

FY 2007 QUESTION NUMBER: 42

QUESTION:

Provide documentation that shows that MCPS is legally required to meet an 80 percent inclusion rate for special education students.

BUDGET PAGE REFERENCE: E - 8

ANSWER:

According to Dr. Carol Ann Baglin, assistant state superintendent, Division of Special Education/Early Intervention Services, Maryland State Department of Education, new reporting requirements, as specified in the State Performance Plan (SPP) and required by the Office of Special Education Programs (OSEP) took effect with the reauthorization of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act 2004 (IDEA). Federal regulations now require (beginning in the 2005-2006 school year) each state to establish measurable and rigorous targets for the indicators established by OSEP under the priority areas, including least restrictive environment (LRE [34 CFR 300.600(d)], [34 CFR 300.601(a)]. MSDE must set academic performance standards, ensure that schools and students have sufficient resources to meet those standards, and hold schools and local systems accountable for student performance.

In the past, Montgomery County Public Schools (MCPS) was required to work towards the goal of having 80 percent of students with disabilities in the general education setting (LRE A + LRE B). The targets for LRE are now measured differently because of changes under IDEA. MSDE established targets for LRE in accordance with the priority areas described in 34 CFR 300.600(d). Now, the MSDE targets are to increase LRE A (general education) and decrease LRE C (self-contained classrooms) each year. For FY 2006, the LRE A target was 57.75 percent and LRE C target was 17.47 percent. Although not specifically targeted, it is assumed that LRE B will increase over time as students transition out of LRE C into less restrictive settings, either LRE A or LRE B.

The monitoring priority area is to provide a free, appropriate public education (FAPE) in the LRE and sets measurable and rigorous targets for implementation (SPP, p.34). The targets for LRE increase yearly. The targets set for the 2005–2006 school year are indicated below.

<b>Inclusion Indicator</b>	<b>MSDE Targets FY 2006</b>	<b>MCPS as of October 2005</b>
LRE A (removed from regular class less than 21% of the day)	57.75%	57.05%
LRE C (removed from regular class greater than 60% of the day)	17.47%	20.66%

MCPS has not reached the LRE A or LRE C target.

The following state targets are set for FY 2007 through FY 2009.

<b>Inclusion Indicator</b>	<b>FY 2007*</b>	<b>FY 2008</b>	<b>FY 2009</b>
LRE A	58.25%	58.75%	59.25%
LRE C	17.22%	16.97%	16.72%

Secondary schools with learning centers contribute to the overall MCPS LRE C. Below is the percentage of students with disabilities in the most restrictive environments within schools with secondary learning centers.

<b>FY 2006–2007</b>				
<b>School Name</b>	<b>School Population</b>	<b>Special Education Students Total</b>	<b>Students with Disabilities in General Education &lt;40% of the Day (LRE C) —State target is 17.22 % for 2006–2007</b>	
			<b>Number</b>	<b>Percent</b>
Dr. M.L. King , Jr. MS	741	120	31	26%
Col. E. Brooke Lee MS	513	126	41	33%
White Oak MS	811	137	70	51%
Montgomery Village MS	749	184	96	52%
Tilden MS	770	191	104	54%
Walter Johnson HS	1,967	272	106	39%
Watkins Mill HS	1,777	273	124	45%
John F. Kennedy HS	1,495	224	120	54%