



Exceptional Student Services

Discipline Data Reporting for Students with Disabilities

Technical Assistance Manual

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ARIZONA DEPARTMENT OF
EDUCATION

Contents

Discipline Data Collection	3
Terminology	3
Definitions	4
AzEDS Reporting	6
Data Fields	6
Discipline Behavior Descriptors	7
Student Discipline Descriptors	7
Integrity Errors for Discipline Data	8
Discipline Integrity Errors	8
Disciplinary Removals During Extended School Year	9
Span of two fiscal years:	9
After the new reporting year:	9
Frequently Asked Questions	10

Discipline Data Collection

The Exceptional Student Services (ESS) unit is responsible for certain aspects of discipline data to improve the collection, use, and reporting of disciplinary incident data. This data is part of our data reporting process for the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA). Effective school year 2024, discipline data is collected via the Arizona Education Data Standards (AzEDS) system. Data is extracted from AzEDS regularly throughout the school year to populate within the ESS Special Education Data Dashboard (SEDD) application 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' discipline data 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.

[Return to Table of Contents](#)

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. This includes removals resulting from Gun-Free Schools Act violations modified to less than 365 days.

This term is specific to the reporting of students with and without disabilities. Note that CFR 34 § 300.101 regarding Free Appropriate Public Education (FAPE) states the following under section (a): *General: A free appropriate public education must be available to all children residing in the State between the ages of 2 and 21, inclusive, including children with disabilities who have been suspended or expelled from school, as provided for in [§300.530\(d\)](#).*

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

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 no more than 45 school days based on the hearing officer's determination that maintaining the child's current placement is likely to result in injury to the child or others. The IEP team determines the interim alternative educational setting (IAES).

This term is used for reporting hearing officer removals that resulted from a special education due process hearing. This data is validated with the ESS Dispute Resolution team. Arizona's aggregate total has been reported as zero (0) for the last several years.

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)).

This term should only be used for reporting removals to an interim alternative educational setting (IAES), often resulting in extensive medical care and/or lasting and debilitating consequences.

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.

[Return to Table of Contents](#)

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.

Data Fields

Field	Requirement	Description
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 Discipline Incident 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 Decline 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

From AzEDS REST API Use Case, Table 55

Code Value	Short Description
Alcohol	Alcohol
Tobacco	Tobacco
Serious Bodily Injury	Serious Bodily Injury
Handguns	Use of handgun
Rifles/shotguns	Use of rifle or shotgun
Multiple firearms	Use of more than one handgun/rifle/shotgun
Other firearms	Any firearm other than a handgun/rifle/shotgun
Pocket Knife	Pocket Knife blade less than 2.5 inches
Drug Offense	Drug offense that is not alcohol or tobacco related
Dangerous Weapon	Dangerous Weapon not a Pocket Knife with a blade less than 2.5 inches
Other	Any offense not explicitly mentioned that violates board policy or a law

Student Discipline Descriptors

From AzEDS REST API Use Case, Table 56

Code Value	Short Description
Expulsion	Expulsion
In School Suspension	In School Suspension
Out of School Suspension	Out of School Suspension
Reassignment to alt education prog in school	Pupil reassignment to an alternative education program in school
Reassignment to alt education prog out of school	Pupil reassignment to alt education program out of school
Reassignment to alt suspension prog in school	Pupil reassignment to alternative to suspension program in school
Reassignment to alt suspension prog out of school	Pupil reassignment to alternative to suspension program out of school
Removal by Hearing Officer	Removal by Hearing Officer for Likely Injury to Self or Others
Unilateral removal	Unilateral removal to an Interim Alternative Educational Setting
No action for incident	No action for incident

Integrity Errors for Discipline Data

Reporting invalid discipline data in AzEDS may result in integrity errors. Discipline-related integrity errors do not affect funding as they are based on the incident, not the student.

Below is a list of integrity errors applicable to discipline data. You may review integrity error tools for these and other SPED-related integrity errors using the SPED Integrity Rules Reference document found on the [AzEDS SPED Reporting page](#).

Discipline Integrity Errors

Error Code	Description
-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 the 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
-52011	Expulsion action for SPED student with no services must report if Parent Declined services
-52012	Serious Bodily Injury has been reported. Review the definition to ensure the incident meets the criteria.

[Return to Table of Contents](#)

Disciplinary Removals During Extended School Year

If a disciplinary removal occurs during ESY, it must be reported in AzEDS. Depending on when the disciplinary removal will occur and the ESY program dates, the removal can be reported in two ways for the student:

- over the span of two fiscal years, or
- after the new reporting year.

The disciplinary removal can and is expected to be reported at least one day outside the child's membership track date range.

Note that the reporting year starts on July 1 and ends on June 30.

Span of two fiscal years:

If the removal occurs through the end of ESY in June, the removal will need to be split when reporting in AzEDS. This means that the removal is reported in AzEDS twice in two reporting years.

For example, if a student with a disability has a disciplinary removal while in an ESY program from June 15 – July 15, this disciplinary removal will need to be reported as follows:

June 15 – June 30 AND July 1 – July 15

After the new reporting year:

If it is determined that the disciplinary removal during ESY will occur after July 1 or when school begins the following school year, it will be reported in the new fiscal year.

For example, if a student was removed at the end of ESY and it was determined that the removal would occur at the start of the next school year, the removal start and end dates would be reported on the first day of school through the last day of the removal period.

[Return to Table of Contents](#)

Frequently Asked Questions

What is the reporting period for Discipline Data?

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

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

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

Is discipline data for preschool students included in this report?

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.

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

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.

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?

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

What is the definition of educational services?

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\(d\)](#).

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

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.

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

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.

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?

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.

Should in-school suspensions administered as part of a behavior intervention plan (BIP) be included in the discipline report?

Yes, this recommendation is consistent with the reporting format. All in-school suspensions, including those administered as part of a BIP, will be reported.

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?

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.

Does serious bodily injury include serious bodily injury to the offender, to him/herself, or the victim only?

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."

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?

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.

Where should PEAs report placement changes made by an IEP team following a disciplinary incident?

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.

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?

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.

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

Yes, report the student as suspended.

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

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 found on the [AzEDS SPED Reporting page](#).

Who is required to submit data for discipline incidents?

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

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

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.

Does an after-school program constitute an IAES?

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.

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

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

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?

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

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

Yes. The discipline data is collected by school year, July 1–June 30.

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

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.

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

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 will be entered into the AzEDS.

What is Serious Bodily Injury (SBI)?

18 U.S.C. 1365(h)(3) states that the term “serious bodily injury” means bodily injury that involves— (A) a substantial risk of death; (B) extreme physical pain; (C) protracted and obvious disfigurement; or (D) protracted loss or impairment of the function of a bodily member, organ, or mental faculty.

Examples of inflicted SBI upon another person while at school, on school premises, or at a school function under the jurisdiction of a State or local educational agency:

- Substantial risk of death
- It is highly probable that the injury will result in death
- Extreme physical pain
- Severe burns
- Gunshot wounds
- Protracted and Obvious Disfigurement
- Facial lacerations that lead to scarring or other permanent disfigurements
- Any lasting change to the appearance or functionality of a person’s body
- Protracted loss or impairment of the function of a bodily member, organ, or mental faculty
- Loss of limb (arm, hand, finger, leg, foot, or toe)
- Paralysis – Spinal injuries
- Traumatic brain injury

If a student attends at 0.5 FTE (Full-Time Equivalent) and is suspended, how should the suspension be reported? Should it be reported as actual days suspended, or days multiplied by FTE?

The suspension should be reported based on the actual number of days the student was removed from their educational environment.

For expulsions, should we report the total length of the expulsion if it occurs outside of the school year?

All discipline incidents including expulsions should be reported within the school year. Both the begin and end dates of the disciplinary action as well as the length of the expulsion must fall within the school year for reporting.

How do I report a student that is expelled, but the parent withdraws them instead?

A.R.S. §15-840 indicates that the expulsion may continue regardless of withdrawal.

A.R.S. §15-843 (E) states if a pupil withdraws from school after receiving notice of possible action concerning discipline, **expulsion** or suspension, the governing board may continue with the action after the withdrawal and may record the results of such action in the pupil's permanent file.

The answer to the question will depend on the decision of the school board. If a parent withdraws the student and the school board does not continue with the expulsion process, the discipline action would not be submitted. If the school board continues with the expulsion, report the discipline action as an expulsion.