



Exceptional Student Services

Discipline Data Reporting for Students with Disabilities

Revised July 2024

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Discipline Data Collection

States are required to report discipline data for students with disabilities annually under Title I, Part A, Subsection 618 of IDEA. For purposes of the data below, students with disabilities are students who have an Individualized Education Program (IEP) in place. The following data is submitted to the Office of Special Education Programs (OSEP) annually by the Arizona Department of Education (ADE):

- The number of students with disabilities who are ages 3 through 21 and were removed to an interim alternative education setting
- The number of students with disabilities who are ages 3 through 21 and were suspended or expelled for disciplinary reasons
- The number of times students with disabilities who are ages 3 through 21 were unilaterally removed by school personnel (not the IEP team) from their current education placement to an interim alternative educational setting (determined by the IEP team) due to drug or weapon offenses or serious bodily injury
- The unduplicated number of students with disabilities who are ages 3 through 21 and were subject to any disciplinary removal during the school year
- The number of times students with disabilities who are ages 3 through 21 and were subject to any disciplinary removal
- The unduplicated number of students who were removed for disciplinary reasons from their regular school program for the remainder of the school year or longer, including all removals resulting from violations of the Gun-Free Schools Act of 1994

Public Education Agencies (PEAs) must now submit Discipline data for students with disabilities to their student information system (SIS). The data submitted through the SIS is reported to the Arizona Education Data Standards (AzEDS) at ADE.

The Exceptional Student Services (ESS) department will have an automated process to extract discipline data for students with disabilities from the Special Education Data Dashboard (SEDD) application. PEAs will be required to review and certify the Discipline data in the SEDD application. This feature will be available before the end of the 2024 school year and will be available to review year-round once the feature goes into effect.

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/behavior

A violation/behavior 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)

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 what school they attend, to receive educational and/or special education services. The DOR includes students attending sites within the PEA/LEA, tuitioned-out students, and students attending sites outside the PEA/LEA.

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Definitions

Below is a list of definitions provided by OSEP or Arizona Revised Statutes:

Dangerous weapon ([18 USC section 930\(g\)\(2\)](#))—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.

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, serious bodily injury, and removal by a hearing officer for likely injury to the child or others.

Drug offenses ([21 U.S.C. Section 812\(c\)](#))—The use, possession, sale, or solicitation of drugs. 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 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 3 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 that 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 due to a behavior violation. 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 and placed in another setting (e.g., home, behavior center). Out of school suspension includes removals in which no IEP services are provided because the removal is ten days or less and removals where the child continues to receive services according to their IEP.

Reassignment to an alternative suspension program ([A.R.S. § 15-841 \(I\)](#))—Each school district shall establish an alternative suspension program in consultation with local law enforcement officials or school resource officers. The school district governing board shall adopt policies to determine the requirements for participation in the alternative suspension program. Pupils who would otherwise be subject to suspension under this article and who meet the school district's requirements for participation in the alternative suspension program shall be transferred to a location on school premises that is isolated from other pupils or transferred to a location that is not on school premises. The alternative suspension program shall be discipline intensive, require academic work, and may require community service, groundskeeping and litter control, parent supervision, and evaluation or other appropriate activities. Community service, groundskeeping and litter control, and other appropriate activities may be performed on school grounds or at any designated area.

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. The ESS Dispute Resolution team validates this data. Arizona’s aggregate total has been reported as zero (0) for the last several years.

Serious bodily injury ([18 USC Section 1365\(g\)\(3\)](#))—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.

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.

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 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 Declined Services (conditional): Parent declined SPED services per IEP while the student is under disciplinary action
- Services Provided (conditional): SPED services per IEP were provided while the student was 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
- Pocketknife
- 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 web page](#).

[-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

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 for a disciplinary offense from his/her current placement in which special education and related services have been delivered, according to the active IEP. 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, 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 when 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 progress toward meeting the goals in their IEP. See [34 CFR § 300.530\(d\)](#).

Why isn’t the definition of in-school suspension limited only to 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 focus on whether the suspension is in-school or out-of-school instead of whether a suspended student receives the regular curriculum?

Both in- and out-of-school suspensions represent removals from a student’s placement that were determined before 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 to collect the required discipline data?

When reporting IDEA data, states must use federal definitions for data elements. While OSEP recognizes considerable variability across states regarding practices and terminology, states must adhere to the established reporting instructions and definitions provided in the data reporting guidelines. This adherence 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 conflict with the terminology and data reporting practices within the states.

Does serious bodily injury include serious bodily injury to the offender, to themselves, or to the victim only?

Serious bodily injury includes only injuries to another person. Under [20 U.S.C. 1415 \(k\)\(1\)\(g\)](#), 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) order 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 the only 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 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 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.

Who is required to submit data for DDC?

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 must submit discipline data for students in special education.

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)?

If a discipline removal were to occur during ESY, please contact ESS Data Management for further information.

What does the term “tuitioned-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 tuitioned-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 would 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:

- (A) Substantial risk of death
 - a. It is highly probable that the injury will result in death
- (B) Extreme physical pain
 - a. Severe burns
 - b. Gunshot wounds
- (C) Protracted and Obvious Disfigurement
 - a. Facial lacerations that lead to scarring or other permanent disfigurements
 - b. Any lasting change to the appearance or functionality of a person’s body
- (D) Protracted loss or impairment of the function of a bodily member, organ, or mental faculty
 - a. Loss of limb (arm, hand, finger, leg, foot, or toe)
 - b. Paralysis and spinal injury
 - c. 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 beginning 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 who is expelled but the parent withdraws them instead?

[A.R.S. §15-843 \(E\)](#) states that 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 school board’s decision. If a parent withdraws the student and the school board does not continue with the expulsion or suspension process, the disciplinary action will not be submitted. If the school board continues with the expulsion/suspension, report the disciplinary action as an expulsion/suspension.