

Final Methodology and Targets for Special Education Indicators 1, 2, 4a, 4b, 9, and 10

This document summarizes the final recommendations from stakeholders on special education indicators 1, 2, 4a, 4b, 9 and 10. See [Ohio’s Special Education Methodology Updates and Target Setting webpage](#) for indicator fact books and a summary of the stakeholder engagement process.

Graduation (Indicator 1) and Dropout (Indicator 2)

Graduation (Indicator 1) Targets

Table 1. Final targets for Indicator 1

Targets	2023-2024 Baseline/Target	2024-2025 Target	2025-2026 Target
Data Year*	2022-2023	2023-2024	2024-2025
Indicator 1 Targets	≤66.61%	≤68.00%	≤70.00%

* Due to data availability, Indicator 1 lags one year behind other indicators for reporting purposes. Targets for this indicator reflect the reporting year rather than the year of the data. For example, the 2022-23 graduation rate is held to the target for the 2023-24 reporting year. The Data Year row of this table identifies the data year for each target.

Dropout (Indicator 2) Targets

Table 2. Final targets for Indicator 2

Targets	2023-2024 Baseline/Target	2024-2025 Target	2025-2026 Target
Data Year*	2022-2023	2023-2024	2024-2025
Indicator 2 Targets	≥18.36%	≥18.00%	≥17.75%

* Due to data availability, Indicator 2 lags one year behind other indicators for reporting purposes. Targets for this indicator reflect the reporting year rather than the year of the data. For example, the 2022-23 dropout rate is held to the target for the 2023-24 reporting year. The Data Year row of this table identifies the data year for each target.

Rationale for Final Indicator 1 and 2 Targets

Stakeholders who recommended these final targets identified these targets as more realistic, specifically as staff at local education agencies are still presented with challenges with student engagement post-COVID and have little resources to effectively address the needs of students with disabilities in general education classrooms. Some stakeholders also mentioned the need for developing a growth mindset in the education of students with disabilities.

Stakeholders who did not support these final targets and were in favor of more rigorous targets noted that educators must have high expectations for all students with the priority of keeping students in school regardless of subgroup and especially for students with disabilities who are historically un- or underemployed.

Other comments included:

- Alternate pathways are not realistic for special education students who are unable to meet competency requirements
- Districts and community schools have difficulty meeting targets when they change from year to year
- A general lack of understanding of the different graduation pathways and rates reported by the state agency

Significant Discipline Discrepancy (Indicators 4a and 4b)

Significant Discipline Discrepancy (Indicator 4a) Methodology

Table 3. Comparison of Ohio's new Indicator 4a methodology to Ohio's previous methodology

Methodological Component	Ohio's Previous Methodology	Ohio's New Methodology	Ohio's Definition
Threshold	1.00 percentage point	1.00 percentage point	Ohio defines, "significant discrepancy," as a discipline rate for children with disabilities that is 1.00 percentage point or more than the discipline rate for children without disabilities in the same district or community school.
Minimum Cell Size	10	0	A minimum cell size of 0 means a rate difference is calculated for all districts and community schools. Previously, Ohio used a minimum cell size of 10. This means that for a district to be included in the analyses, there had to be: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> at least 10 children with disabilities suspended/expelled for at least 10 cumulative days in the district; and at least 10 children without disabilities suspended/expelled for at least 10 cumulative days in the district.
Minimum N Size	30	0	A minimum n-size of 0 means a rate difference is calculated for all districts and community schools. Ohio previously used a minimum n-size of 30. This means that for a district to be included in the analyses, there had to be: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> at least 30 children with disabilities enrolled in the district; and at least 30 children without disabilities enrolled in the district.
Multiple Years of Data	3	2	Ohio uses two years of data to determine whether "significant discrepancy" is occurring in a district or community school. A district or community school must have a rate difference that exceeds 1.00 percentage point for each of the years considered to have a significant discrepancy as defined by Ohio. Ohio previously used three years of data.

See the Indicator 4a fact book on [Ohio's Special Education Methodology Updates and Target Setting webpage](#) for more information.

Significant Discipline Discrepancy by Race/Ethnicity (Indicator 4b) Methodology

Table 4. Comparison of Ohio's new Indicator 4b methodology to Ohio's previous methodology

Methodological Component	Ohio's Previous Methodology	Ohio's New Methodology	Ohio's Definition
Threshold	2.50	2.50	Ohio defines, "significant discrepancy," as a discipline rate for children with disabilities of a racial/ethnic group that is 2.50 times the discipline rate for all children without disabilities in the same district or community school.
Minimum Cell Size	10	0	A minimum cell size of 0 means a rate ratio is calculated for all districts and community schools. Previously, Ohio used a minimum cell size of 10. This means that for a district to be included in the analyses, there had to be: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> at least 10 children with disabilities of the racial/ethnic group suspended/expelled for at least 10 cumulative days in the district; and at least 10 children without disabilities suspended/expelled for at least 10 cumulative days in the district.
Minimum N Size	30	0	A minimum n-size of 0 means a rate ratio will be calculated for all districts and community schools. Previously, Ohio used a minimum n-size of 30. This means that for a district to be included in the analyses, there had to be: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> at least 30 children with disabilities of the racial/ethnic group enrolled in the district; and at least 30 children without disabilities enrolled in the district.
Multiple Years of Data	3	2	Ohio uses two years of data to determine whether "significant discrepancy" is occurring in a district or community school. A district or community school must have a rate ratio that exceeds 2.50 for each of the years considered to have a significant discrepancy by race/ethnicity as defined by Ohio.

See the Indicator 4b fact book on [Ohio's Special Education Methodology Updates and Target Setting webpage](#) for more information.

Rationale for New Methodology

Stakeholders who recommended using two years of data stated two years is enough to establish a potential pattern and allows for local education agencies to obtain support from the state sooner. Stakeholders appreciated the option to use these indicators as an early warning system for significant disproportionality.

Stakeholders who opposed using two years of data in favor of using three noted it is necessary to gather as much data as possible to identify trends, particularly with the reduction in the minimum cell and n-sizes. Stakeholders also focused on having insufficient staff at the local level to effectively address behavioral concerns and the need to address staff mindset.

Few stakeholders noted their belief in meritocracy suggesting race is not an issue, while others shared a preference for lowering the rate ratio threshold for indicator 4b and for having consistent methodology across indicators where possible.

Continued Stakeholder Engagement

The Department will be reengaging stakeholders to set statewide targets for Indicator 4a in spring 2025. Targets do not need to be set for Indicator 4b as this measure is a compliance indicator with a required statewide target of zero percent each year.

Disproportionate Representation (Indicators 9 and 10)


Disproportionate Representation (Indicators 9 and 10) Methodology

Table 5. Comparison of Ohio's new methodology for Indicators 9 and 10 to Ohio's previous methodology

Methodological Component	Ohio's Previous Methodology	Ohio's New Methodology	Ohio's Definition
Threshold	2.50	2.50	Ohio has set the state's risk ratio threshold for both indicators to 2.50. This means that districts and community schools will be identified with disproportionate representation when students in a specific racial/ethnic group are more than two and a half times as likely as their peers to be identified for special education (Indicator 9) or a specific disability (Indicator 10) for two consecutive years. A risk ratio of 1.00 means that students with disabilities within a racial/ethnic group are no more or less likely to be identified with disabilities than students of all other races.
Minimum Cell Size	10	10	Ohio uses a minimum cell size of 10. Indicator 9 This means that for a district to be included in the analyses for Indicator 9, there must be: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> At least 10 children with disabilities within the racial/ethnic group; and at least 10 children with disabilities in all other racial/ethnic groups. Indicator 10 This means that for a district to be included in the analyses for Indicator 10, there must be: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> at least 10 children with the specific disability within the racial/ethnic group; and at least 10 children with the specific disability in all other racial/ethnic groups.
Minimum N Size	30	30	Ohio uses a minimum n-size size of 30. Indicator 9 This means that for a district to be included in the analyses for Indicator 9, there must be: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> at least 30 children within the racial/ethnic group; and at least 30 children in all other racial/ethnic groups. Indicator 10 This means that for a district to be included in the analyses for Indicator 10, there must be: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> at least 30 children with disabilities within the racial/ethnic group; and at least 30 children with disabilities in all other racial/ethnic groups
Alternate Risk Ratio	Yes	Yes	If the minimum cell and n sizes are not met, an alternate risk ratio is calculated. An alternate risk ratio compares the district or community school to the whole state. For example, if a district or community school's predominant racial group is White students, such that they do not enroll enough non-White students to form a comparison group, the risk for their White students is compared to the risk for all non-White students in the state.
Multiple Years of Data	3	2	Ohio uses two years of data to determine whether "disproportionate representation" is occurring in a district or community school. A district or community school must have a risk ratio that exceeds 2.50 for each of the years considered to have disproportionate representation as defined by Ohio.

Rationale for New Methodology

Stakeholders in favor of using two years of data noted more than two years should not be necessary before addressing disproportionate representation. Stakeholders appreciated the option to use these indicators as an early warning system for significant disproportionality.



Stakeholders who opposed using two years of data in favor of using three years noted it is necessary to gather as much data as possible to identify trends. Stakeholders also focused on the need to educate staff on comprehensive evaluations and address staff mindset.

Few stakeholders noted their belief in meritocracy suggesting race is not an issue, while others shared a preference for lowering the risk ratio threshold and for having consistent methodology across indicators where possible. Others mentioned continued challenges with staff shortages with student engagement.