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26th Annual Report to Congress
on the Implementation of the Individuals with
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Individuals with Disabilities Education Act:
to ensure the free appropriate public education of all children
with disabilities

Prepared by Westat for the
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Notes Concerning the Data Tables That Follow

The following will assist users of this volume:

1. The term state is used for column labels in this report to represent the 50 states, the District of Columbia, Puerto Rico, the Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA) schools, and the outlying areas of American Samoa, Guam, the Northern Marianas and the Virgin Islands. Note that Section 602 (27) of the 1997 Amendments to IDEA (the law under which the data in this report were collected) states that “The term ‘State’ means each of the 50 States, the District of Columbia, the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico, and each of the outlying areas.”
2. Tables that show the percentage of children served based on population data do not include percentages for Puerto Rico, BIA schools, and the outlying areas as no population data were available from the Census Bureau for these entities.
3. Many tables have a note indicating that the data included are as of July 30, 2003. This is because much of the Part B and Part C data included in this report are from snapshots of the database maintained by the Office of Special Education Programs’ (OSEP’s) Data Analysis System (DANS). OSEP permits states to update data as necessary after original state submissions; however, snapshots are used to prepare analyses for the annual reports to Congress. The use of snapshots ensures that the data are not revised while the report is produced. It also ensures the accuracy of the presentation and analysis of data for the reports and facilitates the Department of Education review process for the reports. Certain other categories of data (exiting and discipline) are collected cumulatively over the course of a state-determined 12-month reporting period.
4. State-reported data from DANS for Part C consist of the following:

Child Count	December 1, 2002
Program Settings	December 1, 2002
Early Intervention Services	December 1, 2001
Exiting	Cumulative, state-determined 12-month reporting period, 2001
Personnel	December 1, 2001

State-reported data from DANS for Part B used in this report consist of the following:

Child Count	December 1, 2002*
Educational Environments	December 1, 2002*
Exiting	Cumulative, state-determined 12-month reporting period, 2001-02
Discipline	School year 2001-02
Personnel	On or about December 1, 2001

*Alaska, BIA, Iowa and Texas used the last Friday in October reporting date for these data.

5. DANS data are tabulated from the data reporting forms; they are not printed reports.
6. Two national rows are included at the bottom of most tables in the report. The first, 50 states and DC (including BIA schools), includes just the 50 states, the District of Columbia and children served in BIA schools. The second, U.S. and outlying areas, includes the 50 states, the District of Columbia, Puerto Rico, the BIA schools and the outlying areas.
7. While IDEA is focused on ensuring that services are provided to children with disabilities through age 21, older students may also be eligible to receive services under the act.

Unless noted otherwise, the year spans in titles of figures and tables refer to school years.

Introduction

During the almost three decades that the annual reports to Congress have been published, these documents have undergone several minor stylistic changes and one major substantive redesign and refocus. In 1997, OSEP adopted a policy-oriented approach to the annual report to Congress. The results of this shift were first seen in the 1998 annual report, which used a four-section modular format. The *2002 Annual Report to Congress* was the fifth volume to include four sections—Context/Environment, Student Characteristics, Programs and Services, and Results—plus a separate appendix of data tables.

The implementation of the *No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB)* beginning in 2002 amplified the importance of accountability and results in the annual report to Congress. As the President’s Commission on Excellence in Special Education pointed out, this emphasis means that Congress and the public must know that federal funds are well spent.*

The *2003 Annual Report to Congress* was redesigned to focus on results and accountability; make the report more useful to Congress, parents, each state and other stakeholders; and use a more readable and user-friendly style. It focuses on key state performance data in accordance with the recommendations of the President’s Commission.

The *2004 Annual Report to Congress* has two volumes:

- Volume 1 focuses on the children and students being served under IDEA and provides profiles of individual states’ special education environments and early intervention settings. It also includes tables of states rank-ordered by their reported data on exiting, dropouts, educational environments, and early intervention services and settings; these tables are used by OSEP as part of its monitoring system.
- Volume 2 contains the state-reported data tables. OSEP’s goal in separating the text of the report from the extensive tables is to make the report usable to all readers. The tables are also posted on www.IDEAdata.org.

* U.S Department of Education, Office of Special Education and Rehabilitative Services, *A New Era: Revitalizing Special Education for Children and Their Families*, Washington, DC, 2002.

Data Sources Used in This Report

The text and graphics contained in the *26th Annual Report to Congress* were developed primarily from data from the Office of Special Education Programs' (OSEP) Data Analysis System (DANS). DANS is a repository for all the data mandated by the *Individuals with Disabilities Education Act* (IDEA) to be collected from states annually. These data include the number of infants and toddlers being served under Part C of IDEA and the settings in which they receive program services, as well as their transition out of Part C. The states also report early intervention services provided to this population and the personnel who are providing services. For Part B, states report the number of children and students who are being served, the educational environments in which they receive education, disciplinary actions that affect them, personnel providing educational services and information on their exiting from the program. Data in the DANS database are not accessible by the public.

U.S. Census Bureau

In addition to using data from DANS, this report presents information from the U.S. Census Bureau. Each year, the Population Estimates Program of the U.S. Census Bureau publishes estimates of the resident population for each state and county. Members of the Armed Forces on active duty stationed outside the United States, military dependents living abroad and other United States citizens living abroad are not included in these estimates. These population estimates are produced by age, sex, race and Hispanic origin. The state population estimates are solely the sum of the county population estimates. The reference date for county estimates is July 1.

Estimates are used in federal funding allocations, as denominators for vital rates and per capita time series, as survey controls and in monitoring recent demographic changes. With each new issue of July 1 estimates, the estimates for years are revised back to the last census. Previously published estimates are superseded and archived. See the Census Bureau's document *Estimates and Projections Area Documentation State and County Total Population Estimates* for more information about how population estimates are produced.

The Census files used in this report are: U.S. Bureau of the Census. Population data for 2002 accessed October 2003 from <http://www.census.gov/popest/datat/states/files/STCH-6R.csv>. This file is now archived as <http://www.census.gov/popest/archives>.

National Center for Education Statistics (NCES)

The National Center for Education Statistics is the primary federal entity for collecting and analyzing data that are related to education in the United States and other nations. NCES is located within the U.S. Department of Education, Institute of Education Sciences.

NCES fulfills a congressional mandate to collect, collate, analyze and report complete statistics on the condition of American education; conduct and publish reports; and review and report on education activities internationally. NCES statistics and publications are used by Congress, other federal agencies, state education agencies, educational organizations, the news media, researchers and the public.

Common Core of Data (CCD)

Additional data come from the NCES Common Core of Data. The CCD is the Department of Education's primary database on public elementary and secondary education in the United States. CCD is a comprehensive, annually updated, national statistical database of all public elementary and secondary schools and school districts that contains data that are designed to be comparable across all states.

CCD comprises five surveys sent to state education departments. Most of the data are obtained from administrative records maintained by the state education agencies. Statistical information is collected annually from public elementary and secondary schools, public school districts and the 50 states, the District of Columbia, Puerto Rico, Department of Defense schools and the four outlying areas. Information from the CCD for 2001-02 and 2002-03 is from three surveys:

- U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, Common Core of Data, *Local Education Agency Universe Survey*, 2002-03.
- U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, Common Core of Data, *State Nonfiscal Survey*, 2002-03.
- U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, Common Core of Data, *National Public Education Financial Survey*, 2001-02.

The surveys can be accessed at <http://nces.ed.gov/ccd/bat>. The 2002-03 local school districts, 2002-03 enrollment and 2001-02 per pupil expenditure data can be derived from building a query on this Web site.