



UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
OFFICE OF SPECIAL EDUCATION AND REHABILITATIVE SERVICES

June 21, 2023

Honorable Daniel P. Edney
State Health Officer
Mississippi State Department of Health
570 East Woodrow Wilson, P.O. Box 1700
Jackson, MS 39215

Dear Dr. Edney:

I am writing to advise you of the U.S. Department of Education's (Department) 2023 determination under Section 616 and 642 of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA). The Department has determined that Mississippi needs intervention in implementing the requirements of Part C of the IDEA. This determination is based on the totality of the State's data and information, including the Federal fiscal year (FFY) 2021 State Performance Plan/Annual Performance Report (SPP/APR), other State-reported data, and other publicly available information.

Your State's 2031 determination is based on the data reflected in the State's "2023 Part C Results-Driven Accountability Matrix" (RDA Matrix). The RDA Matrix is individualized for each State and consists of:

- (1) a Compliance Matrix that includes scoring on Compliance Indicators and other compliance factors;
- (2) a Results Matrix that includes scoring on Results Elements;
- (3) a Compliance Score and a Results Score;
- (4) an RDA Percentage based on both the Compliance Score and the Results Score; and
- (5) the State's Determination.

The RDA Matrix is further explained in a document, entitled "[How the Department Made Determinations under Sections 616\(d\) and 642 of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act in 2023: Part C](#)" (HTDMD).

OSEP is continuing to use both results data and compliance data in making determinations in 2023, as it did for Part C determinations in 2015-2022. (The specifics of the determination procedures and criteria are set forth in the HTDMD document and reflected in the RDA Matrix for your State.) For 2023, the Department's IDEA Part C determinations continue to include consideration of each State's Child Outcomes data, which measures how children who receive IDEA Part C services are improving functioning in three outcome areas that are critical to school readiness:

- positive social-emotional skills;
- acquisition and use of knowledge and skills (including early language/communication);
- and

400 MARYLAND AVE. S.W., WASHINGTON DC 20202-2600

www.ed.gov

The Department of Education's mission is to promote student achievement and preparation for global competitiveness by fostering educational excellence and ensuring equal access.

- use of appropriate behaviors to meet their needs.

Specifically, the Department considered the data quality and the child performance levels in each State’s Child Outcomes FFY 2021 data.

Prior to issuing the 2023 determinations, the Department asked stakeholders for input regarding how the Department might prioritize equity and improve results for infants, toddlers and children with disabilities. OSEP received input through a variety of sources. For its 2023 determinations, OSEP has factored only programmatic (not Department-wide) specific conditions when scoring the Longstanding Noncompliance element of the Compliance Matrix.

For 2024 and beyond, the Department is considering the weight of existing as well as potential additional factors in making its determinations as part of its continuing effort to prioritize equity and improve results for infants, toddlers, children and youth with disabilities. Potential additional factors include how the Department considers assessment data, such as whether to continue including data on the participation and proficiency of CWD on the NAEP and/or whether to include data on the proficiency of CWD on Statewide assessments. Other potential factors include whether and how to consider child find under Indicators C-5 and C-6 and/or other longstanding noncompliance (such as unresolved findings issued by OSEP during and prior to FFY 2020).

The 2022-23 IDEA Section 618 Part C data will continue to repopulate the Part C SPP/APR Indicators 2, 5, 6, 9, and 10 as they have in the past. However, please note that there will be changes to the data submission and data quality processes associated with the 2022-23 IDEA Section 618 Part C data under EDFACTS Modernization. Under EDFACTS Modernization, States are expected to submit high quality IDEA Section 618 Part C data that can be published and used by the Department as of the due date for the applicable IDEA Section 618 data submission. Though the 2022-23 Part C Child Count and Settings, Part C Exiting, and Part C Dispute Resolution data will continue to be submitted via EMAPS, States will be expected to conduct data quality reviews prior to the applicable due date. OSEP will expect States to take one of the following two actions for all business rules that are triggered in the EMAPS system prior to the applicable due date: 1) revise the data entered into the 618 data collection in EMAPS to address the edit; or 2) provide a data note addressing why the data submission triggered the edit. There will not be a resubmission period for the IDEA Section 618 Part C data. The 2022-23 IDEA Section 618 Part C data submitted as of the due date will be used for the FFY 2022 SPP/APR and the 2024 IDEA Part C Results Matrix.

You may access the results of OSEP’s review of your State’s SPP/APR and other relevant data by accessing the EMAPS SPP/APR reporting tool using your State-specific log-on information at <https://emaps.ed.gov/suite/>. When you access your State’s SPP/APR on the site, you will find, in Indicators 1 through 11, the OSEP Response to the indicator and any actions that the State is required to take. The actions that the State is required to take are in the “Required Actions” section of the indicator.

It is important for you to review the Introduction to the SPP/APR, which may also include language in the “OSEP Response” and/or “Required Actions” sections.

You will also find all of the following important documents saved as attachments:

- (1) the State’s RDA Matrix;

- (2) the HTDMD document;
- (3) a spreadsheet entitled “2023 Data Rubric Part C,” which shows how OSEP calculated the State’s “Timely and Accurate State-Reported Data” score in the Compliance Matrix; and
- (4) a document entitled “Dispute Resolution 2021-2022,” which includes the IDEA Section 618 data that OSEP used to calculate the State’s “Timely State Complaint Decisions” and “Timely Due Process Hearing Decisions” scores in the Compliance Matrix; and
- (5) a Data Display, which presents certain State-reported data in a transparent, user-friendly manner and is helpful for the public in getting a broader picture of State performance in key areas.

As noted above, the Department has determined that Mississippi needs intervention in implementing the requirements of Part C of IDEA. The Department identifies a State as needing intervention under IDEA Part C if its RDA Percentage is less than 60%. Mississippi RDA Percentage is 53.57%.

As noted above, the Department has determined that Mississippi needs intervention in implementing the requirements of Part C of IDEA. The Department identifies a State as needing intervention under IDEA Part C if its RDA Percentage is less than 60%. Mississippi’s RDA Percentage is 53.57%. The major factors contributing to Mississippi’s 2023 Needs Intervention determination are the State’s longstanding noncompliance and the State’s RDA score of zero on a certain results element.

In the 2023 Part C Compliance Matrix, the State received a score of zero for the Longstanding Noncompliance data element (i.e., longstanding uncorrected noncompliance and/or Specific Conditions). The State reported one finding of noncompliance identified in FFY2013 related to the timely provision of services was still uncorrected. The State also reported five findings or noncompliance identified in FFY 2017 related to timely development of an IFSP with transition steps and services, and one finding of noncompliance identified in FFY 2017 related to timely transition conferences were still uncorrected.

In the 2023 Part C Results Matrix, the State received a score of zero on one of the child performance data elements (i.e., comparing the State’s FFY 2021 data to the State’s FFY 2020 data). This means that the State’s FFY 2021 child outcome results data were low compared to the State’s own FFY 2020 child outcomes data.

Pursuant to Section 616(d)(2)(B) and 642 of the IDEA and 34 C.F.R. § 303.703(b)(2), a State that is determined to be “needs intervention” or “needs substantial intervention” and does not agree with this determination, may request an opportunity to meet with the Assistant Secretary to demonstrate why the Department should change the State’s determination. To request a hearing, submit a letter to Glenna Wright-Gallo, the Assistant Secretary for Special Education and Rehabilitative Services, U.S. Department of Education, 400 Maryland Avenue, S.W., Washington, D.C. 20202 within 15 days of the date of this letter. The letter must include the basis for your request for a change in your State’s determination.

As a reminder, your State must report annually to the public, by posting on the State lead agency’s website, on the performance of each early intervention service (EIS) program located in the State on the targets in the SPP/APR as soon as practicable, but no later than 120 days after the State’s submission of its FFY 2021 SPP/APR. In addition, your State must:

- (1) review EIS program performance against targets in the State’s SPP/APR;
- (2) determine if each EIS program “meets the requirements” of Part C, or “needs assistance,” “needs intervention,” or “needs substantial intervention” in implementing Part C of the IDEA;
- (3) take appropriate enforcement action; and
- (4) inform each EIS program of its determination.

Further, your State must make its SPP/APR available to the public by posting it on the SEA’s website. Within the upcoming weeks, OSEP will be finalizing a State Profile that:

- (1) includes the State’s determination letter and SPP/APR, OSEP attachments, and all State attachments that are accessible in accordance with Section 508 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973; and
- (2) will be accessible to the public via the ed.gov website.

OSEP appreciates the State’s efforts to improve results for infants and toddlers with disabilities and looks forward to working with your State over the next year as we continue our important work of improving the lives of children with disabilities and their families. Please contact your OSEP State Lead if you have any questions, would like to discuss this further, or want to request technical assistance.

Sincerely,

/s/

Valerie Williams
Director
Office of Special Education Programs

cc: State Part C Coordinator