



United States Department of Education Office of Special Education and Rehabilitative Services

Final Determination Letter

June 18, 2025

Honorable Jeff Adams
Director of Special Education Programs
Arkansas Department of Human Services
1401 W Capitol Avenue, Suite 450
Little Rock, AR 72201

Dear Director Adams:

I am writing to advise you of the U.S. Department of Education's (Department) 2025 determination under Section 616 and 642 of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA). The Department has determined that Arkansas needs intervention in implementing the requirements of Part C of the IDEA. This determination is based on the totality of Arkansas' data and information, including the Federal fiscal year (FFY) 2023 State Performance Plan/Annual Performance Report (SPP/APR), other State-reported data, and other publicly available information.

Arkansas' 2025 determination is based on the data reflected in Arkansas' "2025 Part C Results-Driven Accountability Matrix" (RDA Matrix). The RDA Matrix is individualized for Arkansas and consists of:

- (1) a Compliance Matrix that includes scoring on Compliance Indicators and other compliance factors;
- (2) a Results Matrix (including Components and Appendices) that include scoring on Results Elements;
- (3) a Compliance Score and a Results Score;
- (4) an RDA Percentage based on both the Compliance Score and the Results Score; and
- (5) Arkansas' Determination.

The RDA Matrix is further explained in a document, entitled "How the Department Made Determinations under Sections 616(d) and 642 of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act in 2025: Part C" (HTDMD-C).

The Office of Special Education Programs (OSEP) is continuing to use both results data and compliance data in making the Department's determinations in 2025, as it did for Part C determinations in 2016-2024. (The specifics of the determination procedures and criteria are set forth in the HTDMD-C document and reflected in the RDA Matrix for Arkansas.) For the 2025 IDEA Part C determinations, OSEP also considered performance on timely correction of noncompliance requirements in Indicator 12. While the State's performance on timely correction of noncompliance was a factor in each State or Entity's 2025 Part C Compliance Matrix, no State or Entity received a Needs Intervention determination in 2025 due solely to this criterion. However, this criterion will be fully incorporated beginning with the 2026 determinations. For 2025, the Department's IDEA Part C determinations continue to include consideration of each State's Child Outcomes data, which measure how children who receive Part C services are improving functioning in three outcome areas that are critical to school readiness:

- positive social-emotional skills;
- acquisition and use of knowledge and skills (including early language/communication); and
- use of appropriate behaviors to meet their needs.

Specifically, the Department considered the data quality, and the child performance levels in each State's Child Outcomes FFY 2023 data. You may access the results of OSEP's review of Arkansas' SPP/APR and other relevant data by accessing the EMAPS SPP/APR reporting tool using your State-specific log-on information at <https://emaps.ed.gov/suite/>. When you access Arkansas' SPP/APR on the site, you will find, in Indicators 1 through 12, the OSEP Response to the indicator and any actions that Arkansas is required to take. The actions that Arkansas is required to take are in the "Required Actions" section of the indicator.

It is important for your State to review the Introduction to the SPP/APR, which may also include language in the "OSEP Response" and/or "Required Actions" sections.

Your State will also find the following important documents in the Determinations Enclosures section:

- (1) Arkansas' RDA Matrix;
- (2) the HTDMD link;
- (3) "2025 Data Rubric Part C," which shows how OSEP calculated the State's "Timely and Accurate State-Reported Data" score in the Compliance Matrix; and

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The Department of Education's mission is to promote student achievement and preparation for global competitiveness by fostering educational excellence and ensuring equal access.

- (4) "Dispute Resolution 2023-2024," which includes the IDEA Section 618 data that OSEP used to calculate the State's "Timely State Complaint Decisions" and "Timely Due Process Hearing Decisions" scores in the Compliance Matrix.

As noted above, the Department has determined that Arkansas needs intervention in implementing the requirements of Part C of IDEA. The Department identifies a State as needing intervention under IDEA Part C if its RDA Percentage is less than 60%. Arkansas' RDA Percentage is 43.75. The major factors contributing to Arkansas' 2025 Needs Intervention determination are the State's RDA score of zero on certain results elements in addition to the State's low level of compliance data reported under Indicator 8A for timely transition plan, Indicator 8C for timely transition conference, and the State's data not being valid and reliable on a compliance element. In the 2025 Part C Results Matrix, the State received a score of zero on both child performance data elements (i.e., comparing the State's FFY 2023 outcomes data to other State's FFY 2023 outcome data and comparing the State's FFY 2023 data to the State's FFY 2022 data). This means that the State's FFY 2023 child outcome results data were low when compared to the national child outcome data provided by all other IDEA Part C grantees in addition to being low when compared to the State's own FFY 2022 child outcomes data. In the 2025 Part C Compliance Matrix, the State received a score of zero for its low performance (72.79%) reported on compliance with the timely transition plan requirements in Indicator 8A. The State also received a score of zero for its low performance (68.46%) reported on compliance with the transition conference requirements in Indicator 8C. In addition, the State received a score of zero for Indicator 12 (general supervision) because its data were not valid and reliable.

Pursuant to Sections 616(d)(2)(B) and 642 of the IDEA and 34 C.F.R. § 303.703(b)(2), a State that is determined to be "needs intervention" or "needs substantial intervention" and does not agree with this determination, may request an opportunity to meet with the Assistant Secretary to demonstrate why the Department should change the State's determination. To request a hearing, submit a letter to Diana Diaz-Harrison, the Acting Assistant Secretary for the Office of Special Education and Rehabilitative Services, U.S. Department of Education, 400 Maryland Avenue, S.W., Washington, D.C. 20202 within 15 days of the date of this letter. The letter must include the basis for your request for a change in Arkansas' determination.

The Secretary is considering modifying the factors the Department will use in making its determinations in June 2026 and beyond, as part of the Administration's priority to empower States in taking the lead in developing and implementing policies that best serve children with disabilities, and empowering parents with school choice options. As we consider changes to data collection and how we use the data reported to the Department in making annual IDEA determinations, OSEP will provide parents, States, entities, and other stakeholders with an opportunity to comment and provide input through a variety of mechanisms.

For the FFY 2024 SPP/APR submission due on February 1, 2026, OSEP is providing the following information about the IDEA Section 618 data. The 2024-25 IDEA Section 618 Part C data submitted as of the due date will be used for the FFY 2024 SPP/APR and the 2026 IDEA Part C Results Matrix and data submitted during correction opportunities will not be used for these purposes. States will not be able to resubmit their IDEA Section 618 data after the due date. The 2024-25 IDEA Section 618 Part C data that States submit will automatically be prepopulated in the SPP/APR reporting platform for Part C SPP/APR Indicators 2, 5, 6, 9, and 10 (as they have in the past). Under EDFacts Modernization, States are expected to submit high-quality IDEA Section 618 Part C data that can be published and used by the Department as of the due date. States are expected to conduct data quality reviews prior to the applicable due date. OSEP expects States to take one of the following actions for all business rules that are triggered in the appropriate EDFacts system prior to the applicable due date: 1) revise the uploaded data to address the edit; or 2) provide a data note addressing why the data submission triggered the business rule. States will be unable to submit the IDEA Section 618 Part C data without taking one of these two actions. There will not be a resubmission period for the IDEA Section 618 Part C data.

As a reminder, Arkansas must report annually to the public, by posting on the State lead agency's website, on the performance of each early intervention service (EIS) program located in Arkansas on the targets in the SPP/APR as soon as practicable, but no later than 120 days after Arkansas' submission of its FFY 2023 SPP/APR. In addition, Arkansas must:

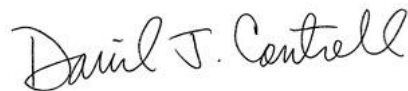
- (1) review EIS program performance against targets in Arkansas' SPP/APR;
- (2) determine if each EIS program "meets the requirements" of Part C, or "needs assistance," "needs intervention," or "needs substantial intervention" in implementing Part C of the IDEA;
- (3) take appropriate enforcement action; and
- (4) inform each EIS program of its determination.

Further, Arkansas must make its SPP/APR available to the public by posting it on the State lead agency's website. Within the upcoming weeks, OSEP will be finalizing a State Profile that:

- (1) includes Arkansas' determination letter and SPP/APR, OSEP attachments, and all State attachments that are accessible in accordance with Section 508 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973; and
- (2) will be accessible to the public via the ed.gov website.

OSEP appreciates Arkansas' efforts to improve results for infants and toddlers with disabilities and their families and looks forward to working with Arkansas over the next year as we continue our important work of improving the lives of children with disabilities and their families. Please contact your OSEP State Lead if you have any questions, would like to discuss this further, or want to request technical assistance.

Sincerely,



David J. Cantrell
Deputy Director
Office of Special Education Programs

cc: State Part C Coordinator