vermont Family Network, special education directors, principals, superintendents, and independent schools. A flyer has been created as a means of informing the public of the importance, the purpose and use of data collected through the survey. The VT AOE is investigating the need for survey translations, including translated surveys assistance by phone, we can make clear that this is an option and what languages are available. Considering more options beyond paper/mail and internet, i.e., a link parents can access at the school so that a parent could sit and do the survey on

site. The VT AOE special education team is engaging more frequently with the VT AOE MTSS team, who have specialists with family engagement expertise. We have new added expertise from a recent full-time hire who specializes in English Language Learners.

The VT AOE have encouraged LEA leadership to consider ways of reaching the 1,172 surveys that were undeliverable due to wrong addresses, of connecting with parent groups in their areas for engagement ideas and for survey support.

**Describe the metric used to determine representativeness (e.g., +/- 3% discrepancy in the proportion of responders compared to target group).**

The VT AOE defines representativeness in a category as a difference by 3.00 percentage points or less between the percent of eligible children in that category and the percent of children for whom surveys were returned.

Sampling Question	Yes / No
Was sampling used?	NO

Survey Question	Yes / No
Was a survey used?	YES
If yes, is it a new or revised survey?	YES
If yes, provide a copy of the survey.	VT SPPAPR FFY20 Indicator 8 Parent Involvement Survey

**Provide additional information about this indicator (optional)**

Much effort was made meeting with the VT-SEAP subcommittee to revise the parent survey (both content and messaging), to collect useful and targeted data, and to create fewer, clearer questions. The survey was presented to the Vermont Family Network (VFN) and to the Vermont Council of Special Educators Administrators (VCSEA) who made minor tweaks to language. The VFN messaged the survey in their newsletter.

Revision of the survey statements changed the method of analysis for the Vermont Parent Survey data. Calculation of the “percent of parents who reported that schools facilitated parent involvement was determined using the following method. Response choices for the statements were Always, Often, Sometimes and Never. In addition, parents had the option to not respond. Always and often were the “positive” choices for this survey. Each of the responses to the survey statements were determined to be positive or not positive for each survey. It was further decided that at least eight of the responses to the fifteen statements must be positive for the survey to be a positive survey.

Survey results indicate that parents are very positive regarding almost all aspects of special education services. The question the majority of responding parents (54.5%) did not respond positively to was the statement, “opportunities for parents to strengthen knowledge about special education issues”. VT AOE is considering developing an additional question or two about that area of service, and provide e.g., ask if they get a newsletter or are invited to parent training sessions separately.

Each LEA receives their report along with recommendations and resources from the Family Engagement Team at VT AOE.

Again, this year, some parents expressed confusion about whether to answer the survey questions based on the time period before or during the COVID19 pandemic, citing different experiences between this school year and those of years past. Some chose not to reply at all. VT AOE advised parents to do their best to take all experiences for the year into account, as they would any other year, but acknowledged how difficult that might be.

The VT AOE maintains and updates a webpage for resources related to parent involvement for special education administrators and educators which can be found at: <https://education.vermont.gov/student-support/vermont-special-education/technical-assistance-requests-and-professional-development/state-performance-plan-resources-by-indicator#indicator-8>

**8 - Prior FFY Required Actions**

In the FFY 2020 SPP/APR, the State must report whether its FFY 2020 data are from a response group that is representative of the demographics of children receiving special education services, and, if not, the actions the State is taking to address this issue. The State must also include its analysis of the extent to which the demographics of the parents responding are representative of the demographics of children receiving special education services.

**Response to actions required in FFY 2019 SPP/APR**

The State reported that its FFY2020 data are from a response group that is not representative of the demographics of children receiving special education services, and the actions the State is taking to address this issue.

**8 - OSEP Response**

The State has revised the baseline for this indicator, using data from FFY 2020, and OSEP accepts that revision.

The State provided targets for FFYs 2020 through 2025 for this indicator, and OSEP accepts those targets.

**8 - Required Actions**

In the FFY 2021 SPP/APR, the State must report whether its FFY 2021 data are from a response group that is representative of the demographics of children receiving special education services, and, if not, the actions the State is taking to address this issue. The State must also include its analysis of the extent to which the demographics of the parents responding are representative of the demographics of children receiving special education services.

## Indicator 9: Disproportionate Representation

### Instructions and Measurement

**Monitoring Priority:** Disproportionality

**Compliance indicator:** Percent of districts with disproportionate representation of racial and ethnic groups in special education and related services that is the result of inappropriate identification.

(20 U.S.C. 1416(a)(3)(C))

#### Data Source

State's analysis, based on State's Child Count data collected under IDEA section 618, to determine if the disproportionate representation of racial and ethnic groups in special education and related services was the result of inappropriate identification.

#### Measurement

Percent = [(# of districts, that meet the State-established n and/or cell size (if applicable) for one or more racial/ethnic groups, with disproportionate representation of racial and ethnic groups in special education and related services that is the result of inappropriate identification) divided by the (# of districts in the State that meet the State-established n and/or cell size (if applicable) for one or more racial/ethnic groups)] times 100.

Include State's definition of "disproportionate representation." Please specify in your definition: 1) the calculation method(s) being used (i.e., risk ratio, weighted risk ratio, e-formula, etc.); and 2) the threshold at which disproportionate representation is identified. Also include, as appropriate, 3) the number of years of data used in the calculation; and 4) any minimum cell and/or n-sizes (i.e., risk numerator and/or risk denominator).

Based on its review of the 618 data for the reporting year, describe how the State made its annual determination as to whether the disproportionate representation it identified of racial and ethnic groups in special education and related services was the result of inappropriate identification as required by 34 CFR §§300.600(d)(3) and 300.602(a), e.g., using monitoring data; reviewing policies, practices and procedures, etc. In determining disproportionate representation, analyze data, for each district, for all racial and ethnic groups in the district, or all racial and ethnic groups in the district that meet a minimum n and/or cell size set by the State. Report on the percent of districts in which disproportionate representation of racial and ethnic groups in special education and related services is the result of inappropriate identification, even if the determination of inappropriate identification was made after the end of the FFY 2020 reporting period (i.e., after June 30, 2021).

#### Instructions

Provide racial/ethnic disproportionality data for all children aged 5 who are enrolled in kindergarten and 6 through 21 served under IDEA, aggregated across all disability categories.

States are not required to report on underrepresentation.

If the State has established a minimum n and/or cell size requirement, the State may only include, in both the numerator and the denominator, districts that met that State-established n and/or cell size. If the State used a minimum n and/or cell size requirement, report the number of districts totally excluded from the calculation as a result of this requirement because the district did not meet the minimum n and/or cell size for any racial/ethnic group.

Consider using multiple methods in calculating disproportionate representation of racial and ethnic groups to reduce the risk of overlooking potential problems. Describe the method(s) used to calculate disproportionate representation.

Provide the number of districts that met the State-established n and/or cell size (if applicable) for one or more racial/ethnic groups identified with disproportionate representation of racial and ethnic groups in special education and related services and the number of those districts identified with disproportionate representation that is the result of inappropriate identification.

Targets must be 0%.

Provide detailed information about the timely correction of noncompliance as noted in OSEP's response for the previous SPP/APR. If the State did not ensure timely correction of the previous noncompliance, provide information on the extent to which noncompliance was subsequently corrected (more than one year after identification). In addition, provide information regarding the nature of any continuing noncompliance, improvement activities completed (e.g., review of policies and procedures, technical assistance, training, etc.) and any enforcement actions that were taken. If the State reported less than 100% compliance for the previous reporting period (e.g., for the FFY 2020 SPP/APR, the data for FFY 2019), and the State did not identify any findings of noncompliance, provide an explanation of why the State did not identify any findings of noncompliance.

## 9 - Indicator Data

### Not Applicable

Select yes if this indicator is not applicable.

NO

#### Historical Data

Baseline Year	Baseline Data
2020	0.00%

FFY	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019
Target	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%
Data	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%

#### Targets

FFY	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025
Target	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%

#### FFY 2020 SPP/APR Data

Has the state established a minimum n and/or cell size requirement? (yes/no)

YES



If yes, the State may only include, in both the numerator and the denominator, districts that met the State-established n and/or cell size. Report the number of districts excluded from the calculation as a result of the requirement.

1

Number of districts with disproportionate representation of racial/ethnic groups in special education and related services	Number of districts with disproportionate representation of racial/ethnic groups in special education and related services that is the result of inappropriate identification	Number of districts that met the State's minimum n and/or cell size	FFY 2019 Data	FFY 2020 Target	FFY 2020 Data	Status	Slippage
0	0	52	0.00%	0%	0.00%	N/A	N/A

Were all races and ethnicities included in the review?

YES

Define “disproportionate representation.” Please specify in your definition: 1) the calculation method(s) being used (i.e., risk ratio, weighted risk ratio, e-formula, etc.); and 2) the threshold at which disproportionate representation is identified. Also include, as appropriate, 3) the number of years of data used in the calculation; and 4) any minimum cell and/or n-sizes (i.e., risk numerator and/or risk denominator).

The VT AOE uses a combination of techniques to measure whether any racial or ethnic group is identified for special education services at a higher rate than other groups. Weighted risk ratios are used when populations are large and diverse enough to support their accuracy; in other cases, alternate risk ratios are used. The VT AOE uses a comparison group cell size of 11 to determine whether to use a weighted or alternate risk ratio; additionally, the VT AOE does not include districts with a target group cell size less than 11. The VT AOE does not use an n size for indicator 9. The VT AOE uses 1 year of data for indicator 9.

The VT AOE has a 2-criterion system to identify LEAs with disproportionate representation in special education, used in combination with a minimum cell size for the target group. A challenge for the VT AOE in identifying disproportionate representation is the homogeneity of Vermont’s student population. In both regular education and special education settings, more than 90 percent of the total student population has historically been reported as white. In addition, the counts of children receiving special education in each LEA are relatively small, averaging less than 300 students per LEA. Taken together, the homogeneity of the student population and relatively small child counts result in a situation where the addition of just one child into special education can create a large difference in the race/ethnicity composition of children receiving IDEA-B services in an LEA. To address these challenges, the VT AOE created the following method designed to provide meaningful, valid, and reliable identification for LEAs with disproportionate representation:

Minimum cell/n sizes: The VT AOE uses a minimum cell size of 11 to avoid volatility in Weighted Risk Ratios and to ensure compliance with our state’s data privacy policy. The VT AOE does not use a minimum n size.

Criterion 1: A difference greater than or equal to 10 between the actual and expected counts of students with disabilities in a race/ethnicity category.

For a district to be identified with disproportionate representation, the VT AOE requires that there be at least 10 more students receiving special education services than would be expected. Expected counts are calculated in two steps. First, the LEA’s total student count in a race/ethnic group is divided by the LEA’s total student population to find the portion of students in that race/ethnic group. This result is then multiplied by the number of students with disabilities in the LEA.

Criterion 2: LEA-level Weighted Risk Ratio greater than 3.0 or LEA-level Alternate Risk Ratio greater than 3.0.

The VT AOE uses a Weighted Risk Ratio with a threshold of 3.0. If the comparison group cell size is less than 11, an Alternate Risk Ratio calculation is used, also with a threshold of 3.0.

These calculations are described in the IDEA Data Center’s Technical Assistance Guide entitled “Methods for Assessing Racial/Ethnic Disproportionality in Special Education” and found at <https://www.ideadata.org/resources/resource/140/methods-for-assessing-raciaethnic-disproportionality-in-special-education>

**Describe how the State made its annual determination as to whether the disproportionate representation it identified of racial and ethnic groups in special education and related services was the result of inappropriate identification.**

The VT AOE used Child Count data and Fall Student Census data to complete the calculations and apply the criteria described above. No LEA in the State is identified with disproportionate representation in any disability category based on these criteria.

**Provide additional information about this indicator (optional)**

FFY20 data for this indicator are based on VT’s Child Count collection with a Dec 1, 2020, reference date, in combination with VT’s DC#06/Fall Student Census data with an Oct 1, 2020, reference date. As the data refer to a period during the State of Emergency brought about by COVID-19, and in fact were collected during the emergency, this indicator for FFY20 was affected by COVID-19. This likely impact isn’t limited only to collection. Collection was relatively smooth during the pandemic. However, the content of the data was conceivably impacted by the pandemic. For instance, we know that evaluations and identifications were impacted by student availability. Is it likely that some races/ethnicities had more barriers to the identification process. We know some races/ethnicities in the state were much more likely to have contracted COVID-19, especially in the earlier months of the pandemic. This could have an effect on who might be identified for special education or more opportunity for Long COVID. Families likely experienced trauma over losing a close family member. Absent answers to any of those questions, the data could conceivably have been affected by COVID-19; however, we didn’t see any changes sizeable enough to base a reliable statistical analysis on.

This indicator is managed by the VT AOE Special Education Monitoring manager.

VT AOE maintains and updates a webpage for resources related to LRE for special education administrators and educators which can be found at: <https://education.vermont.gov/student-support/vermont-special-education/technical-assistance-requests-and-professional-development/state-performance-plan-resources-by-indicator#indicator-9>

**Correction of Findings of Noncompliance Identified in FFY 2019**

Findings of Noncompliance Identified	Findings of Noncompliance Verified as Corrected Within One Year	Findings of Noncompliance Subsequently Corrected	Findings Not Yet Verified as Corrected

**Correction of Findings of Noncompliance Identified Prior to FFY 2019**

Year Findings of Noncompliance Were Identified	Findings of Noncompliance Not Yet Verified as Corrected as of FFY 2019 APR	Findings of Noncompliance Verified as Corrected	Findings Not Yet Verified as Corrected

**9 - Prior FFY Required Actions**

None

**9 - OSEP Response**

The State has revised the baseline for this indicator, using data from FFY 2020, and OSEP accepts that revision.

**9 - Required Actions**

# Indicator 10: Disproportionate Representation in Specific Disability Categories

## Instructions and Measurement

**Monitoring Priority:** Disproportionality

**Compliance indicator:** Percent of districts with disproportionate representation of racial and ethnic groups in specific disability categories that is the result of inappropriate identification.

(20 U.S.C. 1416(a)(3)(C))

### Data Source

State's analysis, based on State's Child Count data collected under IDEA section 618, to determine if the disproportionate representation of racial and ethnic groups in specific disability categories was the result of inappropriate identification.

### Measurement

Percent = [(# of districts, that meet the State-established n and/or cell size (if applicable) for one or more racial/ethnic groups, with disproportionate representation of racial and ethnic groups in specific disability categories that is the result of inappropriate identification) divided by the (# of districts in the State that meet the State-established n and/or cell size (if applicable) for one or more racial/ethnic groups)] times 100.

Include State's definition of "disproportionate representation." Please specify in your definition: 1) the calculation method(s) being used (i.e., risk ratio, weighted risk ratio, e-formula, etc.); and 2) the threshold at which disproportionate representation is identified. Also include, as appropriate, 3) the number of years of data used in the calculation; and 4) any minimum cell and/or n-sizes (i.e., risk numerator and/or risk denominator).

Based on its review of the 618 data for FFY 2020, describe how the State made its annual determination as to whether the disproportionate representation it identified of racial and ethnic groups in specific disability categories was the result of inappropriate identification as required by 34 CFR §§300.600(d)(3) and 300.602(a), e.g., using monitoring data; reviewing policies, practices and procedures, etc. In determining disproportionate representation, analyze data, for each district, for all racial and ethnic groups in the district, or all racial and ethnic groups in the district that meet a minimum n and/or cell size set by the State. Report on the percent of districts in which disproportionate representation of racial and ethnic groups in specific disability categories is the result of inappropriate identification, even if the determination of inappropriate identification was made after the end of the FFY 2020 reporting period (i.e., after June 30, 2021).

### Instructions

Provide racial/ethnic disproportionality data for all children aged 5 who are enrolled in kindergarten and aged 6 through 21 served under IDEA. Provide these data at a minimum for children in the following six disability categories: intellectual disability, specific learning disabilities, emotional disturbance, speech or language impairments, other health impairments, and autism. If a State has identified disproportionate representation of racial and ethnic groups in specific disability categories other than these six disability categories, the State must include these data and report on whether the State determined that the disproportionate representation of racial and ethnic groups in specific disability categories was the result of inappropriate identification.

States are not required to report on underrepresentation.

If the State has established a minimum n and/or cell size requirement, the State may only include, in both the numerator and the denominator, districts that met that State-established n and/or cell size. If the State used a minimum n and/or cell size requirement, report the number of districts totally excluded from the calculation as a result of this requirement because the district did not meet the minimum n and/or cell size for any racial/ethnic group.

Consider using multiple methods in calculating disproportionate representation of racial and ethnic groups to reduce the risk of overlooking potential problems. Describe the method(s) used to calculate disproportionate representation.

Provide the number of districts that met the State-established n and/or cell size (if applicable) for one or more racial/ethnic groups identified with disproportionate representation of racial and ethnic groups in specific disability categories and the number of those districts identified with disproportionate representation that is the result of inappropriate identification.

Targets must be 0%.

Provide detailed information about the timely correction of noncompliance as noted in OSEP's response for the previous SPP/APR. If the State did not ensure timely correction of the previous noncompliance, provide information on the extent to which noncompliance was subsequently corrected (more than one year after identification). In addition, provide information regarding the nature of any continuing noncompliance, improvement activities completed (e.g., review of policies and procedures, technical assistance, training, etc.) and any enforcement actions that were taken.

If the State reported less than 100% compliance for the previous reporting period (e.g., for the FFY 2020 SPP/APR, the data for FFY 2019), and the State did not identify any findings of noncompliance, provide an explanation of why the State did not identify any findings of noncompliance.

## 10 - Indicator Data

### Not Applicable

Select yes if this indicator is not applicable.

NO

### Historical Data

Baseline Year	Baseline Data
2020	0.00%

FFY	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019
Target	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%
Data	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%

### Targets

FFY	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025
Target	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%

**FFY 2020 SPP/APR Data**

**Has the state established a minimum n and/or cell size requirement? (yes/no)**

YES

**If yes, the State may only include, in both the numerator and the denominator, districts that met the State-established n and/or cell size. Report the number of districts excluded from the calculation as a result of the requirement.**

1

Number of districts with disproportionate representation of racial/ethnic groups in specific disability categories	Number of districts with disproportionate representation of racial/ethnic groups in specific disability categories that is the result of inappropriate identification	Number of districts that met the State's minimum n and/or cell size	FFY 2019 Data	FFY 2020 Target	FFY 2020 Data	Status	Slippage
0	0	52	0.00%	0%	0.00%	N/A	N/A

**Were all races and ethnicities included in the review?**

YES

**Define “disproportionate representation.” Please specify in your definition: 1) the calculation method(s) being used (i.e., risk ratio, weighted risk ratio, e-formula, etc.); and 2) the threshold at which disproportionate representation is identified. Also include, as appropriate, 3) the number of years of data used in the calculation; and 4) any minimum cell and/or n-sizes (i.e., risk numerator and/or risk denominator).**

The VT AOE uses a combination of techniques to measure whether any racial or ethnic group is identified for special education services in certain disability categories at a higher rate than other groups. Six disability categories are examined: autism, specific learning disabilities, other health impairments, emotional disturbance, speech and language impairments, and intellectual disability. Weighted risk ratios are used when populations are large and diverse enough to support their accuracy; in other cases, alternate risk ratios are used. VT AOE uses a comparison group cell size of 11 to determine whether to use a weighted or alternate risk ratio; additionally, the VT AOE does not include districts with a target group cell size less than 11. The VT AOE does not use an n size for indicator 10. The VT AOE uses 1 year of data for indicator 10.

The VT AOE has a 2-criterion system to identify LEAs with disproportionate representation in the 6 selected special education disability categories, used in combination with a minimum cell size for the target group. A challenge for the VT AOE in identifying disproportionate representation is the homogeneity of Vermont’s student population. In both regular education and special education settings, more than 90 percent of the total student population has historically been reported as white. In addition, the counts of children receiving special education in each LEA are relatively small, averaging less than 300 students per LEA. Taken together, the homogeneity of the student population and relatively small child counts result in a situation where the addition of just one child into a disability category can create a large difference in the race/ethnicity composition of children receiving IDEA-B services for that disability in an LEA. To address these challenges, the VT AOE created the following method designed to provide meaningful, valid, and reliable identification for LEAs with disproportionate representation:

Minimum cell/n sizes: the VT AOE uses a minimum cell size of 11 to avoid volatility in Weighted Risk Ratios and to ensure compliance with our state’s data privacy policy. The VT AOE does not use a minimum n size.

Criterion 1: A difference greater than or equal to 10 between the actual and expected counts of students in a race/ethnicity group identified with the target disability category.

For a district to be identified with disproportionate representation, the VT AOE requires that there be at least 10 more students receiving services for any of the 6 disability categories than would be expected. Expected counts are calculated in two steps. First, the LEA’s total student count in a race/ethnic group is divided by the LEA’s total student population to find the portion of students in that race/ethnic group. This result is then multiplied by the number of students with the target disability in the LEA.

Criterion 2: LEA-level Weighted Risk Ratio greater than 3.0 or LEA-level Alternate Risk Ratio greater than 3.0.

The VT AOE uses a Weighted Risk Ratio with a threshold of 3.0. If the comparison group cell size is less than 11, an Alternate Risk Ratio calculation is used, also with a threshold of 3.0. These calculations are described in the IDEA Data Center’s Technical Assistance Guide entitled “Methods for Assessing Racial/Ethnic Disproportionality in Special Education” and found at <https://www.ideadata.org/resources/resource/140/methods-for-assessing-racialethnic-disproportionality-in-special-education>

**Describe how the State made its annual determination as to whether the disproportionate overrepresentation it identified of racial and ethnic groups in specific disability categories was the result of inappropriate identification.**

The VT AOE used Child Count data and Fall Student Census data to complete the calculations and apply the criteria described above. No LEA in the State is identified with disproportionate representation in any disability category based on these criteria.

**Provide additional information about this indicator (optional)**

FFY20 data for this indicator are based on VT’s Child Count collection with a Dec 1, 2020, reference date, in combination with VT’s DC#06/Fall Student Census data with an Oct 1, 2020, reference date. As the data refer to a period during the State of Emergency brought about by COVID-19, and in fact were collected during the emergency, this indicator for FFY20 was affected by COVID-19. This likely impact isn’t limited only to collection. Collection was

relatively smooth during the pandemic. However, the content of the data was conceivably impacted by the pandemic. For instance, we know that evaluations and identifications were impacted by student availability. Is it likely that some races/ethnicities had more barriers to the identification process. We know some races/ethnicities in the state were much more likely to have contracted COVID-19, especially in the earlier months of the pandemic. This could have an effect on who might be identified for special education or more opportunity for Long COVID. Families likely experienced trauma over losing a close family member. Absent answers to any of those questions, the data could conceivably have been affected by COVID-19; however, we didn't see any changes sizeable enough to base a reliable statistical analysis on.

This indicator is managed by the VT AOE Special Education Monitoring manager.

The VT AOE maintains and updates a webpage for resources related to LRE for special education administrators and educators which can be found at: <https://education.vermont.gov/student-support/vermont-special-education/technical-assistance-requests-and-professional-development/state-performance-plan-resources-by-indicator#indicator-10>

**Correction of Findings of Noncompliance Identified in FFY 2019**

Findings of Noncompliance Identified	Findings of Noncompliance Verified as Corrected Within One Year	Findings of Noncompliance Subsequently Corrected	Findings Not Yet Verified as Corrected

**Correction of Findings of Noncompliance Identified Prior to FFY 2019**

Year Findings of Noncompliance Were Identified	Findings of Noncompliance Not Yet Verified as Corrected as of FFY 2019 APR	Findings of Noncompliance Verified as Corrected	Findings Not Yet Verified as Corrected

**10 - Prior FFY Required Actions**

None

**10 - OSEP Response**

The State has revised the baseline for this indicator, using data from FFY 2020, and OSEP accepts that revision.

**10 - Required Actions**

## Indicator 11: Child Find

### Instructions and Measurement

**Monitoring Priority:** Effective General Supervision Part B / Child Find

**Compliance indicator:** Percent of children who were evaluated within 60 days of receiving parental consent for initial evaluation or, if the State establishes a timeframe within which the evaluation must be conducted, within that timeframe.

(20 U.S.C. 1416(a)(3)(B))

#### Data Source

Data to be taken from State monitoring or State data system and must be based on actual, not an average, number of days. Indicate if the State has established a timeline and, if so, what is the State's timeline for initial evaluations.

#### Measurement

- a. # of children for whom parental consent to evaluate was received.
- b. # of children whose evaluations were completed within 60 days (or State-established timeline).  
Account for children included in (a), but not included in (b). Indicate the range of days beyond the timeline when the evaluation was completed and any reasons for the delays.

Percent = [(b) divided by (a)] times 100.

#### Instructions

If data are from State monitoring, describe the method used to select LEAs for monitoring. If data are from a State database, include data for the entire reporting year.

Describe the results of the calculations and compare the results to the target. Describe the method used to collect these data, and if data are from the State's monitoring, describe the procedures used to collect these data. Provide the actual numbers used in the calculation.

Note that under 34 CFR §300.301(d), the timeframe set for initial evaluation does not apply to a public agency if: (1) the parent of a child repeatedly fails or refuses to produce the child for the evaluation; or (2) a child enrolls in a school of another public agency after the timeframe for initial evaluations has begun, and prior to a determination by the child's previous public agency as to whether the child is a child with a disability. States should not report these exceptions in either the numerator (b) or denominator (a). If the State-established timeframe provides for exceptions through State regulation or policy, describe cases falling within those exceptions and include in b.

Targets must be 100%.

Provide detailed information about the timely correction of noncompliance as noted in OSEP's response for the previous SPP/APR. If the State did not ensure timely correction of the previous noncompliance, provide information on the extent to which noncompliance was subsequently corrected (more than one year after identification). In addition, provide information regarding the nature of any continuing noncompliance, improvement activities completed (e.g., review of policies and procedures, technical assistance, training, etc.) and any enforcement actions that were taken.

If the State reported less than 100% compliance for the previous reporting period (e.g., for the FFY 2020 SPP/APR, the data for FFY 2019), and the State did not identify any findings of noncompliance, provide an explanation of why the State did not identify any findings of noncompliance.

## 11 - Indicator Data

### Historical Data

Baseline Year	Baseline Data
2005	69.74%

FFY	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019
Target	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%
Data	97.89%	97.74%	97.58%	97.13%	97.12%

### Targets

FFY	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025
Target	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%

### FFY 2020 SPP/APR Data

(a) Number of children for whom parental consent to evaluate was received	(b) Number of children whose evaluations were completed within 60 days (or State-established timeline)	FFY 2019 Data	FFY 2020 Target	FFY 2020 Data	Status	Slippage
334	198	97.12%	100%	59.28%	Did not meet target	Slippage

**Provide reasons for slippage**

The VT AOE reports slippage on indicator 11 from the FFY2019 rate of 97.12% to the FFY2020 rate of 59.28%, a decrease of 37.84 percentage points. The special education team have disaggregated the data and have seen a decrease over one year in the percentage of evaluations completed within the 60-day timeframe or delayed for acceptable reasons due under Child Find laws to COVID-19. COVID-19 caused school closures and staffing shortages which resulted in outstanding evaluations needing to be completed. The majority of non-compliant reasons for delay cited "COVID", school closures related to COVID, and staff unavailability due to COVID. From Memo: Complicating factors stemming from COVID-19 is an acceptable reason for an initial evaluation delay. However, "COVID-19" is not an acceptable reason without also detailing the specifics of the situation – it must be an individualized determination. LEAs must complete the evaluation delay form stating the specific reason for not being able to complete the evaluation. Examples: social distancing required by staff health, student availability, vulnerability of a family member, or school closure.

Vermont adhered to previous allowable reasons for delay such as the family not producing the child or exceptional circumstances related to the child or the family. If the delay of evaluation form stated that the family was concerned about exposing their child to COVID and therefore chose to delay the evaluation that was an allowable reason for delay. Another common reason allowed for delay was unavailability of preferred evaluators which led the family to choose to delay the evaluation. However, LEA's that stated reasons not related to the family or the child were not accepted (i.e., "School closed due to COVID"). The VT AOE was strict with respect to allowable reasons for a delay and believes COVID played a significant impact on initial evaluations going beyond the 60 day timeline.

**Number of children included in (a) but not included in (b)**

136

**Account for children included in (a) but not included in (b). Indicate the range of days beyond the timeline when the evaluation was completed and any reasons for the delays.**

The number of days between the state established timeline and date of completion range from 1-533 days. Within this range, the following two LEAs had zero evaluations completed past sixty days; two had evaluations completed less than 60 days past the 60 day requirement; three LEAs had evaluations that occurred between 178-193 days past the 60 day requirement; seven LEAs had evaluations completed between 211-260 days past the 60 day requirement, two LEAs had evaluations completed 324 and 326 days past the 60 day requirement, and one LEA had evaluation(s) that occurred 529 days past the 60 day requirement.

Reasons for the delays included school closures and staffing shortages related to COVID-19. This resulted in outstanding evaluations needing to be completed. 51 non-compliant reasons for delay cited "COVID", school closures related to COVID-19, staff unavailability due to COVID-19. Delays included a lack of qualified evaluators in particular geographic areas of the state, which caused delays in scheduling. In Vermont, COVID had a significant impact on our compliance percentage.

**Indicate the evaluation timeline used:**

The State established a timeline within which the evaluation must be conducted

**What is the State's timeline for initial evaluations? If the State-established timeframe provides for exceptions through State regulation or policy, describe cases falling within those exceptions and include in (b).**

The state's established timeframe is cited as 2362.2.1 (c) Initial Evaluations:

2362.2.1 (c) Initial Evaluations (34 CFR §300.301) states that "the initial evaluation shall be completed and the report issued within sixty days from either: 1. The date parental consent has been received by the LEA. 2. The date on the LEA's Notice, which informs parents that it will be reviewing existing data as the sole basis for the initial evaluation." This differs from 34 CFR §300.301 by adding the language "and the report issued" as opposed to just completed.

**What is the source of the data provided for this indicator?**

State monitoring

**Describe the method used to collect these data, and if data are from the State's monitoring, describe the procedures used to collect these data.**

In FFY2019, Vermont state policy provided that data is to be collected on a 3-year cycle through a state developed spreadsheet for LEA self-reporting of completed initial evaluations. This policy continued in FFY2020, measuring initial evaluations during the time period July 1, 2020 – March 1, 2021. The VT AOE provides technical assistance individually to ensure LEA data are reported in a secure, accurate location. Vermont reviews submissions within a state developed state monitoring system, and each LEA receives written feedback in addition to citations identifying student-level issues of noncompliance and opportunities for differentiated technical assistance. Districts who do not meet 100% compliance are included as part of the next year's monitoring activities for this indicator as part of a selective monitoring cohort, and the results are factored into the LEAs determination status. At the end of each monitoring cycle, Vermont notifies LEAs of final compliance standings in a summary of results report that details the noncompliance with citations and a corrective action plan. For FFY2020, data submissions for cyclic monitoring were scheduled for Jan 15, 2021, and March 15, 2021.

**Provide additional information about this indicator (optional)**

For FFY2020, Indicator 11 measured initial evaluations conducted during the time period from July 1, 2020 – March 1, 2021, with COVID-19 causing school closures and staffing shortages which resulted in outstanding evaluations needing to be completed. Still, the VT AOE engaged in multiple activities and strategies aimed at improving this indicator despite ongoing challenges.

The VT AOE began improvement efforts regarding the ease of use and clarity of Delay of Evaluation forms in FFY 2020. The form and accompanying "companion document" now have a much clearer explanation of the law regarding appropriate reasons for delay as well as some common misconceptions. We anticipate the completion of the new documents in FFY2021 and expect that it will greatly decrease the misuse of the Delay of

Evaluation form for non-compliant delays. This form and related training will be made available Summer 2022 and messaged widely to Special Education Directors, Special Education Advisory Panel, and Vermont Family Network.

The Delay of Evaluation forms collected by the the VT AOE indicated that many LEAs were found non-compliant due to using unacceptable/non-compliant reasons for delay on their Delay of Evaluation forms. Using this data, the VT AOE conducted targeted trainings and updated forms to mitigate this issue in the future. The VT AOE provided indicator 11 trainings to all LEA's who were found to be non-compliant. Trainings consisted of 30–60-minute meeting with the special education director and a VT AOE TA provider and were comprised of one-three special education directors and one VT AOE TA provider per training. The VT AOE TA provider reviewed each LEA's data with them and went over which reasons for delay were allowable and why. The TA provider also shared language from Child Find statute as well as Vermont State legal language regarding evaluation timelines. The VT AOE TA provider who provided the trainings was a designated Indicator 11 data steward who was familiar with the indicator data collection and improvement activities.

The VT AOE also began development an updated Delay of Evaluation form that makes it impossible for LEAs to input a non-allowable reasons for delay of evaluation into the form. There will be an updated "companion document" with all relevant federal and state legal language relayed to evaluation timelines, as well as some examples of acceptable and unacceptable reasons for delay and an explanation of why they are acceptable or not.

A Child Find Self-Assessment form was developed and posted. A collection form was designed in Excel last year, and improved this year, to assist the districts in a thorough and accurate submission of data. The form includes pop-up windows, detailing the specific information required in each column. Through this tool, in addition to individual assistance when needed (via e-mail or video call), the Vermont AOE collects every year, from all initial evaluations completed during the school year, for all districts under monitoring, the name of the school, the type of enrollment (public school, independent school, or other), the perm number, the date of request for evaluation, the date of the Evaluation Planning Team meeting, the date of parental consent, the date of the eligibility determination meeting, the date on which the eligibility report was provided to the parents, whether the student was determined to be eligible for special education in Vermont, the type of evaluation (for out-of-state transfers), whether the student was referred to a 504 or EST team, whether a form 4 was filled out (in case of delay), whether the delay in evaluation was family-related, the reasons for evaluation delay, and the date and reasons for denial of the request to evaluate, if applicable. The monitoring team in collaboration with the indicator 11 data steward provided ongoing, individualized support to districts.

Bi -Weekly meetings with special education directors included information dissemination on reasons for delay, under indicator 11 as well as recommendations for child find activities. Directors were informed about OSEP guidance regarding Child Find issues in 2021 and were cautioned that there were no waivers around their obligations under child find federal and state regulations that cover the location, identification, and evaluation of students with suspected disabilities. Information from OSEP was posted on our webpage and distributed via our listserv and our monthly special education communication called The Nuggets.

The VT AOE created a Model Procedures document, which includes comprehensive Child Find procedures and will be disseminated late Winter 2022. Districts are expected to adopt the AOE Model Procedures as their own or assure that their own procedures include AOE content at the minimum. The districts submit their special education policy and procedures for review annually as part of cyclic monitoring. As part of a comprehensive review, we look at their child find language to ensure they are meeting federal and state requirements concerning child find. This section includes the location identification and evaluation of students with suspected disabilities. The AOE believes the adoption of these procedures will strengthen practices across LEAs.

Training on Indicator 11 data collection forms with samples occurred and all relevant materials are posted on the website. Virtual meetings were hosted by Monitoring, in addition to providing 1:1 technical assistance with districts. A webinar, in addition to a transcript and slides of the same, with detailed instructions on monitoring submissions, were posted on the Monitoring webpage of the VT AOE. A Q&A session on the monitoring system was held in September. An additional session, specific to the January deadlines, was held in December. In February 2022, will take place a third session, regarding the March submissions. The monitoring team is also consistently available to answer monitoring questions on all business days.

The VT AOE staff collaborated with IDC to generate a formal process document for monitoring, data collection, review, verification, and persons responsible for indicator 11 submissions.

Vermont developed a more robust Child Find/Prop Share form and took the opportunity to remind districts about their obligations of Child Find for parentally placed private school and homeschool students as part of trainings and Bi-weekly Directors' calls.

The VT AOE also produced trainings in the form of pre-recorded webinars, resources, and follow-up Live Office Hours on determining adverse effect and making eligibility decisions for students suspected of having a Specific Learning Disability.

Future Child Find/Indicator 11 activities include: a toolkit for addressing Child Find activities, culturally sensitive/unbiased assessment methodology for initial evaluations (guidance), and a manual for utilizing MTSS in conducting evaluations across disability categories.

The VT AOE maintains and updates a webpage for resources related to Child Find for special education administrators and educators which can be found at: <https://education.vermont.gov/student-support/vermont-special-education/technical-assistance-requests-and-professional-development/state-performance-plan-resources-by-indicator#indicator-11>

**Correction of Findings of Noncompliance Identified in FFY 2019**

Findings of Noncompliance Identified	Findings of Noncompliance Verified as Corrected Within One Year	Findings of Noncompliance Subsequently Corrected	Findings Not Yet Verified as Corrected
6	6	0	0

**FFY 2019 Findings of Noncompliance Verified as Corrected**

**Describe how the State verified that the source of noncompliance is correctly implementing the regulatory requirements**

Beginning in FFY2019, the VT AOE policy is for data to be collected per the method described above. At the end of each monitoring cycle, the VT AOE notifies LEAs of final compliance standings with the appropriate citations in a summary of results report. For FFY2019, data submissions were scheduled for Jan 15, 2020, and Spring 2020. However, the only data collection Vermont was able to obtain was on January 15, 2020, due to the Governor's executive order declaring a state of emergency on March 13th, 2020.

Special education program monitoring activities for SY2019-2020 were disrupted on March 15, 2020, as a result of the Governor's executive order(s)



declaring a state of emergency in Vermont. As the state of emergency was still in effect as of the date of the FFY2019 SPP APR report, the AOE collected and verified updated information for any LEA that did not meet compliance targets by including that LEA in selective monitoring for SY2020-2021. Data for this indicator were verified and updated in the fall of 2020 when schools resumed in-person services and had access to student files. LEAs had submitted their special education policies and procedures for review so the VT AOE was able to confirm LEAs with the findings were correctly implementing the requirements, including Child Find.

LEAs were required to submit subsequent data to demonstrate correction. The VT AOE reviewed updated data for initial evaluation in each of the three (3) LEAs with late initial evaluations in FFY2019. Vermont determined that each LEA is correcting implementing the regulations by completing 100% of the initial evaluations within the one-year timeline and having appropriate and accurate special education policies and procedures submitted through the monitoring system. The VT AOE has determined that each LEA is now meeting 100% compliance with federal regulations related to indicator 11 and this is not a systemic issue. The VT AOE was able to verify the correction of noncompliance, close out within one year, and notify the LEAs in writing about the correction.

**Describe how the State verified that each individual case of noncompliance was corrected**

Based on an updated review of individual student records for each of the six (6) students reported in FFY2019 with late initial evaluations, the VT AOE has determined that although late, all six (6) students received an initial evaluation and eligibility determination within one year. This correction has been verified and these cases have been closed out. LEAs are notified in writing the correction of their noncompliance has been verified.

**Correction of Findings of Noncompliance Identified Prior to FFY 2019**

Year Findings of Noncompliance Were Identified	Findings of Noncompliance Not Yet Verified as Corrected as of FFY 2019 APR	Findings of Noncompliance Verified as Corrected	Findings Not Yet Verified as Corrected

**11 - Prior FFY Required Actions**

Because the State reported less than 100% compliance for FFY 2019, the State must report on the status of correction of noncompliance identified in FFY 2019 for this indicator. When reporting on the correction of noncompliance, the State must report, in the FFY 2020 SPP/APR, that it has verified that each LEA with noncompliance identified in FFY 2019 for this indicator: (1) is correctly implementing the specific regulatory requirements (i.e., achieved 100% compliance) based on a review of updated data such as data subsequently collected through on-site monitoring or a State data system; and (2) has corrected each individual case of noncompliance, unless the child is no longer within the jurisdiction of the LEA, consistent with OSEP Memo 09-02. In the FFY 2020 SPP/APR, the State must describe the specific actions that were taken to verify the correction.

If the State did not identify any findings of noncompliance in FFY 2019, although its FFY 2019 data reflect less than 100% compliance, provide an explanation of why the State did not identify any findings of noncompliance in FFY 2019.

**Response to actions required in FFY 2019 SPP/APR**

The VT AOE reported on the status of correction of noncompliance identified in FFY2019 for this indicator. The VT AOE reported that each LEA with noncompliance identified in FFY2019 for this indicator is 1) is correctly implementing the specific regulatory requirements (i.e., achieved 100% compliance) based on a review of updated data such as data subsequently collected through on-site monitoring or a state data system; and (2) has corrected each individual case of noncompliance, unless the child is no longer within the jurisdiction of the LEA, consistent with OSEP Memo 09-02. The state reported the specific actions that were taken to verify the correction.

Beginning in FFY2019, Vermont state policy is for data to be collected per the method described above. At the end of each monitoring cycle, Vermont notifies LEAs of final compliance standings in a summary of results report. For FFY2019, data submissions were scheduled for Jan 15, 2020, and Spring 2020. However, the only data collection the VT AOE was able to obtain was on January 15, 2020, due to the Governor's executive order declaring a state of emergency on March 13th, 2020.

Special education program monitoring activities for SY2019-2020 were disrupted on March 15, 2020, as a result of the Governor's executive order(s) declaring a state of emergency in Vermont. As the state of emergency was still in effect as of the date of the FFY2019 SPP APR report, the VT AOE collected and verified updated information for any LEA that did not meet compliance targets by including that LEA in selective monitoring for SY2020-2021. Data for this indicator were verified and updated in the fall of 2020 when schools resumed in-person services and had access to student files.

Based on a review of updated data regarding the three (3) LEAs who had late initial evaluations in FFY2019, Vermont determined that all late initial evaluations were verified as corrected within one year. The VT AOE has determined that each LEA is now meeting 100% compliance with federal regulations related to indicator 11 and this is not a systemic issue.

**11 - OSEP Response**

**11 - Required Actions**

Because the State reported less than 100% compliance for FFY 2020, the State must report on the status of correction of noncompliance identified in FFY 2020 for this indicator. When reporting on the correction of noncompliance, the State must report, in the FFY 2021 SPP/APR, that it has verified that each LEA with noncompliance identified in FFY 2020 for this indicator: (1) is correctly implementing the specific regulatory requirements (i.e., achieved 100% compliance) based on a review of updated data such as data subsequently collected through on-site monitoring or a State data system; and (2) has corrected each individual case of noncompliance, unless the child is no longer within the jurisdiction of the LEA, consistent with OSEP Memo 09-02. In the FFY 2021 SPP/APR, the State must describe the specific actions that were taken to verify the correction.

If the State did not identify any findings of noncompliance in FFY 2020, although its FFY 2020 data reflect less than 100% compliance, provide an explanation of why the State did not identify any findings of noncompliance in FFY 2020.



## Indicator 12: Early Childhood Transition

### Instructions and Measurement

**Monitoring Priority:** Effective General Supervision Part B / Effective Transition

**Compliance indicator:** Percent of children referred by Part C prior to age 3, who are found eligible for Part B, and who have an IEP developed and implemented by their third birthdays.

(20 U.S.C. 1416(a)(3)(B))

#### Data Source

Data to be taken from State monitoring or State data system.

#### Measurement

- a. # of children who have been served in Part C and referred to Part B for Part B eligibility determination.
- b. # of those referred determined to be NOT eligible and whose eligibility was determined prior to their third birthdays.
- c. # of those found eligible who have an IEP developed and implemented by their third birthdays.
- d. # of children for whom parent refusal to provide consent caused delays in evaluation or initial services or to whom exceptions under 34 CFR §300.301(d) applied.
- e. # of children determined to be eligible for early intervention services under Part C less than 90 days before their third birthdays.
- f. # of children whose parents chose to continue early intervention services beyond the child's third birthday through a State's policy under 34 CFR §303.211 or a similar State option.

Account for children included in (a), but not included in b, c, d, e, or f. Indicate the range of days beyond the third birthday when eligibility was determined and the IEP developed, and the reasons for the delays.

Percent = [(c) divided by (a - b - d - e - f)] times 100.

#### Instructions

*If data are from State monitoring, describe the method used to select LEAs for monitoring. If data are from a State database, include data for the entire reporting year.*

Describe the results of the calculations and compare the results to the target. Describe the method used to collect these data, and if data are from the State's monitoring, describe the procedures used to collect these data. Provide the actual numbers used in the calculation.

Targets must be 100%.

Category f is to be used only by States that have an approved policy for providing parents the option of continuing early intervention services beyond the child's third birthday under 34 CFR §303.211 or a similar State option.

Provide detailed information about the timely correction of noncompliance as noted in OSEP's response for the previous SPP/APR. If the State did not ensure timely correction of the previous noncompliance, provide information on the extent to which noncompliance was subsequently corrected (more than one year after identification). In addition, provide information regarding the nature of any continuing noncompliance, improvement activities completed (e.g., review of policies and procedures, technical assistance, training, etc.) and any enforcement actions that were taken.

If the State reported less than 100% compliance for the previous reporting period (e.g., for the FFY 2020 SPP/APR, the data for FFY 2019), and the State did not identify any findings of noncompliance, provide an explanation of why the State did not identify any findings of noncompliance.

## 12 - Indicator Data

### Not Applicable

Select yes if this indicator is not applicable.

NO

#### Historical Data

Baseline Year	Baseline Data
2005	86.44%

FFY	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019
Target	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%
Data	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%

#### Targets

FFY	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025
Target	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%

#### FFY 2020 SPP/APR Data

a. Number of children who have been served in Part C and referred to Part B for Part B eligibility determination.	157
b. Number of those referred determined to be NOT eligible and whose eligibility was determined prior to third birthday.	6

c. Number of those found eligible who have an IEP developed and implemented by their third birthdays.	130
d. Number for whom parent refusals to provide consent caused delays in evaluation or initial services or to whom exceptions under 34 CFR §300.301(d) applied.	20
e. Number of children who were referred to Part C less than 90 days before their third birthdays.	0
f. Number of children whose parents chose to continue early intervention services beyond the child's third birthday through a State's policy under 34 CFR §303.211 or a similar State option.	0

Measure	Numerator (c)	Denominator (a-b-d-e-f)	FFY 2019 Data	FFY 2020 Target	FFY 2020 Data	Status	Slippage
Percent of children referred by Part C prior to age 3 who are found eligible for Part B, and who have an IEP developed and implemented by their third birthdays.	130	131	100.00%	100%	99.24%	Did not meet target	No Slippage

Number of children who served in Part C and referred to Part B for eligibility determination that are not included in b, c, d, e, or f

1

Account for children included in (a), but not included in b, c, d, e, or f. Indicate the range of days beyond the third birthday when eligibility was determined and the IEP developed, and the reasons for the delays.

3 days beyond the third birthday due to case manager extended illness

Attach PDF table (optional)

What is the source of the data provided for this indicator?

State monitoring

Describe the method used to collect these data, and if data are from the State's monitoring, describe the procedures used to collect these data.

Notification letters and reminders were sent to seventeen (17) LEAs slated for FFY2019 Compliance Monitoring which for this indicator involves the LEA completion of a state-developed tracking tool spreadsheet. The VT AOE requested from each LEA the child's name, date birth, name of CIS/EI office, person submitting the data to the state with the date, the date of referral to Part B was received, if the child was determined eligible for Part C less than 90 days before the child's third birthday providing the range of days before the third birthday, date of the transition meeting, date of eligibility for Part B, as well as the date an IEP was developed and the date of parental consent for the provision of the IEP services. This tracking tool spreadsheet was submitted at two (2) periods over the course of the school year and were specifically due on January 15 and June 1.

Provide additional information about this indicator (optional)

Follow up technical assistance by the state was provided previous to, and after each submission date. The VT AOE has also created an Indicator 12 training video with corresponding PowerPoint, held a live training webinar for LEA's, following with a Community of Call to answer any additional questions from the LEA's.

Since this collection period, the state has worked with ECTA providers to develop a new tracking tool that will give LEA's an at a glance color coded indication as they get closer to the third birthday. Additionally, date safeguards were sent and date eligible for Part B was added to the tracking tool.

The VT AOE maintains and updates a webpage for resources related to early childhood transition for special education administrators and educators which can be found at: <https://education.vermont.gov/student-support/vermont-special-education/technical-assistance-requests-and-professional-development/state-performance-plan-resources-by-indicator#indicator-12>

Correction of Findings of Noncompliance Identified in FFY 2019

Findings of Noncompliance Identified	Findings of Noncompliance Verified as Corrected Within One Year	Findings of Noncompliance Subsequently Corrected	Findings Not Yet Verified as Corrected

Correction of Findings of Noncompliance Identified Prior to FFY 2019

Year Findings of Noncompliance Were Identified	Findings of Noncompliance Not Yet Verified as Corrected as of FFY 2019 APR	Findings of Noncompliance Verified as Corrected	Findings Not Yet Verified as Corrected

## 12 - Prior FFY Required Actions

None

## 12 - OSEP Response

### 12 - Required Actions

Because the State reported less than 100% compliance for FFY 2020, the State must report on the status of correction of noncompliance identified in FFY 2020 for this indicator. When reporting on the correction of noncompliance, the State must report, in the FFY 2021 SPP/APR, that it has verified that each LEA with noncompliance identified in FFY 2020 for this indicator: (1) is correctly implementing the specific regulatory requirements (i.e., achieved 100% compliance) based on a review of updated data such as data subsequently collected through on-site monitoring or a State data system; and (2) has corrected each individual case of noncompliance, unless the child is no longer within the jurisdiction of the LEA, consistent with OSEP Memo 09-02. In the FFY 2021 SPP/APR, the State must describe the specific actions that were taken to verify the correction.

If the State did not identify any findings of noncompliance in FFY 2020, although its FFY 2020 data reflect less than 100% compliance, provide an explanation of why the State did not identify any findings of noncompliance in FFY 2020.

## Indicator 13: Secondary Transition

### Instructions and Measurement

**Monitoring Priority:** Effective General Supervision Part B / Effective Transition

**Compliance indicator:** Percent of youth with IEPs aged 16 and above with an IEP that includes appropriate measurable postsecondary goals that are annually updated and based upon an age appropriate transition assessment, transition services, including courses of study, that will reasonably enable the student to meet those postsecondary goals, and annual IEP goals related to the student's transition services needs. There also must be evidence that the student was invited to the IEP Team meeting where transition services are to be discussed and evidence that, if appropriate, a representative of any participating agency that is likely to be responsible for providing or paying for transition services, including, if appropriate, pre-employment transition services, was invited to the IEP Team meeting with the prior consent of the parent or student who has reached the age of majority.

(20 U.S.C. 1416(a)(3)(B))

#### Data Source

Data to be taken from State monitoring or State data system.

#### Measurement

Percent = [(# of youth with IEPs aged 16 and above with an IEP that includes appropriate measurable postsecondary goals that are annually updated and based upon an age appropriate transition assessment, transition services, including courses of study, that will reasonably enable the student to meet those postsecondary goals, and annual IEP goals related to the student's transition services needs. There also must be evidence that the student was invited to the IEP Team meeting where transition services are to be discussed and evidence that, if appropriate, a representative of any participating agency that is likely to be responsible for providing or paying for transition services, including, if appropriate, pre-employment transition services, was invited to the IEP Team meeting with the prior consent of the parent or student who has reached the age of majority) divided by the (# of youth with an IEP age 16 and above)] times 100.

If a State's policies and procedures provide that public agencies must meet these requirements at an age younger than 16, the State may, but is not required to, choose to include youth beginning at that younger age in its data for this indicator. If a State chooses to do this, it must state this clearly in its SPP/APR and ensure that its baseline data are based on youth beginning at that younger age.

#### Instructions

*If data are from State monitoring, describe the method used to select LEAs for monitoring. If data are from a State database, include data for the entire reporting year.*

Describe the results of the calculations and compare the results to the target. Describe the method used to collect these data and if data are from the State's monitoring, describe the procedures used to collect these data. Provide the actual numbers used in the calculation.

Targets must be 100%.

Provide detailed information about the timely correction of noncompliance as noted in OSEP's response for the previous SPP/APR. If the State did not ensure timely correction of the previous noncompliance, provide information on the extent to which noncompliance was subsequently corrected (more than one year after identification). In addition, provide information regarding the nature of any continuing noncompliance, improvement activities completed (e.g., review of policies and procedures, technical assistance, training, etc.) and any enforcement actions that were taken.

If the State reported less than 100% compliance for the previous reporting period (e.g., for the FFY 2020 SPP/APR, the data for FFY 2019), and the State did not identify any findings of noncompliance, provide an explanation of why the State did not identify any findings of noncompliance.

## 13 - Indicator Data

### Historical Data

Baseline Year	Baseline Data
2009	22.60%

FFY	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019
Target	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%
Data	91.49%	88.03%	100.00%	71.25%	10.53%

### Targets

FFY	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025
Target	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%

### FFY 2020 SPP/APR Data

Number of youth aged 16 and above with IEPs that contain each of the required components for secondary transition	Number of youth with IEPs aged 16 and above	FFY 2019 Data	FFY 2020 Target	FFY 2020 Data	Status	Slippage
73	160	10.53%	100%	45.63%	Did not meet target	No Slippage

What is the source of the data provided for this indicator?

State monitoring

**Describe the method used to collect these data, and if data are from the State's monitoring, describe the procedures used to collect these data.**

A minimum of 10 sample plans are collected from each LEA which are part of the three-year cyclic monitoring cohort through electronic submissions and reviewed for compliance in 16 single areas contained within 8 elements of indicator 13. Plans found by an initial reviewer to be less than 100% compliant when scored against the NTACT checklist and present further questions are then reviewed by multiple VT AOE staff to establish inter-rater reliability. The VT AOE currently makes a finding based on one submission window each March 15th. During FFY2020, districts in cyclic monitoring were required to perform a self-review of their transition plans for compliance, which was then followed by the standard review by the VT AOE. This allows further inter-reviewer agreement processes to evaluate districts' reasoning and methods for determining if their transition plans were in compliance.

The VT AOE established an elaborate analysis system which lets VT AOE staff see (for each LEA) all plan submissions and breaks down each submission based on how the individual transition plan scored against the NTACT checklist. This chart lets VT AOE staff easily and readily see how each LEA performed across all 8 elements of indicator 13. With this new system (put into effect for FY19) the AOE was able to clearly identify two areas common to most non-compliant LEAs: transition assessments and annual transition goals. Based on these findings, the VT AOE Postsecondary Transition Coordinator put together a focused, 4-part training series (called VT AOE Fall Indicator 13 Training Series), in the fall of 2021 and required all non-compliant LEAs to attend. The first training was on transition assessments, the second on annual transition goals, the third was a peer learning session where all LEAs who scored 90% or above shared effective practices with noncompliant LEAs. The fourth training was comprehensive, covering all 8 elements. All trainings described here were recorded. The first three are now housed in the VT AOE's secondary transition resource center (the posting of the fourth training is forthcoming). The postsecondary transition coordinator also met with each non-compliant LEA, explaining, plan by plan, the reasons for their findings and ensuring that the LEA understood the underlying system improvements required to prepare and implement appropriate transition plans and services for all of students with disabilities. <https://education.vermont.gov/student-support/vermont-special-education/resources-for-special-educators-and-administrators>

Question	Yes / No
Do the State's policies and procedures provide that public agencies must meet these requirements at an age younger than 16?	NO

**Provide additional information about this indicator (optional)**

During FFY2020, it was noted that some transition plans specified for a student to attend vocational training or related activities at jobsites, encountered difficulties stemming from COVID-19 related impacts to those job sites specifically. For example, if a student's plan specified that they were to engage in vocational training at a lumber mill, and that lumber mill was shut down due to a COVID-19 related issue, the student was unable to engage in vocational training due to the business's operational status. During this time when many schools were fully remote, the VT AOE created a resource so that schools could still provide some transition services (student led transition assessments and online career exploration activities that are designed for students), which can be found at <https://education.vermont.gov/documents/implementing-transition-services-during-remote-learning>.

As a result of further study of the OSEP 09-02 Memo, the State Guide on Identifying Noncompliance (February 2021), and analysis of the nature of the noncompliance being cited, the VT AOE will make a modification to its current system for March 2022 submissions. Monitoring staff will ensure individual noncompliance is corrected immediately. Our general supervision procedures will allow programs to correct noncompliance prior to the VT AOE issuing a written notification of a finding of noncompliance. The VT AOE will verify correction of each instance of child-specific noncompliance and review updated program data demonstrating 100% compliance with each statutory or regulatory requirement with which noncompliance was identified. While the LEA may be allowed to correct noncompliance prior to a written finding being issued, the VT AOE will still report the actual rate of compliance that was calculated prior to correction in the APR and when reporting to the public on the performance of the LEA. Our SPP/APR report data will reflect the level of compliance prior to the LEA correcting any identified noncompliance, regardless of whether compliance is corrected prior to or following written notification of noncompliance. This will ensure more timely corrections and prevent our state from continued longstanding noncompliance.

It is important to note that the VT AOE has a rigorous evaluation system for Indicator 13 submissions. There are multiple factors considered using NTACT criteria. If an LEA misses just one factor, it is marked as 0% compliant. In drilling deeper into our data of 45.63%, those LEAs with noncompliance are over and above 90% compliance with the indicator. We have been able to pinpoint specific correction and improvement areas and use that for corrective actions and targeted technical assistance. We are encouraged by our improvement from FFY2019, but we know the results of our efforts focused on helping LEAs implement the requirements will be evident in FFY21. Another note is that the LEAs reviewed for cyclic monitoring contributing to our percentage have not been monitored on this indicator for over six years. We believe our move to a three-year cycle will also improve outcomes and LEA performance. This is our third year of the implementation of a more robust, rigorous system and all LEAs in the state will have been through the close review by March 15, 2022.

The VT AOE maintains and updates a webpage for resources related to secondary transition for special education administrators and educators which can be found at <https://education.vermont.gov/student-support/vermont-special-education/technical-assistance-requests-and-professional-development/state-performance-plan-resources-by-indicator#indicator-13> along with a dedicated webpage for secondary transition at <https://education.vermont.gov/student-support/vermont-special-education/resources-for-special-educators-and-administrators#secondary-transition>

**Correction of Findings of Noncompliance Identified in FFY 2019**

Findings of Noncompliance Identified	Findings of Noncompliance Verified as Corrected Within One Year	Findings of Noncompliance Subsequently Corrected	Findings Not Yet Verified as Corrected
17	4	1	12

**FFY 2019 Findings of Noncompliance Verified as Corrected**

**Describe how the State verified that the source of noncompliance is correctly implementing the regulatory requirements**

The LEAs in this category were part of a selective monitoring cohort. During selective monitoring, LEAs must resubmit previously non-compliant plans with corrections as well as additional plans in order to demonstrate 100% compliance with individual and systemic non-compliance. Through the state's established means of collecting data a minimum of 10 sample plans are submitted to the department by each LEA through electronic submissions and reviewed for compliance in 16 single areas contained within 8 elements of indicator 13. Selective monitoring is a status obtained if noncompliance was identified as part of a LEA's three-year cyclic monitoring. In addition to the 10 sample plans, they are required to submit corrected plans for individual students previously found to be non-compliant. A review of these corrected transition plans takes place, and the VT AOE verifies the correction of noncompliance by confirming that each corrected transition plan demonstrates 100% compliance with the NTACT Indicator 13 checklist. When the

corrected transition plans demonstrate 100% compliance against the indicator 13 checklist, they are closed out and notified in writing that the LEA has achieved 100% compliance. The process described above was followed and through this process, we verified that 5 LEAs were in compliance.

In summary, when findings of noncompliance are identified:

1. LEAs must submit previously noncompliant transition plans with corrections (prong 1).
  - 1a. If a student has graduated, moved, or otherwise is no longer a student, their transition plan is supplanted by another student's transition plan.
2. Additionally, LEAs must submit a minimum of 10 additional transition plans (prong 2).
3. All plans are submitted through the state's established means of collecting data.
4. Submitted transition plans are verified by the VT AOE for correction of noncompliance by confirming that each plan demonstrates 100% compliance with the NTACT Indicator 13 checklist.
5. When each transition plan submitted by an LEA is reviewed and found to be 100% compliant against the indicator 13 checklist, the LEA is closed out via written notification.

Based on the findings done by checking the plans against the NTACT Indicator 13 checklist, the VT AOE Postsecondary Transition Coordinator put together a 4-part training series focused on these two I-13 elements (transition assessments and annual IEP transition goals) in the fall of 2021 and required all LEAs who had noncompliant transition plans to attend. It was called the VT AOE Fall Indicator 13 Training series. The first training was all on transition assessments, the second was on annual transition goals, the third was a peer learning session for all LEAs who scored 90% or above to share what systems are working well for them with noncompliant LEAs. The fourth training was a comprehensive I-13 training covering all 8 elements. These trainings were recorded and are now housed in the VT AOE's secondary transition resource center (training 3 all elements coming soon). The postsecondary transition coordinator also met with each LEA that had plans that were out of compliance and went through each plan and explained why they were out of compliance and made sure the LEA understood what was wrong and how to fix it not just at face value but addressing the underlying systems that need to be in place for effective transition services for all of their students with disabilities. To see VT AOE's resources on postsecondary transition or to see the fall 2021 trainings please visit <https://education.vermont.gov/student-support/vermont-special-education/resources-for-special-educators-and-administrators>.

The 12 LEAs (findings) not yet verified as corrected are in selective monitoring for FY21, which means submission and verification occurred March 15, 2022. VT AOE evaluated correction of individual cases and if the plans were 100% compliant (Prong 1). Additionally, the districts identified with noncompliance produced a sample of current transition plans and the VT AOE will review for systems compliance (Prong 2). The VT AOE will be able to report on these close outs by OSEP's April 2022 clarification period.

As a result of ongoing noncompliance, the VT AOE will impose additional corrective actions on the LEAs that did not correct noncompliance in a timely manner (within one year from identification) for those not demonstrating compliance as of March 15, 2022. The VT AOE continues to collect and review updated data to verify subsequent correction (ensuring that child-specific instances of noncompliance have been corrected and that the program is correctly implementing the requirement(s) through selective monitoring. If an LEA is not yet correctly implementing the statutory/ regulatory requirement(s) for this indicator by March 15, 2022, the LEA will enter into targeted monitoring status with mandatory technical assistance, comprehensive desk review, and increased reporting requirements until the correction of noncompliance is verified. The VT AOE will not issue another finding, but will continue to work with the LEA to correct and verify correction of the noncompliance.

**Describe how the State verified that each individual case of noncompliance was corrected**

The VT AOE reviewed the transition plans submitted to the department through the state's established means of collecting data that have been corrected and verified correction of noncompliance by confirming that each corrected transition plan demonstrates 100% compliance against the NTACT Indicator 13 checklist. When the corrected transition plans demonstrate 100% compliance against the indicator 13 checklist, they are closed out as the VT AOE has verified that 100% of the noncompliance was corrected. The VT AOE maintains written documentation of the verification of correction. The VT AOE notifies each LEA that correction of noncompliance has been verified.

**FFY 2019 Findings of Noncompliance Not Yet Verified as Corrected**

**Actions taken if noncompliance not corrected**

The districts identified as noncompliant during FFY2019 were placed in selective monitoring during FFY2020 and required to submit a minimum of 10 sample plans submitted electronically. Additionally, these LEAs are in selective monitoring for FFY2021 and the VT AOE continued to verify the LEAs compliance rate using the NTACT indicator 13 checklist.

Any LEA found with at least one transition plan which is non-compliant and not yet verified as corrected is entered into selective monitoring, requiring a subsequent resubmission of previously non-compliant transition plan(s) and additional transition plans from current students demonstrating correction as evidenced by a 100% pass on the NTACT Indicator 13 checklist. This submission occurs March 15, 2022. If the LEA is unable to submit a revised, compliant plan due to student graduation, they then select a different student's transition plan in their place from the same case manager. The VT AOE anticipates reporting by the FFY2020 SPP/APR clarification period and in the FFY2021 SPP/APR, that it has verified that each LEA with findings of noncompliance identified in FFY2019: (1) is correctly implementing the specific regulatory requirements based on a review of updated data; and (2) has corrected each individual case of noncompliance, unless the child is no longer within the jurisdiction of the LEA, consistent with OSEP Memo 09-02.

**Correction of Findings of Noncompliance Identified Prior to FFY 2019**

Year Findings of Noncompliance Were Identified	Findings of Noncompliance Not Yet Verified as Corrected as of FFY 2019 APR	Findings of Noncompliance Verified as Corrected	Findings Not Yet Verified as Corrected
FFY 2018	1	1	0

**FFY 2018**

**Findings of Noncompliance Verified as Corrected**

**Describe how the State verified that the source of noncompliance is correctly implementing the regulatory requirements**

A minimum of 10 sample plans were collected the LEA through electronic submissions and reviewed for compliance in 16 single areas contained within 8 elements of indicator 13. As this district was in selective monitoring, in addition to the 10 sample plans, they were required to submit corrected plans previously found to be non-compliant. Review of these corrected transition plans occurred, and the VT AOE verified correction of noncompliance by



confirming that each corrected transition plan demonstrated 100% compliance with the NTACT Indicator 13 checklist. When the corrected transition plans demonstrated 100% compliance against the Indicator 13 checklist, they were closed out.

The VT AOE verified compliance with the following from the 1 LEA with noncompliance in the FFY 2018 reporting year to determine if correction of noncompliance has occurred:

Correction of each child-specific instance of noncompliance, unless the child was no longer in the jurisdiction of the LEA. The VT AOE reviewed additional records for students still within the LEA from the 2019-20 school year. The VT AOE verified that IEP meetings, transition plans, transition notices, and transition conferences were completed although late (see OSEP Memo 09-02 – Prong 1). The VT AOE requested and reviewed subsequent data demonstrating the program is correctly implementing the requirement(s) where the program had noncompliance (i.e., 100% compliance) (see OSEP Memo 09-02 – Prong 2). Data was from a desk review of student files from the 1 LEA.

The VT AOE notified the 1 LEA that correction of noncompliance was verified. Verification of the correction and notification of the correction of noncompliance occurred later than the one year from the date of the written notification of findings of noncompliance.

#### **Describe how the State verified that each *individual case of noncompliance was corrected***

The VT AOE postsecondary transition coordinator met with the LEA that had plans that were out of compliance and went through each plan and explained why they were out of compliance and made sure the LEA understood what was wrong and how to fix it: both the individual example as well as the underlying systems that need to be in place for effective transition services for all of their students with disabilities. The LEA subsequently produced corrected transition plans for individual cases from the 19-20 school year. One student had left the LEA jurisdiction so the LEA submitted an IEP for a current student who attended in 19-20 school year. Upon review and utilizing the VT AOE NTACT checklist and follow up conversation with the Special Education Administrator, the VT AOE postsecondary transition coordinator verified the correction and notified the LEA in writing.

The VT AOE reviewed the submitted transition plans that had been corrected and verified correction of noncompliance by confirming that each corrected transition plan demonstrated 100% compliance against the NTACT Indicator 13 checklist. When the corrected transition plans demonstrated 100% compliance against the Indicator 13 checklist, they were closed out as the VT AOE has verified that the noncompliance was corrected.

### **13 - Prior FFY Required Actions**

Because the State reported less than 100% compliance for FFY 2019, the State must report on the status of correction of noncompliance identified in FFY 2019 for this indicator. In addition, the State must demonstrate, in the FFY 2020 SPP/APR, that the one remaining uncorrected finding of noncompliance identified in FFY 2018 was corrected. When reporting on the correction of noncompliance, the State must report, in the FFY 2020 SPP/APR, that it has verified that each LEA with findings of noncompliance identified in FFY 2019 and the LEA with remaining noncompliance identified in FFY 2018: (1) is correctly implementing the specific regulatory requirements (i.e., achieved 100% compliance) based on a review of updated data such as data subsequently collected through on-site monitoring or a State data system; and (2) has corrected each individual case of noncompliance, unless the child is no longer within the jurisdiction of the LEA, consistent with OSEP Memo 09-02. In the FFY 2020 SPP/APR, the State must describe the specific actions that were taken to verify the correction.

If the State did not identify any findings of noncompliance in FFY 2019, although its FFY 2019 data reflect less than 100% compliance, provide an explanation of why the State did not identify any findings of noncompliance in FFY 2019.

#### **Response to actions required in FFY 2019 SPP/APR**

In the FFY2019 SPP/APR, 17 LEAs were identified with noncompliant transition plans. The VT AOE reports that 4 of those LEAs are now verified as corrected, and 12 LEAs remain noncompliant at this time. These 12 LEAs are in selective monitoring for FFY2021 and the VT AOE expects to verify that all instances of noncompliance will have been corrected after the FFY2021 selective monitoring round with submissions due March 15, 2022. Verification of correction of noncompliance takes place via a review of the corrected transition plans against the NTACT Indicator 13 checklist. When the corrected transition plans and the 10 additional transition plans demonstrate 100% compliance against the Indicator 13 checklist, they are verified, closed out, and the LEA receives written notice of correction. In the case of LEAs in selective monitoring for FFY2021, the VT AOE will conduct a comprehensive desk audit of student files and LEA procedures to ensure the LEAs are implementing the specific regulatory compliance upon receipt of the transition plan submissions.

Additionally, the VT AOE verified compliance from the 1 LEA with a finding of noncompliance in the FFY2018 reporting year. The LEA was notified of correction in writing.

### **13 - OSEP Response**

The State did not demonstrate that the LEAs corrected the findings of noncompliance identified in FFY 2019 because it did not report that it verified correction of those findings, consistent with OSEP Memo 09-02. Specifically, the State did not report that it verified that each LEA with noncompliance identified in FFY 2019 is correctly implementing the specific regulatory requirements (i.e., achieved 100% compliance) based on a review of updated data such as data subsequently collected through on-site monitoring or a State data system.

### **13 - Required Actions**

Because the State reported less than 100% compliance for FFY 2020, the State must report on the status of correction of noncompliance identified in FFY 2020 for this indicator. In addition, the State must demonstrate, in the FFY 2021 SPP/APR, that the remaining 12 uncorrected findings of noncompliance identified in FFY 2019 were corrected. When reporting on the correction of noncompliance, the State must report, in the FFY 2021 SPP/APR, that it has verified that each LEA with findings of noncompliance identified in FFY 2020 and each LEA with remaining noncompliance identified in FFY 2019: (1) is correctly implementing the specific regulatory requirements (i.e., achieved 100% compliance) based on a review of updated data such as data subsequently collected through on-site monitoring or a State data system; and (2) has corrected each individual case of noncompliance, unless the child is no longer within the jurisdiction of the LEA, consistent with OSEP Memo 09-02. In the FFY 2021 SPP/APR, the State must describe the specific actions that were taken to verify the correction.

If the State did not identify any findings of noncompliance in FFY 2020, although its FFY 2020 data reflect less than 100% compliance, provide an explanation of why the State did not identify any findings of noncompliance in FFY 2020.

## Indicator 14: Post-School Outcomes

### Instructions and Measurement

**Monitoring Priority:** Effective General Supervision Part B / Effective Transition

**Results indicator:** Percent of youth who are no longer in secondary school, had IEPs in effect at the time they left school, and were:

- A. Enrolled in higher education within one year of leaving high school.
- B. Enrolled in higher education or competitively employed within one year of leaving high school.
- C. Enrolled in higher education or in some other postsecondary education or training program; or competitively employed or in some other employment within one year of leaving high school.

(20 U.S.C. 1416(a)(3)(B))

#### Data Source

State selected data source.

#### Measurement

- A. Percent enrolled in higher education = [(# of youth who are no longer in secondary school, had IEPs in effect at the time they left school and were enrolled in higher education within one year of leaving high school) divided by the (# of respondent youth who are no longer in secondary school and had IEPs in effect at the time they left school)] times 100.
- B. Percent enrolled in higher education or competitively employed within one year of leaving high school = [(# of youth who are no longer in secondary school, had IEPs in effect at the time they left school and were enrolled in higher education or competitively employed within one year of leaving high school) divided by the (# of respondent youth who are no longer in secondary school and had IEPs in effect at the time they left school)] times 100.
- C. Percent enrolled in higher education, or in some other postsecondary education or training program; or competitively employed or in some other employment = [(# of youth who are no longer in secondary school, had IEPs in effect at the time they left school and were enrolled in higher education, or in some other postsecondary education or training program; or competitively employed or in some other employment) divided by the (# of respondent youth who are no longer in secondary school and had IEPs in effect at the time they left school)] times 100.

#### Instructions

*Sampling of youth who had IEPs and are no longer in secondary school is allowed. When sampling is used, submit a description of the sampling methodology outlining how the design will yield valid and reliable estimates of the target population. (See [General Instructions](#) on page 2 for additional instructions on sampling.)*

Collect data by September 2021 on students who left school during 2019-2020, timing the data collection so that at least one year has passed since the students left school. Include students who dropped out during 2019-2020 or who were expected to return but did not return for the current school year. This includes all youth who had an IEP in effect at the time they left school, including those who graduated with a regular diploma or some other credential, dropped out, or aged out.

#### I. Definitions

*Enrolled in higher education* as used in measures A, B, and C means youth have been enrolled on a full- or part-time basis in a community college (two-year program) or college/university (four or more year program) for at least one complete term, at any time in the year since leaving high school.

*Competitive employment* as used in measures B and C: States have two options to report data under “competitive employment”:

Option 1: Use the same definition as used to report in the FFY 2015 SPP/APR, i.e., competitive employment means that youth have worked for pay at or above the minimum wage in a setting with others who are nondisabled for a period of 20 hours a week for at least 90 days at any time in the year since leaving high school. This includes military employment.

Option 2: States report in alignment with the term “competitive integrated employment” and its definition, in section 7(5) of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended by Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA). For the purpose of defining the rate of compensation for students working on a “part-time basis” under this category, OSEP maintains the standard of 20 hours a week for at least 90 days at any time in the year since leaving high school. This definition applies to military employment.

*Enrolled in other postsecondary education or training* as used in measure C, means youth have been enrolled on a full- or part-time basis for at least 1 complete term at any time in the year since leaving high school in an education or training program (e.g., Job Corps, adult education, workforce development program, vocational technical school which is less than a two-year program).

*Some other employment* as used in measure C means youth have worked for pay or been self-employed for a period of at least 90 days at any time in the year since leaving high school. This includes working in a family business (e.g., farm, store, fishing, ranching, catering services, etc.).

#### II. Data Reporting

States must describe the metric used to determine representativeness (e.g., +/- 3% discrepancy in the proportion of responders compared to target group).

Provide the total number of targeted youth in the sample or census.

Provide the actual numbers for each of the following mutually exclusive categories. The actual number of “leavers” who are:

1. Enrolled in higher education within one year of leaving high school;
2. Competitively employed within one year of leaving high school (but not enrolled in higher education);
3. Enrolled in some other postsecondary education or training program within one year of leaving high school (but not enrolled in higher education or competitively employed);
4. In some other employment within one year of leaving high school (but not enrolled in higher education, some other postsecondary education or training program, or competitively employed).

“Leavers” should only be counted in one of the above categories, and the categories are organized hierarchically. So, for example, “leavers” who are enrolled in full- or part-time higher education within one year of leaving high school should only be reported in category 1, even if they also

happen to be employed. Likewise, "leavers" who are not enrolled in either part- or full-time higher education, but who are competitively employed, should only be reported under category 2, even if they happen to be enrolled in some other postsecondary education or training program.

States must compare the response rate for the reporting year to the response rate for the previous year (e.g., in the FFY 2020 SPP/APR, compare the FFY 2020 response rate to the FFY 2019 response rate), and describe strategies that will be implemented which are expected to increase the response rate year over year, particularly for those groups that are underrepresented.

The State must also analyze the response rate to identify potential nonresponse bias and take steps to reduce any identified bias and promote response from a broad cross section of youth who are no longer in secondary school and had IEPs in effect at the time they left school.

### III. Reporting on the Measures/Indicators

Targets must be established for measures A, B, and C.

Measure A: For purposes of reporting on the measures/indicators, please note that any youth enrolled in an institution of higher education (that meets any definition of this term in the Higher Education Act (HEA)) within one year of leaving high school must be reported under measure A. This could include youth who also happen to be competitively employed, or in some other training program; however, the key outcome we are interested in here is enrollment in higher education.

Measure B: All youth reported under measure A should also be reported under measure B, in addition to all youth that obtain competitive employment within one year of leaving high school.

Measure C: All youth reported under measures A and B should also be reported under measure C, in addition to youth that are enrolled in some other postsecondary education or training program, or in some other employment.

Include the State's analyses of the extent to which the response data are representative of the demographics of youth who are no longer in secondary school and had IEPs in effect at the time they left school. States should consider categories such as race/ethnicity, disability category, and geographic location in the State.

If the analysis shows that the response data are not representative of the demographics of youth who are no longer in secondary school and had IEPs in effect at the time they left school, describe the strategies that the State will use to ensure that in the future the response data are representative of those demographics. In identifying such strategies, the State should consider factors such as how the State collected the data.

**Beginning with the FFY 2021 SPP/APR, due Feb. 1, 2023**, when reporting the extent to which the demographics of respondents are representative of the demographics of youth who are no longer in secondary school and had IEPs in effect at the time they left school, States must include race/ethnicity in its analysis. In addition, the State's analysis must include at least one of the following demographics: disability category, gender, geographic location, and/or another demographic category approved through the stakeholder input process.

## 14 - Indicator Data

### Historical Data

Measure	Baseline	FFY	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019
A	2009	Target >=	24.25%	24.25%	24.25%	24.25%	24.25%
A	24.22%	Data	38.79%	22.22%	21.94%	22.92%	23.31%
B	2009	Target >=	56.50%	56.50%	56.50%	56.50%	56.50%
B	56.40%	Data	69.63%	64.81%	62.58%	72.92%	77.91%
C	2009	Target >=	72.00%	72.00%	72.00%	72.00%	72.00%
C	71.97%	Data	80.84%	74.07%	78.71%	88.89%	86.50%

### FFY 2020 Targets

FFY	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025
Target A >=	17.00%	17.00%	18.00%	20.10%	22.20%	24.30%
Target B >=	64.37%	64.37%	66.37%	68.37%	70.37%	72.37%
Target C >=	75.30%	75.30%	78.30%	81.30%	84.30%	87.30%

### Targets: Description of Stakeholder Input

VT AOE solicited broad stakeholder input on the State's targets in the SPP/APR from January 2021 until December 2021. The VT AOE Special Education team began meeting with the Special Education Advisory Panel in January 2021 to discuss the changes to the SPP/APR FFY20-25 package, changes to data sources and indicator calculation, indicator targets and improvement activities. Along with collaboration with the Special Education Advisory Panel, VT AOE Special Education team solicited input from the Vermont's Parent Support Center (Vermont Family Network) and the Vermont Council of Special Education Administrators Executive. Beyond target input from these groups, the VT AOE Special education team also created a public webpage in which community partners and interested parties can access resources regarding the SPP/APR, information on the target setting process and electronic and mail-in forms to provide input on the State's targets in the SPP/APR. The public webpage regarding the SPP/APR Target

Setting can be found at <https://education.vermont.gov/student-support/vermont-special-education/recent-guidance-news-and-events/target-setting-for-the-spp-apr>

Vermont prefers to use the terms “community partners” or “interested parties” rather than stakeholders. With that said, we continue to make progress towards our goal of Improved outcomes in utilizing feedback and input, which will lead to better products reflective of representative community partner input, and an increased understanding of how the SPP/APR grounds the work of the State. During 2021, key community partner input was obtained through the engaging the Vermont Special Education Advisory Panel (VT-SEAP) and the Vermont Council of Special Education Administrators Executive Board; as well as through check-in sessions hosted by the State Director of Special Education designed for dialogue and technical assistance with Special Education Administrators throughout the state.

Since they were approved in May of 2021, the State has been developing and executing an implementation and training plan for changes to the Special Education Rules scheduled to take effect July 1, 2022. The initial training plan, and subsequent amendments, have been designed based on ongoing feedback from our community partners, in particular our special education administrators and the Vermont Family Network. The State convened two round table meetings with representation from the Vermont Family Network, the Special Education Advisory Panel, the Vermont Association of School Psychologists, and the Vermont Council of Special Education Administrators, Representatives from these organizations also provided direct feedback on each resource package released in response to the rule changes.

Community Partners -the groups named above along with staff from institutes of higher education, an external evaluator, special education directors and leadership from all participating SSIP LEAs - have consistent opportunities to provide input, suggestions, and insight on the implementation of the SSIP. Targeted engagement includes sharing and engaging in discussion about the annual SSIP report, comment and suggestions on direction of SSIP implementation, evaluation and tool development, data analysis, root cause analysis; sharing problems of practice, challenges and successes of implementation efforts; target setting, State Identified Measurable Result (SiMR) setting and scale-up opportunities.

VT AOE staff serving as individual Indicator Stewards worked with community partners to examine trends, make comparison to targets, and engage in root causes analyses in order to promote the benefits of using the SPP/APR as a tool for understanding compliance needs and prioritizing continuous improvement. This primarily occurred through the Local Special Education Determinations process – while providing TA, indicator stewards were able to receive feedback on the target set for the indicator in comparison to individual LEA performance. The State Director also worked with the VT-SEAP to review indicator performance after the February 1, 2021 SPP/APR submission. A plan has already been formulated for a busy 2021 calendar year for establishing new rigorous targets based on Vermont trend data.

Additionally, VT AOE has also utilized parent focus groups to provide input and feedback on work related to the indicators, which ultimately reflect on how we will revise targets. An example of engaging stakeholders is the collaboration with VT-SEAP, VCSEA, VFN, and an independent parent focus group all of whom provided feedback on the administrative complaint process and strategies for ensuring VT AOE has timely responses, and user-friendly tools and procedures for Dispute Resolution. These stakeholders provided great insight into the parent engagement survey/response rates/targets (indicator 8), the SSIP work (Indicator 17) and our data collection for Indicators 11, 12, and 13 (through our state monitoring system).

The Special Education Team met with the VT-SEAP on their report identifying unmet needs of students with disabilities and incorporated recommendations as part of the rule changes work. The State Director reports out on progress at VT-SEAP meetings.

For target setting, a public webpage was developed and promoted so parents from local and statewide advocacy and advisory committees and individual parents can engage in setting targets, analyzing data, developing, and recommending improvement strategies and evaluating progress. The target setting webpage can be found at <https://education.vermont.gov/student-support/vermont-special-education/recent-guidance-news-and-events/target-setting-for-the-spp-apr>, which includes a link to the webpage that houses Vermont’s SPP/APR reports, which can be found at <https://education.vermont.gov/data-and-reporting/school-reports/special-education-reports>

**FFY 2020 SPP/APR Data**

Total number of targeted youth in the sample or census	703
Number of respondent youth who are no longer in secondary school and had IEPs in effect at the time they left school	247
Response Rate	35.14%
1. Number of respondent youth who enrolled in higher education within one year of leaving high school	42
2. Number of respondent youth who competitively employed within one year of leaving high school	117
3. Number of respondent youth enrolled in some other postsecondary education or training program within one year of leaving high school (but not enrolled in higher education or competitively employed)	17
4. Number of respondent youth who are in some other employment within one year of leaving high school (but not enrolled in higher education, some other postsecondary education or training program, or competitively employed).	10

Measure	Number of respondent youth	Number of respondent youth who are no longer in secondary school and had IEPs in effect at the time they left school	FFY 2019 Data	FFY 2020 Target	FFY 2020 Data	Status	Slippage
A. Enrolled in higher education (1)	42	247	23.31%	17.00%	17.00%	Met target	No Slippage
B. Enrolled in higher education or competitively employed within one year of leaving high school (1 +2)	159	247	77.91%	64.37%	64.37%	Met target	No Slippage
C. Enrolled in higher education, or in some other postsecondary education or training program; or competitively employed or in some other employment (1+2+3+4)	186	247	86.50%	75.30%	75.30%	Met target	No Slippage

**Please select the reporting option your State is using:**

Option 1: Use the same definition as used to report in the FFY 2015 SPP/APR, i.e., competitive employment means that youth have worked for pay at or above the minimum wage in a setting with others who are nondisabled for a period of 20 hours a week for at least 90 days at any time in the year since leaving high school. This includes military employment.

**Response Rate**

FFY	2019	2020
Response Rate	25.80%	35.14%

**Describe strategies that will be implemented which are expected to increase the response rate year over year, particularly for those groups that are underrepresented.**

The VT AOE has the goal to get higher than a 35% response rate, along with the goal to increase response rate year over year for underrepresented groups. A strategy is to increase accurate contact information of exiters by reaching out to LEAs with rejected phone numbers of students ages 14 and above for accurate information. The VT AOE will announce statewide to parents and exiters informing them of the survey and the importance of completing the survey. The VT AOE will collaborate with Vermont Family Network and Vermont organizations supporting new Americans settling in Vermont to help increase parent knowledge of this survey statewide.

**Describe the analysis of the response rate including any nonresponse bias that was identified, and the steps taken to reduce any identified bias and promote response from a broad cross section of youth who are no longer in secondary school and had IEPs in effect at the time they left school.**

Those who responded to the VT AOE's Post-Secondary Outcomes Survey (or whose parents responded on their behalf) were compared by demographic category to all exiters. VT AOE defined representativeness in a category as a difference of 3.00 percentage points or less between the percent of eligible youth in that category and the percent of youth for whom surveys were returned. In a few categories, the VT AOE's Post-Secondary Outcomes Survey for school year 2020-2021 did not meet this bar for representativeness.

For the categories of disability, gender and age, the individuals and parents who responded to the survey were representative of the children with IEPs who exited high school during the 2019-20 school year. For the categories of race/ethnicity and exiting reasons, respondents were not representative of the children with IEPs who exited high school during the 2019-20 school year.

The largest differences between the survey recipient population and respondents were for exiting reason and race/ethnicity. Students that dropped out and non-white students were two groups less likely to respond. High schoolers with IEPs who dropped out represented a portion of the respondent group 3.09 percentage points smaller than their portion of all survey recipients, which has decreased from 9.76 percentage points from the previous year. Non-white high schoolers with IEPs represented a portion of the respondent group 3.51 percentage points smaller than their portion of all survey recipients.

The VT AOE has identified two steps the agency will take on reducing any identified bias and promoting a high response rate from former students. A)

The VT AOE will identify the LEAs which had students that were underrepresented for the FY20 report and send those LEAs messaging that would go to all exiting students on IEPs to be on the lookout for the survey phone call for Indicator 14; and B) VT AOE is considering adding email addresses to child count to increase the response rate across all students on IEPs.

**Include the State’s analyses of the extent to which the response data are representative of the demographics of youth who are no longer in secondary school and had IEPs in effect at the time they left school.**

Complete survey and demographic information was collected for 247 respondents from a target population of 703. This constitutes a 35% response rate. The response rate, when coupled with selected demographic analyses of respondents, provides a clearer understanding of the validity and accuracy of the survey data. Overall, the response data did not meet Vermont’s standard for representativeness. Data are representative of the target population when examined by disability, gender, and age; however, Vermont recognizes the need to continue to improve upon the representativeness of the response groups race/ethnicity and dropout respectively.

Non-white youth who are no longer in secondary school and had IEPs in effect at the time they left school represented a portion of the respondent group 3.51 percentage points lower than the surveyed population. All races and ethnicities were examined for representativeness; Non-white includes Hispanic, African American, American Indian or Alaskan Native and Asian or Pacific. VT AOE found that four of the six nonwhite categories were underrepresented, each by less than the 3-percentage-point threshold. White youth who are no longer in secondary school and had IEPs in effect at the time they left school represented a portion of the responded group 3.51 percentage points larger than the surveyed population.

Youth who dropped out and are no longer in secondary school and had IEPs in effect at the time they left school represented a portion of the respondent group 3.09 percentage points lower than the surveyed population. Youth who exited for all other reasons and are no longer in secondary school and had IEPs in effect at the time they left school represented a portion of the respondent group 3.09 percentage points larger than the surveyed population.

Youth with other health impairment who are no longer in secondary school and had IEPs in effect at the time they left school represented a portion of the respondent group 2.42 percentage points lower than the surveyed population. Youth with emotional disturbance who are no longer in secondary school and had IEPs in effect at the time they left school represented a portion of the respondent group .63 percentage points lower than the surveyed population. Youth with intellectual disability who are no longer in secondary school and had IEPs in effect at the time they left school represented a portion of the respondent group .39 percentage points larger than the surveyed population. Youth with all other disabilities, which includes hearing loss, multiple disabilities, orthopedic impairment, speech or language impairment, traumatic brain injury, and visual impairment, who are no longer in secondary school and had IEPs in effect at the time they left school represented a portion of the respondent group .83 percentage points larger than the surveyed population. Youth with specific learning disability who are no longer in secondary school and had IEPs in effect at the time they left school represented a portion of the respondent group .86 percentage points larger than the surveyed population. Youth with autism spectrum disorder who are no longer in secondary school and had IEPs in effect at the time they left school represented a portion of the respondent group .97 percentage points larger than the surveyed population.

Youth aged 14-18 who are no longer in secondary school and had IEPs in effect at the time they left school represented a portion of the respondent group 1.46 percentage points lower than the surveyed population. Youth aged 19-22 who are no longer in secondary school and had IEPs in effect at the time they left school represented a portion of the respondent group 1.46 percentage points larger than the surveyed population.

Male youth who are no longer in secondary school and had IEPs in effect at the time they left school represented a portion of the respondent group .83 percentage points lower than the surveyed population. Female youth who are no longer in secondary school and had IEPs in effect at the time they left school represented a portion of the respondent group .83 percentage points larger than the surveyed population.

**The response data is representative of the demographics of youth who are no longer in school and had IEPs in effect at the time they left school. (yes/no)**

NO

**If no, describe the strategies that the State will use to ensure that in the future the response data are representative of those demographics.**

The VT AOE will continue to utilize a system to increase accurate contact information of exiters by reaching out to LEAs with rejected or incorrect phone numbers of students ages 14 and above for the most accurate information. In the spring of 2022, the VT AOE will make an announcement statewide targeting parents and exiters informing them of the upcoming survey and the importance of completing the survey. The VT AOE will collaborate with Vermont Family Network and Vermont organizations supporting new Americans settling in Vermont to help increase parent knowledge of this survey statewide.

**Describe the metric used to determine representativeness (e.g., +/- 3% discrepancy in the proportion of responders compared to target group).**

The VT AOE defined representativeness in a category as a difference of 3.00 percentage points or less between the percent of eligible youth in that category and the percent of youth for whom surveys were returned.

Sampling Question	Yes / No
Was sampling used?	NO
Survey Question	Yes / No
Was a survey used?	YES
If yes, is it a new or revised survey?	NO

**Provide additional information about this indicator (optional)**

The COVID-19 impact was significant and reduced the number of available work-based learning options for students with transition plans in their IEPs. In response to this the VT AOE created a way for students to get access to transition services remotely via student led online transition assessments as well as student led online career exploration activities. Please see here <https://education.vermont.gov/sites/aoe/files/documents/edu-implementing-transition-services-during-remote-learning.pdf> VT AOE maintains and updates a webpage for resources related to post-school outcomes for special education administrators and educators which can be found at: <https://education.vermont.gov/student-support/vermont-special-education/technical-assistance-requests-and-professional-development/state-performance-plan-resources-by-indicator#indicator-14>

## **14 - Prior FFY Required Actions**

In the FFY 2020 SPP/APR, the State must report whether the FFY 2020 data are representative of the demographics of youth who are no longer in secondary school and had IEPs in effect at the time they left school, and, if not, the actions the State is taking to address this issue. The State must also include its analysis of the extent to which the response data are representative of the demographics of youth who are no longer in secondary school and had IEPs in effect at the time they left school.

OSEP notes that one or more of the attachments included in the State's FFY 2019 SPP/APR submission are not in compliance with Section 508 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended (Section 508), and will not be posted on the U.S. Department of Education's IDEA website. Therefore, the State must make the attachment(s) available to the public as soon as practicable, but no later than 120 days after the date of the determination letter.

### **Response to actions required in FFY 2019 SPP/APR**

The State reported that its FFY2020 data are from a response group that is not representative of the demographics of children receiving special education services, and the actions the State is taking to address this issue.

## **14 - OSEP Response**

The State provided targets for FFYs 2020 through 2025 for this indicator, and OSEP accepts those targets.

The State provided an explanation of how COVID-19 impacted its ability to collect FFY 2020 data for this indicator and steps the State has taken to mitigate the impact of COVID-19 on data collection.

## **14 - Required Actions**

In the FFY 2021 SPP/APR, the State must report whether the FFY 2021 data are representative of the demographics of youth who are no longer in secondary school and had IEPs in effect at the time they left school, and, if not, the actions the State is taking to address this issue. The State must also include its analysis of the extent to which the response data are representative of the demographics of youth who are no longer in secondary school and had IEPs in effect at the time they left school.

## Indicator 15: Resolution Sessions

### Instructions and Measurement

**Monitoring Priority:** Effective General Supervision Part B / General Supervision

**Results Indicator:** Percent of hearing requests that went to resolution sessions that were resolved through resolution session settlement agreements. (20 U.S.C. 1416(a)(3)(B))

#### Data Source

Data collected under section 618 of the IDEA (IDEA Part B Dispute Resolution Survey in the ED Facts Metadata and Process System (EMAPS)).

#### Measurement

Percent = (3.1(a) divided by 3.1) times 100.

#### Instructions

*Sampling is not allowed.*

Describe the results of the calculations and compare the results to the target.

States are not required to establish baseline or targets if the number of resolution sessions is less than 10. In a reporting period when the number of resolution sessions reaches 10 or greater, develop baseline and targets and report on them in the corresponding SPP/APR.

States may express their targets in a range (e.g., 75-85%).

If the data reported in this indicator are not the same as the State's data under IDEA section 618, explain.

States are not required to report data at the LEA level.

### 15 - Indicator Data

Select yes to use target ranges

Target Range not used

#### Prepopulated Data

Source	Date	Description	Data
SY 2020-21 EMAPS IDEA Part B Dispute Resolution Survey; Section C: Due Process Complaints	11/03/2021	3.1 Number of resolution sessions	2
SY 2020-21 EMAPS IDEA Part B Dispute Resolution Survey; Section C: Due Process Complaints	11/03/2021	3.1(a) Number resolution sessions resolved through settlement agreements	2

Select yes if the data reported in this indicator are not the same as the State's data reported under section 618 of the IDEA.

NO

#### Targets: Description of Stakeholder Input

VT AOE solicited broad stakeholder input on the State's targets in the SPP/APR from January 2021 until December 2021. The VT AOE Special Education team began meeting with the Special Education Advisory Panel in January 2021 to discuss the changes to the SPP/APR FFY20-25 package, changes to data sources and indicator calculation, indicator targets and improvement activities. Along with collaboration with the Special Education Advisory Panel, VT AOE Special Education team solicited input from the Vermont's Parent Support Center (Vermont Family Network) and the Vermont Council of Special Education Administrators Executive. Beyond target input from these groups, the VT AOE Special education team also created a public webpage in which community partners and interested parties can access resources regarding the SPP/APR, information on the target setting process and electronic and mail-in forms to provide input on the State's targets in the SPP/APR. The public webpage regarding the SPP/APR Target Setting can be found at <https://education.vermont.gov/student-support/vermont-special-education/recent-guidance-news-and-events/target-setting-for-the-spp-apr>

Vermont prefers to use the terms "community partners" or "interested parties" rather than stakeholders. With that said, we continue to make progress towards our goal of Improved outcomes in utilizing feedback and input, which will lead to better products reflective of representative community partner input, and an increased understanding of how the SPP/APR grounds the work of the State. During 2021, key community partner input was obtained through the engaging the Vermont Special Education Advisory Panel (VT-SEAP) and the Vermont Council of Special Education Administrators Executive Board; as well as through check-in sessions hosted by the State Director of Special Education designed for dialogue and technical assistance with Special Education Administrators throughout the state.

Since they were approved in May of 2021, the State has been developing and executing an implementation and training plan for changes to the Special Education Rules scheduled to take effect July 1, 2022. The initial training plan, and subsequent amendments, have been designed based on ongoing feedback from our community partners, in particular our special education administrators and the Vermont Family Network. The State convened two round table meetings with representation from the Vermont Family Network, the Special Education Advisory Panel, the Vermont Association of School Psychologists, and the Vermont Council of Special Education Administrators, Representatives from these organizations also provided direct feedback on each resource package released in response to the rule changes.

Community Partners -the groups named above along with staff from institutes of higher education, an external evaluator, special education directors and leadership from all participating SSIP LEAs - have consistent opportunities to provide input, suggestions, and insight on the implementation of the SSIP. Targeted engagement includes sharing and engaging in discussion about the annual SSIP report, comment and suggestions on direction of SSIP implementation, evaluation and tool development, data analysis, root cause analysis; sharing problems of practice, challenges and successes of implementation efforts; target setting, State Identified Measurable Result (SiMR) setting and scale-up opportunities.

VT AOE staff serving as individual Indicator Stewards worked with community partners to examine trends, make comparison to targets, and engage in



root causes analyses in order to promote the benefits of using the SPP/APR as a tool for understanding compliance needs and prioritizing continuous improvement. This primarily occurred through the Local Special Education Determinations process – while providing TA, indicator stewards were able to receive feedback on the target set for the indicator in comparison to individual LEA performance. The State Director also worked with the VT-SEAP to review indicator performance after the February 1, 2021 SPP/APR submission. A plan has already been formulated for a busy 2021 calendar year for establishing new rigorous targets based on Vermont trend data.

Additionally, VT AOE has also utilized parent focus groups to provide input and feedback on work related to the indicators, which ultimately reflect on how we will revise targets. An example of engaging stakeholders is the collaboration with VT-SEAP, VCSEA, VFN, and an independent parent focus group all of whom provided feedback on the administrative complaint process and strategies for ensuring VT AOE has timely responses, and user-friendly tools and procedures for Dispute Resolution. These stakeholders provided great insight into the parent engagement survey/response rates/targets (indicator 8), the SSIP work (Indicator 17) and our data collection for Indicators 11, 12, and 13 (through our state monitoring system).

The Special Education Team met with the VT-SEAP on their report identifying unmet needs of students with disabilities and incorporated recommendations as part of the rule changes work. The State Director reports out on progress at VT-SEAP meetings.

For target setting, a public webpage was developed and promoted so parents from local and statewide advocacy and advisory committees and individual parents can engage in setting targets, analyzing data, developing, and recommending improvement strategies and evaluating progress. The target setting webpage can be found at <https://education.vermont.gov/student-support/vermont-special-education/recent-guidance-news-and-events/target-setting-for-the-spp-apr>, which includes a link to the webpage that houses Vermont’s SPP/APR reports, which can be found at <https://education.vermont.gov/data-and-reporting/school-reports/special-education-reports>

**Historical Data**

Baseline Year	Baseline Data
2005	55.00%

FFY	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019
Target >=	60.00%	60.00%	60.00%	60.00%	60.00%
Data	100.00%	0.00%	11.11%	16.67%	100.00%

**Targets**

FFY	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025
Target >=	60.00%	60.00%	60.00%	60.00%	60.00%	60.00%

**FFY 2020 SPP/APR Data**

3.1(a) Number resolutions sessions resolved through settlement agreements	3.1 Number of resolutions sessions	FFY 2019 Data	FFY 2020 Target	FFY 2020 Data	Status	Slippage
2	2	100.00%	60.00%	100.00%	Met target	No Slippage

**Provide additional information about this indicator (optional)**

Fewer than 10 resolution sessions were held.

Resolution sessions were held online due to COVID-19. It is still the case that because of inadequate bandwidth, especially in rural parts of the state, Due Process hearings experienced video, sound, and connectivity issues, rendering the process not equitably useful for all. The VT Department of Public Service has been working in response to the pandemic to expand high-speed internet access for families in Vermont.

The VT AOE is creating dispute resolution manual that includes all forms of dispute resolution, including mediation, administrative complaints, and due process.

The VT AOE maintains and updates a webpage for resources related to resolution sessions for special education administrators and educators which can be found at: <https://education.vermont.gov/student-support/vermont-special-education/technical-assistance-requests-and-professional-development/state-performance-plan-resources-by-indicator#indicator-15>

The VT AOE maintains and updates a webpage for resources related to resolution sessions for parents, which can be found at <https://education.vermont.gov/student-support/vermont-special-education/resources-for-families/dispute-resolution>

**15 - Prior FFY Required Actions**

None

## **15 - OSEP Response**

The State provided targets for this indicator, and OSEP accepts those targets.

The State reported fewer than ten resolution sessions held in FFY 2020. The State is not required to meet its targets until any fiscal year in which ten or more resolution sessions were held.

## **15 - Required Actions**

## Indicator 16: Mediation

### Instructions and Measurement

**Monitoring Priority:** Effective General Supervision Part B / General Supervision

**Results indicator:** Percent of mediations held that resulted in mediation agreements.

(20 U.S.C. 1416(a)(3)(B))

#### Data Source

Data collected under section 618 of the IDEA (IDEA Part B Dispute Resolution Survey in the ED Facts Metadata and Process System (EMAPS)).

#### Measurement

Percent = (2.1(a)(i) + 2.1(b)(ii)) divided by 2.1 times 100.

#### Instructions

*Sampling is not allowed.*

Describe the results of the calculations and compare the results to the target.

States are not required to establish baseline or targets if the number of mediations is less than 10. In a reporting period when the number of resolution mediations reaches 10 or greater, develop baseline and targets and report on them in the corresponding SPP/APR.

States may express their targets in a range (e.g., 75-85%).

If the data reported in this indicator are not the same as the State's data under IDEA section 618, explain.

States are not required to report data at the LEA level.

## 16 - Indicator Data

### Select yes to use target ranges

Target Range not used

### Prepopulated Data

Source	Date	Description	Data
SY 2020-21 EMAPS IDEA Part B Dispute Resolution Survey; Section B: Mediation Requests	11/03/2021	2.1 Mediations held	25
SY 2020-21 EMAPS IDEA Part B Dispute Resolution Survey; Section B: Mediation Requests	11/03/2021	2.1.a.i Mediations agreements related to due process complaints	2
SY 2020-21 EMAPS IDEA Part B Dispute Resolution Survey; Section B: Mediation Requests	11/03/2021	2.1.b.i Mediations agreements not related to due process complaints	11

Select yes if the data reported in this indicator are not the same as the State's data reported under section 618 of the IDEA.

NO

### Targets: Description of Stakeholder Input

VT AOE solicited broad stakeholder input on the State's targets in the SPP/APR from January 2021 until December 2021. The VT AOE Special Education team began meeting with the Special Education Advisory Panel in January 2021 to discuss the changes to the SPP/APR FFY20-25 package, changes to data sources and indicator calculation, indicator targets and improvement activities. Along with collaboration with the Special Education Advisory Panel, VT AOE Special Education team solicited input from the Vermont's Parent Support Center (Vermont Family Network) and the Vermont Council of Special Education Administrators Executive. Beyond target input from these groups, the VT AOE Special education team also created a public webpage in which community partners and interested parties can access resources regarding the SPP/APR, information on the target setting process and electronic and mail-in forms to provide input on the State's targets in the SPP/APR. The public webpage regarding the SPP/APR Target Setting can be found at <https://education.vermont.gov/student-support/vermont-special-education/recent-guidance-news-and-events/target-setting-for-the-spp-apr>

Vermont prefers to use the terms "community partners" or "interested parties" rather than stakeholders. With that said, we continue to make progress towards our goal of improved outcomes in utilizing feedback and input, which will lead to better products reflective of representative community partner input, and an increased understanding of how the SPP/APR grounds the work of the State. During 2021, key community partner input was obtained through the engaging the Vermont Special Education Advisory Panel (VT-SEAP) and the Vermont Council of Special Education Administrators Executive Board; as well as through check-in sessions hosted by the State Director of Special Education designed for dialogue and technical assistance with Special Education Administrators throughout the state.

Since they were approved in May of 2021, the State has been developing and executing an implementation and training plan for changes to the Special Education Rules scheduled to take effect July 1, 2022. The initial training plan, and subsequent amendments, have been designed based on ongoing feedback from our community partners, in particular our special education administrators and the Vermont Family Network. The State convened two round table meetings with representation from the Vermont Family Network, the Special Education Advisory Panel, the Vermont Association of School Psychologists, and the Vermont Council of Special Education Administrators, Representatives from these organizations also provided direct feedback on each resource package released in response to the rule changes.

Community Partners -the groups named above along with staff from institutes of higher education, an external evaluator, special education directors and leadership from all participating SSIP LEAs - have consistent opportunities to provide input, suggestions, and insight on the implementation of the SSIP. Targeted engagement includes sharing and engaging in discussion about the annual SSIP report, comment and suggestions on direction of SSIP implementation, evaluation and tool development, data analysis, root cause analysis; sharing problems of practice, challenges and successes of implementation efforts; target setting, State Identified Measurable Result (SiMR) setting and scale-up opportunities.

VT AOE staff serving as individual Indicator Stewards worked with community partners to examine trends, make comparison to targets, and engage in root causes analyses in order to promote the benefits of using the SPP/APR as a tool for understanding compliance needs and prioritizing continuous improvement. This primarily occurred through the Local Special Education Determinations process – while providing TA, indicator stewards were able to receive feedback on the target set for the indicator in comparison to individual LEA performance. The State Director also worked with the VT-SEAP to review indicator performance after the February 1, 2021 SPP/APR submission. A plan has already been formulated for a busy 2021 calendar year for establishing new rigorous targets based on Vermont trend data.

Additionally, VT AOE has also utilized parent focus groups to provide input and feedback on work related to the indicators, which ultimately reflect on how we will revise targets. An example of engaging stakeholders is the collaboration with VT-SEAP, VCSEA, VFN, and an independent parent focus group all of whom provided feedback on the administrative complaint process and strategies for ensuring VT AOE has timely responses, and user-friendly tools and procedures for Dispute Resolution. These stakeholders provided great insight into the parent engagement survey/response rates/targets (indicator 8), the SSIP work (Indicator 17) and our data collection for Indicators 11, 12, and 13 (through our state monitoring system).

The Special Education Team met with the VT-SEAP on their report identifying unmet needs of students with disabilities and incorporated recommendations as part of the rule changes work. The State Director reports out on progress at VT-SEAP meetings.

For target setting, a public webpage was developed and promoted so parents from local and statewide advocacy and advisory committees and individual parents can engage in setting targets, analyzing data, developing, and recommending improvement strategies and evaluating progress. The target setting webpage can be found at <https://education.vermont.gov/student-support/vermont-special-education/recent-guidance-news-and-events/target-setting-for-the-spp-apr>, which includes a link to the webpage that houses Vermont’s SPP/APR reports, which can be found at <https://education.vermont.gov/data-and-reporting/school-reports/special-education-reports>

**Historical Data**

Baseline Year	Baseline Data
2005	63.00%

FFY	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019
Target >=	82.00%	82.00%	82.00%	82.00%	82.00%
Data	70.00%	91.67%	70.83%	64.29%	67.86%

**Targets**

FFY	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025
Target >=	65.00%	65.00%	65.00%	65.00%	65.00%	66.00%

**FFY 2020 SPP/APR Data**

2.1.a.i Mediation agreements related to due process complaints	2.1.b.i Mediation agreements not related to due process complaints	2.1 Number of mediations held	FFY 2019 Data	FFY 2020 Target	FFY 2020 Data	Status	Slippage
2	11	25	67.86%	65.00%	52.00%	Did not meet target	Slippage

**Provide reasons for slippage, if applicable**

Mediations were done virtually due to COVID-19. More cases than previous years came to only partial agreements due to multiple allegations, many of which were highly technical.

**Provide additional information about this indicator (optional)**

The VT AOE received feedback that COVID-19 had a significant impact on mediation requests. Some Mediation requests were withdrawn due to changes in circumstances or lack of access to internet service and the technology necessary to participate remotely. The VT Department of Public Service has been working in response to the pandemic to expand high-speed internet access for families in Vermont.

The VT AOE is creating dispute resolution manual that includes all forms of dispute resolution, including mediation, administrative complaints, and due process.

The VT AOE maintains and updates a webpage for resources related to mediation for special education administrators and educators which can be found at <https://education.vermont.gov/student-support/vermont-special-education/technical-assistance-requests-and-professional-development/state-performance-plan-resources-by-indicator#indicator-16>

The VT AOE maintains and updates a webpage for resources related to mediation for parents, which can be found at <https://education.vermont.gov/student-support/vermont-special-education/resources-for-families/dispute-resolution>

## **16 - Prior FFY Required Actions**

None

## **16 - OSEP Response**

The State provided targets for this indicator, and OSEP accepts those targets.

The State provided an explanation of how COVID-19 impacted its ability to collect FFY 2020 data for this indicator and steps the State has taken to mitigate the impact of COVID-19 on data collection.

## **16 - Required Actions**

## Indicator 17: State Systemic Improvement Plan

### Instructions and Measurement

**Monitoring Priority:** General Supervision

The State's SPP/APR includes a State Systemic Improvement Plan (SSIP) that meets the requirements set forth for this indicator.

#### Measurement

The State's SPP/APR includes an SSIP that is a comprehensive, ambitious, yet achievable multi-year plan for improving results for children with disabilities. The SSIP includes each of the components described below.

#### Instructions

**Baseline Data:** The State must provide baseline data that must be expressed as a percentage and which is aligned with the State-identified Measurable Result(s) for Children with Disabilities.

**Targets:** In its FFY 2020 SPP/APR, due February 1, 2022, the State must provide measurable and rigorous targets (expressed as percentages) for each of the six years from FFY 2020 through FFY 2025. The State's FFY 2025 target must demonstrate improvement over the State's baseline data.

**Updated Data:** In its FFYs 2020 through FFY 2025 SPPs/APRs, due February 2, 2022, the State must provide updated data for that specific FFY (expressed as percentages) and that data must be aligned with the State-identified Measurable Result(s) for Children with Disabilities. In its FFYs 2020 through FFY 2025 SPPs/APRs, the State must report on whether it met its target.

#### Overview of the Three Phases of the SSIP

It is of the utmost importance to improve results for children with disabilities by improving educational services, including special education and related services. Stakeholders, including parents of children with disabilities, local educational agencies, the State Advisory Panel, and others, are critical participants in improving results for children with disabilities and should be included in developing, implementing, evaluating, and revising the SSIP and included in establishing the State's targets under Indicator 17. The SSIP should include information about stakeholder involvement in all three phases.

##### **Phase I: Analysis:**

- Data Analysis;
- Analysis of State Infrastructure to Support Improvement and Build Capacity;
- State-identified Measurable Result(s) for Children with Disabilities;
- Selection of Coherent Improvement Strategies; and
- Theory of Action.

**Phase II: Plan** (which, in addition to the Phase I content (including any updates) outlined above:

- Infrastructure Development;
- Support for local educational agency (LEA) Implementation of Evidence-Based Practices; and
- Evaluation.

**Phase III: Implementation and Evaluation** (which, in addition to the Phase I and Phase II content (including any updates) outlined above:

- Results of Ongoing Evaluation and Revisions to the SSIP.

#### Specific Content of Each Phase of the SSIP

Refer to FFY 2013-2015 Measurement Table for detailed requirements of Phase I and Phase II SSIP submissions.

Phase III should only include information from Phase I or Phase II if changes or revisions are being made by the State and/or if information previously required in Phase I or Phase II was not reported.

##### **Phase III: Implementation and Evaluation**

In Phase III, the State must, consistent with its evaluation plan described in Phase II, assess and report on its progress implementing the SSIP. This includes: (A) data and analysis on the extent to which the State has made progress toward and/or met the State-established short-term and long-term outcomes or objectives for implementation of the SSIP and its progress toward achieving the State-identified Measurable Result(s) for Children with Disabilities (SiMR); (B) the rationale for any revisions that were made, or that the State intends to make, to the SSIP as the result of implementation, analysis, and evaluation; and (C) a description of the meaningful stakeholder engagement. If the State intends to continue implementing the SSIP without modifications, the State must describe how the data from the evaluation support this decision.

###### A. Data Analysis

As required in the Instructions for the Indicator/Measurement, in its FFYs 2020 through 2025 SPP/APR, the State must report data for that specific FFY (expressed as actual numbers and percentages) that are aligned with the SiMR. The State must report on whether the State met its target. In addition, the State may report on any additional data (e.g., progress monitoring data) that were collected and analyzed that would suggest progress toward the SiMR. States using a subset of the population from the indicator (e.g., a sample, cohort model) should describe how data are collected and analyzed for the SiMR if that was not described in Phase I or Phase II of the SSIP.

###### B. Phase III Implementation, Analysis and Evaluation

The State must provide a narrative or graphic representation, e.g., a logic model, of the principal activities, measures and outcomes that were implemented since the State's last SSIP submission (i.e., Feb 2021). The evaluation should align with the theory of action described in Phase I and the evaluation plan described in Phase II. The State must describe any changes to the activities, strategies, or timelines described in Phase II and include a rationale or justification for the changes. If the State intends to continue implementing the SSIP without modifications, the State must describe how the data from the evaluation support this decision.

The State must summarize the infrastructure improvement strategies that were implemented, and the short-term outcomes achieved, including the measures or rationale used by the State and stakeholders to assess and communicate achievement. Relate short-term outcomes to one or more areas of a systems framework (e.g., governance, data, finance, accountability/monitoring, quality standards, professional development and/or technical assistance) and explain how these strategies support system change and are necessary for: (a) achievement of the SiMR; (b) sustainability of systems improvement efforts; and/or (c) scale-up. The State must describe the next steps for each infrastructure improvement strategy and the anticipated outcomes to be attained during the next fiscal year (e.g., for the FFY 2020 APR, report on anticipated outcomes to be obtained during FFY 2021, i.e., July 1, 2021-June 30, 2022).

The State must summarize the specific evidence-based practices that were implemented and the strategies or activities that supported their selection and ensured their use with fidelity. Describe how the evidence-based practices, and activities or strategies that support their use, are intended to impact the SiMR by changing program/district policies, procedures, and/or practices, teacher/provider practices (i.e., behaviors), parent/caregiver outcomes,

and/or child outcomes. Describe any additional data (i.e., progress monitoring data) that was collected to support the on-going use of the evidence-based practices and inform decision-making for the next year of SSIP implementation.

**C. Stakeholder Engagement**

The State must describe the specific strategies implemented to engage stakeholders in key improvement efforts and how the State addressed concerns, if any, raised by stakeholders through its engagement activities.

**Additional Implementation Activities**

The State should identify any activities not already described that it intends to implement in the next fiscal year (e.g., for the FFY 2020 APR, report on activities it intends to implement in FFY 2021, i.e., July 1, 2021-June 30, 2022) including a timeline, anticipated data collection and measures, and expected outcomes that are related to the SiMR. The State should describe any newly identified barriers and include steps to address these barriers.

**17 - Indicator Data**

**Section A: Data Analysis**

**What is the State-identified Measurable Result (SiMR)?**

To improve the proficiency of mathematics performance for students with disabilities in grades 3, 4, and 5.

**Has the SiMR changed since the last SSIP submission? (yes/no)**

NO

**Is the State using a subset of the population from the indicator (e.g., a sample, cohort model)? (yes/no)**

NO

**Is the State's theory of action new or revised since the previous submission? (yes/no)**

NO

**Please provide a link to the current theory of action.**

<https://education.vermont.gov/documents/edu-vt-ssip-theory-of-action>

**Does the State intend to continue implementing the SSIP without modifications? (yes/no)**

YES

**If yes, describe how evaluation data support the decision to implement without any modifications to the SSIP.**

The coaching output data and regular conversations with our systems and instructional coaches informed the SSIP Core Team of the challenges in accessing classroom teachers during the era of COVID-19. Feedback from participating LEAs and schools provided guidance in our decision to place a greater emphasis on supporting local coaches.

**Progress toward the SiMR**

**Please provide the data for the specific FFY listed below (expressed as actual number and percentages).**

**Select yes if the State uses two targets for measurement. (yes/no)**

NO

**Historical Data**

Baseline Year	Baseline Data
2018	12.50%

**Targets**

FFY	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025
Target>=	12.50%	13.00%	13.50%	14.00%	14.50%	15.00%

**FFY 2020 SPP/APR Data**

Number of Students Proficient	Number of Students Tested	FFY 2019 Data	FFY 2020 Target	FFY 2020 Data	Status	Slippage
14	132		12.50%	10.61%	Did not meet target	N/A

**Provide the data source for the FFY 2020 data.**

Smarter Balanced Assessment (SBAC) and Vermont Alternate Assessment (VAA)

**Please describe how data are collected and analyzed for the SiMR.**

SBAC and VAA data are collected and analyzed by the VT AOE assessment office. The data are analyzed by the Special Education Team for correlation to other indicators. The data are disaggregated by VT SSIP schools and the state average, then provided to the VT SSIP Evaluation Team for further data interpretation specific to the SSIP schools.

**Optional: Has the State collected additional data (i.e., benchmark, CQI, survey) that demonstrates progress toward the SiMR? (yes/no)**

YES

**Describe any additional data collected by the State to assess progress toward the SiMR.**

Additional data collected to support progress toward the SiMR included LRE data (Indicators 5, specifically 5a and 5b, parent involvement (Indicator 8), and professional learning (PL) outcomes. When we use the term professional learning, we are referring to multiple methods of increasing the knowledge and skills of participants to implement VTmtss and evidence-based mathematics practices. This includes systems and instructional coaching, training, and the sharing of resources.

In 2020-21, 3 training sessions were held "EdCamp" style. The expected outcomes for the three trainings were to:

- Develop and strengthen shared leadership in mathematics education in schools' Multi-tiered Systems of Supports (MTSS) framework;
- Promote equitable access to high levels of learning for all students;
- Cultivate the understanding and implementation of NCTM's mathematical teaching practices;
- Learn how to "unpack" the System of Layered Supports in the VTmtss Field Guide 2019;
- Understand "leadership's" role in implementing effective layers of support;
- Learn about Specially Designed Instruction;
- Explore resources available to help in designing an aligned progression of instruction across the layers of support;
- Understand the differences between benchmark assessments and formative assessment and how they are used; and
- Examine progress monitoring and the implications for informing next instructional steps.

A total of 38 participants attended at least one of the three training sessions, and 13 of them attended all three trainings. Participants included general and special educators, administrators, academic coaches, and systems coaches. Across the three trainings, the average pre-test score measuring knowledge of the training content was 69%, increasing to 81% at post-test. Participants also reported the trainings were high quality, relevant, useful, and employed adult learning practices.

Studies show that students receiving their core instruction in general education settings are more likely to be proficient. VT LRE data over the last four years provided information on the type of educational settings in which students are receiving mathematics instruction. Participating schools were supported in using these data to review and use in writing Continuous Improvement Plans. In the 2020-21 SY, 89% of students in grades 3-5 in SSIP LEAs received 80% or more of their instruction in general education settings, below the state average of 91%. The percentage of students in SSIP sites and statewide receiving 80% or more of their instruction in general education settings did not change from the previous year. It is difficult to ascertain the differences between LRE rates in SSIP schools and statewide rates. The smaller sample of SSIP results in more year-to-variance in data than what occurs with the state average. Changes in the LRE status of a small number of students can influence the LRE rates positively or negatively.

Prior to the 2020-21 school year, SEA personnel and representatives from the VT Special Education Advisory Panel (VT-SEAP), the Vermont Family Network (VFN), and the monitoring team identified a number of challenges with the existing Parent Engagement Survey. These community partners worked to develop a new survey, reducing the number of items and clarifying all items, and increasing the messaging about the importance of family feedback. The new survey was implemented for the first time during the 2020-21 SY. 90.3% of parents with children with disabilities in participating SSIP sites reported involvement as a means of improving services and results, in contrast to 79.9% of parents of children with disabilities statewide reporting involvement. The new parent survey does not allow for comparisons of historical data.

**Did the State identify any general data quality concerns, unrelated to COVID-19, that affected progress toward the SiMR during the reporting period? (yes/no)**

YES

**Describe any data quality issues, unrelated to COVID-19, specific to the SiMR data and include actions taken to address data quality concerns.**

Two data quality concerns have provided challenges to a more comprehensive evaluation of the implementation of VT SSIP. These include the fidelity of implementation of the Common Core State Standards (CCSS) and National Council of Teacher of Mathematics (NCTM) Practice Standards by participating teachers and the fidelity of VT SSIP systems and instructional coaching. The second concern relates to the collection of student achievement data.

**Fidelity**

Two fidelity of intervention instruments were developed in the 2020-21 SY to assess the degree to which the VT SSIP systems and instructional coaching resulted in improved implementation of VTmtss and mathematics instruction. The VT SSIP Systems Process, Planning, and Outcome Tool (SPPOT) was created in collaboration with the VTmtss team, to assess the degree to which SU teams achieve their SSIP-related process measures, change idea outcomes, and SMART goals. The SPPOT was used with four SUs/SDs and one independent school between January and June 2021, which also mirrored the time in which systems coaching occurred. Seventeen process measures and five outcome measures were identified. During this time, 11 (65%) process measures were achieved and one (20%) of the outcome measures was met. The SSIP Evaluation Team and SSIP coaches reviewed the SPOTT in summer 2021 and made revisions to the SPOTT to provide a greater emphasis on the identification of data used to drive VTmtss change ideas.

A mathematics fidelity of implementation process tool was also created-as the SSIP team which includes our general education and MTSS folks. to define best practices related to student and teacher behaviors. The fidelity tool is aligned to the CCSS and NCTM Practice Standards. The SSIP instructional coaches were provided training on and given the opportunity to provide feedback on the fidelity tool and process, in the fall of 2020. The training included practice opportunities and inter-rater agreement was obtained across the four instructional coaches. However, the instructional coaches met a significant amount of resistance in implementing the fidelity tool. Some educators saw the tool as evaluative and not the conversation, information providing tool it is meant to be. SSIP coaches didn't readily jump on board being required to use the tool as part of coaching. Some resistance was in accessing virtual classrooms and teachers due to COVID safety measures. Similar to the SPOTT, the mathematics fidelity tool and process were reviewed and revised during the summer of 2021. After input from the field and coaches, the fidelity tool included both teacher and student behavior observed. It was modified to include a more generalized rubric -to feel less evaluative.

A process for assessing the quality, consistency of practice, and the fidelity of VT SSIP systems and instructional coaching was developed during the



2020-21 SY. To assess the quality and fidelity of SSIP systems and instructional coaching, minor adaptations were made to the Coaching Observation Checklist (2013) developed by staff from the Center for Research on Learning at the University of Kansas. Additional items were added to focus on practices specific to systems or instructional coaching. Input was provided by staff from the SEA Education Quality Division, Student Pathways Division, Proficiency-Based Learning (PBL) mathematics expert, the SSIP systems and instructional coaches and the VTmtss Team. Initial observations are scheduled during the 2021-22 SY.

#### Student Assessment Data

The collection of student-level achievement data (other than the SBAC and VTAA) has continued to be a challenge. Due to limited access to teachers, small n-size, and personnel shortages, the SSIP instructional coaches had limited access to teachers and school-based coaches were concerned about requesting additional activities of teachers. An additional challenge was the varying types of assessments used by participating schools. Some assessments were more qualitative in nature, making a coherent analysis of student data even more challenging. We continue to work closely with the interdivision Proficiency Based Learning (PBL) Team, as well as the new SSIP instructional coach (hired in October '21) to inventory the differing formative assessments used by participating schools and to develop a process of collecting student formative data. We expect to collect 2021-22 data to be reported on the 2023 SSIP Phase III report. The PBL team issued a guidance document on the use and importance of universal screeners to assist in identifying students needing additional supports or interventions.

#### **Did the State identify any data quality concerns directly related to the COVID-19 pandemic during the reporting period? (yes/no)**

YES

**If data for this reporting period were impacted specifically by COVID-19, the State must include in the narrative for the indicator: (1) the impact on data completeness, validity and reliability for the indicator; (2) an explanation of how COVID-19 specifically impacted the State's ability to collect the data for the indicator; and (3) any steps the State took to mitigate the impact of COVID-19 on the data collection.**

#### State Assessment Concerns

The SBAC was administered in spring 2021, after a one-year absence. The administration of the SBAC was challenged by COVID protocols. As discussed previously, the resulting outcomes were lower than in years prior to COVID. It is likely the disruptions to mode of instruction delivery (virtually or face-to-face), teacher absences, and other stressors caused by COVID impacted the lower proficiency rates. This phenomenon was not unique to the VT SSIP, as states across the country had similar results.

#### Data Collection Challenges

VT schools varied in how instruction and administrative support was provided during the 2020-21 SY, but no schools were allowing SSIP coaches to go into schools or district buildings. This forced SSIP professional learning and coaching to be provided virtually throughout the year impacting outcomes. The systems coaching worked well virtually but accessing teachers for instructional coaching was much more challenging.

#### Steps to Mitigate Impact

The SSIP coordinator met with each LEA implementing the SSIP to ensure there was capacity available and made recommendations of how implementation might look within each LEA. The SEA was in close contact with special education directors and administrators to help provide support in planning for the fall 2020 implementation. Additionally, as part of scale-up efforts, LEAs with the largest achievement gaps received targeted messaging about the supports available to them. Messaging was part of weekly check-in meetings of Special Education Directors- reminding them they earn points on their Local Special Education Determination (LSED) for participation in SSIP, part of the AOE monthly newsletter – "nuggets", Weekly Field Memos, continuing conversations with advisory panel and VFN, the state's parent center. Indicator stewards (for each indicator) were able to recommend SSIP as a means of supporting LEA's experiencing challenges in achievement. While COVID brought new challenges, as a CORE team we predict that teachers, students, and families will find that academic growth has still occurred in the 2020-21 SY.

### **Section B: Implementation, Analysis and Evaluation**

**Please provide a link to the State's current evaluation plan.**

<https://education.vermont.gov/documents/edu-vt-ssip-evaluation-plan>

**Is the State's evaluation plan new or revised since the previous submission? (yes/no)**

NO

**Provide a summary of each infrastructure improvement strategy implemented in the reporting period:**

VT SSIP Infrastructure improvement strategies include: (1) teaming, (2) support for LEAs and schools in planning for implementation of VTmtss and improved mathematics instruction, (3) provision of mathematics training through EdCamps, (4) Job-embedded coaching (systems and instructional), and (5) stakeholder engagement.

#### Teaming Infrastructure

The VT SSIP Core Team was established to include key personnel from the Data Management (DM), Education Quality Assurance (EQA) and Student Pathways Divisions, the VTmtss team, the NCSI TA provider and the SSIP external evaluator. The purpose of the Core Team is to monitor SSIP activities and stakeholder feedback to make informed, necessary modifications to SSIP implementation and evaluation activities. The Core Team met 21 times during this reporting period.

The Transformation Team includes Core Team members and the SSIP systems coaches. This team met 11 times during this reporting period. The SSIP instructional coaches participated in Transformation Team meetings. This is a key component in the SSIP feedback loops, providing a forum for Core Team members to learn from SSIP coaches how to support implementation. Concurrently, the Core Team provides information to be shared with LEAs and school personnel.

The Evaluation Team includes members from the SEA special education team, representatives from the VTmtss and Student Pathways Teams, and the external evaluator. The Evaluation Team met eight times during the 2020-21 SY.

A state-wide stakeholder team, representative of varied organizations/groups, met formally at a kick-off event and year-end-concluding meeting.

## VTmtss Implementation/Systems Coaching

A large focus of SSIP coaching was to support LEA implementation of VTmtss strategies through systems coaching. Between January and June 2021 (the primary period of coaching), there were 70 systems coach contacts with participating SU/SDs and one Independent (private) school. The tools and processes used to support LEAs and schools continue to be refined due to ongoing learnings and feedback from the systems coaches and SSIP participants. Coaching most frequently addressed data-based decision making, alignment to other initiatives, action planning, and the development of SMART goals to guide professional learning.

## Mathematics Professional Learning (Training and Coaching)

As discussed previously, three EdCamps were held during the 2020-21 SY, involving 38 participants. The EdCamp trainings were supported by on-going SSIP instructional coaching. Between January and June 2021, there were 133 mathematics coaching activities provided by VT SSIP instructional coaches, with 16 schools. The most frequent instructional coaching activities focused on action planning, High Leverage Practices, evidence-based mathematical practices, using data for instruction, and instructional support for students with disabilities. SSIP instructional coaches worked closely with district and/or school coaches when available, however much of the virtual instructional coaching was with school and district administrators to develop systems for supporting teachers. SSIP coaches had very limited access to teachers, regardless of virtual or face-to-face methods. Output data were not collected from district/school coaches.

## Stakeholder Engagement

Stakeholder engagement continued to be an essential component of the implementation of VT SSIP professional learning activities. During the 2020-21 SY, there were three formal stakeholder meetings.

Two meetings focused on participants from SSIP LEAs and school. The 2020-21 VT SSIP Kick-Off Meeting was held virtually on November 16, 2020. The meeting objectives were to (1) gather feedback on the current activities and implementation plan of the VT SSIP and (2) explain the benefits of VT SSIP activities and the necessity to be committed to their implementation. There were 44 participants.

On May 12, 2021, 29 SSIP participants attended the VT SSIP Annual Meeting. The purpose of this meeting was to (1) share celebrations of what worked well this year; (2) share challenges of implementation as it related to meeting student and teacher needs during COVID, mathematics instruction, and developing systems to meet student needs including change ideas; and (3) to plan for SY 2021-2022.

The April 14, 2021 stakeholder meeting reached a broader audience of stakeholders, including representation from IHE faculty and the VT Higher Education Collaborative. The meeting provided an overview of VT SSIP activities, presenting successes and barriers faced during implementation. Discussions also addressed recruitment challenges and a review of what is working well in VT and what is needed to improve student outcomes. There were 29 participants.

On October 19, 2020, the VT-SEAP engaged in providing feedback to the implementation and scale-up activities of the SSIP. On March 18, 2021, the VT-SEAP engaged in discussion about the implementation of SSIP as well as commented on and provided feedback on the 2021 SSIP Phase III Report.

**Describe the short-term or intermediate outcomes achieved for each infrastructure improvement strategy during the reporting period including the measures or rationale used by the State and stakeholders to assess and communicate achievement. Please relate short-term outcomes to one or more areas of a systems framework (e.g., governance, data, finance, accountability/monitoring, quality standards, professional development and/or technical assistance) and explain how these strategies support system change and are necessary for: (a) achievement of the SiMR; (b) sustainability of systems improvement efforts; and/or (c) scale-up.**

## Teaming

The VT SSIP Core Team, Transformation Team, and Evaluation Team all met as scheduled during the 2020-21 SY. The CORE Team ensures accountability of a systems framework through monitoring providing support to the VT SSIP systems and instructional coaches to facilitate their work with LEAs and schools. The use of job-embedded coaches was designed to support scale-up and sustainability efforts. One piece of evidence to support the impact of the VT AOE teaming structure came as a result of feedback from the May 2021 VT SSIP Impact Surveys. One survey was directed to personnel participating in VT SSIP systems coaching (n=28), with 21 (75%) responding. The second survey was sent to the 13 participants in VT mathematics professional learning, with nine (70%) responding. 89% of systems coaching respondents reported that the VT AOE has the necessary capacity to support and sustain effective use of VTmtss. 80% of the respondents participating in VT SSIP mathematics professional learning agreed that the VT AOE has the capacity to support and sustain the effective use of mathematics practices to impact student performance.

## VTmtss Implementation/Systems Coaching

VT SSIP systems activities focused on increasing the infrastructure of the AOE to support LEA's use of VTmtss practices and to increase the capacity of LEAs to support their schools' development of a VTmtss framework. This included training on the use of driver diagrams and the identification of problems of practice and corresponding change plans-using a continuous improvement cycle. On the May 2021 VT SSIP Systems Coaching Impact Survey, respondents felt that the professional learning facilitated by the VT SSIP systems coaches helped them to prioritize goals (86% agreement), identify or determine key change ideas (76%), work with data, develop action plans, and implement the VTmtss framework (71% of respondents agreed about the last three items). Less of an impact from systems coaching was reported for conducting rapid review cycles (43%), developing SMART goals (52%), implementing activities to achieve SMART goals through PDSA cycles, and developing change plans (only 57% of respondents agreed with the last two items).

As a result of the systems coaching, all (100%) respondents felt more confident in establishing a culture of learning and high expectations for all students, including students with disabilities. They also perceived that their SU/SD or school has greater capacity to support and sustain the effective use of mathematics instruction (94%) and VTmtss (89%). 86% of respondents stated their SU/SD or school uses data more deliberately to inform improvement efforts.

## Mathematics Professional Learning (Training and Coaching)

On the May 2021 VT SSIP Mathematics Professional Learning Impact Survey (n=9), an average of 78% of respondents agreed that the VT SSIP instructional coaching increased their knowledge of the eight NCTM essential mathematics practices. The greatest impacts were reported for eliciting and using evidence of student thinking (m=89%) and facilitating meaningful mathematical discourse (m=88%). Respondents were in less agreement

about the impact of the instructional coaching on posing purposeful questions and establishing mathematics goals to focus learning (both, m= 67%). All respondents agreed that all aspects of the VT SSIP professional learning opportunities (EdCamps, coaching, All Learners Network) impacted their knowledge to use evidence-based practices to meet the mathematics needs of all students and specifically, students with disabilities. All respondents were also in agreement that VT SSIP professional learning had an impact on classroom instruction and classroom engagement of all students and students with disabilities. The intermediate outcomes of improved classroom instruction and greater student engagement will lead to improvements in student performance, impacting the VT SSIP's SiMR. The focus on data systems and increasing the capacity of local coaches will support the sustainability of the use of evidence-based mathematics practices.

As stated earlier in the report, three EdCamp training sessions were held, with 38 participants across the three training sessions. Across the three trainings, the average pre-test score measuring knowledge of the training content increased by 12%, with 81% personnel reporting increased knowledge at post-test. The increase in pre-test scores is likely due to greater familiarity of the training content over time. Participants found the EdCamps to be high quality, relevant, useful, and used adult learning practices.

#### Stakeholder Engagement

Stakeholder engagement was assessed through evaluation surveys implemented after stakeholder meetings or events, when appropriate. This included quantitative satisfaction and impact feedback, but more importantly, rich qualitative data were also collected to provide a more nuanced assessment. However, stakeholders expressed concerns about evaluation burden, so only the first stakeholder meeting had a formal evaluation report. On average, participants agreed that the objectives of the Kick-Off meeting were met and that the meeting was relevant, of high quality, and useful. The participants agreed that the meeting was implemented well, indicating that the organizers were prepared, the content was clearly presented and organized, and they were opportunities to ask questions. On the qualitative section, respondents felt the composition of meeting participants was good, they liked hearing from others and about the SSIP. Ongoing stakeholder engagement will be important in aiding efforts to scale up SSIP practices.

Feedback was also solicited from the VT-SEAP on an ongoing basis. Three presentations were made to the SEAP during the 2020-21 SY. On March 18, 2021, members of the VT SSIP Core Team met virtually with the SEAP to receive feedback on VT SSIP activities and most specifically feedback related to the 2020 VT SSIP Phase III report. Minimal feedback was received, with SEAP members satisfied with SSIP activities.

SPP/APR Indicator 8 Parent Engagement data were also analyzed to determine the degree to which parents report schools facilitated parent involvement as a means of improving services and results for children with disabilities. The low response rates of the past led us to revise the survey to work closely with schools to message the survey, make the questions clearer, as well as plans to expanding our support to families in the 2021-22 school year, with the assistance of VT-SEAP subcommittee and the Vermont Family Network (VFN) discussed previously.

#### **Did the State implement any new (newly identified) infrastructure improvement strategies during the reporting period? (yes/no)**

NO

**Provide a summary of the next steps for each infrastructure improvement strategy and the anticipated outcomes to be attained during the next reporting period.**

#### Teaming

The current teaming structure will continue in SY 2021-22. A greater emphasis will be placed on analyzing output and fidelity data on an ongoing basis. At each Transformation Team meeting, the VT SSIP Systems Process, Planning, and Outcome Tool (SPPOT) from one LEA will be reviewed. This will allow for feedback from the AOE to inform and improve the identified problem of practice and corresponding change idea(s) and SMART goals and to support coaches as needed. The evaluation team will also review the identified process and outcomes measures. Similarly, data from the mathematics fidelity tool will be reviewed at each teaming level.

#### VTmtss Implementation/Systems Coaching

The current teaming structure will support improved consistent SSIP implementation through better communication and coordination across the SEA, systems and instructional coaches, the external evaluator, and other stakeholders. With six months experience going into the 2021-22 SY, the coach is better positioned to support LEAs' VTmtss implementation. The SPPOT was reviewed and revised as a result of the piloting of the instrument at the end of the 2020-21 SY year, primarily adding specific resources that connect VTmtss strategies to specific areas of the SPPOT (change ideas, measures, etc.), in addition to providing a space to prompt coaches to describe the data that informed their decision-making process to connect system improvement to coaching decisions.

Through a collaboration with the Vtmtss team, the VT SSIP systems coaches will be observed, with pre- and post-conferencing, to allow for a review of the quality and fidelity to the VTmtss expectations according to best practices in coaching relationships. This will also allow the systems coaches an opportunity to reflect on their coaching with a knowledgeable observer.

#### Mathematics Professional Learning (Training and Coaching)

During the 2021-22 SY, the mathematics professional learning process will be reviewed to make sure the VT SSIP activities are implemented as designed and the VT SiMR is achieved. Feedback from SSIP stakeholders consistently address the quality, relevance, and usefulness of the VT SSIP EdCamp sessions. The EdCamp structure will continue as in previous years. We expect the positive outcomes to continue in 2021-22. Job-embedded coaching will continue.

The use of the mathematics fidelity of implementation tool and corresponding action plan for instructional coaching will provide a more accurate measure of how well teachers are implementing the desired mathematical practice areas with fidelity. Similar to the collaboration with the Vtmtss Team mentioned above, the VT SSIP Core Team has developed a process for observing SSIP instructional coaches for quality and fidelity to the mathematics practices' expectations and best practices in coaching.

#### Stakeholder Engagement

Existing stakeholder engagement strategies will continue. This includes ongoing meetings and communication (through systems and instructional coaches) with SSIP LEA and school participants, regular meetings with the VT-SEAP and the newly formed subcommittees, state-wide stakeholder group meetings, and cross SEA division conversations. We will continue to explore other methods of stakeholder engagement to augment the current activities.

**List the selected evidence-based practices implement in the reporting period:**

1. Multi-Tiered Systems of Support (VTmtss)
2. Professional learning opportunities and resources that are aligned with the CCSS /NCTM's eight effective mathematics teaching practices
3. Data analysis and use of data to drive systems planning and mathematics instruction
4. Systems and instructional coaching

**Provide a summary of each evidence-based practices.**

Multi-Tiered Systems of Support (VTmtss)

The VT SSIP placed a stronger emphasis in SY 2021 on developing stronger alignment with professional learning activities provided by the VTmtss Team, using MTSS tools to guide SSIP systems coaching efforts. The VTmtss team is represented on the VT SSIP Core Team, Transformation Team, and the Evaluation Team. The VTmtss Framework is based on the most recent research and evidence related to implementing MTSS equitably so that all students have access to rigorous content and high-quality supports. VTmtss is encased in the idea of ongoing consideration of the Framework components to gain an in depth-understanding of the system while making continuous improvement decisions.

The VT SSIP systems coaches and external evaluator have worked very closely with the VTmtss Team to ensure the coaching processes, content, and evaluation tools are aligned with VTmtss expectations. A primary collaborative activity was the development of the SPPOT, discussed earlier, to assess progress related to the systems-based continuous improvement SSIP goals. The systems coaches work closely with each LEAs Leadership Team to identify a systems-level problem of practice and SMART goal associated with the SIMR, relevant change ideas, and related process and outcome measures for each change idea along with timeframes for completion. Next, they identify process and outcome measures, with timeframes for completion. The SPPOT is reviewed each meeting to review the status of the process and outcome measures and to plan for ongoing and future activities.

Professional learning opportunities and resources that are aligned with the CCSS Mathematics Practices/NCTM's eight effective mathematics teaching practices.

As mentioned previously, three EdCamp training sessions and 133 instructional coaching activities were conducted in SY 2020-21 to support (1) teachers' capacity to implement the CCSS Mathematics Practices and NCTM's eight effective mathematics teaching practices with fidelity and (2) local coaches' capacity to support teachers' implementation of CCSS Mathematics Practices and NCTM's eight effective mathematics teaching practices. The VT SSIP has collaborated with staff from the Student Pathways Division to plan and implement VT SSIP mathematics professional learning activities. The Student Pathways Division's mathematics consultant is a member of the VT SSIP Core Team, Transformation Team, and the Evaluation Team.

A mathematics practice fidelity of implementation instrument was developed, based on the CCSS Practice Standards and the NCTM eight effective mathematics teaching practices. The purpose of the mathematics fidelity of implementation process is to identify practices for teachers and coaches to focus on for ongoing coaching. These practices (NCTM) foster the development of aligned student behaviors (CCSS). A corresponding action plan guides the coaching and identifies desired outcomes. Rollout of the fidelity of implementation process will occur in the 2021-22 SY.

Data analysis and use of data to drive systems planning and mathematics instruction.

Data analysis and use of data to drive systems planning and mathematics instruction are central to the systems and mathematics professional learning supported by the VT SSIP. On a programmatic level, professional learning was evaluated through meeting and training evaluations, impact surveys, a coaching log dashboard, and stakeholder feedback. The VT SSIP Core Team, Transformation Team, and Evaluation Team reviewed these data on an ongoing basis.

Data analysis and the use of data to guide and assess student progress was a large focus of the VT SSIP training and coaching. Data from the VT SSIP Coaching Log Dashboard indicates that coaching on the use of data to guide instruction was one of the most frequent instructional coaching activities. Data-based decision making was the most frequent systems coaching activity in 2020-21. One of the three 2020-21 EdCamps focused on the use of data, specifically, understanding the differences between benchmark assessments and formative assessment and how they are used, and examining progress monitoring and the implications for informing next instructional steps.

At the LEA and school level, the SPPOT and the mathematics fidelity of implementation tool are used to gather baseline data to guide systems planning and to determine the necessary professional learning to improve mathematics instruction. The two tools were tested in spring 2021, with full implementation in the 2021-22 SY.

Systems and Instructional Coaching

Research has shown that training alone is not sufficient to impact teacher practices and ultimately, student outcomes. The VT SSIP has focused on improving the capacity of SSIP coaches, as well as local coaches to support ongoing VTmtss implementation and improved instructional practices. As stated previously, there were 71 systems coaching activities and 136 instructional coaching activities during the 2020-21 SY. The SSIP systems and instructional coaches received support and guidance from the VT SSIP Core Team and other VT AOE staff as needed.

The VT SSIP coaches play a similar role with participating LEA Leadership Teams and district/school-based mathematics coaches. EdCamp topics were designed to develop the capacity of administrators and local coaches to support mathematics teachers. Specific content addressed: (1) developing and strengthening shared leadership in mathematics education in schools' MTSS, (2) promoting equitable access to high levels of learning for all students, (3) understanding "leadership's" role in implementing effective layers of support, and (4) exploring resources available to help in designing an aligned progression of instruction across the layers of support.

**Provide a summary of how each evidence-based practice and activities or strategies that support its use, is intended to impact the SiMR by changing program/district policies, procedures, and/or practices, teacher/provider practices (e.g. behaviors), parent/caregiver outcomes, and/or child /outcomes.**

Multi-Tiered Systems of Support (VTmtss)/Systems coaching

The SEA continues to focus on developing a continuum of supports for all students in Vermont schools that utilizes nationally recognized frameworks for supporting VTmtss and evidence-based mathematics instruction. The VTmtss framework's five components include: A Systemic and Comprehensive Approach, Effective Collaboration, High-Quality Instruction, and Intervention, Comprehensive and Balanced Assessment, and Professional Expertise.

Research has shown that schools implementing a well-designed MTSS framework are in a better position to support high quality instruction, increased data literacy practices by teachers and leaders, provide appropriate supports for all students, and reduce false negatives to special education evaluations.

Professional learning opportunities and resources that are aligned with the CCSS/NCTM's eight effective mathematics teaching practices.

Data analysis and use of data to drive systems planning and mathematics instruction.

Instructional coaching

The SEA offered SSIP sites mathematics professional learning opportunities and resources that are aligned with the CCSS Mathematics Practices and NCTM's eight effective mathematics teaching practices. This includes EdCamp training sessions, instructional coaching practices, with an emphasis on data analysis and the use of the data to inform and drive instruction. It is through these learnings, coaching, and changes in practice that we hope to improve teacher practices and ultimately, impact mathematics proficiency levels for all students with disabilities.

#### **Describe the data collected to monitor fidelity of implementation and to assess practice change.**

As discussed previously, the VT SSIP Evaluation Team, in collaboration with the VT AOE VTmtss team, developed the SPPOT as the systems fidelity of implementation tool. The SPPOT guides and assesses the progress of LEAs' implementation of the essential components of VTmtss. The systems coaches facilitate the development and ongoing review of the SPPOT with each LEAs Leadership Team. The purpose of the SPPOT is to identify a problem of practice and related change idea(s) and SMART goal(s). Process and outcome measures, with timeframes for completion, are also established. The review of the SPPOT is an ongoing continuous improvement process to guide implementation and to assess the attainment of the identified process and outcome measures. This tool was tested in spring 2021, with plans to continue using a slightly modified SPPOT in fall 2021.

Also discussed previously, the mathematics fidelity of implementation instrument was developed during the 2020-21 SY, based on the CCSS Practice Standards and the NCTM eight effective practices. The mathematics fidelity of implementation tool and process was created to identify practices for teachers and coaches to focus on for ongoing coaching. Baseline data will be collected at the beginning of each school year, with subsequent reviews during the year. An action plan will be developed based on fidelity results, to guide instructional coaching and to identify pertinent outcomes. Similar to the SPPOT, this observation tool was tested in spring 2021, with plans to modify and fully implement the mathematics fidelity of implementation instrument in fall 2021.

#### **Describe any additional data (e.g. progress monitoring) that was collected that supports the decision to continue the ongoing use of each evidence-based practice.**

Not applicable. All data collected have already been discussed.

#### **Provide a summary of the next steps for each evidence-based practices and the anticipated outcomes to be attained during the next reporting period.**

Multi-Tiered Systems of Support (VTmtss)/Systems Coaching

We plan on continuing the use of systems coaches and the SPPOT to support LEA Leadership Teams to implement targeted components of the VTmtss framework. Systems coaches will be provided greater support by the VT SSIP Core Team in the development and review of the SPPOT. At each Transformation Team meeting, the SPPOT from one participating district is reviewed and feedback is provided to the systems coaches. Expected outcomes are for the LEA Leadership Teams to achieve their identified process and outcome measures related to their MTSS-related problems of practice and associated change ideas designed to improve mathematics outcomes for students with disabilities in grades 3-5, as well as impacting the VT SSIP's SiMR.

Professional learning opportunities and resources that are aligned with the CCSS Mathematics Practices/NCTM's eight effective mathematics teaching practices.

Data analysis and use of data to drive systems planning and mathematics instruction.

Instructional coaching

The focus on varied professional learning opportunities supporting the implementation of the three evidence-based practices listed above include EdCamps, training offered by the All Learners Network (a collection of outside contracted offerings, emphasis on math and struggling learners), and instructional coaching will continue. Three EdCamps will be provided in 2021-22. Personnel from SSIP sites will be encouraged to attend the All Learners Network trainings, particularly those with a focus on students with disabilities. EdCamp sessions and instructional coaches will continue to focus on data analysis and the use of data to guide mathematics instruction. An RFP for instructional coaching during the 2021-22 SY will be released in fall 2021, but the same coaching model and evaluation tools will be used.

### **Section C: Stakeholder Engagement**

#### **Description of Stakeholder Input**

VT AOE solicited broad stakeholder input on the State's targets in the SPP/APR from January 2021 until December 2021. The VT AOE Special Education team began meeting with the Special Education Advisory Panel in January 2021 to discuss the changes to the SPP/APR FFY20-25 package, changes to data sources and indicator calculation, indicator targets and improvement activities. Along with collaboration with the Special Education Advisory Panel, VT AOE Special Education team solicited input from the Vermont's Parent Support Center (Vermont Family Network) and the Vermont Council of Special Education Administrators Executive. Beyond target input from these groups, the VT AOE Special education team also created a public webpage in which community partners and interested parties can access resources regarding the SPP/APR, information on the target setting process and electronic and mail-in forms to provide input on the State's targets in the SPP/APR. The public webpage regarding the SPP/APR Target Setting can be found at <https://education.vermont.gov/student-support/vermont-special-education/recent-guidance-news-and-events/target-setting-for-the-spp-apr>

Vermont prefers to use the terms "community partners" or "interested parties" rather than stakeholders. With that said, we continue to make progress

towards our goal of Improved outcomes in utilizing feedback and input, which will lead to better products reflective of representative community partner input, and an increased understanding of how the SPP/APR grounds the work of the State. During 2021, key community partner input was obtained through the engaging the Vermont Special Education Advisory Panel (VT-SEAP) and the Vermont Council of Special Education Administrators Executive Board; as well as through check-in sessions hosted by the State Director of Special Education designed for dialogue and technical assistance with Special Education Administrators throughout the state.

Since they were approved in May of 2021, the State has been developing and executing an implementation and training plan for changes to the Special Education Rules scheduled to take effect July 1, 2022. The initial training plan, and subsequent amendments, have been designed based on ongoing feedback from our community partners, in particular our special education administrators and the Vermont Family Network. The State convened two round table meetings with representation from the Vermont Family Network, the Special Education Advisory Panel, the Vermont Association of School Psychologists, and the Vermont Council of Special Education Administrators, Representatives from these organizations also provided direct feedback on each resource package released in response to the rule changes.

Community Partners -the groups named above along with staff from institutes of higher education, an external evaluator, special education directors and leadership from all participating SSIP LEAs - have consistent opportunities to provide input, suggestions, and insight on the implementation of the SSIP. Targeted engagement includes sharing and engaging in discussion about the annual SSIP report, comment and suggestions on direction of SSIP implementation, evaluation and tool development, data analysis, root cause analysis; sharing problems of practice, challenges and successes of implementation efforts; target setting, State Identified Measurable Result (SiMR) setting and scale-up opportunities.

VT AOE staff serving as individual Indicator Stewards worked with community partners to examine trends, make comparison to targets, and engage in root causes analyses in order to promote the benefits of using the SPP/APR as a tool for understanding compliance needs and prioritizing continuous improvement. This primarily occurred through the Local Special Education Determinations process – while providing TA, indicator stewards were able to receive feedback on the target set for the indicator in comparison to individual LEA performance. The State Director also worked with the VT-SEAP to review indicator performance after the February 1, 2021 SPP/APR submission. A plan has already been formulated for a busy 2021 calendar year for establishing new rigorous targets based on Vermont trend data.

Additionally, VT AOE has also utilized parent focus groups to provide input and feedback on work related to the indicators, which ultimately reflect on how we will revise targets. An example of engaging stakeholders is the collaboration with VT-SEAP, VCSEA, VFN, and an independent parent focus group all of whom provided feedback on the administrative complaint process and strategies for ensuring VT AOE has timely responses, and user-friendly tools and procedures for Dispute Resolution. These stakeholders provided great insight into the parent engagement survey/response rates/targets (indicator 8), the SSIP work (Indicator 17) and our data collection for Indicators 11, 12, and 13 (through our state monitoring system).

The Special Education Team met with the VT-SEAP on their report identifying unmet needs of students with disabilities and incorporated recommendations as part of the rule changes work. The State Director reports out on progress at VT-SEAP meetings.

For target setting, a public webpage was developed and promoted so parents from local and statewide advocacy and advisory committees and individual parents can engage in setting targets, analyzing data, developing, and recommending improvement strategies and evaluating progress. The target setting webpage can be found at <https://education.vermont.gov/student-support/vermont-special-education/recent-guidance-news-and-events/target-setting-for-the-spp-apr>, which includes a link to the webpage that houses Vermont's SPP/APR reports, which can be found at <https://education.vermont.gov/data-and-reporting/school-reports/special-education-reports>

#### **Describe the specific strategies implemented to engage stakeholders in key improvement efforts.**

As discussed previously, stakeholder engagement was assessed through evaluation surveys implemented after stakeholder meetings or events, when appropriate. However, stakeholders expressed concerns about evaluation burden, so a formal evaluation report was only produced for the first stakeholder meeting.

#### **VT SSIP Participant Meetings**

The objectives for the 2020-21 Kick-off meeting (October 6, 2021) were to (1) allow participants to provide feedback on the current activities and implementation plan of the Vermont SSIP and (2) explain the benefits of, and commitment needed, to implement the SSIP in their LEA, and/or school. On average, 88% of the 26 stakeholders (there were 44 total participants) who completed the survey agreed or strongly agreed they had opportunities to provide feedback and were more informed of VT SSIP supported practices. They also felt the meeting was relevant, of high quality, and useful. On the qualitative section, respondents felt the composition of meeting participants was good. They liked hearing from others and about the SSIP.

The purpose of the May 12, 2021, VT SSIP Annual Meeting was to (1) share celebrations of what worked well this year; (2) share challenges of implementation as it related to meeting student and teacher needs during COVID, mathematics instruction, and developing systems to meet student needs including change ideas; and (3) to plan for SY 2021-2022. There were 29 participants at this meeting as well. Using a Jamboard, data were collected regarding potential student-level data sources, how SSIP activities are improving their MTSS systems and impacting their recovery plans, the degree and methods of collaboration used in districts and schools, successes, and challenges.

#### **VT SSIP Statewide Stakeholder Meeting**

The April 14, 2021 stakeholder meeting provided an overview of VT SSIP activities, presenting successes and barriers faced during implementation. Discussions also addressed recruitment challenges and a review of what is working well in VT and what is needed to improve student outcomes. This meeting reached a broader audience of stakeholders, including representation from IHE faculty and the VT Higher Education Collaborative, with 29 people in attendance.

#### **VT SEAP Stakeholder Feedback**

Feedback was also solicited from the VT-SEAP on an ongoing basis. Three presentations were made to the SEAP during the 2020-21 SY. On March 18, 2021, members of the VT SSIP Core Team met virtually with the SEAP to receive feedback on VT SSIP activities and most specifically feedback related to the 2020 VT SSIP Phase III report. Minimal feedback was received, with SEAP members expressing satisfaction with SSIP activities. Outside of this reporting period, the SSIP Coordinator most frequently met the VT-SEAP in October 2021 to receive feedback on setting new SiMR targets.

#### **Were there any concerns expressed by stakeholders during engagement activities? (yes/no)**

YES

#### **Describe how the State addressed the concerns expressed by stakeholders.**

At the November 2020 kick-off meeting, five of the 26 participating stakeholders' who responded to the meeting evaluation survey expressed about implementing SSIP activities during the pandemic. Their comments are bulleted below.

- The math focus and coaching is great, however with the stress of COVID and the unknowns this year, it is hard to commit. Teachers are not in a place where they will benefit from this. I will be looking at this as an option for the 21-22 school year.
- A couple things. I am interested but I know my district is dealing with a lot right now and I was the only one there for the meeting. I want it to be the right time, but I don't know that I can get the right people engaged.
- It is a very challenging year to think about SSIP goals because our entire MTSS system is not able to be utilized due to staffing/ coverage for remote and hybrid schooling.
- Will there be an opportunity to participate in 2021-2022 or 2022-2023? I'm not sure that we have the capacity or infrastructure to participate in 2020-2021.
- Just nervous to take on such a large project during a pandemic when teachers are already stretched and stressed.

Similar feedback was received at the May 12, 2021 Annual Meeting. Participants also mentioned the challenges of inconsistent internet, the use of Zoom, collecting student work digitally, and challenges to collaboration among teachers and administrators.

The VT SSIP Core Team carefully reviewed the stakeholder feedback. One strategy was to provide time at each stakeholder event to allow school personnel and other stakeholders to collaborate and to share their challenges and any corresponding strategies. When asked to list any take-aways from the May 12, 2021 Annual Meeting, a sample of stakeholders made the statements below.

- We're not alone! Lots of others are struggling with the same issues and challenges.
- We should reach out to other districts when we have questions or hit roadblocks.
- I am eager, as others appear to be, to enhance collaboration.
- We must collaborate to have the capacity to create lasting change.

#### **Additional Implementation Activities**

**List any activities not already described that the State intends to implement in the next fiscal year that are related to the SiMR.**

Not applicable. All planned activities have already been discussed.

**Provide a timeline, anticipated data collection and measures, and expected outcomes for these activities that are related to the SiMR.**

**Describe any newly identified barriers and include steps to address these barriers.**

Not applicable. The primary barriers related to the impact of the COVID-19 are the same as those reported in the 2021 SSIP Phase III report.

**Provide additional information about this indicator (optional).**

Our decision to set the baseline to 2018 was based upon the last year with valid and reliable data. We used 2018 data for the current population of ALL STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES (12.5%), which is different from the (students identified with) ED population reported on at that time (20.0%).

### **17 - Prior FFY Required Actions**

None

### **17 - OSEP Response**

The State has revised the baseline for this indicator, using data from FFY 2018, and OSEP accepts that revision.

The State provided targets for FFYs 2020 through 2025 for this indicator, and OSEP accepts those targets.

The State provided an explanation of how COVID-19 impacted its ability to collect FFY 2020 data for this indicator and steps the State has taken to mitigate the impact of COVID-19 on data collection.

### **17 - Required Actions**

## **Certification**

### **Instructions**

Choose the appropriate selection and complete all the certification information fields. Then click the "Submit" button to submit your APR.

#### **Certify**

I certify that I am the Chief State School Officer of the State, or his or her designee, and that the State's submission of its IDEA Part B State Performance Plan/Annual Performance Report is accurate.

#### **Select the certifier's role:**

Designated by the Chief State School Officer to certify

**Name and title of the individual certifying the accuracy of the State's submission of its IDEA Part B State Performance Plan/Annual Performance Report.**

#### **Name:**

Jacqueline Kelleher

#### **Title:**

State Director of Special Education

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#### **Submitted on:**

04/28/22 4:35:31 PM