



Introduction

Successfully collecting, validating, submitting, and reporting 618 data for Part B Indicator 3 requires involvement from multiple state agency staff and others. It is critical that everyone involved has a clear understanding of the process and timelines. This can be challenging as other program areas most often manage and control the data sources for Part B Indicator 3, and their staff may not be aware of the differences in the Office of Special Education Programs' (OSEP) and the Office of Elementary and Secondary Education's (OESE) timeline requirements. Collaboration and coordination across those divisions within state education agencies (SEAs) that support assessment data collection, validation, submission, and reporting are essential. Using IDC's *Assessment Data Journey: Are We There Yet?* resources can serve as a starting point for necessary and important dialogue. Convening a team to help you prepare for the dialogue also can be helpful.

Objective of the Dialogue: To build shared understanding among SEA staff of the process and timelines for submitting data to OSEP that the state will use to populate Indicator 3 of the State Performance Plan/Annual Performance Report (SPP/APR).

Before the Dialogue

Considerations

- Who needs to be involved in the dialogue? Possible participants include state special education staff, state assessment staff, state *EDFacts* coordinator and data submitter, and assessment vendors.
- What will be the best format for the dialogue? Will the dialogue take place informally as a discussion with a small number of people or will it be more formal, such as sharing information at a conference or during a presentation?
- Which of *The Assessment Data Journey: Are We There Yet?* resources will work best for your dialogue? Consider if you will use the online interactive version of the infographic or the static resources. You may want to make copies of the static resource(s) you are using for participants to take back with them.
- How much background knowledge will participants have? You may need to provide contextual information about how the U.S. Department of Education (Department), state education systems, local education agencies, parents, and school communities use the assessment data.

During the Dialogue

Context and Background Information

Based on the knowledge of participants about assessment data, consider using the following context and background information during the opening dialogue.

- Within the Department, OSEP and OESE use data from state assessments in their accountability, monitoring, and supports systems. OSEP requires states and entities to measure and report participation and achievement of children with individualized education programs (IEPs) on statewide assessments in the SPP/APR. These data are found in Indicator 3. OSEP factors in participation data from Indicator 3 in its Results Driven Accountability system, which informs state determinations and directs differentiated incentives, supports, and interventions based on each state's unique strengths, progress, challenges, and needs. Academic achievement is also a key accountability measure for OESE as it is a crucial component in every state's plan under the *Every Student Succeeds Act* (ESSA).
- SEAs use assessment data as one driver of the level of supports and interventions schools receive under the ESSA accountability framework. Increasingly, SEAs also are using state assessment data within their own divisions of special education, by incorporating results data points into LEA determinations and/or identifying LEAs for differentiated monitoring and support.
- More broadly, state assessment data provide state and local agencies, parents, and communities with a valuable "systems health check." Assessment data offer a bird's eye view of how students and subgroups of students are faring in school systems across the state, but they also allow for district- and school-level comparisons. Further, reviewing assessment data helps state and local agencies identify strengths and areas of improvement, set priorities and goals, and monitor progress toward those priorities and goals. Finally, the data provide feedback on the impact of various state-, district-, and school-supported initiatives and interventions.

Key Points to Emphasize When Using the Assessment Data Journey: Are We There Yet? Resources

- Given the widespread systemic use of data from statewide assessments, the Department requires these data (as they do any data) to be of high quality. Data are of high quality if they are timely, accurate, and complete.
- There is only one due date for the file states submit to the Department through *EDFacts*. This is the third Wednesday in December. However, OSEP and OESE have different points in time for when they judge submitted data as accurate and complete.
- States that do not submit accurate and complete data as of the December deadline face consequences from OSEP. While states can resubmit these data after the December due date, unlike OESE, OSEP considers the December deadline to be firm for the purposes of accuracy and completeness when making state determinations.

Dialogue Questions

- What questions did the "assessment journey" resources raise for you? What were any aspects of the journey that surprised you?
- As you reflect on your assessment journey experiences in your state, what is different from what the IDC resources depict that you in your role in the SEA may need to consider?
- As you consider the various "caution cones" along the journey, can you identify similar challenges that you experienced in your work collecting, validating, submitting, and reporting high-quality assessment data? What other assessment data challenges have you encountered in your work?
- As you consider the various "share the road" signs along the journey, how would you characterize the level of communication and collaboration in your state agency among divisions/programs/staff involved in collecting, validating, submitting, or reporting assessment data?

- What possible follow-up activities could you engage in to improve communication and collaboration within the SEA to support successfully collecting, validating, submitting, and reporting 618 data for Part B Indicator 3?
- What aspects of the journey do you think have gone particularly well or smoothly in your agency?
- How can you document, memorialize, and sustain the aspects of the journey that are working well in your agency?
- What additional “road signs” do you feel would be helpful in describing your state’s assessment journey?

After the Dialogue

- Distribute notes that you or a notetaker may have taken during the dialogue and copies of the *Assessment Journey: Are We There Yet?* resource(s).
- Make sure you have written down questions that may have arisen during the dialogue.
- Determine whether ongoing communication or meetings among participants would aid in ensuring the collection, validation, submission, and reporting of assessment data. Consider whether technical assistance from IDC could support your state’s efforts to improve assessment data quality. Schedule future meetings, if necessary, and confirm other next steps.

The IDEA Data Center (IDC) created this publication under U.S. Department of Education, Office of Special Education Programs grant number H373Y190001. Richelle Davis and Rebecca Smith serve as the project officers.

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Westat is the lead organization for IDC. For more information about the center’s work and its partners, see www.ideadata.org.

October 2020



Suggested Citation:

Nagle, K., Hayes, S., Boyd, T., and Walters, S. (2020, October). *The Assessment Data Journey: Are We There Yet? Dialogue Guide*. IDEA Data Center. Rockville, MD: Westat.