MICHIGAN Department of Education
Office of Special Education and Early Intervention Services

Disproportionate Representation in Specific Disability Categories

Michigan's State Performance Plan
Indicator 10

Special Education Facts

Disproportionate Representation Matters for Students With Disabilities

When districts inappropriately identify students for special education and related services, it may result in educational and economic consequences such as:

- Limited access to the general education curriculum with appropriate supports.
- Lowered expectations.
- Poor school attendance.
- High dropout rates.
- Low graduation rates.
- Higher rates of unemployment.
- Increased likelihood of incarceration.
- Increased discipline.

Reporting Requirement: Disproportionate Representation in Specific Disability Categories

Indicator 10 is a compliance indicator with a target of 0 percent.

Indicator 10—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)

Michigan Information on Disproportionate Representation in Specific Disability Categories

The Michigan Department of Education (MDE), Office of Special Education and Early Intervention Services (OSE-EIS), monitors districts that have a two-year pattern of over-representation or under-representation of racial/ethnic groups (American Indian, Asian, Black, Hispanic, White) in specific disability categories (cognitive impairment, emotional impairment, specific learning disability, speech and language impairment, other health impairment, and autism).

Selection of focused monitoring activities is based on the degree of over-representation or under-representation. The focused monitoring process determines if the over-representation or under-representation is the result of inappropriate identification policies, procedures, or practices.

Michigan's Commitment to Education

Michigan addresses disproportionate representation through data verification, state monitoring, corrective action plans, and technical assistance to districts as needed.

Defining Disproportionate Representation in Specific Disability Categories

Disproportionate representation refers to over-representation or under-representation of racial/ethnic groups in specific disability categories that is the result of inappropriate identification policies, procedures, or practices.

If a much greater proportion of students from a racial/ethnic group are identified in a specific disability category than the proportion of that racial/ethnic group within the general school population, then that group is considered to be over-represented in the disability category. The inverse is true for under-representation.

Through state monitoring, districts are identified as having disproportionate representation if the over-or under-representation is the result of inappropriate identification policies, procedures, or practices.

Michigan's Performance

Measurable and Rigorous Targets

Indicator 10 is a compliance indicator. This target is set by the U.S. Department of Education's Office of Special Education Programs (OSEP) at 0 percent.

Indicator Component	FFY 2008 Result	FFY 2009* Result	FFY 2009 Target	FFY 2009 Status
The percent of districts with disproportionate representation of racial and ethnic groups in specific categories of special education and related services that is the result of inappropriate identification policies, procedures, or practices.	1.4%	**0.9%**	0%	Target Not Met

Source: Michigan Compliance Information System (MI-CIS) and the Single Record Student Database (SRSD)

**Federal Fiscal Year (FFY) 2009 = July 1, 2009 to June 30, 2010*

During 2009-2010, the OSE-EIS analyzed 2008-2009 and 2009-2010 disproportionate representation data for 755 districts.

The 2009-2010 data analysis identified 56 districts as potentially having disproportionate representation based on a data review (13 with over-representation only, 37 with under-representation only, and 6 with both over- and under-representation). Seven districts were found to have disproportionate over-representation due to inappropriate identification policies, procedures, or practices. There were no districts found to have under-representation due to inappropriate identification policies, procedures, or practices.

For More Information

Michigan Department of Education (MDE), Office of Special Education and Early Intervention Services (OSE-EIS) Disproportionate Representation Resources
www.michigan.gov/mde/0,1607,7-140-6530_6598_48005---,00.html

Truth in Labeling: Disproportionality in Special Education
www.nea.org/home/18456.html

The U.S. Department of Education
www.ed.gov

Michigan's State Performance Plan (SPP) and Annual Performance Report (APR)
www.michigan.gov/ose-eis

Michigan Can Improve

- The OSE-EIS works to improve districts' awareness of the impact of disproportionate representation due to inappropriate identification policies, procedures, or practices.
- The OSE-EIS continues to provide technical assistance to districts to improve identification policies, procedures, and practices for all students.
- Michigan's Integrated Behavior and Learning Support Initiative (MiBLSi) provides districts with technical assistance to implement a tiered approach to working with students facing challenges in the general education classroom prior to considering a referral for special education services.