

District of Special Education Accountability Rule for Students with Disabilities



The California School Dashboard (Dashboard) reports data on how local educational agencies (LEAs) and schools are meeting the needs of California’s diverse student population. For most student groups, the LEA in which a student resides will be the same LEA in which the student is receiving the majority of their instruction. However, students with disabilities (SWDs) often receive services outside their district of special education accountability (DSEA). The DSEA, which in most cases is also the district of geographic residence, may be unable to provide the full range of special education services that the student requires and will often enter into a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with another LEA or county office of education to provide these services. Which LEA, then, is held accountable for the outcomes of the student, as reported on the Dashboard?

DSEA Rule for 2017–19 Dashboards

In prior years, the DSEA was applied to the Academic Indicators for only those SWDs who received services from a special education school in another LEA or a non-public school (NPS).

In the 2019 Dashboard, the DSEA was applied to the Academic Indicators for all SWDs, regardless of where they receive special education services. However, the LEA of Attendance (i.e., the LEA providing the services) was accountable for the students’ performance on the other state indicators.

Current DSEA Rule for 2022 Dashboard and Beyond

Initially, the DSEA rule was to be implemented for all state indicators beginning with the 2020 Dashboard. However, with the continuance of the COVID-19 pandemic, federal and state law prohibited the California Department of Education (CDE) from publishing state indicators in the 2020 and 2021 Dashboards. As a result, the DSEA rule was only applied to the graduation rates and College/Career Indicator-related data reported in the 2020 and 2021 Dashboard and Additional Reports available on the CDE School Dashboard Additional Reports and Data web page at <https://www6.cde.ca.gov/californiamodel>.

Beginning with the 2022 Dashboard, the DSEA rule was applied to all available state indicators for SWDs who receive special education services at another district or county office of education. The data for these students are “sent back” to the DSEA and included in the DSEA’s Dashboard. This ensures that the LEA that receives federal funding—under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act—for a student will be held accountable for the outcomes of that student.

Please note that, at the school level, the school of attendance will continue to be held accountable for the student’s performance. The table on the following page identifies the responsible entities.

Which entity is accountable for SWDs for the 2022 Dashboard and beyond?

State Indicator	School of Attendance	DSEA	District of Attendance	Charter School	Charter School Authorizer
Academic	Responsible	Responsible	Not Responsible	Responsible	Not Responsible
Suspension Rate	Responsible	Responsible	Not Responsible	Responsible	Not Responsible
Chronic Absenteeism	Responsible	Responsible	Not Responsible	Responsible	Not Responsible
Graduation Rate	Responsible	Responsible	Not Responsible	Responsible	Not Responsible
College/Career Readiness	Responsible	Responsible	Not Responsible	Responsible	Not Responsible
English Learner Progress	Responsible	Responsible	Not Responsible	Responsible	Not Responsible

Additional Resources

LEAs can confirm which of their students were sent to other entities to receive appropriate special education services by downloading the DSEA extract from the California Longitudinal Pupil Achievement Data System (CALPADS). This extract will identify the most recent data on which students are flagged with the “DSEA” field. For further information on this extract, the CALPADS DSEA field, and scenarios for determining which LEA is responsible for reporting SWD data, please visit the following CDE CALPADS Communications web pages:

- CALPADS Update Flash #160: <https://www.cde.ca.gov/ds/sp/cl/calpadsupdf160.asp>
- CALPADS Update Flash #161: <https://www.cde.ca.gov/ds/sp/cl/calpadsupdf161.asp>
- Reporting Data for SWDs: <https://www.cde.ca.gov/ds/sp/cl/swdreporting.asp>

For more information, please visit the CDE California School Dashboard and System of Support web page at <https://www.cde.ca.gov/ta/ac/cm/index.asp>.

Contact the Analysis, Measurement, and Accountability Reporting Division by email at dashboard@cde.ca.gov.

