



SPP Indicator B-5 (Educational Environments) Probe Questions

Michigan Department of Education Office of Special Education
January 2020

The probe questions below are provided for district staff to use in their review of data or when developing a corrective action plan.

Common Indicator Probe Questions

1. Does the district have data or information that is more current than the data shown on the Strand Report? If so, what do the data show?
2. How do district data compare to the state target?
3. Do the data vary significantly based on race/ethnicity?
4. Do the data vary significantly based on age/grade level?
5. Do the data vary significantly based on special education eligibility category?
6. Does the performance level reflect a systemic problem (i.e., involves multiple classrooms, buildings, providers, personnel changes, or processes), or is it attributable to specific buildings, providers, or groups of students?
7. Have the data shown any significant changes over time?

Indicator-Specific Probe Questions

1. Review the district's data history. Check out [MI School Data](http://www.mischooldata.org) (www.mischooldata.org). Are the data moving closer to or further from the state targets for this indicator? What is contributing to this trend?
2. Consider the following factors and their impact on the district's data and placement decisions:
 - Initiatives in place or in early phases of implementation (e.g., co-teaching, Michigan's Integrated Behavior and Learning Support [MIBLSI], the Statewide Autism Resources and Training Project [START]).

- Time dedicated for collaboration among educators, including general education teachers.
 - Child-study teams to proactively address needs of students.
 - Types of instructional materials being used (i.e., are they aligned with accessibility standards?) that may present barriers for some students.
 - Instructional practices that are flexible and account for learner variability.
 - Special education department organization, caseloads, responsibility for special education teachers and ancillary staff.
 - Number of behavioral referrals (by building and district-wide).
 - Number of behavior intervention plans (by building and district-wide).
 - Patterns of least restrictive environment (LRE) placements by level:
 - Elementary
 - Middle school
 - High school
 - Variations in racial/ethnic populations:
 - Growing/shrinking
 - Mobility
 - Significant cultural differences
 - Concentrations in particular areas or schools
 - Variations in socioeconomic status by:
 - Geography/school
 - Race/Ethnicity
 - Schools-of-choice students
3. What types of professional development are provided regarding LRE and inclusive practices? Who participates in that professional development? Is input from special educators and general educators considered when determining professional development needs? Are there options to meet everyone's needs?

Are joint opportunities between general education and special education encouraged with explicit goals?

4. How do individualized education program (IEP) teams determine the most appropriate placements for students? Are there district guidelines or procedures? What data are considered in placement decisions? What is the role of the general education teacher in the IEP process?
5. What process for consideration of student need for accommodations does the district have in place and who is included in the process (e.g., student, general education teacher, special educator, parents, administration, support staff)? How do general education teachers document accommodations they are providing for students with an IEP? How is the effectiveness of those accommodations evaluated?
6. How does the district ensure full parent participation in the IEP and placement decision making processes?
7. What is the process for making placement decisions for transfer students? Who is involved?
8. How does the district track and report the amount of time in general education? Who is involved?
9. How does the district differentiate between full-time equivalency (FTE) and educational settings data? Does the district differentiate between FTE and educational settings data on IEPs?
10. How is the educational settings data entered into the Michigan Student Data System (MSDS) from the IEPs? Who verifies the data before it is sent to the MSDS?
11. If the Review and Analysis Process (RAP) team was to conduct student record reviews, would there be a match between students' programs and their IEPs regarding the amount of time in general and special education? The RAP team may want to conduct a review of student records.
12. What is the process for placing students in segregated facilities? Are placement options reviewed on an annual basis and a less restrictive placement considered at that time?