



Maryland Report on Part B Indicator 8 of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act

2019-20

August 10, 2020

Submitted to:

Maryland State Department of Education
Division of Early Intervention and Special
Education Services

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1. Introduction

ICF International (ICF) was contracted by the Maryland State Department of Education (MSDE) to administer its annual Part B Indicator 8 Parent Survey for the 2019-20 school year. Part B Indicator 8 of the Individuals with Disabilities Act (IDEA) requires states to report:

Percentage of parents with a child receiving special education services who report that schools facilitated parent involvement as a means of improving services and results for children with disabilities.

This Indicator is also used to address involvement of parents with children in preschool as specified in Section 619 of Part B of IDEA. The MSDE is required to report the value of this Indicator to the Office of Special Education Programs (OSEP) at the U.S. Department of Education (ED) by February 1st of each year.

In support of these two objectives, ICF administered two surveys:

- **A Preschool Survey** – completed by the parents/guardians of children who received special education services in preschool during the 2019-20 school year and were between the ages of three and five as of September 30, 2019.
- **A School-Age Survey** – completed by the parents/guardians of children who received special education services in kindergarten or above during the 2019-20 school year and were at least six years of age as of September 30, 2019.

As in prior years, the 2019-20 Survey consists of items obtained from the National Center for Special Education Accountability Monitoring (NCSEAM) item bank. Both surveys include 24 core questions, several demographic questions, and an open-ended comment section.¹ This report summarizes the methodology used to administer the surveys and presents the findings from each survey.

1.1 Data Collection Methodology

The MSDE provided the ICF team with the names and addresses of children between the ages of 3 and 21 who were eligible to receive special education services in the 26 Maryland Local School Systems (LSSs) and five Public Agencies (PAs) – Maryland School for the Deaf (Columbia and Frederick campuses), Maryland School for the Blind, the Schools for Educational Evolution and Development (SEED) School of Maryland, Juvenile Services Education, and Adult Correctional Facility.

Each home on the list was mailed a survey packet addressed to the “Parent or Guardian of [name of child].” The survey packet contained:

- A letter of introduction signed by the Assistant State Superintendent of the Division of Early Intervention and Special Education Services that explained the purpose of the survey;
- A one-page list of Frequently Asked Questions and Answers;
- A copy of either the Preschool Survey or the School-Age Survey; and
- A business reply envelope.

Each packet contained English and Spanish versions of the letters and surveys. Alternatively, parents could complete the survey online at: <http://www.mdparentsurvey.com>. The online survey could also be completed either in English or Spanish.

¹ An analysis of the open-ended comments is not a part of this report. However, all comments are compiled and provided to the MSDE.

Prior to administering the surveys, the ICF team worked with the MSDE to develop a suite of resources that special education staff at each LSS/PA, and other stakeholders with access to parents of children with special needs, could use to encourage parents to complete the survey. The resources included flyers, web banners, and text that stakeholders could insert in a newsletter or other communication with parents.

All these resources were packaged together as a Promotional Materials Toolkit and sent electronically to stakeholders through an email from the MSDE sent on January 28, 2020. The email included each item in the toolkit (Exhibit 1.1).

Exhibit 1.1: Description of Resources Included in the Promotional Toolkit

Toolkit Item	Brief Description	Recommendations
<p>Flyers</p>	<p>Please take 5 Minutes to Complete the Survey Flyer: informs parents they should have received the survey in the mail and serves as a gentle reminder to complete it (to be used immediately after the survey launch). Key Message: <i>We want to hear from you.</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Email the flyer to parents. • Print the flyer and distribute to parents. • Post copies of the flyer in buildings. • Upload the flyer to websites.
<p>Web Banner</p>	<p>An image of a web banner in three different sizes that may be uploaded to a website.</p> <p>Informs parents when the survey is available. When parents click on the <i>Start Now</i> button on the banner, they will be directed to the www.mdparentsurvey.com site where they can complete the survey.</p> <p>Key Message: <i>Your Opinion Matters! Let Us Hear From You!</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Select a banner size and have it displayed on websites for the duration of the survey.
<p>Newsletters/ Communications</p>	<p>Three versions of text that may be used to inform parents about the survey.</p> <p>Key Message: <i>Complete the Maryland Special Education Parent Involvement Survey.</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Select one or more options to include in February, March, and April newsletters/ communications.
<p>Special Education Teacher Email</p>	<p>Text for an email to teachers about the survey, its timing, promotion strategies, and where to get more information.</p> <p>Key Message: <i>Help Spread the Word!</i></p>	<p>Strategies for teachers included in email:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Print and distribute or email flyers to parents. • Offer parents the computer lab for completing the online survey. • Remind parents to complete the survey at meetings.
<p>School Administrator Email</p>	<p>Text for an email to administrators about the survey, its timing, promotion strategies, and where to get more information.</p> <p>Key Message: <i>Help Spread the Word!</i></p>	<p>Strategies for administrators included in email:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Print and distribute or email flyers to parents. • Offer parents the computer lab for completing the online survey. • Use Robo calls to promote the survey.

Toolkit Item	Brief Description	Recommendations
<p>Social Media Reminders</p>	<p>Suggestions for posting reminders on Facebook, Twitter, etc.</p> <p>Key Message: <i>Your Opinion Matters! We want to hear from you!</i></p>	<p>Tweet the following at different points during the survey window:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • MD parents of children receiving special education services—we want to hear from you! Please take this survey. • Your opinion matters! If your child receives special education services in MD, please take this survey. • If your child receives special education services, you may have received a survey; return it to MDSE or complete it online. • MD Special Education Parent Involvement Survey—please provide your feedback.
<p>Promotional Material Memo</p>	<p>Summarizes the 5 types of materials for promoting the survey.</p> <p>Key Message: <i>Ways you can help</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Distribute flyers • Post web banners • Use newsletter language • Post reminders on social media • Send teacher email

The original fielding period for the surveys was February 3, 2020 to May 15, 2020. On March 12, 2020, the State Superintendent of schools announced that schools would be closed from March 16th through March 27, 2020, in response to the COVID-19 pandemic. Schools were eventually closed for the remainder of the year with online learning implemented across all jurisdictions. In prior years, each LSS and PA would have been contacted via phone and email to increase response rates. However, this could not be completed for this year’s survey. After discussions with the various LSS and PA coordinators, regarding whether or not response rates could be increased by extending the survey into June by, MSDE it was decided that the survey would only be extended until May 29, 2020.

A bilingual help desk was maintained for the duration of the survey. Parents could call or email a member of the ICF team with questions about the survey, even throughout the COVID-19 pandemic.

Each jurisdiction facilitated a list of addresses of parents/guardians of preschool and school age students to the MSDE, and the MSDE shared the lists with ICF. A total of 110,383 surveys were mailed – 12,416 to parents/guardians of preschool children, and 97,967 to parents of school-age children. Using the business reply envelopes included in the survey packets, parents mailed completed surveys to ICF’s offices in Rockville, Maryland. Once at this facility, the surveys were cleaned and scanned, and the open-ended comments were entered into a database. Some parents chose to take the survey online. Their responses were also cleaned, and their comments were added into the open-ended comments database.

1.2 Analytic Methods

Chapters 2 and 3 provide a summary of findings from the two surveys. The respondents to each survey are described demographically, and the value of Indicator 8 is reported. As of the 2017 administration of these two surveys, the MSDE Indicator 8 analytic methodology was changed from a Rasch analysis using Winsteps software with the anchors suggested by NCSEAM to an analysis of the Percent of Maximum with a cut score of 60% because of the difficulty stakeholders voiced in interpreting the Rasch analysis.

In the 2011 SPP/APR Indicator report, the authors described the approach to calculating Percent of Maximum:

When using a “percent of maximum” analysis, the survey responses for each respondent are averaged and compared to a pre-determined cut-off value that indicates a positive response. For example, on a six-point scale, a respondent who marked “six - very strongly agree” to all survey items would receive a score of 100%. Someone who marked “one - very strongly disagree” on all items would receive a score of 0%. Someone who marked “four - agree” on all survey items (or whose responses averaged a score of four) would receive a score of 60%. Not all states using this method had the same “cut-off” for a positive response. For example, many used four (60%) on a six-point scale. Others used 75% (four on a five-point scale) or other criteria. *FFY 2011 Part B SPP/APR Indicator Analyses (page 71)*.

2. Preschool Survey

Data received from the MSDE indicated that in 2019, there were over 14,000 preschool children receiving services in the state². Based on the data received from each jurisdiction, a total of 12,416 surveys were sent out to parents of students receiving services in state. Of the 12,416 surveys mailed to parents, 4 percent were returned as undeliverable because the address was out of date or inaccurate. The jurisdictions with the highest rate of undeliverable surveys (more than 4%) were:

- St. Mary’s County (15%)
- Cecil County (7%)
- Washington County (7%)
- Baltimore City (6%)
- Dorchester County (6%)
- Somerset County (6%)
- Montgomery County (5%)
- Wicomico County (5%)

To account for undeliverable surveys, an adjusted response rate was calculated using the following formula:

$$\text{Adjusted Response Rate} = \text{Number of Surveys Completed} / (\text{Number of Surveys Mailed} - \text{Number of Undeliverables})$$

Exhibit 2.1 summarizes the Survey completion data. Overall, 1,654 completed Surveys were received, which amounts to an adjusted response rate of 14%, which is a 2 percentage point decrease from last year. The jurisdictions with the highest adjusted response rates (above 20%) were:

- Talbot County³ (157%)
- Caroline County (88%)
- Maryland School for the Blind (68%)
- Somerset County (44%)
- Maryland School for the Deaf (34%)
- St. Mary’s County (28%)
- Cecil County (24%)
- Queen Anne’s County (23%)

²Source: 2019 Maryland Early Intervention and Special Education Services Census Data and Related Tables report

³ The number of responses exceeded the expected amount through either misidentification of location or completion of mail and online survey.

Parents had the option of completing the Survey online or on paper, and in Spanish or English. Statewide, 1,565 Surveys were completed in English (95%) and 89 were completed in Spanish (5%). In 15 of the 26 jurisdictions, there were no Surveys completed in Spanish.

Exhibit 2.1: Summary of Responses to Preschool Survey

Jurisdiction	Total Number Mailed in Jurisdiction	Total Surveys Completed	Surveys Completed in English		Surveys Completed in Spanish		Returned Undeliverable (%)	Adjusted Response Rate (%)
			Paper (N)	Online (N)	Paper (N)	Online (N)		
Statewide	12,416	1,654	846	719	65	24	4%	14%
Allegany	124	14	6	8	-	-	2%	11%
Anne Arundel	1,461	210	113	92	5	-	3%	15%
Baltimore City	901	51	37	13	1	-	6%	6%
Baltimore County	1,053	182	78	99	4	1	2%	18%
Calvert	294	36	28	8	-	-	2%	13%
Caroline	33	29	4	22	1	2	0%	88%
Carroll	213	29	17	12	-	-	1%	14%
Cecil	305	69	29	39	-	1	7%	24%
Charles	403	30	20	10	-	-	1%	8%
Dorchester	53	3	1	2	-	-	6%	6%
Frederick	391	53	34	18	1	-	3%	14%
Garrett	46	4	4	-	-	-	2%	9%
Harford	554	95	50	44	1	-	3%	18%
Howard	823	90	51	37	2	-	4%	11%
Kent	33	3	1	2	-	-	0%	9%
Montgomery	3,130	261	190	50	20	1	5%	9%
Prince George's	1,935	267	79	151	22	15	2%	14%
Queen Anne's	104	24	10	14	-	-	0%	23%
St. Mary's	89	21	9	12	-	-	15%	28%
Somerset	34	14	2	12	-	-	6%	44%
Talbot*	7	11	1	10	-	-	0%	157%
Washington	198	19	12	7	-	-	7%	10%
Wicomico	65	7	7	-	-	-	5%	11%
Worcester	110	21	18	3	-	-	1%	19%
MD School for the Blind	19	13	5	7	-	1	-	68%
MD Schools for the Deaf†	38	13	2	11	-	-	-	34%
Unknown**	-	85	38	36	8	3	-	-

Note: †Results are aggregated for the Frederick and Columbia campuses of the Maryland Schools for the Deaf.

*Parents from Talbot County may have misidentified the survey online, which would account for the response rate exceeding 100%.

**Surveys classified as unknown are those on which respondents did not indicate the County in which they receive service.

2.1 Demographic Characteristics of Respondents' Children

In this section, in addition to discussing the demographic characteristics of respondents' children, these characteristics are compared to those of the population from which the sample was drawn. The respondent demographic data included in this report were self-reported by survey respondents. The population demographic data included in Section 2.1.1 and 2.1.2 were obtained from the 2019 Maryland Early Intervention and Special Education Services Census Data and Related Tables report.⁴

For the purpose of this report, a demographic group is classified as being overrepresented in the respondent sample if the percentage of that group in the sample is greater than its percentage in the Statewide estimate by 3 percentage points or more. Similarly, a demographic group is classified as being underrepresented in the sample if the difference between the percentages of that group in the sample is less than its percentage in the Statewide estimates by 3 percentage points or more. Differences of 3 percentage points or more are bolded, indicating areas in which the parents or guardians who responded to the survey are different from the Statewide population. If the difference between the sample and the Statewide estimate is less than 3 percentage points in either direction, the respondent sample is not significantly different from the Statewide population.

Respondents were also asked to indicate their child's age when first referred to Early Intervention or Special Education. Similar to last year, of the respondents who answered this question, 71 percent (n=1,173) indicated that their children had been referred between the ages of two and four.

2.1.1 Age, Race/Ethnicity

Exhibit 2.2 summarizes the age of the children of respondents. Parents were asked about the age of their child as of September 30, 2019. A majority (89%) of respondents stated that their child was between 3 and 5 years of age. The parents or guardians of children 5 years of age are underrepresented in the sample (-21%), while parents or guardians of children 3 and 4 years of age are overrepresented (6% and 4%, respectively).

The two racial groups that account for the largest percentage of the respondent population are parents of White (40%) and Black (24%) children. Parents of Black children are underrepresented by 7 percent, in the survey, when compared to the state population. In addition, parents of White children are overrepresented by 3 percent in the survey when compared to the state population. The differences between the sample and the population for other racial groups were equal or less than one percent.

⁴ Data received from the MSDE; final report published March 2020.

Exhibit 2.2: Age, Race/Ethnicity: Comparison between Respondent Sample and Statewide Estimate – Preschool Survey†

	Population from 2019 Maryland Special Education Census Data (N=14,215)		Respondents (N=1,654)		Over (Under) Representation
	N	%	N	%	
Age					
3 Years	3,210	23%	478	29%	6%
4 Years	5,174	36%	656	40%	4%
5 Years	5,831	41%	338	20%	(21%)
6 Years	-	-	9	1%	-
Unknown	-	-	173	10%	-
Race/Ethnicity					
White	5,242	37%	655	40%	3%
Black	4,611	32%	420	25%	(7%)
Hispanic or Latino	2,724	19%	302	18%	(1%)
Asian, Native Hawaiian, or other Pacific Islander	924	7%	94	6%	(1%)
American Indian/Alaskan Native	44	<1%	6	<1%	-
Multi-racial	670	5%	121	7%	2%
Unknown	-	-	56	3%	-

Note: †Percentages may not total 100% due to rounding.

2.1.2 Primary Exceptionality/Disability

According to Statewide estimates, the most common exceptionality or disability evident in the Maryland preschool population is developmental delay which represents 57 percent of the population. Although this group did make up one of the largest portions of the sample, compared to the Statewide estimate this group was underrepresented among the respondents by 33 percent, and represented only 24 percent of the sample. The second most common exceptionality or disability Statewide is speech or language impairment and sample estimates were fairly close to the actual population (29% of the population, 33% of the sample). Students with Autism represent 9 percent of the population but represented 17 percent of the sample; parents of children with Autism were overrepresented by 8 percent in this year’s survey, compared to 16 percent last year. Students with Multiple Disabilities were overrepresented in the sample by 14%, as they constituted 15% of the respondents.

Exhibit 2.3: Exceptionalities/Disabilities: Comparison between Respondent Sample and Statewide Estimate – Preschool Survey†

	Statewide Estimate of Active/Eligible Population (2019) (N=14,215)		Respondents (N=1,654)		Over (Under) Representation
	N	%	N	%	
Autism	1,311	9%	277	17%	8%
Deaf-Blindness	1	<1%	1	<1%	-
Deafness	81	1%	11	1%	-
Developmental Delay	8,062	57%	400	24%	(33%)
Emotional Disability	5	<1%	16	1%	<1%
Hearing Impairment	79	1%	10	1%	-
Intellectual Disability	24	<1%	14	1%	<1%
Orthopedic impairment	14	<1%	5	<1%	-
Other Health Impairment	275	2%	29	2%	-
Specific Learning Disability	2	<1%	15	1%	<1%
Speech or Language Impairment	4,169	29%	539	33%	4%
Traumatic Brain Injury	9	<1%	6	<1%	-
Visual Impairment including Blindness	21	<1%	4	<1%	-
Multiple Disabilities	162	1%	247	15%	14%
Unknown	-	-	80	5%	-

Note: †Percentages may not total 100% due to rounding

2.2 Summary of Survey Responses

This section provides a Statewide summary of survey responses. ICF has also created local jurisdiction dashboards, which provide individual school system’s data on every question in the Preschool Survey for this year. These are available in the Appendix.

The survey asked respondents to state the extent to which they agreed or disagreed with 24 statements about their involvement with the special education services they receive. Statewide, every item on the Survey was answered by at least 74 percent of respondents, including 22 items for which at least 90 percent of respondents provided an answer.

Exhibit 2.4 shows the average percentage response per question, which was calculated by converting each respondent’s answers to a percentage (Very Strongly Disagree-0%, Strongly Disagree-20%, Disagree-40%, Agree-60%, Strongly Agree-80% and Very Strongly Agree-100%), and then averaging the percentages for each question. The exhibit also shows the percentage of respondents who agreed with each of the statements on the survey. In order to agree with a question, a respondent had to answer agree, strongly agree or very strongly agree.

For each item on the survey, a majority of parents agreed with the statement. There were 20 items where at least 80 percent of respondents agreed. The statements with the highest percentage of agreement were Question 12 (97%) *“People from preschool special education, including teachers and other service providers, respect my culture,”* Question 1 (96%) *“I am part of the IEP decision-making process,”* Question 4 (95%) *“Written information I receive is in words I understand,”* and Question 9 (95%) *“People from preschool special education, including teachers and other service providers are available to speak with me.”* Similar to previous years, the statements with the highest level of agreement were those related to the way teachers and service providers include and value parents.

Also like previous years, the statements with which the smallest percentage of agreement were related to the way parents are connected with outside services, organizations, or individuals. The statement with the

lowest percentage of agreement was (54%) was Question 24 “People from preschool special education, including teachers and other service providers, connect me with other families for mutual support.”

Exhibit 2.4: Summary of Responses to Survey Questions – Preschool Survey†

Survey Questions	% Answering this Statement	Average Response to this Statement	% Agreeing with this Statement
Q1 I am part of the IEP decision-making process.	99%	85%	96%
Q2 My recommendations are included in the IEP.	98%	82%	94%
Q3 My child’s IEP goals are written in a way that I can work on them at home during daily routines.	98%	79%	91%
Q4 Written information I receive is in words I understand.	99%	84%	95%
Q5 I have been asked for my opinion about how well preschool special education services are meeting my child’s needs.	97%	75%	82%
Q6 My child receives his/her preschool special education services with children without disabilities to the maximum extent possible.	93%	76%	85%
Q7 If my child’s services are provided only with children with disabilities, a written explanation of this is on the IEP.	74%	71%	82%
Q8 People from preschool special education, including teachers and other service providers provide me with information on how to get other services (e.g., childcare, parent support, respite, regular preschool program, WIC, food stamps).	92%	66%	72%
Q9 People from preschool special education, including teachers and other service providers are available to speak with me.	98%	83%	95%
Q10 People from preschool special education, including teachers and other service providers treat me as an equal team member.	98%	82%	94%
Q11 People from preschool special education, including teachers and other service providers encourage me to participate in the decision-making process.	97%	81%	92%
Q12 People from preschool special education, including teachers and other service providers respect my culture.	94%	84%	97%
Q13 People from preschool special education, including teachers and other service providers value my ideas.	97%	82%	94%
Q14 People from preschool special education, including teachers and other service providers ensure that I have fully understood my rights related to preschool special education.	98%	82%	93%
Q15 People from preschool special education, including teachers and other service providers communicate regularly with me regarding my child’s progress on IEP goals.	98%	78%	88%
Q16 People from preschool special education, including teachers and other service providers give me options concerning my child’s services and supports.	96%	76%	85%
Q17 People from preschool special education, including teachers and other service providers provide me with strategies to deal with my child’s behavior.	92%	73%	83%
Q18 People from preschool special education, including teachers and other service providers give me enough information to know if my child is making progress.	98%	78%	87%
Q19 People from preschool special education, including teachers and other service providers give me information about the approaches they use to help my child learn.	98%	77%	86%
Q20 People from preschool special education, including teachers and other service providers give me information about organizations that offer support for parents (e.g., Parent Resource Centers, disability groups).	92%	68%	74%
Q21 People from preschool special education, including teachers and other service providers offer me information regarding parent training.	91%	68%	73%
Q22 People from preschool special education, including teachers and other service providers offer me different ways of communicating with people from preschool special education (e.g., face-to-face meetings, phone calls, e-mail).	96%	79%	90%
Q23 People from preschool special education, including teachers and other service providers explain what options I have if I disagree with a decision made by the preschool special education IEP team.	92%	72%	83%
Q24 People from preschool special education, including teachers and other service providers connect me with other families for mutual support.	88%	56%	54%

Note: † Table is sorted in descending order of the item number of each statement.

2.3 OSEP Indicator 8 Preschool Estimates

As of 2016-17, the MSDE began using the Percent of Maximum approach for calculating Indicator 8. Each survey response was converted into a percentage (Very Strongly Disagree-0%, Strongly Disagree-20%, Disagree-40%, Agree-60%, Strongly Agree-80% and Very Strongly Agree-100%). Each respondent's answers to the 24 questions were then averaged. The MSDE chose a cut-off point of 60 percent for their Indicator 8 Parent Involvement value (or an average response of "Agree" or better to the survey items). The percentage of parents whose average score was above 60 percent was calculated for each LSS and for the entire state.

For the 2019-20 school year, 82 percent of parents had measures that exceeded the cut point measure of 60%. **Therefore, the value of OSEP Indicator 8 for parents of preschool students during the 2019-20 school year is 82 percent.** This means that on average 82 percent of parents, Statewide, agree that their child's school facilitated parent involvement. The 95 percent confidence interval for this Indicator is from 80 to 84 percent.

Another way to analyze survey responses is to look at the average score respondents gave on each question. Only one question (Q24) received an average score below 60%. This means that parents are by and large agreeing strongly, or very strongly, with all the items on the survey. If the State would like to increase its measure, one thing it could do is focus its efforts on getting parents to agree with statements that parents agreed less frequently to, such as:

- *People from preschool special education, including teachers and other service providers connect me with other families for mutual support. (Q24)*
- *People from preschool special education, including teachers and other service providers provide me with information on how to get other services (e.g., childcare, parent support, respite, regular preschool program, WIC, food stamps). (Q8)*
- *People from preschool special education, including teachers and other service providers offer me information regarding parent training. (Q21)*
- *People from preschool special education, including teachers and other service providers give me information about organizations that offer support for parents (e.g., Parent Resource Centers, disability groups). (Q20)*

This year's value of OSEP Indicator 8 is the same as last year's (82 percent). This means that on average in 2019-20 the State remained consistent on Indicator 8 from the last school year into the current school year. In 2018-19 the value was 82 percent (CI 80% to 84%). Due to the change in methodology used to calculate Indicator 8, data can only be compared to estimates of the Indicator 8 calculated after 2016-17.

Exhibit 2.5 presents the estimates of Indicator 8 for the preschool population by LSS or PA. Estimates are not reported where there 10 or fewer respondents.

Exhibit 2.5: 2019-20 Estimates for Part B Indicator 8 – Preschool Survey*

Jurisdiction	Estimate of Indicator 8	Number of Valid Responses	Std. Error	Lower CI	Upper CI
Statewide	82%	1,654*	.019	80%	84%
Allegany	100%	14	.161	84%	100%
Anne Arundel	78%	210	.057	72%	83%
Baltimore City	71%	51	.127	58%	83%
Baltimore County	84%	182	.055	78%	89%
Calvert	81%	36	.136	67%	94%
Caroline	90%	29	.129	77%	100%
Carroll	86%	29	.140	72%	100%
Cecil	88%	69	.081	80%	96%
Charles	83%	30	.144	69%	98%
Dorchester	-	3	-	-	-
Frederick	85%	53	.102	75%	95%
Garrett	-	4	-	-	-
Harford	73%	95	.090	64%	82%
Howard	88%	90	.071	81%	95%
Kent	-	3	-	-	-
Montgomery	83%	261	.046	79%	88%
Prince George's	81%	267	.048	76%	85%
Queen Anne's	88%	24	.152	72%	100%
Saint Mary's	86%	21	.170	69%	100%
Somerset	93%	14	.193	74%	100%
Talbot	91%	11	.234	68%	100%
Washington	68%	19	.214	47%	90%
Wicomico	-	7	-	-	-
Worcester	81%	21	.182	63%	99%
MD School for the Blind	100%	13	.171	83%	100%
MD Schools for the Deaf†	92%	13	.205	72%	100%

Note:† Results are aggregated for the Frederick and Columbia campuses.

*Of the respondents with valid data for this calculation, 85 did not report the LSS or PA with which they are affiliated.

3. School-Age Survey

Data received from the MSDE indicated that in 2019, there were more than 98,000 children between the ages of 6 and 21 receiving special education services in the state.⁵ Of the 97,967 surveys mailed to parents, 4 percent were returned as undeliverable. The jurisdictions with the highest rate of undeliverable surveys (more than 4%) were:

- Dorchester County (13%)
- Juvenile Services Education (10%)
- Baltimore City (8%)
- St. Mary's County (7%)
- Somerset County (7%)
- Washington County (6%)
- Caroline County (5%)

To account for undeliverable surveys, an adjusted response rate was calculated using the same formula as for the Preschool Survey. The adjusted response rate this year was 9 percent, which is 1 percentage point lower than last year's survey. The jurisdictions with the highest adjusted response rates (at or above 20%) were:

- The SEED School (68%)
- Juvenile Services Education (36%)
- MD School for the Blind (36%)
- Caroline County (24%)

The jurisdictions with the highest percentage of surveys completed in Spanish are The SEED School (21%) followed by The Juvenile Services Education (15%) and Montgomery County (10%). No other county had more than 10 percent of the surveys completed in Spanish, and in 9 jurisdictions there were no surveys completed in Spanish.

Paper surveys were more common than online surveys. Of the 8,285 surveys received, 58 percent were completed on paper and 42 percent were submitted online. Exhibit 3.1 summarizes the survey completion data.

⁵ Source :2019 Maryland Early Intervention and Special Education Services Census Data and Related Tables report.

Exhibit 3.1: Summary of Responses to School-Age Survey

Jurisdiction	Total Number in Jurisdiction	Total Surveys Completed	Surveys Completed in English		Surveys Completed in Spanish		Returned Undeliverable (%)	Adjusted Response Rate (%)
			Paper (N)	Online (N)	Paper (N)	Online (N)		
Statewide	97,967	8,285	4,510	3,438	299	38	4%	9%
Allegany	1,175	104	66	38	-	-	4%	9%
Anne Arundel	7,905	986	426	537	14	9	3%	13%
Baltimore City	11,139	505	316	181	6	2	8%	5%
Baltimore County	14,258	1,244	558	663	15	8	4%	9%
Calvert	1,391	146	65	81	-	-	3%	11%
Caroline	531	120	23	89	5	3	5%	24%
Carroll	2,788	200	158	40	2	-	1%	7%
Cecil	2,151	324	113	209	1	1	4%	16%
Charles	2,586	127	87	40	-	-	2%	5%
Dorchester	420	21	12	9	-	-	13%	6%
Frederick	4,497	369	259	104	6	-	2%	8%
Garrett	307	28	23	5	-	-	2%	9%
Harford	4,610	534	258	271	5	-	3%	12%
Howard	5,278	483	293	183	7	-	3%	9%
Kent	277	33	12	21	-	-	4%	12%
Montgomery	16,932	1,094	787	195	109	3	3%	7%
Prince George's	13,178	576	407	115	49	5	3%	4%
Queen Anne's	724	108	46	61	1	-	3%	15%
St. Mary's	1,868	251	100	150	1	-	7%	15%
Somerset	375	44	9	34	1	-	7%	13%
Talbot	482	68	20	48	-	-	2%	14%
Washington	2,144	112	93	18	1	-	6%	6%
Wicomico	1,563	95	71	17	7	-	4%	6%
Worcester	658	69	39	30	-	-	2%	11%
Juvenile Service Education	150	48	22	19	5	2	10%	36%
Adult Correctional Facility	59	6	1	5	-	-	0%	10%
SEED School	56	38	30	-	8	-	0%	68%
MD School for the Blind	203	73	23	46	4	-	0%	36%
MD Schools for the Deaf ^a	262	51	19	30	2	-	0%	19%
Unknown*		428	174	199	50	5	-	-

Note: ^a Results are aggregated for the Frederick and Columbia campuses of the Maryland Schools for the Deaf.

* Surveys classified as unknown are those on which respondents did not indicate the County in which they receive service.

3.1 Demographic Characteristics of Respondents' Children

All grade levels (Kindergarten – Grade 12) were well represented in the respondent sample. Each grade level accounted for between 3 percent and 8 percent of the respondent sample. The majority of respondents (84%) indicated that their child had been referred for special education services between the ages of zero and eight, and 46 percent had been referred between the ages of two and five. The population demographic data included in Section 3.1.1 and 3.1.2 were obtained from the 2019 Maryland Early Intervention and Special Education Services Census Data and Related Tables report.⁶

Ten percent of respondents (N=791) indicated that their child attended a non-public school as a result of an IEP team decision for a Free Appropriate Public Education (FAPE); while 82 percent of respondents (N=6,790) indicated that their child attended a public school during the 2019-20 school year. Eight percent of respondents did not answer this question.

3.1.1 Age, Race/Ethnicity

Exhibit 3.2 summarizes the age characteristics of the children of respondents. Respondents were asked about the age of their child as of September 30, 2019. Much like last year, the age distribution of children of survey respondents did not significantly differ from the age distribution of the State.

The most common race/ethnic backgrounds of respondents were White (49%) or Black (26%), which is similar to last year's sample. Parents of Black children were underrepresented by 15 percent and parents of White children were overrepresented by 14 percent. Hispanic or Latino children were underrepresented by 5 percentage points.

Exhibit 3.2: Age, Race/Ethnicity: Comparison between Respondent Sample and Statewide Estimate –School-Age Survey [†]

	Population from 2019 Maryland Special Education Census Data (N=98,185)		Respondents (N=8,284)		Over (Under) Representation
	N	%	N	%	
Age					
Less than 6 Years			159	2%	-
6 Years	6,101	6%	550	7%	1%
7 Years	7,244	7%	687	8%	1%
8 Years	7,790	8%	704	8%	-
9 Years	8,283	8%	666	8%	-
10 Years	8,667	9%	665	8%	(1%)
11 Years	8,904	9%	686	8%	(1%)
12 Years	8,622	9%	683	8%	(1%)
13 Years	8,372	9%	658	8%	(1%)
14 Years	7,723	8%	582	7%	(1%)
15 Years	7,407	8%	566	7%	(1%)
16 Years	7,191	7%	541	7%	-
17 Years	6,783	7%	488	6%	(1%)
18 Years	2,981	3%	244	3%	-
19 Years	1,196	1%	115	1%	-
20 Years	839	1%	74	1%	-
21 Years	82	<1%	19	<1%	-
Unknown	-	-	197	2%	-

⁶ Data received from the MSDE, final report published March 2020.

	Population from 2019 Maryland Special Education Census Data (N=98,185)		Respondents (N=8,284)		Over (Under) Representation
	N	%	N	%	
Race/Ethnicity					
White	34,000	35%	4,047	49%	14%
Black or African American	40,246	41%	2,181	26%	(15%)
Hispanic or Latino	16,201	16%	947	11%	(5%)
Asian, Native Hawaiian, or other Pacific Islander	3,093	3%	342	4%	1%
American Indian/Alaskan Native	257	<1%	25	<1%	-
Multi-racial	4,388	4%	534	6%	2%
Unknown	-	-	208	3%	

Note: †Percentages may not total 100% due to rounding

3.1.2 Primary Exceptionality/Disability

Exhibit 3.3 shows the distribution of primary exceptionalities/disabilities among the children of Survey respondents and the State as a whole. Parents of children with Other Health Impairment and Specific Learning Disability were each underrepresented in the survey by 12 and 9 percent, respectively. Overrepresented in this year's Survey were parents of children with Autism by 6 percent and Multiple Disabilities by 7 percent.

Exhibit 3.3: Exceptionalities/Disabilities: Comparison between Respondent Sample and Statewide Estimate – School-Age Survey †

	Statewide Estimate of Active/Eligible Population (2019) (N=98,185)		Respondents (N=8,284)		Over (Under) Representation
	N	%	N	%	
Autism	12,037	12%	1,516	18%	6%
Deaf-Blindness	10	<1%	7	<1%	-
Deafness	326	<1%	44	1%	<1%
Developmental Delay	3,630	4%	398	5%	1%
Emotional Disability	6,177	6%	438	5%	(1%)
Hearing Impairment	392	<1%	48	1%	<1%
Intellectual Disability	6,217	6%	473	6%	-
Orthopedic Impairment	136	<1%	20	<1%	-
Other Health Impairment	19,326	20%	691	8%	(12%)
Specific Learning Disability	30,902	32%	1,871	23%	(9%)
Speech or Language Impairment	11,512	12%	973	12%	-
Traumatic Brain Injury	211	<1%	44	<1%	-
Visual Impairment including Blindness	258	<1%	57	1%	<1%
Multiple Disabilities	6,938	7%	1,149	14%	7%
Unknown			555	7%	

Note: †Percentages may not total 100% due to rounding

3.2 Summary of Survey Responses

This section provides a summary of Statewide survey responses. As with the Preschool Survey data, ICF has enhanced the utility of district dashboards to provide individual district data on every question asked within the School-Age Survey this year (Appendix).

The survey asked respondents to state the extent to which they agreed or disagreed with 24 questions about their involvement with special education services they receive. Statewide, every question was answered by at least 84 percent of respondents.

Exhibit 3.4 shows the percentage of respondents who agreed with each of the statements on the survey. Similar to the Preschool Survey, every statement presented on the survey was able to obtain agreement from a majority of parents, including 20 items for which at least 80 percent of parents agreed with the statement. The statements for which the highest percentage of agreement were those related to the way the school and/or teachers communicate with parents, with the most agreement (94%) on Question 10 *“Written information I receive is written in words I understand.”*

Parents were least likely to agree with statements about how well the school connects parents to other organizations or agencies to support them, providing parents with information on agencies that can assist with transition from school, or options parents have when they disagree with a decision of the school. As in previous years, the statement with the lowest percentage of agreement (67%) was Question 22 *“The school and/or school system offers me training about special education issues.”*

Exhibit 3.4: Summary of Responses to Survey Questions – School-Age Survey[†]

Survey Questions	% Answering the Statement	Average Response to this Statement	% Agreeing with this Statement
Q1 I am considered an equal partner with teachers and other professionals in planning my child's program.	97%	76%	89%
Q2 I have been asked for my opinion about how well special education services are meeting my child's needs.	95%	72%	83%
Q3 At the IEP meeting, we discussed how my child would participate in statewide assessments.	94%	72%	84%
Q4 My child's school consistently implements all accommodations and modifications documented on my child's IEP.	94%	71%	83%
Q5 All of my concerns and recommendations were documented on the IEP.	96%	75%	88%
Q6 My child is educated in regular classes (general education) with supports, to the maximum extent appropriate.	91%	74%	85%
Q7 I was given information about organizations that offer support for parents of students with disabilities.	91%	67%	75%
Q8 I am comfortable asking questions and expressing concerns to school staff.	97%	81%	93%
Q9 I was given all pertinent reports and evaluations related to my child prior to the IEP team meeting.	96%	78%	91%
Q10 Written information I receive is written in words I understand.	98%	80%	94%
Q11 I was given information about the curriculum and materials used with my child.	94%	69%	80%
Q12 The transition outcomes developed for my child are appropriate to meet his/her needs.	91%	71%	84%
Q13 Teachers and administrators seek out parent input.	94%	71%	83%
Q14 Teachers and administrators show sensitivity to the needs of students with disabilities and their families.	94%	74%	86%
Q15 Teachers and administrators expect parents to participate in decision making.	96%	74%	88%
Q16 Teachers and administrators set a climate for acceptance of diversity.	93%	74%	89%
Q17 Teachers and administrators answer any questions I have about Procedural Safeguards.	90%	75%	91%
Q18 Teachers and administrators value my ideas and input.	95%	74%	87%
Q19 Teachers and administrators ensure that students with disabilities have the same opportunities to learn and participate in school programs as students without disabilities (e.g., academics, fundraising events, sports, etc.).	93%	75%	88%
Q20 The school and/or school system has a person on staff who is available to answer parents' questions.	96%	76%	91%
Q21 The school and/or school system gives me enough information to know whether or not my child is making adequate progress.	94%	72%	84%
Q22 The school and/or school system offers me training about special education issues.	87%	62%	67%
Q23 The school and/or school system provides information on agencies that can assist my child in the transition from school.	84%	65%	73%
Q24 The school and/or school system explains what options I have if I disagree with a decision of the school.	88%	66%	77%

Note: [†] Table is sorted in descending order of the item number of each statement.

3.3 OSEP Indicator 8 School-Age Estimates

Starting with 2017, the MSDE began using the Percent of Maximum approach for calculating Indicator 8. Each survey response was converted into a percentage (Very Strongly Disagree-0%, Strongly Disagree-20%, Disagree 40%, Agree-60%, Strongly Agree-80% and Very Strongly Agree-100%). Each respondent's answers to the 24 questions were then averaged. The MSDE chose a cut-off point of 60% for their Indicator 8 Parent Involvement value (or an average response of "Agree" or better to the survey items). The percentage of parents whose average score was above 60 percent was calculated for each LSS and for the entire state.

For the 2019-20 school year, 72 percent of parents had measures that exceeded the cut point measure. **Therefore, the value of OSEP Indicator 8 for parents of school-age students during the 2019-20 school year is 72%.** This means that 72 percent of parents, Statewide, agree that their child's school facilitated parent involvement. The 95 percent confidence interval for this Indicator is from 71 to 73 percent.

Another way to analyze survey responses is to look at the average response for each of the questions. Only one question (Q22) scored an average score 62 percent or below. This means that on average parents are by and large agreeing strongly, or very strongly, with all the items on the survey. If the State would like to increase its measure, one thing it could do is focus its efforts on getting parents to agree with statements that parents agreed less frequently to, such as:

- *The school and/or school system offers me training about special education issues. (Q22)*
- *The school and/or school system provides information on agencies that can assist my child in the transition from school. (Q23)*
- *The school and/or school system explains what options I have if I disagree with a decision of the school. (Q24)*
- *I was given information about organizations that offer support for parents of students with disabilities. (Q7)*

Because of the change in methodology used to calculate Indicator 8, this year's data can only be compared to estimates of the Indicator 8 calculated after 2016-17. Last year the Parent Involvement Score for the school-age survey using this methodology was 69 percent (CI 68% to 70%), and it was the same in the prior year. This means that on average in 2019-20, the State performance on Indicator 8 increased by 3 percentage points, when compared to the previous two years.

Exhibit 3.5 presents the estimates of the Indicator for school-age children by LSS or PA as well as the upper and lower 95 percent confidence limits of that estimate.

Exhibit 3.5: 2019-20 Estimates for OSEP Indicator 8 – School-Age Survey*

Jurisdiction	Estimate of Indicator 8	Number of Valid Responses	Std. Error	Lower CI	Upper CI
Statewide	72%	8,285	.010	71%	73%
Allegany	78%	104	.081	70%	86%
Anne Arundel	67%	986	.029	64%	70%
Baltimore City	71%	505	.040	67%	75%
Baltimore County	70%	1,244	.026	67%	72%
Calvert	70%	146	.075	62%	77%
Caroline	92%	120	.053	86%	97%
Carroll	79%	200	.057	73%	85%
Cecil	71%	324	.050	66%	76%
Charles	68%	127	.082	60%	76%
Dorchester	81%	21	.182	63%	99%
Frederick	76%	369	.044	71%	80%
Garrett	79%	28	.160	63%	95%
Harford	71%	534	.039	67%	74%
Howard	77%	483	.038	73%	81%
Kent	79%	33	.146	64%	93%
Montgomery	73%	1,094	.026	71%	76%
Prince George's	64%	576	.039	60%	68%
Queen Anne's	80%	108	.077	72%	87%
Saint Mary's	68%	251	.058	62%	74%
Somerset	91%	44	.097	81%	100%
Talbot	74%	68	.106	63%	84%
Washington	70%	112	.086	61%	78%
Wicomico	75%	95	.088	66%	84%
Worcester	84%	69	.090	75%	93%
Juvenile Services Education	71%	48	.130	58%	84%
Adult Correctional Facility	-	6	-	-	-
SEED School	82%	38	.130	69%	95%
MD School for the Blind	89%	73	.077	81%	97%
MD Schools for the Deaf [†]	80%	51	.113	69%	92%

Note:[†] Results are aggregated for the Frederick and Columbia campuses.

*Of the respondents with valid data for this calculation, 428 did not report the LSS or PA with which they are affiliated.

4. Conclusion

For the 2019-20 MSDE Parent Survey, the parents of 1,654 Preschool and 8,285 School-Age students across the State of Maryland responded. The response rate was 14% for Preschool and 9% for School-Aged, which is a 2 percent decrease for Preschool and 1 percent decrease for School Age, compared to the previous year. This reduction is most likely due to the COVID-19 pandemic, during which Maryland schools physically closed and there was limited communication with parents. The demographic categories of survey respondents were generally similar to those in the State Census, except for a few age discrepancies in Preschool respondents and some variations in exceptionalities/disabilities distributions. Race/ethnicity distribution were similar overall and improved by three percentage points for Black and multi-racial children compared to previous years.

Again, this year the MSDE used the Percent of Maximum approach for calculating Indicator 8. Survey responses were converted to percentages, and then averaged. The MSDE chose a cut-off point of 60% for their Indicator 8 Parent Involvement value (or an average response of “Agree” or better to the survey items). **The value of OSEP Indicator 8 for parents of preschool students during the 2019-20 school year is 82%.** This means that on average 82% of parents, Statewide, agree that their child’s school facilitated parent involvement. The 95% CI for this Indicator is from 80% to 84%. **The value of OSEP Indicator 8 for parents of school-age students during the 2019-20 school year is 72%.** This means that on average 72% of parents, Statewide, agree that their child’s school facilitated parent involvement. The 95% CI for this Indicator is from 71% to 73%. Because of a change to the methodology used to calculate Indicator 8 implemented in 2016-17, this year’s data can be compared to estimates of Indicator 8 reported in the last three years. This year’s results are the same as estimates from last year for Preschool (82%). There was some increase in parent perceptions that their child’s school facilitated parent involvement for School Age (69% last year, compared to 72% this year).

Similar to previous years, parents responding to both surveys provided low responses to issues of training or support. In addition, parents of students in preschool responded less favorably to receiving information about community services and supports. Parents of school-age students responded less favorably to the school providing them information on agencies that can assist their child in transition from school, providing information about organizations that support parents of students with disabilities, and explaining what options parents have if they disagree with the decision made by a school.