

# Ohio's 2025 Special Education Rating Process



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# Ohio's 2025 Special Education Rating Process

Each year, the Ohio Department of Education and Workforce (the Department) issues a Special Education Rating for every district and community school. This rating evaluates the performance of each entity's special education program and fulfills federal requirements for local education agencies (LEAs) receiving IDEA funding, as outlined in Section 300.600(a)(2) of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA).

## Rating Categories

Districts and community schools receive one of the following ratings:

- **Meets Requirements**
- **Needs Assistance**
- **Needs Intervention**
- **Needs Substantial Intervention**

These ratings reflect both compliance with federal requirements and results for students with disabilities.

## Data Sources and Timeline

The Department uses data submitted through Ohio's Education Management Information System (EMIS) from the 2023-2024 school year to develop each district's 2024-2025 Special Education Profile, which forms the basis for the 2025 Special Education Rating.

*Approximate Timeline for Annual Monitoring via the Special Education Profile*

Approximate Date	Monitoring Component
January 2025	Special Education Profile released
February 2025	Disproportionate representation and significant disproportionality in identification evaluation team reports (ETRs) and data appeals due
February 2025	Records investigation and data appeals for all other indicators due
Late March 2025	Indicator analysis and improvement plans due
Early May 2025	Individual corrections due
Mid-September 2025	Evidence for systemic improvement due
Mid-October 2025	Special Education Rating released

**Note:** Districts that do not sufficiently complete the monitoring on time will automatically receive a rating of “**Needs Intervention**” and be referred to the Office for Exceptional Children's Supports and Monitoring team.

## Indicators and Measures Used in the 2025 Rating

The 2025 rating is based on performance in the following areas:

### *Compliance Indicators and Measures*

- Indicator 4b: Significant discrepancy in suspension/expulsion by race/ethnicity
- Indicators 9 & 10: Disproportionate representation
- Indicator 11: Timely initial evaluations
- Indicator 12: Early childhood transition
- Indicator 13: Secondary transition planning
- Indicator 18: General supervision (timely correction of noncompliance)
- Valid and reliable data
- IDEA audit findings

### *Results Indicators*

- Indicator 1: Graduation rate for students with disabilities
- Indicator 2: Dropout rate for students with disabilities

## Calculating the Rating

The rating is determined by averaging a district's **compliance score** and **results score**, and factoring in IDEA audit findings and the completion of the monitoring process.

### *How the Rating is Determined*

- **Compliance Score:**  
Total points earned across all compliance measures ÷ number of applicable compliance measures (up to 8).
- **Results Score:**  
Total points earned across results indicators ÷ number of applicable results indicators (up to 2).
- **Overall Score:**  
Average of compliance and results scores.
- **Monitoring Completion:**  
Whether the LEA completed the required monitoring process for the 2024-2025 Special Education Profile.

## Rating Scale

Rating	Criteria
Meets Requirements	Overall Score of 3.75 – 4.00
Needs Assistance (Year 1)	Overall Score of 3.00 – 3.74
Needs Assistance (Year 2)	Overall Score of 3.00 – 3.74 and rating of “Needs Assistance” for 2 consecutive years
Needs Intervention	One or more of the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Overall Score of 1.25 – 2.99</li> <li>• Rating of “Needs Assistance” for 3+ consecutive years</li> <li>• Missed systemic improvement deadline</li> <li>• Continued noncompliance (2+ consecutive years of uncorrected noncompliance)</li> </ul>
Needs Substantial Intervention	One or more of the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Overall Score: 0.00 – 1.24</li> <li>• Rating of “Needs Intervention” for 3+ consecutive years</li> </ul>

## Enforcement Actions

Under IDEA Part B regulations §300.600(a), the Department must take enforcement actions when districts receive these ratings:

- Two consecutive years of “Needs Assistance”
- Three or more consecutive years of “Needs Intervention”
- Any designation of “Needs Substantial Intervention”

The table below outlines the enforcement actions required by the Department for ratings other than “Meets Requirements.”

Category	Enforcement Actions
Needs Assistance (Year 2)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Review the 2025-26 Special Education Profile to examine indicator data.</li> <li>• Notify the district of available technical assistance from State Support Teams (SSTs) and other resources.</li> <li>• Require an indicator analysis and improvement plan to address areas of noncompliance and low results scores.</li> </ul>
Needs Intervention	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>All actions listed under “Needs Assistance”, plus:</b></li> <li>• Refer the district to the Office for Exceptional Children’s Supports &amp; Monitoring team for a Supportive Technical Assistance Review (STAR) if not already in progress.</li> </ul>

Category	Enforcement Actions
Needs Substantial Intervention	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>All actions listed under “Needs Assistance”, plus:</b></li> <li>• Refer the district to the Office for Exceptional Children’s Supports &amp; Monitoring team for an IDEA Comprehensive Monitoring Review if not already in progress.</li> <li>• Department withholds, in whole or in part, IDEA Part B funds in accordance with Ohio Revised Code §3317.01, IDEA 2004, and 34 C.F.R. Part 300.</li> <li>• Opportunity for a hearing will be provided, consistent with 34 C.F.R. §§ 300.155, 300.221, and 76.401(d)</li> <li>• Require intensive support from SSTs.</li> </ul>

**Note:** In some cases, no action is necessary if issues have already been addressed through the Special Education Profile.

## Maintenance of Effort (MOE)

Under IDEA §300.203(b), districts and community schools must maintain or increase local, or state and local, spending on special education compared to the prior fiscal year.

Districts that do not receive a “Meets Requirements” rating are **not eligible** for MOE reduction flexibility under §300.205(c).

## Compliance Indicators

### Indicator 4b: Significant Discrepancy in Long-Term Suspensions and Expulsions by Race/Ethnicity

#### Overview

**Indicator 4b** evaluates whether there are significant racial or ethnic discrepancies in the rate of out-of-school suspensions and expulsions (OSSE), defined as more than 10 cumulative days in a school year, among students with disabilities.

A **significant discrepancy** is identified when the suspension/expulsion rate for students with disabilities in a specific racial or ethnic group is **more than 2.5 times** the rate for students without disabilities in the same LEA for **three consecutive years**.

If the indicator data identifies a significant discrepancy, monitoring efforts assess whether an LEA's **policies, procedures, or practices** contribute to the discrepancy and whether they comply with IDEA discipline requirements.

#### Target

LEAs must maintain a **rate ratio of  $\leq 2.50$**  for **three consecutive years** to meet the target.

#### Data Source

Data from the 2020-2021, 2021-2022, and 2022-2023 EMIS year-end discipline and enrollment files were used to calculate significant discipline discrepancies reflected in the 2023-2024 Special Education Profile. For Indicator 4, the 2023-2024 profile data will inform the 2025 Special Education Rating. All other indicators in the 2025 rating will be based on data from the 2024-2025 Special Education Profile.

#### Calculation Method

##### Rate Ratio =

*(Discipline rate for students with disabilities in a racial/ethnic group)  $\div$  (Discipline rate for students without disabilities)*

- **Discipline Rate (Students with Disabilities in a Racial/Ethnic Group) =**  
(FTE of students in a group with > 10 cumulative days of OSSE)  $\div$  (Total FTE of students with disabilities in that group)  $\times$  100
- **Discipline Rate (Students without Disabilities) =**  
(FTE of students without disabilities with > 10 cumulative days of OSSE)  $\div$  (Total FTE of students without disabilities)  $\times$  100

Rate ratios are calculated for the following racial/ethnic groups:

**American Indian or Alaska Native, Asian, Black, Hispanic, Multiracial, Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander, and White.**

#### Minimum Cell Size

To be included in the analysis, an LEA must meet both of the following criteria:

- At least **10 students without disabilities** received OSSE for more than 10 cumulative days.

- At least **10 students with disabilities** from the **same racial/ethnic group** received OSSE for more than 10 cumulative days.

### *Minimum N Size*

To be included in the analysis, an LEA must have:

- At least **30 enrolled children without disabilities**, and
- At least **30 enrolled children with disabilities** from the **specified racial/ethnic group**.

### *Evaluation Process*

- **Identification:** LEAs with a rate ratio >2.50 for three consecutive years are flagged, using the minimum cell and n-size thresholds.
- **Review:** Identified LEAs must complete an analysis of:
  - Policies, procedures, and practices related to IEP development and implementation
  - Use of positive behavioral interventions and supports
  - Procedural safeguards
- **Determination:** The Department evaluates if the LEA's policies, procedures, or practices violate IDEA discipline requirements.

### *Scoring Criteria for Indicator 4b*

LEAs receive points for Indicator 4b based on the criteria outlined in the table below.

<b>Points Assigned</b>	<b>Criteria</b>
4	No significant discrepancy for any racial/ethnic group in the suspension/expulsions rate for students with disabilities.
1	Significant discrepancy exists for one or more racial/ethnic groups, and noncompliance with IDEA was identified in policies, procedures, or practices.
NR	LEA had no students suspended/expelled for >10 cumulative days, had no students enrolled, or did not meet the minimum cell or n-size thresholds.

## Indicators 9 and 10: Disproportionate Representation in Racial/Ethnic Groups Identified with Disabilities

### Overview

- **Indicator 9** measures whether racial or ethnic groups are disproportionately represented in special education and related services due to **inappropriate identification** across **all disability categories**.
- **Indicator 10** focuses on disproportionate representation of racial and ethnic groups due to inappropriate identification in **specific disability categories**, including:
  - Intellectual Disabilities
  - Specific Learning Disabilities
  - Emotional Disturbance
  - Speech or Language Impairments
  - Other Health Impairment–Minor
  - Autism

Indicators 9 and 10 are combined for the Special Education Rating.

An LEA is identified as having a **disproportionate representation** when students in a specific racial or ethnic group are **more than 2.5 times as likely** as their peers to be identified for special education or a specific disability for **two consecutive years**.

### Target

LEAs must maintain a **risk ratio  $\leq 2.50$**  for **two consecutive years** to meet the target.

### Data Source

Data are collected from the 2022-2023 and 2023-2024 EMIS year-end enrollment files. These data are used to calculate risk ratios and identify districts with disproportionate representation. The results are reported in the 2024-2025 Special Education Profile, which informs the 2025 Special Education Rating.

### Calculation Method (Example for Indicator 9)

**Risk Ratio =**

*(Risk for a specific racial/ethnic group of students with disabilities) ÷ (Risk for students without disabilities of all other races)*

- **Risk for the racial/ethnic group =**  
(Total FTE of students with disabilities in the group) ÷ (Total FTE of all students in the group) x 100
- **Risk for all other races =**  
(Total FTE of students with disabilities in all other races) ÷ (Total FTE of all students in those races) x 100

To calculate **Indicator 10**, substitute “disabilities” with the specific disability category.

Risk ratios are calculated for the following racial/ethnic groups:

**American Indian or Alaska Native, Asian, Black, Hispanic, Multiracial, Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander, White.**

### Minimum Cell Size

To be included in the analysis, an LEA must meet both of the following criteria:

- At least **10 children with disabilities** in the racial/ethnic group.
- At least **10 children with disabilities** in all other racial/ethnic groups.

### Minimum N Size

To be included in the analysis, an LEA must have:

- At least **30 enrolled children** within the racial/ethnic group, and
- At least **30 enrolled children** in all other racial/ethnic groups.

### Evaluation Process

- **Identification:** LEAs with a risk ratio > 2.50 for two consecutive years, using the minimum cell and n-size thresholds.
- **Review:** Identified LEAs must complete an analysis of their policies, procedures, and practices relating to the identification of students with disabilities.
- **Determination:** The Department reviews the analysis and supporting documentation to determine whether the disproportionate representation is due to inappropriate identification.

### Scoring Criteria for Indicators 9 and 10

LEAs receive points for Indicators 9 and 10 based on the criteria outlined below.

Points Assigned	Criteria
4	No disproportionate representation of racial/ethnic groups due to inappropriate identification (across disability categories or within specific disability categories).
1	Disproportionate representation of racial/ethnic groups due to inappropriate identification (either across disability categories or within specific disability categories).
NR	LEA has no enrolled students with or without disabilities or does not meet the minimum cell size (10) or n-size (30).

## Indicator 11: Timely Initial Evaluations

### Overview

**Indicator 11** measures the percentage of children who received an initial evaluation **within 60 calendar days** of the LEA receiving **parental consent**.

### Target

The target is **100 percent**.

### Data Source

Data are collected in the 2023-2024 EMIS year-end Special Education Event Record. These data are reflected in the 2024-2025 Special Education Profile, which informs the 2025 Special Education Rating.

### Calculation

**Timely Initial Evaluations % =**

*(Number of children whose initial evaluations were completed within 60 calendar days) ÷ (Number of children for whom parental consent for initial evaluation was received)*

**Note:** There is no minimum group size. Any LEAs with at least one initial evaluation in 2023-2024 receive a score.

### Scoring Criteria for Indicator 11

LEAs receive points for Indicator 11 based on the criteria outlined in the table below.

Points Assigned	Timely Initial Evaluation (%)
4	95% or higher
3	75 – 94.99%
2	50 – 74.99%
1	0 – 49.99%
NR	No initial evaluations conducted in 2023-2024

## Indicator 12: Early Childhood Transition from Part C to Part B

### Overview

**Indicator 12** measures the percentage of children referred to **Part C (early intervention)** before age 3, who are found eligible for **Part B (preschool special education)**, and who have an **IEP in place by their third birthday**.

### Target

The target is **100 percent**.

### Data Source

Data are collected through the 2023-2024 EMIS year-end Special Education Event Record. These data are reported in the 2024-2025 Special Education Profile, which informs the 2025 Special Education Rating.

### Calculation

**Early Childhood Transition % =**

*(Number of children with initial IEPs implemented on or before their third birthday) ÷ (Number of children with preschool transition conferences who were found eligible for special education)*

**Note:** There is no minimum group size used. All LEAs with at least one eligible child transitioning from Part C to Part B in 2023-2024 will receive a score.

### Scoring Criteria for Indicator 12

LEAs receive points for Indicator 12 based on the criteria outlined in the table below.

Points	Early Childhood Transition (%)
4	95% or higher
3	75 – 94.99%
2	50 – 74.99%
1	0 – 49.99%
NR	No eligible transitions in 2023-2024

## Indicator 13: Secondary Transition

### Overview

**Indicator 13** measures the percentage of students with disabilities **aged 16 or older** whose IEPs include all required **transition planning elements**:

- Measurable postsecondary goals, updated annually and based on an age-appropriate transition assessment
- Transition services, including courses of study, aligned with postsecondary goals that will reasonably enable the student to meet their goals
- Annual IEP goals related to transition needs
- Evidence that the student was invited to the IEP meeting
- If appropriate, evidence that a participating agency representative was invited to the IEP meeting with prior consent

**Note:** Although Ohio requires transition planning to begin at age 14, this indicator is based on federal requirements for students age 16 and older.

### Target

The target is **100 percent**.

### Data Source

Data are collected through the 2023-2024 EMIS year-end enrollment files and the Special Education Event Record. They are reflected in the 2024-2025 Special Education Profile, which informs the 2025 Special Education Rating.

### Calculation

**Secondary Transition (%) =**

*(Number of students aged 16+ with IEPs including all required transition components) ÷ (Total number of students with disabilities aged 16 during reporting year)*

**Note:** No minimum group size. All districts with at least one student age 16 or older in 2023-2024 will receive a score.

### Scoring Criteria for Indicator 13

LEAs receive points for Indicator 13 based on the criteria outlined in the table below.

Points	Secondary Transition (%)
4	95% or higher
3	75 – 94.99%
2	50 – 74.99%
1	0 – 49.99%
NR	No students age 16+ with IEPs in 2023-2024

## Indicator 18: General Supervision (Timely Correction of Noncompliance)

### Overview

**Indicator 18** measures whether districts and community schools **correct all findings of noncompliance** within timelines established by the Department. It reflects the state’s general supervision responsibilities.

**Note:** Indicator 18 replaces Indicator 15 to align with the updated state-level measure of timely correction.

### Target

The target is **100 percent**.

### Data Source

Findings are based on data collected through all components of the state’s general supervision system, including:

- Monitoring of compliance indicators (4b, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13)
- State monitoring activities
- State databases and data systems
- Dispute resolution and fiscal management systems
- Other mechanisms used to identify noncompliance

The 2025 Rating uses findings issued in 2022-2023 that were due for correction in 2023-2024, as reported in the 2024-2025 Special Education Profile.

### Scoring Criteria for Indicator 18

LEAs receive points for Indicator 18 based on the criteria outlined in the table below.

Points	Timely Correction of Noncompliance (%)
4	95% or higher
3	75 – 94.99%
2	50 – 74.99%
1	0 – 49.99%
NR	No findings due for correction in 2023-2024.

# Valid and Reliable Data

## Overview

This measure evaluates whether LEA-reported data are **accurate and consistent** across key reporting areas.

## Target

The target is **no data issues**.

## Data Source

Data validity and reliability are assessed for the following components:

- Indicator 1: Graduation rate for students with disabilities
- Indicator 2: Dropout rate for students with disabilities
- Indicator 4: Significant discipline discrepancy
- Indicators 9 & 10: Disproportionate representation
- Indicator 11: Timely initial evaluations
- Indicator 12: Early childhood transition
- Indicator 13: Secondary transition planning
- Alternate assessment participation
- Significant disproportionality (identification, placement, discipline)
- Other EMIS-reported data for students with disabilities

The 2025 Rating is primarily based on data reported in the 2024-2025 Special Education Profile. However, data for Indicator 4 was reported in the 2023-2024 profile.

**Note:** Data are considered inaccurate if student records or documentation do not match EMIS submissions, as determined through Department reviews.

## Scoring Criteria for Valid and Reliable Data

LEAs receive points for having valid and reliable data based on the criteria outlined in the table below.

Points	Criteria
4	All data are valid and reliable
3	One component is not valid and reliable
2	Two components are not valid and reliable
1	Three or more components are not valid and reliable

## IDEA Audit Finding

### Overview

This measure reflects the **severity of IDEA-related audit findings** during the **2023-2024** school year.

### Target

The target is **no audit findings**.

### Data Source

Findings are based on **single audits** conducted by the **Ohio Auditor of State's Office**, with reports released by July 1, 2025.

**Note:** See the Department's [Special Education Ratings webpage](#) for examples of minor, moderate, and major findings.

### Scoring Criteria for IDEA Audit Finding

LEAs receive points for IDEA-related audit findings based on the criteria outlined in the table below.

Points	Criteria
4	No IDEA audit findings
3	Minor monitoring/reporting issues correctable through implementing procedures according to <a href="#">Uniform Guidance</a>
2	Moderate documentation/reporting issues requiring internal process revision
1	Major financial tracking issues requiring new financial/accounting procedures
NR	Not audited in 2023-2024

# Results Indicators

## Indicator 1: Graduation Rate

### Overview

**Indicator 1** measures the percentage of students with disabilities (ages 14-21) who exited special education by **graduating with the same requirements** as peers without disabilities.

### Target

The target is **≥ 66.61%**.

### Data Source

Data are collected through the 2022-2023 EMIS year-end Student Standing, Special Education Event, Graduation, Assessment, and Student Details files. They are reflected in the 2024-2025 Special Education Profile, which informs the 2025 Special Education Rating.

### Calculation

#### Graduation Rate =

*(Number of students with disabilities who graduated by meeting the same requirements as students without disabilities) ÷ (Total number of students with disabilities aged 14-21 who exited special education)*

**Note:** Students are considered to have exited special education if they:

- Graduated with a regular high school diploma
- Graduated with a state-defined alternate diploma
- Received a certificate
- Reached maximum age
- Dropped out

Students graduating via IEP goals, alternate assessments, or exemptions **are included in the denominator** (total number of students being considered in the calculation) but not the numerator. This includes students graduating with an Ohio diploma and who:

- Used IEP goals to meet curricular requirements
- Took the Assessment for Students with Significant Cognitive Disabilities (AASCD)
- Were exempted from obtaining end-of-course exam or AASCD competency score requirements

Students who exited due to ineligibility (via Evaluation Team Report) or parental revocation of services are excluded from the calculation.

### Scoring Criteria for Indicator 1

LEAs receive points based on how far their graduation rate deviates from the target, using standard deviation.

- LEAs meeting or outperforming the target receive 4 points, while those further from the target with lower graduation rates receive fewer points based on how much their performance deviates from the state average.

- LEAs with the lowest graduation rates (more than two standard deviations below the mean of all LEAs that did not meet the target) receive zero points.

To receive a score, LEAs must have at least 10 students with disabilities (ages 14-21) who exited special education.

Points	Graduation Rate
4	≥66.61%
3	46.03%-66.60%
2	29.14%-46.02%
1	12.25%-29.13%
0	0.00% –12.24%
NR	Fewer than 10 students

## Indicator 2: Dropout Rate

### Overview

**Indicator 2** measures the percentage of students with disabilities (ages 14-21) who exited special education due to **dropping out**.

### Target

The target is  $\leq 18.36\%$ .

### Data Source

Data are collected through the 2022-2023 EMIS year-end Student Standing, Special Education Event, Special Education Graduation, and Student Details files. They are reflected in the 2024-2025 Special Education Profile, which informs the 2025 Special Education Rating.

### Calculation

#### Dropout Rate =

*(Number of students with disabilities aged 14-21 who dropped out) ÷ (Total number of students with disabilities aged 14-21 who exited special education)*

**Note:** Students are considered to have exited special education if they:

- Graduated with a regular high school diploma
- Graduated with a state-defined alternate diploma
- Received a certificate
- Reached maximum age
- Dropped out

**Note:** Students are considered to have dropped out if they:

- Withdrew due to Truancy/Non-attendance
- Pursued Employment/Work Permit
- Reached Maximum Age
- Moved (not know to be continuing)
- Student Completed Course Requirements (but did not pass assessments)
- Non-attendance according to the 72-hour rule
- Withdrew to ORC 3314.26 (non-tested)
- Withdrew due to ORC 3314.261 (non-attendance at internet-based community school)
- No longer eligible to be enrolled in the district

### Scoring Criteria for Indicator 2

LEAs receive points based on how far their dropout rate deviates from the target, using standard deviation.

- LEAs meeting or outperforming the target receive 4 points, while those further from the target with higher dropout rates receive fewer points based on how much their performance deviates from the state average.
- LEAs with the highest dropout rates (more than two standard deviations above the mean of all LEAs that did not meet the target) receive zero points.

To receive a score, districts must have at least 10 students with disabilities (ages 14-21) who exited special education.

Points	Dropout Rate
4	≤18.36%
3	18.37%-43.96%
2	43.97%-65.59%
1	65.60%-87.21%
0	87.22%-100.00%
NR	Fewer than 10 students

## Data Security

LEAs are responsible for managing the security and local access to their Rating report data. These reports are not masked and may include group sizes under 10. They are intended for internal use only and should be handled according to local data security policies.

## Appeals Process

LEAs may appeal their 2025 Special Education Rating by submitting a completed appeal form and supporting documentation to [sped.data@education.ohio.gov](mailto:sped.data@education.ohio.gov) by **November 26, 2025**. The appeal form is available through the Special Education Rating section in OH|ID.

## Public Reporting

The Department publicly reports each LEA's Special Education Rating on its [website](#). The 2025 Ratings will be added to the District-Level Special Education Indicator Data report after the appeals window closes.

## Questions

For questions about the Special Education Rating, contact: [sped.data@education.ohio.gov](mailto:sped.data@education.ohio.gov).