

Special Education in Michigan Graduation and Drop Out Rates

2003-04 Annual Performance Report

Office of Special Education and Early Intervention Services

Under IDEA, Michigan must report an unduplicated count of all children with IEPs, by age, disability and ethnicity who were in special education at the start of a 12-month reporting period, but were not in special education at the end of the reporting period. IDEA has seven exiting categories for special education exiting students: transferred to regular education, graduated, received a certificate, reached maximum age, died, moved and dropped out.

With respect to graduation rates in Michigan, it is important to observe that locally elected school boards set graduation requirements in Michigan, and these requirements vary widely. The State of Michigan does not grant diplomas (with the exception of the Michigan School for the Deaf), nor does it grant various certificates of attainment that are alternatives to a regular diploma (e.g., certificate of completion). Michigan also does not recognize a GED as equivalent to a regular diploma (i.e., attainment of a GED does not terminate a student's right to FAPE for the purposes of pursuing a regular diploma); however GEDs are accepted for college admission.

The dropout and graduation rates for students with IEPs are calculated using the methodology outlined by the U.S. Department of Education, Office of Special Education Programs (OSEP). The statistics available on special education graduation and dropout are from the statewide special education database, Michigan Compliance Information System (MICIS).

Graduation and Dropout Rates for Students with IEPs 14 Years of Age or Older, 1997-2004

Year	Graduation Count	Graduation Rate Percent	Dropout Count	Dropout Rate Percent
1997	4,464	33.1%	8,046	59.6%
1998	4,707	35.0%	7,829	58.3%
1999	5,034	35.1%	8,274	57.7%
2000	5,302	41.0%	6,723	52.0%
2001	5,485	42.6%	6,200	48.1%
2002	5,752	42.1%	6,575	48.1%
2003	7,051	52.6%	4,577	38.7%
2004	8,315	66.1%	3,442	27.4%

Source: MICIS

OSE/EIS along with ISDs, LEAs and PSAs have made a significant effort to increase the accuracy of data reporting for students graduating and dropping out of school. This effort along with a focus on decreasing student dropouts has steadily improved Michigan's graduation rate while lowering the dropout rate.

IDEA 2004 & Exit Information

Graduation and Drop Out Rates continue to be considered key performance indicators within the FAPE (Free and Appropriate Public Education) in the LRE (Least Restrictive Environment) monitoring priority.

OSEP's Methodology

The OSEP calculates **graduation rates** by dividing the number of students aged 14 and older who graduated with a standard diploma by the number of students 14 and older who are known to have left school (i.e., graduated with a standard diploma, received a certificate of completion, reached the maximum age for services, died, or dropped out).

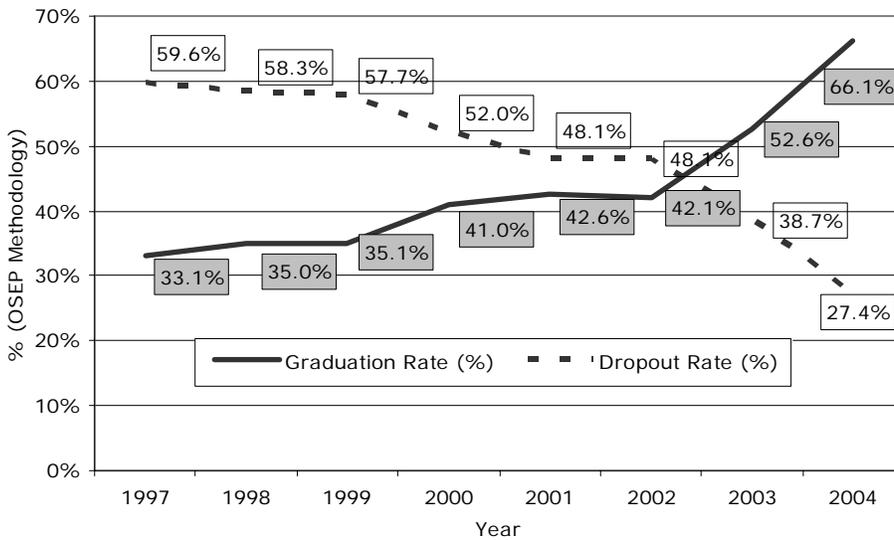
The OSEP calculates **dropout rates** by dividing the number of students aged 14 and older who dropout of school by the number of students 14 and older who are known to have left school (i.e., graduated with a standard diploma, received a certificate of completion, reached the maximum age, died or dropped out).

From IDEA 2004 – SPP/APR Indicators

On the SPP, States are to compare the percent of youth with IEPs **graduating** from high school with a regular high school diploma to the percent of all youth in the State graduating with a regular diploma.

States have to perform similar comparison with the percent of youth with IEPs and all youth **dropping out** of high school

Special Education Graduation and Dropout Rates

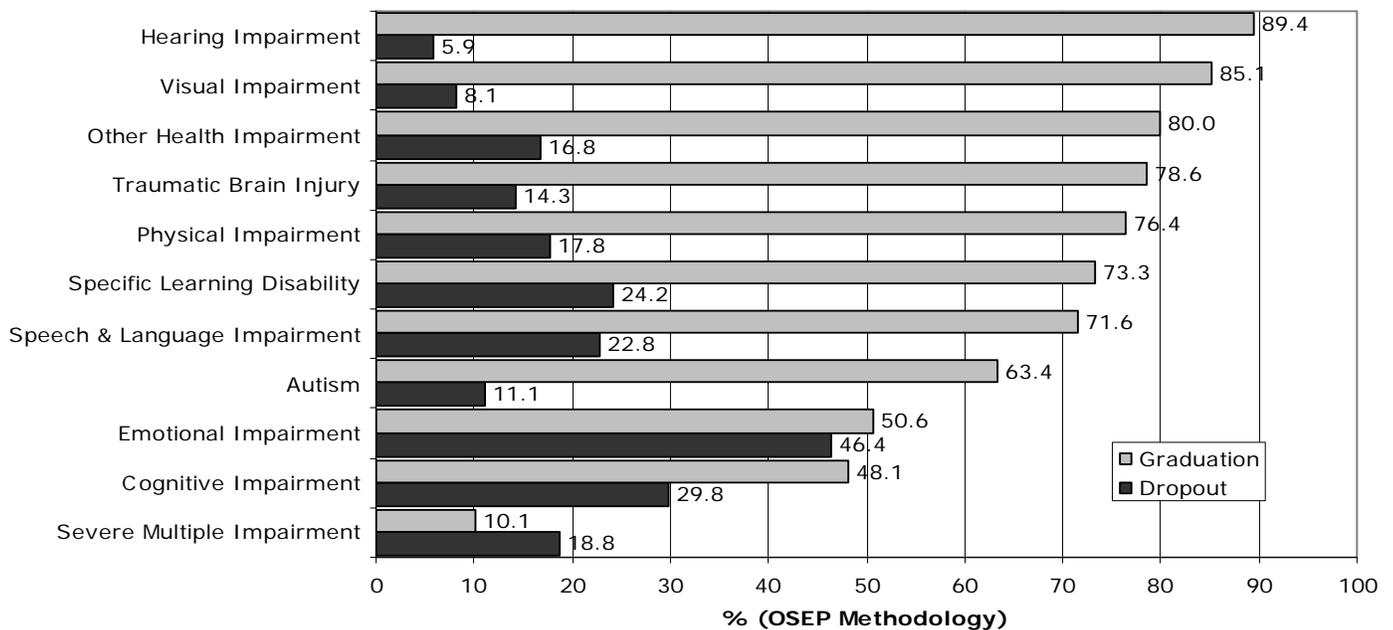


In 2002, students with IEPs in Michigan were more likely to drop out (48.1%) than to graduate (42.1%) with a diploma. This situation was reversed in 2004 with graduation at 66.1% and dropout at 27.4%.

Graduation and dropout rates can be calculated for 11 disability categories or students 14 years of age and older. These rates for 2004 are presented below. Ten out of the eleven disability categories have a higher graduation rate as compared to the dropout rate. Hearing Impairment has the highest graduation rate at

89.4%. Emotional Impairment has the highest dropout rate at 46.4%. The goal of Michigan's Education YES! is to have a graduation rate of 80% and a dropout rate less than 20%.

Graduation and Dropout Rates by Disability Category for 2004



Source: MICIS

Michigan's Annual Performance Report has set a 2003-2004 target for graduation and dropout rates for special education students (Graduation rates for students with IEPs at 80%, the minimum standard for graduation set by Michigan's Education YES!, Dropout rates for students with IEPs below 20%). Although MI has not met this target for the population of students with IEPs in 2003-04, the data trend of the last few years depicts a move toward reaching this goal. If this trend is not interrupted, Michigan should reach the Michigan's Education YES! target in less than two years. Students with hearing impairment, visual impairment and other health impairment have already met the Education YES! graduation standard, as calculated by the OSEP methodology.