# SPP/APR Indicator Sampling Plan Checklist

States are allowed to use sampling for collecting data for select Part B State Performance Plan/Annual Performance Report (SPP/APR) indicators—7, 8, and 14.[[1]](#footnote-1) Sampling can provide an effective means for targeting resources for data collection and improving data quality. There are important requirements that states must consider when designing and implementing a sampling plan. If a state proposes to use a sampling plan that the Office of Special Education Programs (OSEP) has not previously approved, or if a state will revise its current sampling procedures, the state must submit the new or revised sampling plan to OSEP for approval. The state must describe the sampling procedures that it will follow. Each year, a state must provide a description of its sampling methodology in the SPP/APR submission, outlining how the design yields valid and reliable estimates of the target population.

**Completing the Checklist**

Use this interactive self-assessment tool to determine whether your state’s sampling plan addresses OSEP sampling requirements for best practice. Check "Yes" for elements that are in place and "No" for those that are not fully in place. Note areas where your state may benefit from technical assistance (TA). If the requirement is not applicable (NA) to your state, check NA.

Complete the checklist for individual self-reflection or as part of a group discussion and use the responses to inform both internal planning and communications with others (e.g., stakeholders, a designated contractor). See the additional resources at the end of the checklist for definitions of key terms and more information on sampling practices.

| SPP/APR Indicator Sampling Plan Checklist | Yes | No | NA | Could use TA |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **1. Are we addressing OSEP requirements for a sampling plan that will yield valid and reliable estimates? Do we…** |  |  |  |  |
| * Specify the specific sampling method(s) (e.g., simple random, stratified, cluster) and describe procedures we will follow
 |  |  |  |  |
| * Describe expected similarities or differences between the sample and target population (considering such variables as disability category, race, ethnicity, age, gender, family income)
 |  |  |  |  |
| * Identify potential problems, as they relate to sampling, and describe a plan to address them, including
 |  |  |  |  |
| * + Low response rates
 |  |  |  |  |
| * + Missing data
 |  |  |  |  |
| * + Selection bias
 |  |  |  |  |
| * Identify methods for enhancing representativeness of the sample (e.g., oversampling certain groups, adjusting for changes in demographics throughout the multi-year reporting cycle)
 |  |  |  |  |
| * Consider risk of disclosure of personally identifiable information about individual children in the annual SPP/APR
 |  |  |  |  |
| * Collect data from a representative sample of LEAs each year to be able to report on state performance in the annual SPP/APR
 |  |  |  |  |
| * Include all LEAs with total enrollment of students with and without disabilities (average daily memberships) over 50,000 each year
 |  |  |  |  |
| * Sample the performance of each LEA on the indicator at least once during the FFY 2020–2025 period
 |  |  |  |  |
| * Plan to take samples within selected LEAs that are representative of each of those LEAs (considering such variables as disability category, race, ethnicity, age, gender, family income)
 |  |  |  |  |
| **1. Are we addressing OSEP requirements for a sampling plan that will yield valid and reliable estimates? Do we…(cont.)** |  |  |  |  |
| * Explain the LEA selection strategy (e.g., the decision to sample within all LEAs or to sample within some and use a census for others)
 |  |  |  |  |
| * Plan to report in the annual SPP/APR the most recently available performance data for each sampled LEA and the dates data were obtained
 |  |  |  |  |
| **2. Are we following sampling best practices that, while not specific OSEP requirements, will make sampling most effective? Do we…** |  |  |  |  |
| * Use a complete and accurate list of the target population (i.e., sampling frame) to develop our sample
 |  |  |  |  |
| * Plan the size of the sample based on the extent to which we want to detect small effects and how small we want the margin of error to be
 |  |  |  |  |
| **3. Are we addressing other OSEP requirements that, though not specific to sampling, are relevant to sampling? Do we…** |  |  |  |  |
| * Include a statement of the target population, including estimated population size
 |  |  |  |  |
| * Present a plan to analyze response rate and representativeness (by race/ethnicity and at least one other demographic category approved by stakeholder input) to identify and reduce potential nonresponse bias
 |  |  |  |  |
| * Indicate the standard (metric) that we use to determine representativeness of the respondents
 |  |  |  |  |
| * Present a plan to monitor, compare, and improve response rates across years, particularly for underrepresented groups
 |  |  |  |  |
| * Consider implications of survey mode (e.g., mail, email, online, telephone, in-person) on response rate and representativeness
 |  |  |  |  |

## Action Steps to Improve Our Sampling Plan

Consider the following questions to guide next steps.

* What elements did we identify in the checklist as “in place” or “not fully in place” to explore further?
* What questions do we have about our sampling procedures?
* What internal resources in our state (e.g., data system, staff with expertise) can we leverage to successfully implement sampling?
* What outside support or expertise will we need (e.g., from a TA center, contractor)?
* What specific actions do we need to take to implement our sampling plan effectively?

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## Additional Resources

For more on data collection and analysis for Part B Indicator 8, including sampling, see

* *[Making the Most of Parent Involvement Data: Improving Quality and Enhancing Understanding](https://ideadata.org/resources/resource/1926/making-the-most-of-parent-involvement-data-improving-quality-and-enhancing)*
* [*Parent Involvement Data: How to Measure and Improve Representativeness for Indicator B8*](https://ideadata.org/resources/resource/2336/parent-involvement-data-how-to-measure-and-improve-representativeness-for)

IDC offers states the opportunity to work with a team of TA providers who have expertise in sampling. To access IDC TA services or if you have any questions, please contact your [IDC State Liaison](https://ideadata.org/technical-assistance/).

1. Sampling is also allowed for Part C indicators 3 and 4. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)