



Exceptional Student Services

Discipline Data

Technical Assistance Manual

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Discipline Data Collection

The Exceptional Student Services (ESS) Discipline Data Collection (DDC) is an initiative to improve the collection, use, and reporting of disciplinary incident data for use in Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) data reporting. Effective school year 2024, discipline data is collected via the Arizona Education Data Standards (AzEDS) system. Data is extracted from AzEDS near the end of the school year to pre-populate data within the ESS Special Education Data Dashboard (SEDD) application (coming soon) for public education agency (PEA) validation. Once validated and certified, this data is submitted to the US Department of Education/Office of Special Education Programs (USDOE/OSEP).

As outlined in IDEA Section 618, the information submitted by PEAs for DDC reports the number of disciplinary removals by different categorizations for students with disabilities. The information is also used in testing significant disproportionality and discrepancy, which considers the removal rates for students with disabilities by race/ethnicity vs. all other races/ethnicities to determine if a PEA must complete the required actions with its IDEA Entitlement grant.

Terminology

Individualized Education Program (IEP) (A.R.S. § 15-761(11))

A written statement, as defined in 20 U.S. Code sections 1401 and 1412, for providing special education and related services to a child with a disability.

Public Education Agency (PEA) (A.R.S. § 15-761(26))

A school district, a charter school, an accommodation school, a state-supported institution, or any other political subdivision of this state that is responsible for providing education to children with disabilities.

Incident

An incident is an event that occurs on school grounds or at a school-sponsored event that disrupts the orderly functioning of a school or classroom.

Violation

A violation is a crime or infringement of the law or the policy, right, or expectation of the PEA.

Action

An action can be taken in response to an incident of infringing upon the standards established by the PEA.

Arizona Education Data Standards (AzEDS)

Acts as the student accountability system for the Department of Education and the state of Arizona for all student-level data

District of Residence (DOR)

The PEA where a student resides, regardless of where they attend, to receive educational and/or special education services. The DOR includes students attending sites within the PEA/LEA, tuition-out students, and students attending sites outside the PEA/LEA.

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Definitions

Below is a list of definitions provided by the Office of Special Education Programs (OSEP):

Dangerous weapon—A weapon, device, instrument, material, or substance, animate or inanimate, that is used for or is readily capable of causing death or serious bodily injury; such a term does **not** include a pocketknife with a blade of less than 2 ½ inches in length. (18 USC section 930(g)(2))

Disciplinary removal—Any instance in which a child with a disability is removed from their educational placement for disciplinary purposes, including in-school suspension, out-of-school suspension, expulsion, removal by school personnel to an interim alternative educational setting for drug or weapon offenses, or serious bodily injury, and removal by a hearing officer for likely injury to the child or others.

Drug offenses—The use, possession, sale, or solicitation of drugs as identified in 21 U.S.C. Section 812(c). These offenses do **not** include the use, possession, sale, or solicitation of alcohol or tobacco.

Expulsion—An action taken by the local educational agency removing a child from their regular school for disciplinary purposes for the remainder of the school year or longer in accordance with LEA policy. Include removals resulting from violations of the Gun-Free Schools Act that are modified to less than 365 days.

In-school suspensions—Instances in which a child is temporarily removed from their regular classroom(s) for disciplinary purposes but remains under the direct supervision of school personnel. Direct supervision means school personnel are physically in the same location as students under their supervision.

Interim alternative educational setting—An appropriate setting determined by the child's IEP team or a hearing officer in which the child is placed for no more than 45 school days. This setting enables the child to continue to receive educational services, participate in the general education curriculum (although in another setting), and progress toward meeting the goals set out in the IEP. As appropriate, the setting includes a functional behavioral assessment, behavioral intervention services, and modifications to address the behavior violation so that it does not recur.

Out-of-school suspensions—Instances in which a child is temporarily removed from their regular school for disciplinary purposes to another setting (e.g., home, behavior center). This includes removals in which no IEP services are provided because the removal is ten days or less and removals in which the child continues to receive services according to their IEP.

Removal by a hearing officer—Those instances in which an impartial hearing officer (resulting from a special education due process hearing—not a disciplinary hearing) orders the removal of children with disabilities from their current educational placement to an appropriate alternative educational setting for not more than 45 school days based on the hearing officer's determination that maintaining the child's current placement is substantially likely to result in injury to the child or others. The IEP team is responsible for determining the interim alternative educational setting.

Serious bodily injury—A bodily injury that involves a substantial risk of death; extreme physical pain; protracted and obvious disfigurement; or protracted loss or impairment of the function of a bodily member, organ, or faculty. (18 USC Section 1365(h)(3))

Unilateral removals—Instances in which school personnel (not the IEP team) order the removal of the children with disabilities from their current educational placement to an appropriate interim alternative educational setting for not more than 45 school days. The IEP team is responsible for determining the interim alternative educational setting. Unilateral removals do **not** include a decision by the child's IEP team to change a student's placement.

AzEDS Reporting

All Student Information System (SIS) vendors were provided specifications to collect discipline data in 2023. If a PEA is unable to locate where to report discipline data in their SIS, they must contact their SIS vendor.

The following data fields are collected in AzEDS via SIS interaction:

- Incident Identifier – (required) - Format = "LEAID-GUID#", for example: "4238-99999"
A locally assigned unique identifier (within the school or school district) to identify each specific incident or occurrence
- School ID – (required) - School Identity Column: A unique alpha-numeric code assigned to a school by the state. School ID for behavior and incident (actual location of incident/behavior)
- Incident Date – (required) - The month, day, and year on which the DisciplineIncident occurred
- Reporter Name – (required) - Identifies the reporter of the incident by name
- Staff Unique ID – (optional) - A unique alpha-numeric code assigned to a staff by the state.
- Student Unique ID – (required) - A unique alpha-numeric code assigned to a student by the state. Also known as State Student ID
- Behavior Descriptor ID – (required) - This descriptor holds the categories of behavior describing a discipline incident
- Discipline Action Identifier – (required) - Identifier assigned by the education organization to the discipline action
- Actual Discipline Action Length – (conditional) - The length, in school days, of the disciplinary action
- Responsibility School ID – (required) - School Identity Column: A unique alpha-numeric code assigned to a school by the state. Actual school of enrollment where the action is bound against
- Discipline Date – (required) - The Begin date of the Discipline Action
- Discipline End Date – (optional) - The End date of the Discipline Action

Parent Declined Services – (conditional) - Parent Declined SPED Services per IEP while under disciplinary action

- Services Provided – (conditional) - SPED Services per IEP were provided while under disciplinary action
- Discipline Descriptor ID – (required) - This descriptor holds the types of Discipline actions taken on a student for a discipline incident

Discipline Behavior Descriptors

- Alcohol
- Tobacco
- Serious Bodily Injury
- Handguns
- Rifles/Shotguns
- Multiple firearms

- Other firearms
- Pocket Knife
- Drug Offense
- Dangerous Weapon
- Other

Student Discipline Descriptors

- Expulsion
- In-School Suspension
- Out-of-School Suspension
- Reassignment to Alternative Education Program In-School
- Reassignment to Alternative Education Program Out-of-School
- Reassignment to Alternative Suspension Program In-School
- Reassignment to Alternative Suspension Program Out-of-School
- Removal by Hearing Officer for Likely Injury to Self or Others
- Unilateral Removal to an Interim Alternative Educational Setting
- No action for incident

Discipline Data-Related Integrity Errors

Reporting invalid discipline data in AzEDS may result in integrity errors. Discipline-related integrity errors do not affect funding. Discipline-related integrity errors are not based on the student. They are based on the incident. Below is a list of integrity errors and links to the integrity error tools document to help you solve your integrity error. All other SPED-related Integrity Error Tools are on the [SPED AzEDS website](#).

[-52000](#) - Discipline Action End Date must be greater than or equal to the Begin Date.

[-52001](#) - Discipline Action Begin Date must be within Fiscal Year reported.

[-52002](#) - Discipline Action End Date must be within Fiscal Year reported.

[-52003](#) - Expulsion action end date must equal begin date

[-52004](#) - Unilateral Removal action can only have violation serious bodily injury, drug offense, or dangerous weapon.

[-52005](#) - Incident Date must be within Fiscal Year reported.

[-52006](#) - Student with expulsion action must be reported expelled in enrollment on the action date.

[-52007](#) - Student must be reported enrolled at School Site on the dates of Discipline Action

[-52008](#) - Student must be reported enrolled at School Site on the date of incident.

[-52009](#) - LEAID is not the reported DOR responsible for student at time of incident.

[-52010](#) - Incident must have a Violation and Action.

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Frequently Asked Questions

Q1: What is the reporting period for Discipline Data?

A1: Discipline counts cover the entire school year, from July 1 to June 30 (all students in special education [SPED]).

Q2: What type of discipline incidents must be reported for SPED students?

A2: All discipline incidents that meet the criteria of disciplinary removal under definitions must be reported.

Q3: Is discipline data for preschool students included in this report?

A3: Yes, students of all ages should be reported. ADE will report students ages 3-21 on October 1 to the Office of Special Education Programs.

Q4: How are “Temporary Removal” and “Permanent Change in Placement” defined?

A4: A **temporary removal** occurs when a student is removed from his/her current placement in which special education and related services have been delivered, according to the active IEP, for a disciplinary offense. This kind of disciplinary removal is made for a limited period of time only. A **permanent change in placement** is not defined in the IDEA. However, in the context of the instructions for this data collection, it means that the IEP team determines that the student should be removed from the current placement and be permanently placed in a **less restrictive environment**. Permanent changes in placement are not reported as disciplinary removals for this data collection.

Q5: If a student received an IEP in the middle of the school year and was suspended twice, once at the beginning of the year and once at the end, does the first suspension (prior to having an IEP) count?

A5: No, only disciplinary removals that took place during the time a student had an IEP will be reported.

Q6: What is the definition of educational services?

A6: In the context of this data collection, the term “educational services” refers to those services that will enable the student to participate in the general education curriculum and to make progress toward meeting the goals in his/her IEP. See [34 CFR § 300.530\(d\)](#).

Q7: Why does the definition of in-school suspension not include only students not benefiting from regular curriculum while in the in-school suspension?

A7: An in-school suspension represents a removal from the student’s IEP-determined placement, regardless of whether a student has access to the regular curriculum during the in-school suspension. OSEP is interested in collecting data on the extent to which students are removed from their IEP placements for disciplinary reasons.

Q8: Why does the definition of in-school suspension not specify that there is a cessation of services during disciplinary removal?

A8: An in-school suspension includes removal from a student’s IEP-determined placement, regardless of whether the student receives their IEP services during the in-school suspension.

- Q9: Why does OSEP not focus on whether a suspended student receives the regular curriculum rather than focusing on whether the suspension is in-school or out-of-school?**
- A9: Both in- and out-of-school suspensions represent removals from a student's placement that were determined prior to a student's discipline removal, regardless of whether a student has access to the regular curriculum during the in-school suspension. OSEP is interested in collecting data on the extent to which students are removed from their IEP-determined placements for disciplinary reasons.
- Q10: Should in-school suspensions administered as part of a behavior intervention plan (BIP) be included in the discipline report?**
- A10: Yes, this recommendation is consistent with the reporting format. All in-school suspensions, including those administered as part of a BIP, will be reported.
- Q11: The Arizona Administrative Code's definition of suspension differs from the one provided by OSEP in this data collection. Which definition should be followed for the purposes of collecting the required discipline data?**
- A11: When reporting IDEA data, states must use federal definitions for data elements. While OSEP recognizes that there is considerable variability across states with regard to practices and terminology, it is imperative that states adhere to the established reporting instructions and definitions that are provided in the data reporting guidelines. This ensures the interpretability of the data and the ability to aggregate the data across states. Therefore, states must adhere to the established guidelines for data reporting in all of the IDEA data collections, even when those guidelines are in conflict with the terminology and data reporting practices in place within the states.
- Q12: Does serious bodily injury include serious bodily injury to the offender, to him/herself, or the victim only?**
- A12: Serious bodily injury includes only injuries to another person. Pursuant to 20 U.S.C. 615 (k)(1)(g), a student may be removed to an Interim Alternative Educational Setting (IAES) for not more than 45 days without regard to whether the student's behavior is determined to be a manifestation of the student's disability if "a student has inflicted serious bodily injury upon another person while at school, on school premises, or at a school function under the jurisdiction of the SEA (state educational agency) or PEA."
- Q13: If a parentally placed private school student with an individual service plan is being provided special education services by the district and is removed to an IAES or suspended or expelled, should the student be included on the discipline report?**
- A13: No. The Part B IDEA regulations, at 34 CFR §§ 300.132(c) and 300.133(c), clarify the types of data that a PEA and SEA must report related to parentally placed private school students with disabilities. These regulations do not require the PEA or the SEA to provide data on a parentally placed private school student with disabilities who has a service plan if that student is removed to an IAES or suspended or expelled.
- Q14: Where should PEAs report placement changes made by an IEP team following a disciplinary incident?**
- A14: A permanent change in placement made by the IEP team is **not** a unilateral removal. A student in this situation should **not** be reported on the discipline report.

ADE will only report students with unilateral removals for drug and weapons offenses and serious bodily injury if school personnel (not the IEP team) ordered the removal from the current educational placement to an IAES. However, once school personnel orders the removal, the IEP team (not school personnel) determines the appropriate IAES for the student. This is not a change in placement on the IEP, but an interim setting in which the student is placed for no more than 45 days.

Q15: Is it important to confirm that a student went to an IAES, or can we assume that if the student was removed for over ten days for a drug or weapons offense, they went to an IAES?

A15: You must confirm that a student went to an IAES. PEAs should not assume that a school or district used unilateral removal simply because the student committed a drug or weapons offense. Unilateral removal is only one option available to local personnel in cases of drug or weapons offenses. While students with disabilities may be unilaterally removed for up to 45 days following a drug or weapons offense, it is not a mandated approach for dealing with all drug and weapons offenses. Schools or districts may choose to remove the students through other means, such as hearing officer determinations regarding likely injury or suspension/expulsion.

Q16: If a student is suspended and subsequently placed in an alternative school, should this student be counted on this report?

A16: Yes, report the student as suspended.

Q17: Should we include disciplinary incident data on students vouchered to ASDB?

A17: Yes, although it is dependent on the DOR that will determine who reports the disciplinary action:

- Campus or shared space (through an agreement) program students
- ASDB is the DOR and is responsible for reporting these students' disciplinary actions.
- Regional cooperative students
- The DOR (not ASDB) is responsible for reporting the students' disciplinary actions
- Fee-for-Service students
- The DOR (not ASDB) is responsible for reporting the students' disciplinary actions

For more information regarding ASDB reporting, please refer to the [ASDB Student Reporting](#) document.

Q18: Who is required to submit data for DDC?

A18: All PEAs serving special education students are required to participate in the submission of discipline-related incidents via AzEDS.

Q19: How is a student who has more than one disability reported?

A19: Based on the state student ID provided in AzEDS, the student will be reported under the disability identified as the federal primary need indicator (FPNI) in AZEDS at the time of the disciplinary incident.

Q20: Does an after-school program constitute an IAES?

A20: If the after-school program is like detention and the student is still attending school, do not report the removal in AzEDS. If the after-school program is the setting determined by the IEP team after removal by school personnel for drugs or weapons, then it is an IAES.

Q21: Are “for-profit” charter schools or Arizona Online Instruction (AOI) schools required to submit discipline data for special education students?

A21: Yes, for-profit charter schools and AOIs are required to submit discipline data for special education students.

Q22: How should an action be reported for an expulsion where the parent or the student (if 18 years of age or older) declines SPED services?

A22: When the action “Expulsion without Services” is selected, the option to indicate “Special Education Services Declined by Parent/Legal Guardian” will be available.

Q23: Should disciplinary incidents be reported in AzEDS for students with disabilities participating in an extended school year (ESY)?

A23: Yes. The reporting year for DDC is July 1–June 30.

Q24: What does the term “tuition-out” refer to?

A24: The term “tuitioned-out” refers to students who, due to an IEP team or state-placing agency decision regarding the least restrictive environment LRE, are placed in approved private day schools, residential treatment centers, Head Start programs, or another PEA.

Q25: As the district of residence (DOR), how do I obtain disciplinary incident data for tuition-out students who reside in my PEA?

A25: PEAs with tuition-out students will need to contact the individual agency where the students attend and request the federally reported discipline data. Once obtained, this data would be entered into the AzEDS.

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