

25th

Annual Report to Congress

on the Implementation of the Individuals
with Disabilities Education Act



Individuals
with Disabilities
Education Act:
to ensure the
free appropriate
public education
of all children
with disabilities.

Office of Special Education and Rehabilitative Services
U.S. Department of Education

Vol. 1

2003

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on the Implementation of the Individuals
with Disabilities Education Act, Vol. 1
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Prepared by Westat for the
Office of Special Education and Rehabilitative Services
U.S. Department of Education

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25th OSEP Annual Report to Congress Volume I

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Executive Summary

The *25th Annual Report to Congress* has been designed to showcase the data collected from states and the national studies that make up the Office of Special Education Programs' (OSEP) National Assessment of the Implementation of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act. To this end, OSEP proposed questions about the characteristics of children and students receiving services under Parts B and C, the settings in which they receive services, their transition from Part C to Part B and from school to adult life, and their disabilities. Answers to the questions are shown through graphs, charts, and tables complemented by short explanatory text. The report is divided into three sections: a national picture of children and students with disabilities served under Parts C and B; individual profiles of states that summarize selected aspects of special education in each state; and data tables that show states' ranking regarding exiting and educational environments for Part B and early childhood intervention and settings for Part C. Some key findings from the report are presented below.

Infants and Toddlers Served Under IDEA, Part C

- Both the number and the percentage of infants and toddlers served under Part C have increased steadily from 1998 to 2001. In all years, 2-year-olds were the largest proportion (53 percent) of children served under Part C (page 4).
- The racial/ethnic composition of these children is quite similar to that of the general infant and toddler population—the majority are white, followed by Hispanic, and then black children (page 5).
- Most infants and toddlers served under Part C in 2000 received services at home; the percentage of this population served in programs for children with developmental delay or other disabilities decreased substantially between 1996-2000 (pages 7 and 8).
- The majority of Part C infants and toddlers (62.6 percent) are eligible to transition to Part B services when they turn age 3 (page 9).

Children Ages 3 Through 5 Served Under IDEA, Part B

- Since 1991, the number of children ages 3 through 5 who receive services under Part B of IDEA has increased steadily (page 14). As of December 1, 2001, 5.2 percent of the total population of 3- through 5-year-olds living in the 50 states and the District of Columbia were estimated to be receiving services (page 13).
- The majority of children ages 3 through 5 receiving special education services are white; white children also make up the majority of the general preschool population (page 16).
- In 2000, 51 percent of preschoolers received special education services in either early childhood settings or part-time early childhood/part-time early childhood special education settings (page 17).
- Special education teachers serving children ages 3 through 5 with disabilities are primarily white and female. Six and a half percent of these preschool special teachers also report having a disability themselves (page 19).

Students Ages 6 Through 21 Served Under IDEA, Part B

- On December 1, 2001, 8.9 percent of 6- through 21-year-olds were receiving special education services under IDEA. The number of students with disabilities receiving services has increased slowly since 1992 (pages 21 and 22).
- In contrast, the number of students receiving services for autism has increased markedly, from a little less than 10,000 in 1992 to approximately 65,000 in 2001 (page 24).
- According to findings from two of OSEP's National Assessment studies, the Special Education Elementary Longitudinal Study (SEELS) and National Longitudinal Transition Study-2 (NLTS2), students with disabilities are more likely to be poor than students in the general population (pages 31 and 32).
- Parent reports as shown in SEELS and NLTS2 data indicate that more black students with disabilities are suspended or expelled from school than are white or Hispanic students. Overall, parents report that about one-third of students ages 13 through 17 with disabilities have been suspended or expelled (pages 40 and 41).
- Most students with disabilities (around 96 percent) are being educated in regular school buildings, and almost half are in regular classrooms for most of the day (page 43). However, 26 percent of students ages 6 through 12 with disabilities and 36 percent of students ages 13 through 17 with disabilities have been retained in grade at least once (pages 53 and 55). Even so, the proportion of high school students being educated at the typical grade level for their age has increased from 32 percent in 1987 to 53 percent in 2001 (page 55).
- In 2000-01, 47.6 percent of students ages 14 and older with disabilities exited school with a regular high school diploma. A total of 41.1 percent of students ages 14 and older with disabilities dropped out (pages 69 and 70).

State Profiles

State profiles include number of school districts, public school enrollment, per-pupil expenditures, and percentage of children living below the poverty level. For Part B, the profiles include number of children served under IDEA, percentage exiting with a diploma, percentage dropping out, number of special education teachers, and percentage of fully certified teachers. Race/ethnicity and education environments data are provided in charts.

For Part C, the profiles list the lead agency for early intervention services, number of infants and toddlers receiving early intervention services, percentage of infants and toddlers served in the home, and percentage of infants and toddlers served in programs for typically developing children. Race/ethnicity and reasons for exiting early intervention are provided in charts.

Data Sources Used in This Report

The text and graphics contained in the *25th 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 their exiting from the program.

Most of the DANS data used in vol. 1 are included in the tables in vol. 2. Tables and graphics that use DANS data in the vol. 2 tables include a footnote referencing the specific table. Other data in vol. 1 were generated directly from the DANS data repository. These tables and graphics reference DANS, but do not include a specific table reference.

In addition to using data from DANS, this report presents information from OSEP's National Assessment of the Implementation of IDEA, the National Center for Education Statistics (NCES) Common Core of Data (CCD), the NCES-sponsored National Household Education Surveys Program (NHES), and the U.S. Census Bureau, Population Estimates Program.

Many of the studies that make up OSEP's National Assessment of the Implementation of IDEA provided data for the report. These studies include:

- National Early Intervention Longitudinal Study (NEILS);
- Pre-Elementary Education Longitudinal Study (PEELS);
- Special Education Elementary Longitudinal Study (SEELS);
- National Longitudinal Transition Study-2 (NLTS2);
- Special Education Expenditure Project (SEEP);
- Study of State and Local Implementation and Impact of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (SLIIDEA); and
- Study of Personnel Needs in Special Education (SPeNSE).

Each of these studies is summarized below. More detailed information about these studies and other data reports can be obtained from the Web sites provided with each summary. The URLs provided for the studies are for general information only. The data in this report from these studies represent analyses from databases not accessible to the general public.

OSEP's National Assessment of the Implementation of IDEA

NEILS

The National Early Intervention Longitudinal Study is being conducted for OSEP by SRI International, the Frank Porter Graham Child Development Institute at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, Research Triangle Institute, and American Institutes for Research.

NEILS is answering the following questions:

- Who are the children and families receiving early intervention services?
- What early intervention services do participating children and families receive, and how are services delivered?
- What are the costs of services?
- What outcomes do participating children and families experience?
- How do outcomes relate to variations in child and family characteristics and services provided?

NEILS includes a nationally representative sample of 3,338 children between birth and 31 months of age and their families who began early intervention services for the first time between September 1997 and November 1998. The sample families were recruited in three to seven counties in each of 20 states. Data in this report come from the NEILS Initial Program Data and the NEILS Parent Survey. The NEILS Web site is: www.sri.com/neils/.

PEELS

The Pre-Elementary Education Longitudinal Study is being conducted for OSEP by Westat. Researchers will follow over 3,000 children with disabilities as they progress through preschool and into their early elementary years. The children are 3 through 5 years old at the start of the study. The initial phase of this study examines children's preschool experiences and outcomes, their transition to kindergarten, and their early elementary school experiences and outcomes. Five research questions focus the study:

- What are the characteristics of children receiving preschool special education?
- What preschool programs and services do they receive?
- What are their transitions like between early intervention (programs for children from birth to 3 years old) and preschool, and between preschool and elementary school?
- What results do children achieve in preschool, kindergarten, and early elementary school?
- What factors help to produce better results?

To answer these questions, researchers conduct telephone interviews with parents of preschoolers with disabilities, one-on-one assessments of children participating in this study, and mail surveys to the children's teachers and other service providers, school principals, district administrators, and state education agency administrators. Data collection began in fall 2003 and will be repeated in fall-winter 2004-5 and fall-winter 2005-6. The PEELS Web site is: www.PEELS.org/. Data from PEELS will be included in future reports.

SEELS

The Special Education Elementary Longitudinal Study is a study of school-age students receiving special education services and is being conducted for OSEP by SRI International and Westat. From 2000 to 2006, SEELS will document the school experiences of a national sample of students as they move from elementary to middle school and from middle to high school. SEELS is designed to assess changes over time in students' educational, social, vocational, and personal development.

SEELS involves a large, nationally representative sample of students in special education who were ages 6 through 12 in 1999. Students were selected randomly from rosters of students in special education provided by local education agencies and state-operated, special schools for the deaf and blind that agreed to participate in the study. Statistical summaries generated from SEELS will generalize to special education students nationally as a group, to each of the 13 federal special education disability categories, and to each single-year age cohort. Data in this report are from the SEELS Parent Survey. The SEELS Web site is: www.seels.net/.

NLTS2

The National Longitudinal Transition Study-2 is a follow-up of the original NLTS. The study is being conducted for OSEP by SRI International with assistance from Westat and RTI International. NLTS2 includes 11,276 youth nationwide who were ages 13 through 16 in 2001 and in at least 7th grade at the start of the study. The study is collecting information over a 9-year period from parents, youth, and schools and will provide a national picture of the experiences and achievements of young people as they transition into early adulthood. The study will:

- Describe the characteristics of secondary school students in special education and their households;
- Describe the secondary school experiences of students in special education, including their schools, school programs, related services, and extracurricular activities;
- Describe the experiences of students once they leave secondary school, including adult programs and services, social activities, etc.;
- Measure the secondary school and postschool outcomes of students in the education, employment, social, and residential domains; and
- Identify factors in students' secondary school and postschool experiences that contribute to positive outcomes.

Data in this report are from the NLTS2 Parent Survey and the NLTS2 School Survey. The NLTS2 Web site is: www.nlts2.org/.

SEEP

The Special Education Expenditure Project, being conducted for OSEP by the American Institutes for Research in Palo Alto, California, examines resource allocation to special education programs. The study investigates the ways in which special education funds are used to enable special education students to meet the expectations of their individualized education program.

The study examines how resources are allocated among various special education programs and how the use of resources varies across schools and districts. The study also investigates total expenditure on special education, average per pupil expenditures for special education programs and services, patterns of resource allocation, and patterns of services to different categories of students.

The study is designed to provide in-depth information about and analysis of:

- The detailed costs associated with the provision of special education services;
- The extent to which expenditures vary according to the type of student, placement, school, district, or state with which they are associated;
- Changes in the rates and patterns of identification of students with disabilities and how these vary by the type of school, district, or state with which the student is associated; and
- How movements toward addressing the needs of special education students in the least restrictive setting, toward the blending of funds from different revenue sources, and toward increasing services to preschool students have affected patterns of resource allocation.

Data in this report are from the SEEP District and School Surveys. The SEEP Web site is: <http://csef.air.org/>.

SLIIDEA

The State and Local Implementation and Impact of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (SLIIDEA) is a national assessment conducted for OSEP by Abt Associates. SLIIDEA collects data from all 50 states, as well as a nationally representative sample of districts and schools that serve children with disabilities, through a combination of surveys, interviews, classroom observations, and document review. The study is designed to measure change over time by collecting data at several points over a 5-year period, beginning in 2000. This longitudinal study is answering the following research questions:

- How is IDEA being implemented?
- What is the status of a number of issues identified in IDEA?
- What contextual factors influence the implementation of the legislation?
- What is the relationship between implementation and results?
- What are the intended and unintended outcomes of the legislation?
- What are the critical and emerging issues in states, districts, and schools?

Data from SLIIDEA used in this report are from the SLIIDEA State, District, and School Surveys. The SLIIDEA Web site is: <http://www.abt.sliidea.org/>.

SPeNSE

The Study of Personnel Needs in Special Education (SPeNSE) is a national assessment conducted for OSEP by Westat. It was designed to address concerns about nationwide shortages in the number of personnel serving students with disabilities and the need for improvement in the qualifications of those employed. Part of the National Assessment of IDEA mandated by Congress, SPeNSE examined (a) the extent to which personnel are adequately prepared to serve students with disabilities, (b) variation in personnel preparation, and (c) factors that explain that variation.

SPeNSE included personnel from a nationally representative sample of districts, intermediate education agencies, and state schools for students with vision and hearing impairments. Over 8,000 local administrators, preschool teachers, general and special education teachers, speech-language pathologists, and paraprofessionals participated in telephone interviews during the 1999-2000 school year.

SPeNSE provides information on the quality of the workforce nationally, within each geographic region, and within and across personnel categories. The SPeNSE Web site is: <http://ferdig.coe.ufl.edu/spense/>. Data in this report are from the SPeNSE Service Provider Survey.

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's 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.

NHES

The National Household Education Surveys Program is a data collection system of NCES that is designed to address a wide range of education-related issues. It provides descriptive data on the educational activities of the U.S. population and offers policymakers, researchers, and educators a variety of statistics on the condition of education in the United States.

NHES surveys have been conducted in spring of 1991, 1993, 1995, 1996, 1999, 2001, and 2003. The NHES Web site is: <http://nces.ed.gov/nhes/>.

CCD

The Common Core of Data is the Department of Education's primary database on public elementary and secondary education in the United States. CCD is a comprehensive, annual, 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 outlying areas. This report uses information from the CCD for 1999-2000, 2000-01, and 2001-02, as noted in the text.

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 include the following:

- U.S. Bureau of the Census. Population data for 2000 and 2001 retrieved October 2003 from <http://www.census.gov/popest/data/states/files/STCH-6R.CSV>. This file is now archived as http://census.gov/popest/archives/2000s/vintage_2002/ST-EST2002/STCH-6R.txt/.
- U.S. Bureau of the Census. Population data for 1999 retrieved October 2000 from <http://www.census.gov/popest/archives/1990s/stas/st-99-10.txt/>.
- U.S. Bureau of the Census. Population data for 1998 retrieved October 1999. This file is no longer available on the Web site.

Introduction

During the two 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 5-year period since the introduction of the modular format has provided sufficient time for OSEP to evaluate the current approach and to suggest a redesign of the report. The implementation of the *No Child Left Behind Act* (NCLB) in 2001 amplified the importance of the annual report to Congress. IDEA focuses on accountability and results. As the President's Commission on Excellence in Special Education pointed out, this emphasis means that Congress and the public must know that IDEA is implemented effectively and that federal funds are well spent.

This annual report focuses on three goals. First, the report is congruent with NCLB. This means that the annual report focuses on results and accountability throughout the text. The second goal is to make the report more useful to Congress, parents, each state, and other stakeholders. This report concentrates on a more readable and user-friendly style. It focuses on key state performance data in accordance with the recommendations of the President's Commission. OSEP's third goal is to make the report more visually appealing.

The *25th Annual Report to Congress* has two volumes. The first volume focuses on the children and students being served under IDEA and provides profiles of individual states' special education environment. In the national picture reported in the first section, the child/student-focused material is presented in a question-and-answer format. It contains three subsections: infants and toddlers served under IDEA, Part C; children ages 3-21 served under IDEA, Part B; and students ages 6-21 served under IDEA, Part B. All information available about each group of children and students is presented in one section. Each subsection focuses on available results. All available data relevant to OSEP's Government Performance and Results Act (GPRA) indicators are included in this section. To the extent possible, the data are presented through graphics, short tables, and bulleted text.

The second section of vol. 1 contains state-level performance data. These state profiles, which provide all of the key information about a state on one or two pages, will be valuable to Congress and other stakeholders who are interested in individual state performance. The state profiles are a new feature of the annual report.

The third section of vol. 1 contains the rank-order tables OSEP uses as part of its continuous improvement and focused monitoring program. These tables are also a new feature of the annual report.

Vol. 2 contains all of the state-reported data tables from DANS. 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/.

The artwork for the covers of the report and its divider pages was graciously provided by VSA (Vision, Strength, Artistic expression) arts.¹

1 Founded in 1974 by Jean Kennedy Smith as an affiliate of The John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts, VSA arts is an international organization that creates learning opportunities through the arts for people with disabilities. The organization offers arts-based programs in creative writing, dance, drama, music and the visual arts implemented primarily through its vast affiliate network in 39 states and the District of Columbia, collaborators in 10 states, and 70 international affiliates in 67 countries. VSA arts' programs now serve 4.3 million Americans and 1.3 million people in other parts of the world.

