COLORADO
Department of Education

How The Colorado Department of Education Exceptional Student Services Unit Made Determinations 2026

Under Section 616 (D) of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act Part B

INTRODUCTION

The Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) requires States to make an annual determination of the extent to which each Administrative Unit (AU) meets the requirements and purposes of IDEA based on the information in the State Performance Plan/Annual Performance Report (SPP/APR), information obtained through monitoring visits, and any other publicly available information. 34 C.F.R. § 300.603(b)(1)

In 2026, the Colorado Department of Education (CDE) Exceptional Student Services Unit (ESSU) used both compliance and results matrices in making determinations for each AU under section 616(d) of the IDEA. Using the Result Matrix developed by the Result Matrix Workgroup and the preexisting Compliance Matrix, we considered the totality of the information we have about an AU. The information ranged from traditional compliance topics such as timely evaluations of IEPs and the significant discrepancy in suspension and expulsion by race/ethnicity to results-oriented topics such as state assessment outcomes, graduation rate, and dropout rate. We also examined Special Conditions which included timely correction of remedies issued in state complaints and other issues related to the AUs' compliance with the IDEA.

FFY 2024 refers to Federal Fiscal Year and corresponds to data collected in 2024-25 School Year (SY) for all Indicators except for Indicators 1, 2, and 4 which report data from 1 year prior (2023-24 SY). The AU's performance is measured based on data submitted by the AU during the FFY 2024 and information obtained through general supervision and monitoring activities to determine if the AU:

1) Meets Requirements: if the Overall Percentage is at least 74%,
2) Needs Assistance: if the Overall Percentage is at least 58% but less than 74%,
3) Needs Intervention: if the Overall Percentage is less than 58%,
4) Needs Substantial Intervention: for a substantial failure to comply with a condition of AU eligibility under Part B of the IDEA 34 C.F.R. § 300.200-300.213

The 2026 Determination consists of:

- A **Compliance Matrix** that includes scoring on the SPP/APR compliance indicators and other compliance elements
- A **Results Matrix** that includes scoring on SPP/APR results indicators and other results elements
- A **Compliance Score**
- A **Results Score**
- An **Overall Percentage** is calculated by adding 50% of the Compliance Score and 50% of the Results Score.
- A consideration of **Special Conditions**
- The AU's **Determination**

2026 PART B COMPLIANCE MATRIX

The Compliance Matrix includes the following data:

1. The AU's FFY 2024 data for the following Part B Indicators:
    - 4A - Significant discrepancy of suspension/expulsion compared to State
        - Indicator 4A is included in the Compliance Matrix despite it being a result-indicator due to its close association with 4B.
    - 4B – Significant discrepancy of suspension/expulsion compared to State by race/ethnicity
    - 9 – Disproportionate representation in special education by race/ethnicity
    - 10 – Disproportionate representation in specific disability categories by race/ethnicity
    - 11 – Timely IEP initial evaluation
    - 12 – Timely Part-C-to-B transition
    - 13 – Secondary transition IEPs with required components
2. The timeliness and accuracy of data submitted by the AUs under section 616 and 618 of the IDEA.

Scoring of the Compliance Matrix

The Compliance Matrix indicates a score of 0, 1, or 2, for each of the indicators in items 1 and 2 above. Using the cumulative possible number of points as the denominator and using the actual points the AU received in its scoring under these factors as the numerator, the Compliance Matrix reflects a Compliance Score.

Scoring of Indicators 4A, 4B, 9, 10, 11, 12, and 13

In the Compliance Matrix, an AU received points as follows for each of Indicators 11, 12, and 13:

- 2 points if the indicators reflect at least 95% compliance.
- 1 point if indicators reflect at least 75% and less than 95% compliance.
- 0 points if:
    - The indicators reflect less than 75% compliance; or
    - The indicators reflect less than 95% compliance for the current and previous year.

A notation of "N/A" (for "not applicable") in the "AU Rate" or "AU Status" columns for an indicator denotes that the indicator is not applicable to the AU. The points for such indicator are not included in the denominator for the matrix, and the indicator does not impact the AU's Compliance Score, AU Score, or AU Overall Determination. In determining whether an AU has met this 95% compliance criterion, the CDE will round up from 94.5% (but no lower) to 95%. Similarly, in determining whether an AU has met the 75% compliance criterion discussed below, the CDE will round up from 74.5% (but no lower) to 75%.

In the Compliance Matrix, an AU received points as follows for each of the indicators 4A, 4B, 9, and 10:

- 2 points if:
  - The rate of children with disabilities who received suspensions/expulsions for greater than 10 days in a school year was below the threshold for Indicator 4A.
  - No racial category was found with significant discrepancy for Indicator 4B.
  - No racial category was found with disproportionate representation in identification of students as students with disabilities in Indicator 9.
  - No racial category was found with disproportionate representation in identification of specific disability category in Indicator 10.

- 1 point if:
  - The rate of children with disabilities who received suspensions/expulsions for greater than 10 days in a school year was above the threshold for Indicator 4A.
  - At least one racial category was found with significant discrepancy for Indicator 4B.
  - At least one racial category was found with disproportionate representation in identification of students as students with disabilities in Indicator 9.
  - At least one racial category was found with disproportionate representation in identification of specific disability category in Indicator 10.

- 0 points if:
  - The rate of children with disabilities who received suspensions/expulsions for greater than 10 days in a school year was above the threshold for Indicator 4A for the current and the previous two school years.
  - 1) At least one racial category was found with significant discrepancy for Indicator 4B for the current and the previous two school years, and 2) policies, procedures, and/or practices were found to contribute to the significant discrepancy and do not comply with requirements relating to the development and implementation of IEPs, the use of positive behavioral interventions and supports, and procedural safeguards.
  - 1) At least one racial category was found with disproportionate representation in identification of students with disabilities in Indicator 9 for the current and the previous year, and 2) the disproportionate representation was found to be the result of inappropriate identification.
  - 1) At least one racial category was found with disproportionate representation in identification of specific disability category in Indicator 10 for the current and the previous year, and 2) the disproportionate representation was found to be the result of inappropriate identification.

Scoring of the Matrix for Timely and Accurate Data Submission

The following three Special Education Data Pipeline collections were evaluated for their validity, reliability, and timeliness: Special Education December Count, Special Education End of Year Collection, and Special Education Discipline Collection. Indicator 13 – review of transition IEPs – was also evaluated for timeliness. The Data Pipeline collections were considered timely when the AU submitted the data electronically via the Data Pipeline to the CDE and submitted necessary data reports with the special education directors' signature by the closing date of the given data collection. The data collections were considered valid and reliable if they were not reopened due to inaccuracy after the closing date. Indicator 13 was considered timely when the sampled students' IEPs were reviewed, and the data were submitted electronically via the Data Management System (DMS) to the CDE by the due date. An AU received points as follows for Timely and Accurate Data Submission:

- 2 points if the following data submissions were timely and accurate: Special Education December Count, Special Education End of Year Collection, Special Education Discipline Collection, and the Indicator 13 (Transition IEP) reviews were submitted on time.
- 1 point if one or two of the following data submissions were late and/or inaccurate: Special Education December Count, Special Education End of Year Collection, Special Education Discipline Collection, or Indicator 13 (Transition IEP) reviews.
- 0 points if at least three of the following data submissions were late and/or inaccurate: Special Education December Count, Special Education End of Year Collection, Special Education Discipline Collection, or Indicator 13 (Transition IEP) review.

Compliance Score

The Compliance Score reflects the points earned divided by points eligible times 100.

2026 PART B RESULTS MATRIX

The Results Matrix includes the following data from the FFY 2024:

- Graduation Rate (Indicator 1)
- Drop-out Rate (Indicator 2)
- Proficiency rate for children with IEPs against academic achievement standards for Colorado Measures of Academic Success (CMAS) (Indicator 3B)
- Proficiency rate for children with IEPs against Colorado's alternate academic achievement standards (CoAlt) (Indicator 3B)
- Median Growth Percentiles in ELA and Math
- Preschool Skill (Indicator 7)
    a. Positive Social-Emotional Skills
        i. Of the children who entered the program below age expectations, the percentage substantially increased their rate of growth by the time they exited the program (i.e., Growth).
        ii. The percent of children who were functioning within age expectations by the time they exited the program (i.e., Achievement).
    b. Acquisition and Use of Knowledge and Skills
        i. Of the children who entered the program below age expectations, the percentage substantially increased their rate of growth by the time they exited the program (i.e., Growth).
        ii. The percent of children who were functioning within age expectations by the time they exited the program (i.e., Achievement).
    c. Use of Appropriate Behaviors to Meet their Needs
        i. Of the children who entered the program below age expectations, the percentage substantially increased their rate of growth by the time they exited the program (i.e., Growth).
        ii. The percent of children who were functioning within age expectations by the time they exited the program (i.e., Achievement).
- Post-School Outcomes (PSO) (Indicator 14)
    a. The percentage of youth who had IEPs when they left high school in the 2023-24 SY, and when interviewed in Summer 2025, found to be:
        i. Enrolled in higher education (Indicator 14A)
        ii. Enrolled in higher education, or in some other post-secondary education or training programs (Indicator 14B)
        iii. Enrolled in higher education, in some other post-secondary education or training programs, competitively employed, or in some other employment (Indicator 14C)
    b. Contacts Attempted - the percentage of former students selected in the post-school outcome interview sample whom the AU attempted to reach.

Common Calculation Rules

The Indicator 1 and Indicator 2 are measured against the state targets using data from the 2023-24 SY. Indicator 3B, Indicator 3C, Median Growth Percentiles (MGP), Indicator 7, Indicator 14, and PSO contact attempts are all measured against state targets using data from the 2024-25 SY. The state targets were finalized by the ESSU Executive Director after the state presented and requested input from indicator specific advisory councils, advocacy groups, AU Special Education Directors, and public comments. The targets are published on the CDE webpages for the indicators. The AU receives all points possible if the AU has met this year's target, half points if the AU is within 80% of the target, and zero points if the AU did not meet 80% of the state target. The exceptions to this rule, whose calculations are described below, are the PSO contact attempts and MGP Reading and Math.

Each of Indicators 1, 2, 3, 7, and 14 are worth 6 points each while PSO contact attempt attempts, MGP Reading, and MGP Math are worth 2 points each. If an indicator was not applicable to an AU, then the indicator was dropped from the calculation.

Indicator 1: Graduation 2023-24 SY

Data for this indicator was collected through Special Education End of Year (EOY) data. The rate reported was the AU's percent of youth with IEPs exiting special education due to graduating with a regular high school diploma.

Points Earned Cutoffs	<=79% of Target 0 Points	80%-99% of Target 3 Points	Met Target 6 Points
Indicator 1 Graduation	< 65.88%	≥ 65.88%	≥ 82.35%

Indicator 2: Dropout 2023-24 SY

Data for this indicator was collected through Special Education End of Year (EOY) data. The rate reported was the AU's percent of youth with IEPs exiting special education due to dropping out of high school.

Points Earned Cutoffs	<=79% of Target 0 Points	80%-99% of Target 3 Points	Met Target 6 Points
Indicator 2 Dropout	> 17.51%	≤ 17.51%	≤ 14.59%

Indicator 3B: Proficiency for Children with IEPs (Grade Level Academic Achievement Standards)

Data for this indicator was collected from the results of CMAS and SAT. The proficiency rate was calculated with the following formula:
Proficiency rate percent = [(# of children with IEPs scoring at or above proficient against grade-level academic achievement standards) divided by the (total # of children with IEPs who received a valid score and for whom a proficiency level was assigned for the regular assessment)].
These are calculated separately for reading and math in each of the grades 4, 8, and high school. This amounts to 6 different measurements in this indicator. The proficiency rate includes both children with IEPs enrolled for a full academic year and those not enrolled for a full academic year.

Points Earned Cutoffs	<=79% of Target 0 Points	80%-99% of Target 0.25 Points	Met Target 0.5 Points
3B CMAS Reading Grade 4	< 12.33%	≥ 12.33%	≥ 15.41%
3B CMAS Reading Grade 8	< 8.28%	≥ 8.28%	≥ 10.35%
3B CMAS Reading High School	< 14.70%	≥ 14.70%	≥ 18.38%
3B CMAS Math Grade 4	< 9.23%	≥ 9.23%	≥ 11.54%
3B CMAS Math Grade 8	< 8.98%	≥ 8.98%	≥ 11.23%
3B CMAS Math High School	< 5.36%	≥ 5.36%	≥ 6.70%

Indicator 3C: Proficiency for Children with IEPs (Alternate Academic Achievement Standards)

Data for this indicator was collected from the results of CoAlt. The proficiency rate was calculated with the following formula:

Proficiency rate percent = [(# of children with IEPs scoring at or above proficient against alternate academic achievement standards) divided by the (total # of children with IEPs who received a valid score and for whom a proficiency level was assigned for the alternate assessment)].

These are calculated separately for reading and math in each of the grades 4, 8, and high school. This amounts to 6 different measurements in this indicator. The proficiency rate includes both children with IEPs enrolled for a full academic year and those not enrolled for a full academic year.

Points Earned Cutoffs	<=79% of Target 0 Points	80%-99% of Target 0.25 Points	Met Target 0.5 Points
3C CoAlt Reading Grade 4	< 20.75%	≥ 20.75%	≥ 25.94%
3C CoAlt Reading Grade 8	< 31.66%	≥ 31.66%	≥ 39.58%
3C CoAlt Reading High School	< 31.23%	≥ 31.23%	≥ 39.04%
3C CoAlt Math Grade 4	< 23.57%	≥ 23.57%	≥ 29.46%
3C CoAlt Math Grade 8	< 11.89%	≥ 11.89%	≥ 14.86%
3C CoAlt Math High School	< 5.95%	≥ 5.95%	≥ 7.44%

Academic Growth – Median Growth Percentile Grades 3-8

The students were required to have test scores from the regular state assessment for at least 2 years including the current year to receive a valid Student Growth Percentile. The AU in which the student participated in the regular state assessment in the 2024-25 SY was accountable for the student's growth percentile.

Points Earned Cutoffs	<=79% of Target 0 Points	80%-99% of Target 1 Point	Met Target 2 Points
MGP - Reading	Does not Meet < 35	Approaching ≥ 35	Meets or Exceeds ≥ 50
MGP - Math	Does not Meet < 35	Approaching ≥ 35	Meets or Exceeds ≥ 50

Indicator 7: Preschool Skills

The preschool skills consisted of three expected outcomes:

A. Positive social-emotional skills
B. Acquisition and use of knowledge and skills
C. Use of appropriate behaviors to meet their needs.

Each outcome includes two summary statements:

1. Growth - Of the children who entered the program below age expectations, the percent of children who substantially increased their rate of growth by the time they exited the program.
2. Achievement - Of the children who entered the program below age expectations, the percent of children who were functioning within age expectations by the time they exited the program.

The data used for this indicator comes from one of three CDE-approved progress monitoring instruments: *GOLD®* by Teaching Strategies, COR Advantage by HighScope, or AEPS (Assessment Evaluation Programming System for Infants and Children.)

Points Earned Cutoffs	<=79% of Target 0 Points	80%-99% of Target 0.5 Points	Met Target 1 Point
7A1 Preschool Social-Emotional Growth	< 60.26%	≥ 60.26%	≥ 75.32%
7A2 Preschool Social-Emotional Achievement	< 50.60%	≥ 50.60%	≥ 63.25%
7B1 Preschool Knowledge and Skills Growth	< 63.10%	≥ 63.10%	≥ 78.87%
7B2 Preschool Knowledge and Skills Achievement	< 53.56%	≥ 53.56%	≥ 66.95%
7C1 Preschool Behavior Growth	< 56.64%	≥ 56.64%	≥ 70.80%
7C2 Preschool Behavior Achievement	< 46.81%	≥ 46.81%	≥ 58.51%

Indicator 14: Post School Outcomes

For this indicator, AUs are given a sample size that is based on the number of former high school students who had IEPs in effect at the time they left school during the previous year.

Student sample size is based on the number of students who were reported in the Special Education End of Year (SPED EOY) collection as exiting special education in each AU.

A. Small AUs: 1 – 100 exiters (interview all students (census))
B. Medium AUs: 101- 200 exiters (interview 100 students)
C. Large AUs: 200 or more exiters (interview 200 students)

In the summer of 2024, the AUs conducted postschool interviews with these students to determine if they were:

A. Indicator 14A. Enrolled in higher education within one year of leaving high school.

B. Indicator 14B. Enrolled in higher education or competitively employed within one year of leaving high school.
C. Indicator 14C. Enrolled in higher education or in some other post-secondary education or training program; or competitively employed or in some other employment within one year of leaving high school.

Points Earned Cutoffs	<=79% of Target 0 Points	80%-99% of Target 1 Points	Met Target 2 points
14A PSO Enrolled in higher education	< 19.68%	≥ 19.68%	≥ 24.60%
14B PSO Enrolled in higher education or competitively employed	< 57.72%	≥ 57.72%	≥ 72.15%
14C PSO Enrolled in higher education or in some other postsecondary education or training program; or competitively employed or in some other employment	< 66.37%	≥ 66.37%	≥ 82.96%

Post School Outcomes Contact Attempts

This measurement shows the percentage of former high school students who had IEPs in effect at the time they left school during the previous year who the AU attempted to contact during the post school interview process in the summer. A student contact attempt is counted for any student who completed the interview, who declined to be interviewed/hung up, was called multiple times but gave no answer/no response, or whose phone disconnected and the AU used multiple other sources to try and contact the student.

Points Earned Cutoffs	Did not Meet Goal 0 points	Met Goal 2 Points
PSO Contact Attempt	< 100%	100%

Results Score

The total Results Score is 36 possible points. If an indicator was not applicable to an AU, then the indicator was dropped from the calculation and the total points eligible are lowered respectively. The Results Score reflects the points earned divided by points eligible times 100.

SPECIAL CONDITIONS

Special Conditions include issues related to the AUs' compliance with the IDEA.

These issues determine the level of the AU's Determination independent of their Compliance Score or Results Score. For example, failure to correct identified noncompliance in 365 days or non-timely compliance with the remedies issued in a state complaint could lower the level of AU Determination by one level from what would otherwise be based on the Compliance and Results Scores (e.g., Meets Requirement becomes Needs Assistance). Findings in an unresolved fiscal single audit could lower the level of AU Determination by one level from what would otherwise be based on the Compliance and Results Scores, and the findings for more than two consecutive years would result in the AU Determination of Needs Intervention. The issue and its corresponding appropriate AU Determination would be determined on an as-needed basis.

AU OVERALL PERCENTAGE AND AU DETERMINATION

The AU Overall Percentage was calculated based on the Compliance Score and the Results Score. The Compliance Score and the Results Score are both weighted at 50% to calculate the AU Percentage for the 2025 AU Determination unless specified otherwise due to Special Conditions. The AU Determination is the official and final determination that CDE uses to fulfill the federal reporting requirements under Section 618 of the IDEA. The following rubric was applied to the AU Percentages to make the AU Determinations:

1) Meets Requirements: if the Overall Percentage is at least 74%,
2) Needs Assistance: if the Overall Percentage is at least 58% but less than 74%,
3) Needs Intervention: if the Overall Percentage is less than 58%,
4) Needs Substantial Intervention: for a substantial failure to comply with a condition of AU eligibility under Part B of the IDEA 34 C.F.R. § 300.200-300.213

ENFORCEMENT

The State is required to take certain enforcement action(s) if an AU needs assistance for two consecutive years, needs intervention for three or more consecutive years, or at any time the State determines that an AU needs substantial intervention or that there is a substantial failure to comply with any Part B eligibility condition or Part C requirement. 34 C.F.R. § 300.604

For more information on enforcement actions that a State must, or may impose under IDEA, please see pages 34-36 of OSEP QA 23-01.