

Missouri Annual Blind/Visually Impaired Literacy Study

December 2020



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PURPOSE

The Missouri Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE), per Section 162.1136, RSMo, conducts an annual study of the educational status of eligible blind/visually impaired students and reports the findings to the Missouri Legislature on the first day of December each year. Additional copies of this report may be obtained at <http://dese.mo.gov/special-education/blindness-literacy-reports>.

BACKGROUND

The information contained in this report pertains to the twelve data elements identified by statute (Section 162.1136, RSMo). An “eligible student” is statutorily defined as “any blind or visually impaired child, including any student who has a visual acuity of 20/200 or less in the better eye with conventional correction, or has a limited field of vision such that the widest diameter of the visual field subtends an angular distance not greater than 20 degrees, and who is eligible for special education services for the visually impaired as defined in the DESE State Plan” (Section 162.1130, RSMo). For the purposes of this report, “eligible student” is any student meeting the eligibility requirements for visual impairment/blindness in the Missouri State Plan for Special Education - Part B which includes the category of students previously reported as “partially sighted” (see Appendix A for the eligibility definition of visual impairment/blindness).

DATA ELEMENTS

Data Element 1: The methodology of the study.

Data provided in this study were collected from three sources – American Printing House, Inc. (APH) which collects data for the *Federal Quota Registration*; DESE which collects data on all students, including students with disabilities; and Missouri Department of Social Services (DSS), Rehabilitation Services for the Blind (RSB) which provides a variety of services to Missourians with visual impairments.

American Printing House, Inc. (APH)

Data collected from APH for the *Federal Quota Registration* include students who are eligible to receive materials provided by the Federal Act to Promote the Education of the Blind (e.g., braille, large print, audio). To be eligible for the *Federal Quota Registration*, students must meet the definition of blindness, i.e. "central visual acuity of 20/200 or less in the better eye with best correction; a peripheral field so contracted that the widest diameter of such field subtends an angular distance no greater than 20 degrees; or visual performance reduced by a brain injury or dysfunction when visual function meets the definition of blindness as determined by an eye care specialist or neurologist."

Data from APH includes counts of students of less than college level enrolled in any formally organized public, private, or non-profit educational program. The data are by grade placement, i.e. preschool and school-age categories, and by primary reading medium. The *Federal Quota Registration* categories considered for this literacy study include preschool and kindergarten through grade twelve. Further descriptive information beyond the scope of this report may be found at <https://www.aph.org/about-federal-quota/>.

Missouri Department of Elementary and Secondary Education

DESE collects student level data from Local Education Agencies (LEAs) through the Missouri Student Information System (MOSIS). MOSIS includes data regarding students ages three to twenty-one with disabilities including students meeting the eligibility requirements for visually impaired/blindness, i.e. impairment in vision that, even with correction, adversely affects a child's educational performance. This definition includes both partial sight (visual acuity of 20/70 to 20/200 in the better eye with best correction by glasses) and blindness (visual acuity of 20/200 or less in the better eye after best correction by glasses or a visual field measuring 20 degrees or less). Note that many preschool children are reported as Young Child with a Developmental Delay (YCDD) regardless of disability type, and therefore, would not be included in these counts.

Other required data are collected by DESE via survey. The Blind Literacy Survey (BLS) collects information annually in January concerning students recorded by APH on the *Federal Quota Registration*. This survey yields counts of blind students (ages three to twenty-one) who

- receive materials in braille and braille-related services;
- receive materials in braille and braille-related services but no longer receive braille instruction; and
- use a slate and stylus or other braille writing device.

In 2019-20, a total of 330 LEAs and other agencies returned a survey.

Missouri Department of Social Services, Rehabilitation Services for the Blind

RSB provided data regarding the counts of blind/visually impaired students who

- received transition planning services from RSB and
- were referred to RSB by an LEA.

For further information, see <http://www.dss.mo.gov/fsd/rsb/>.

Calculations

The eligibility definition for the *Federal Quota Registration* contains similar language as the Missouri statutory definition (Section 162.1130, RSMo) and the Missouri State Plan for Special Education – Part B (see Appendix A and Appendix B). However, the varying reporting requirements for APH and MOSIS yield different counts. The primary variances are as follows:

- APH *Federal Quota Registration* counts are collected annually on the first Monday in January on the basis of blindness alone or with other disabilities with no primary disability designated.
- MOSIS counts are collected annually on December 1 on the basis of visual impairment which includes partial sight as well as blindness as the primary disability. Therefore, the visual impairment/blindness category includes students who would not be counted on the APH *Federal Quota Registration*, i.e. partially sighted, but on the other hand, would not include some students reported on APH because the primary disability designated is not partially sighted or blindness, including early childhood special education (ECSE) students in the YCDD category used by many LEAs for all ECSE children.

In order to ensure validity given these variances, data from APH and MOSIS are not combined for calculations or comparative analyses, and data sources are noted on all tables and charts.

Data Element 2: The percentage of eligible students in the study who read braille, standard print, or large print.

**Blind/Visually Impaired Students
Number and Percentage by Primary Reading Medium
Ages Three to Twenty-One**

| Primary Reading Medium | 2015-16 | | 2016-17 | | 2017-18 | | 2018-19 | | 2019-20 | |
|------------------------|---------|------------|---------|------------|---------|------------|---------|------------|---------|------------|
| | Total | Percentage | Total | Percentage | Total | Percentage | Total | Percentage | Total | Percentage |
| Braille Readers | 95 | 8.4% | 91 | 7.9% | 91 | 8.9% | 82 | 7.9% | 78 | 7.4% |
| Visual Readers | 342 | 30.4% | 356 | 31.0% | 318 | 31.2% | 321 | 30.9% | 322 | 30.5% |
| Large Print | 209 | 18.6% | 216 | 18.8% | 187 | 18.4% | 190 | 18.3% | 194 | 18.4% |
| Regular Print | 47 | 4.2% | 47 | 4.1% | 39 | 3.8% | 31 | 3.0% | 33 | 3.1% |
| Screen Enlargement | 53 | 4.7% | 61 | 5.3% | 66 | 6.5% | 70 | 6.7% | 69 | 6.5% |
| Optical Devices | 33 | 2.9% | 32 | 2.8% | 26 | 2.6% | 30 | 2.9% | 26 | 2.5% |
| Auditory Readers | 54 | 4.8% | 46 | 4.0% | 35 | 3.4% | 26 | 2.5% | 27 | 2.6% |
| Pre-readers | 248 | 22.0% | 270 | 23.5% | 231 | 22.7% | 246 | 23.7% | 282 | 26.7% |
| Non-readers | 387 | 34.4% | 384 | 33.5% | 344 | 33.8% | 363 | 35.0% | 347 | 32.9% |
| Total | 1,126 | 100.0% | 1,147 | 100.0% | 1,019 | 100.0% | 1,038 | 100.0% | 1,056 | 100.0% |

Data Source: APH data for *Federal Quota Registration* as of August 31, 2020, (reflects January 6, 2020, count date).

Percentage of Readers = (Number in Primary Reading Medium/Number of Eligible Students) x 100.

Primary Reading Medium Definitions (APH)

- Braille Readers – Students primarily using braille in their studies.
- Visual Readers – Students primarily using optical devices, screen enlargement, large print/type hardcopy, or regular print in their studies.
- Auditory Readers – Students primarily using a reader or auditory materials in their studies.
- Pre-readers – Students working on or toward a readiness level; older students with reading potential.
- Non-readers – Non-reading students; students who show no reading potential; students who do not fall into any of the above categories.

Findings for Data Element 2

- Non-readers comprise 32.9 percent of total blind or visually impaired students, which is higher than the national average of 30.4 percent.
- The trends of primary reading medium remain consistent over the past five years.
- The total number of registered blind or visually impaired students ages three through twenty-one increased by 1.7 percent (n=18) from 2018-19.

Data Element 3: The number of students who have a visual impairment sufficient to meet the definition of "eligible student" as defined in Section 162.1130, RSMo.

Note: Data reporting requirements differ between APH and MOSIS counts. See “Calculations” on page 7 for the different requirements. Other LEAs are all Missouri public schools except Missouri School for the Blind (MSB).

Number of Blind/Visually Impaired Students

| School Year | 2015-16 | | | 2016-17 | | | 2017-18 | | | 2018-19 | | | 2019-20 | | |
|----------------------------------|------------|-----------|------------|------------|-----------|------------|------------|-----------|------------|------------|-----------|------------|------------|-----------|------------|
| | Other LEAs | MSB | Total LEAs | Other LEAs | MSB | Total LEAs | Other LEAs | MSB | Total LEAs | Other LEAs | MSB | Total LEAs | Other LEAs | MSB | Total LEAs |
| Ages 3 to Pre-K | 32 | NA | 32 | 30 | NA | 30 | 41 | NA | 41 | 48 | NA | 48 | 57 | NA | 57 |
| Ages 5 to 21 | 422 | 36 | 458 | 444 | 35 | 479 | 417 | 39 | 456 | 423 | 35 | 458 | 421 | 36 | 457 |
| TOTAL | 454 | 36 | 490 | 474 | 35 | 509 | 458 | 39 | 497 | 471 | 35 | 506 | 478 | 36 | 514 |
| Annual Percent Increase/Decrease | -4.4% | 0.0% | -4.1% | 4.4% | -2.8% | 3.9% | -3.4% | 11.4% | -2.4% | 2.8% | -11.4% | 1.8% | 1.5% | 2.9% | 1.6% |

Data Source: DESE MOSIS data as of August 25, 2020, (reflects December 1, 2019, count date). Totals for ages three to pre-kindergarten are not applicable to MSB which serves students of kindergarten age eligibility and older. Counts include parentally-placed private school children receiving services from LEAs.

APH Federal Quota Registration
Number of Blind/Visually Impaired Students

| School Year | 2015-16 | | | 2016-17 | | | 2017-18 | | | 2018-19 | | | 2019-20 | | |
|----------------------------------|--------------------------------|-----------|--------------|--------------------------------|-----------|--------------|--------------------------------|-----------|--------------|--------------------------------|-----------|--------------|--------------------------------|-----------|--------------|
| | Other LEAs and Private Schools | MSB | Total | Other LEAs and Private Schools | MSB | Total | Other LEAs and Private Schools | MSB | Total | Other LEAs and Private Schools | MSB | Total | Other LEAs and Private Schools | MSB | Total |
| Ages 3 to Pre-K | 151 | NA | 151 | 173 | NA | 173 | 162 | NA | 162 | 170 | NA | 170 | 166 | NA | 166 |
| Ages 5 to 21 | 940 | 35 | 975 | 942 | 32 | 974 | 817 | 34 | 857 | 837 | 31 | 868 | 858 | 32 | 890 |
| TOTAL | 1,091 | 35 | 1,126 | 1,115 | 32 | 1,147 | 979 | 34 | 1,019 | 1,007 | 31 | 1,038 | 1,024 | 32 | 1,056 |
| Annual Percent Increase/Decrease | -0.5% | 0.0% | -0.5% | 2.2% | -8.6% | 1.9% | -12.2% | 6.3% | -11.2% | 2.9% | -8.8% | 1.9% | 1.7% | 3.2% | 1.7% |

Data Source: APH data for *Federal Quota Registration* as of August 31, 2020, (reflects January 6, 2020, count date). Other LEAs and Private Schools include any formally organized public or private, non-profit educational program of less than college level except MSB (see Appendix B for further information).

Findings for Data Element 3

Based on MOSIS data:

- The number of blind/visually impaired students, ages three to five (pre-kindergarten) and kindergarten (kindergarten eligible five years old) to twenty-one in LEAs other than MSB, has increased 1.5 percent from 2018-19.
- The total number of blind/visually impaired students ages three to twenty-one has increased 1.6 percent (n=8) from 2018-19.

- The number of blind/visually impaired students, ages three to five (pre-kindergarten) increased from 32 children reported by 24 LEAs in 2015-16 to 57 children reported by 31 LEAs in 2019-20.

Based on data from APH:

- The number of blind/visually impaired students, ages three to twenty-one in LEAs other than MSB, has increased 1.7 percent (n=17) from 2018-19.
- The total number of blind/visually impaired students ages three to twenty-one has increased by 1.7 percent (n=18) for 2019-20. The total number of blind/visually impaired students ages three to twenty-one has decreased by 6.2 percent (n=70) from five years ago.

Data Element 4: The number of students currently reading braille, large print, and standard print.

Note: For definitions of academic non-graded and other registrants, see Appendix B.

Number of Students by Reading Medium and Grade/Level Ages Birth to Twenty-One

| 2019-20 | | | | | | | | | |
|-------------------------|-----------------|--------------|---------------|-----------------|--------------------|-------------|--------------|--------------|---------------|
| Grade or Level | Braille Readers | Large Print | Regular Print | Optical Devices | Screen Enlargement | Auditory | Non-readers | Pre-readers | Totals |
| Academic Non-graded | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 2 |
| Infant Program | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 142 | 142 |
| Pre-school | 2 | 4 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 21 | 142 | 169 |
| K | 3 | 8 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 18 | 31 | 61 |
| 1 | 2 | 8 | 0 | 1 | 1 | 0 | 17 | 18 | 47 |
| 2 | 0 | 19 | 1 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 24 | 20 | 65 |
| 3 | 8 | 11 | 3 | 0 | 3 | 1 | 16 | 13 | 55 |
| 4 | 3 | 11 | 4 | 0 | 3 | 1 | 13 | 14 | 49 |
| 5 | 8 | 13 | 1 | 3 | 6 | 1 | 17 | 7 | 56 |
| 6 | 3 | 15 | 5 | 3 | 4 | 1 | 16 | 3 | 50 |
| 7 | 4 | 19 | 1 | 2 | 9 | 5 | 22 | 8 | 70 |
| 8 | 9 | 17 | 0 | 2 | 7 | 2 | 19 | 6 | 62 |
| 9 | 10 | 15 | 5 | 0 | 10 | 4 | 8 | 3 | 55 |
| 10 | 2 | 19 | 4 | 6 | 10 | 2 | 15 | 2 | 60 |
| 11 | 7 | 15 | 2 | 6 | 10 | 3 | 15 | 1 | 59 |
| 12 | 14 | 17 | 5 | 2 | 4 | 2 | 58 | 3 | 105 |
| Functional Curriculum | 2 | 2 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 2 | 19 | 7 | 33 |
| Transition Placement | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Other Registrants | 0 | 2 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 3 | 48 | 7 | 61 |
| Total | 78 | 195 | 33 | 26 | 68 | 27 | 347 | 427 | 1,201 |
| Percent of Total | 6.5% | 16.2% | 2.7% | 2.2% | 5.7% | 2.2% | 28.9% | 35.6% | 100.0% |

Data Source: APH data for *Federal Quota Registration* as of August 31, 2020, (reflects January 6, 2020, count date). Visual includes optical devices, screen enlargement, large type/large print hardcopy, and regular print.

Primary Reading Medium Definitions APH

The primary reading medium definitions may be found in Data Element 2.

Findings for Data Element 4

- Approximately 6.5 percent (n=78) of students ages birth to twenty-one use braille as their primary reading medium.
- Pre-readers (students working on or toward a readiness level or older students with reading potential) and non-readers (students who show no reading potential or students who do not fall into any of the above categories) are the most common categories at 35.6 percent (n=427) and 28.9 percent (n=347), respectively.
- Less than three percent of students used regular print (2.7 percent), optical devices (2.2 percent) and auditory (2.2 percent), respectively.

Data Element 5: The number of braille-reading students who no longer receive any instruction in braille reading and writing but do receive materials in braille and braille-related services.

| School Year | 2015-16 | 2016-17 | 2017-18 | 2018-19 | 2019-20 |
|---|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|
| Number of Non-Instructional Recipients | 11 | 17 | 16 | 21 | 26 |
| Total Braille Readers (Receive materials in Braille and Braille-related services) | 156 | 184 | 191 | 181 | 183 |
| Percent of Total Braille Readers | 7.1% | 9.2% | 8.4% | 11.6% | 14.2% |

Data Sources: Number of Non-Instructional Recipients (Braille readers not receiving braille reading and writing instruction) and Total Number of Braille Readers from Blind Literacy Survey form as of August 25, 2020, (reflects January 6, 2020, count date). Percentage of Total Braille Readers = (Number of Non-Instructional Recipients/Total Braille Readers) x 100.

Findings for Data Element 5

- The number of non-instructional recipients is 26 in 2019-20, an increase of five from 2018-19.
- The non-instructional recipients as a percent of total braille readers increased from 11.6 percent in 2018-19 to 14.2 percent in 2019-20.

Data Element 6: The number of certified vision teachers or teachers of the blind or visually impaired who are currently employed in the field in the state of Missouri.

| School Year | 2015-16 | 2016-17 | 2017-18 | 2018-19 | 2019-20 |
|-----------------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|
| LEAs except MSB | 84 | 85 | 82 | 79 | 87* |
| MSB | 17 | 17 | 16 | 16 | 15 |
| Total LEAs | 101 | 102 | 98 | 95 | 102 |

Data Source: DESE MOSIS and Educator Certification data as of September 14, 2020. Counts are of teachers certificated in Blind/Partially Sighted (kindergarten through grade twelve), employed in any Missouri LEA, and teaching any special education class. MSB teacher counts includes all teachers at MSB regardless of certification area.

* Fifty LEAs in 2018-19 and fifty-two LEAs in 2019-20 reported at least one teacher of the visually impaired.

Findings for Data Element 6

- While the number of teachers certificated in blind/partially sighted employed in LEAs to provide special education services has increased 10.1 percent (n=8) from 2018-19, the number of MSB teachers decreased from 16 in 2018-19 to 15 in 2019-20.
- The total number of teachers certificated in blind/partially sighted and employed in LEAs to provide special education services and MSB teachers decreased in 2017-18 and 2018-19 but increased in 2019-20 to totals similar to four and five years ago.

Data Element 7: The number of eligible students who use a slate and stylus and/or other devices in writing braille.

| School Year | 2015-16 | 2016-17 | 2017-18 | 2018-19 | 2019-20 |
|---------------------------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|
| Number of Braille Writers | 111 | 145 | 136 | 128 | 97 |

Data Sources: Number of Braille Writers from Blind Literacy Survey as of August 25, 2020, (reflects January 6, 2020, count date).

Findings for Data Element 7

- The number of braille writers decreased by 24.2 percent (n=31) from 2018-19. In 2019-20, 20 fewer LEAs reported students for this survey item and MSB reported 14 fewer students than the previous year.

Data Element 8: The number of eligible students educated in the general classroom (Inside Regular Class greater than 79 percent), in an itinerant or resource classroom (Inside Regular Class 40 to 79 percent), in a self-contained classroom (Inside Regular Class less than 40 percent), or in a separate educational facility.

**Blind/Visually Impaired Students
Number of School-Age Placements by Age
2019-20**

| Age | Other LEAs | | | | | | | | | | MSB | Total | |
|----------------|---------------------------|---------------------------------|---------------------------|---------------------------|-------------------------------|------------------------------|--------------------|------------------------------|---|------------------|-------------|---------------|----|
| | Inside Regular Class >79% | Inside Regular Class 40% to 79% | Inside Regular Class <40% | Parentally Placed Private | Private Separate Day Facility | Public Separate Day Facility | Homebound/Hospital | Private Residential Facility | State Operated Separate School (except MSB) | Total Other LEAs | Total MSB | | |
| 5 | 9 | 5 | 3 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 18 | 0 | 18 |
| 6 | 18 | 6 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 25 | 0 | 25 |
| 7 | 12 | 1 | 3 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 17 | 1 | 18 |
| 8 | 25 | 2 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 28 | 0 | 28 |
| 9 | 18 | 7 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 26 | 0 | 26 |
| 10 | 29 | 8 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 37 | 1 | 38 |
| 11 | 34 | 7 | 1 | 2 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 44 | 3 | 47 |
| 12 | 15 | 4 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 20 | 1 | 21 |
| 13 | 21 | 10 | 4 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 36 | 2 | 38 |
| 14 | 26 | 14 | 4 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 45 | 3 | 48 |
| 15 | 24 | 7 | 4 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 35 | 4 | 39 |
| 16 | 27 | 9 | 3 | 0 | 0 | 2 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 41 | 6 | 47 |
| 17 | 20 | 6 | 4 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 30 | 5 | 35 |
| 18 | 8 | 6 | 3 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 17 | 2 | 19 |
| 19 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 1 | 7 | 8 |
| 20 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 1 | 2 |
| 21 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Total | 286 | 93 | 31 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 | 0 | 1 | 421 | 36 | 457 | |
| Percent | 62.6% | 20.4% | 6.8% | 0.9% | 0.7% | 0.4% | 0.2% | 0.0% | 0.2% | 92.1% | 7.9% | 100.0% | |

Data Source: DESE MOSIS data as of August 25, 2020, (reflects December 1, 2019, count date).

Note: Other LEAs are all Missouri public schools except MSB.

Findings for Data Element 8

- More than 60 percent of blind/visually impaired students (62.6 percent) are placed inside the regular classroom more than 79 percent of the time.
- Among 457 blind/visually impaired students, 92.1 percent (n=421) are in other LEAs and 7.9 percent (n=36) are at MSB.

Data Element 9: The graduation rate of eligible students compared to those students who are not disabled.

Graduation Rates for Blind/Visually Impaired Students and All Students

| Year | 4-Year Graduation Data | | | 5-Year Graduation Data | | | 6-Year Graduation Data | | | 7-Year Graduation Data | | |
|---------|-------------------------|-----------|--------------|-------------------------|-----------|--------------|-------------------------|-----------|--------------|-------------------------|-----------|--------------|
| | Blind/Visually Impaired | | All Students | Blind/Visually Impaired | | All Students | Blind/Visually Impaired | | All Students | Blind/Visually Impaired | | All Students |
| | # of Grads | Grad Rate | Grad Rate | # of Grads | Grad Rate | Grad Rate | # of Grads | Grad Rate | Grad Rate | # of Grads | Grad Rate | Grad Rate |
| 2015-16 | 20 | 66.7% | 89.0% | 22 | 78.6% | 90.9% | 23 | 82.1% | 91.3% | 23 | 82.1% | 91.4% |
| 2016-17 | 21 | 75.0% | 89.0% | 23 | 82.1% | 90.9% | 26 | 92.9% | 91.2% | 26 | 92.9% | 91.3% |
| 2017-18 | 22 | 91.7% | 89.3% | 23 | 95.8% | 90.9% | 24 | 96.0% | 91.2% | | | |
| 2018-19 | 22 | 75.9% | 89.6% | 23 | 82.1% | 91.3% | | | | | | |
| 2019-20 | 29 | 78.4% | 89.0% | | | | | | | | | |

Data Source: DESE MOSIS data as of August 25, 2020.

Formulas: Adjusted cohort graduation rates: Percent of students graduating within four, five, six, or seven years.

Findings for Data Element 9

- The four-year graduation rate for blind/visually impaired students increased from 75.9 percent in 2018-19 to 78.4 percent in 2019-20. The four-year graduation rate for students with visual impairments has been significantly lower than the graduation rate for all students for the last several years, but their graduation rates generally increase dramatically by the seventh year.
- For the last five years, the four-year graduation rate for blind/visually impaired students shows a generally increasing trend.
- On average, the gap of graduation rates between blind/visually impaired students and all students has narrowed over the years. Average four-year graduation rates for the past five years were 77.5 percent in blind/visually

impaired students and 89.2 percent in all students (11.6 percent gap), whereas average seven-year graduation rates were 87.5 percent and 91.4 percent between two groups, respectively (3.9 percent gap).

Data Element 10: The number of eligible students who did not meet graduation requirements but were terminated from formal education having reached age twenty-one.

Blind/Visually Impaired Dropout Data

| Exit Category | 2015-16 | 2016-17 | 2017-18 | 2018-19 | 2019-20 |
|-----------------------------------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|
| Received Certificate | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Reached Maximum Age | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Moved, Not Known to be Continuing | 0 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 0 |
| Dropped Out | 0 | 1 | 1 | 0 | 3 |
| Total Dropouts | 0 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 3 |

Data Source: DESE MOSIS data as of August 25, 2020.

Blind/Visually Impaired Students Who Reached Age Twenty-One Without Attaining a High School Diploma

| Exit Category | 2015-16 | 2016-17 | 2017-18 | 2018-19 | 2019-20 |
|----------------------------------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|
| Exited at Age 21 without Diploma | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |

Data Source: DESE MOSIS data as of August 25, 2020. Number includes Reached Maximum Age and Received Certificate Exit Categories.

Findings for Data Element 10

In the 2019-20 school year, three blind/visually impaired students dropped out. In the same school year, no blind/visually impaired students reached age 21 and were terminated from formal education without attaining a high school diploma.

Data Element 11: The number of eligible students who received transition planning services with the cooperation of Rehabilitation Services for the Blind or Vocational Rehabilitation as part of their Individualized Education Program (IEP).

Note: Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) services to the blind are provided by RSB rather than by VR. RSB delivers VR services to eligible blind/visually impaired students ages fourteen and over and to their families statewide (further information may be found at <https://dese.mo.gov/rehabilitation-services-blind> and <http://www.dss.mo.gov/fsd/rsb/>).

| School Year | 2015-16 | 2016-17 | 2017-18 | 2018-19 | 2019-20 |
|------------------------------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|
| Number of Student Recipients | 194 | 225 | 224 | 277 | 245 |

Data Source: Number of Student Recipients from RSB as of August 24, 2020.

Findings for Data Element 11

- The number of students who received transition planning services with the cooperation of RSB as part of their IEP has decreased 11.6 percent (n=32) from 2018-19.
- The number of student recipients from RSB has gradually increased and there is a 26.3 percent (n=51) increase of the student recipients from RSB from five years ago.

Data Element 12: The number of eligible students referred to RSB or VR.

Note: Vocational Rehabilitation Services to the Blind are provided by RSB rather than by VR. All children ages birth to twenty-one or older identified as visually impaired upon parental consent or consent of the student (if the student is at least age eighteen) are to be referred by the LEA to RSB. Additional information concerning the referral process may be found at <https://dese.mo.gov/rehabilitation-services-blind>.

| School Year | 2015-16 | 2016-17 | 2017-18 | 2018-19 | 2019-20 |
|---------------------------------------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|
| Number of Students Ages 0-21 Referred | 55 | 76 | 99 | 90 | 90 |

Data Source: RSB data as of August 24, 2020.

Findings for Data Element 12

- The number of blind/visually impaired students referred to RSB remained the same as 2018-19.
- The number of referred students has increased by 63.6 percent (n=35) from five years ago.

APPENDICES

APPENDIX A - Missouri State Plan for Special Education (Part B) – Visual Impairment/Blindness Definition

Visual Impairment/Blindness Definition

Visual Impairment, including blindness, means impairment in vision that, even with correction, adversely affects a child's educational performance. The term includes both partial sight and blindness.

Criteria for Initial Determination of Eligibility

A child displays a Visual Impairment when:

- A. a visual impairment or a progressive vision loss has been diagnosed by an optometrist or ophthalmologist.
- B. visual acuity has been determined to be:
 - 1) for visual impairment, of 20/70 to 20/200 in the better eye with best correction by glasses
 - 2) for blindness, of 20/200 or less in the better eye after best correction by glasses or a visual field measuring 20 degrees or less
- C. the visual impairment adversely affects the child's educational performance.

APPENDIX B - Federal Quota Registration

The *Federal Quota Registration* is the census that records students who are eligible to receive materials provided by the federal Act to Promote the Education of the Blind. These Federal Quota accounts are maintained and administered by the APH and its Ex Officio Trustees. Instructions are distributed statewide to schools by MSB for the APH *Federal Quota Registration* as outlined by APH per federal requirements (see <http://www.aph.org/federal-quota/>).

ELIGIBILITY

To be eligible for registration in the Federal Quota Program, students **MUST** meet the following criteria, as outlined in the Act to Promote the Education of the Blind:

- Meet the definition of legal blindness: "central visual acuity of 20/200 or less in the better eye with best correction; a peripheral field so contracted that the widest diameter of such field subtends an angular distance no greater than 20 degrees; or visual performance reduced by a brain injury or dysfunction when visual function meets the definition of blindness as determined by an eye care specialist or neurologist."
- Be enrolled in a formally organized public or private, nonprofit educational program of less than college level. Note: The educational programs providing services to these students can include public, private, and parochial schools.
- Be enrolled with the registering school or agency on the first Monday in January.

Eligibility of Infants, Preschool Children, and Homebound Students: Eligible infants, preschool children, and homebound students can be registered if they are enrolled in a formally organized, regularly scheduled educational or training program and have a written education plan.

Eligibility of Students Who Are Home Schooled: In order for blind students enrolled in home school programs to prove eligibility for registration in the Federal Quota Program, the home school program should meet guidelines and/or procedures in effect within the state.

Eligibility of Adults: There is no chronological age limit for eligibility. The federal law limits registration to persons working at less than college level, but places no restriction on the age of eligible students. Legally blind adult students in education programs must "have a written instruction plan and be enrolled in and attend, on a regular basis, an

instructional program of at least 20 hours of instruction per week. Social and leisure programs do not qualify as instructional programs.”

INFORMATION TO BE REPORTED

For each eligible student, the following data must be reported (see reporting codes and definitions below):

- name of the LEA, private school, or agency enrolling the student
- name of student
- date of birth
- grade placement
- measurement of vision in the right eye, measurement of vision in the left eye
- primary reading medium
- secondary reading medium
- any additional reading medium
- written education plan (indication that one exists)

DEFINITIONS OF REQUIRED INFORMATION AND REPORTING CODES

Preschool and School-Age Students: This is not to include any eligible participants over school age.

| <u>Reporting Code</u> | <u>Definition</u> |
|-----------------------|---|
| IP | Infants: Children of preschool age served by infant programs |
| PS | Preschool Students: Children of preschool age served by preschool programs |
| KG | Kindergarten Students: Children enrolled in kindergarten classes |
| 01-12 | Students of School Age: Determined by state law, in regular academic grades 1 through 12. Please indicate grade placement by using numerals 01 through 12 |
| AN | Academic Non-graded: Students of school age, as determined by state law, who are working to acquire skills necessary for placement in a regular grade |
| VO | Vocational Students: Students of school age who are in vocational training (e.g., students enrolled in a program that leads to independent employment). This does not include students with multiple disabilities in pre-vocational programs or classes |
| PG | Post-graduate Students: Students of school age, as determined by state law, in a post-graduate high school program, studying at less than college level |
| OR | Other Registrants: Students of school age, as determined by state law, who do not fall into any of the above placements (e.g., students enrolled in classes for nonacademic students) |
| AD | Adult Students: Adults above school age (over 21 years of age) in educational programs of less than college level |

Vision Measurements and Reporting Codes

| <u>Reporting Code</u> | <u>Visual Measurement</u> |
|-----------------------|---|
| 20/200 | Distance Vision: 20/200 or less with maximum correction using the Snellen Chart (example: 20/200 or 20/400) |
| VF | Visual Field: Restricted field of 20 degrees or less (add the degree of restriction after the VF code, for example: VF20, VF10, VF6) |
| CF | Counts Fingers: Should be used only when an eye specialist finds it is not possible to obtain an acuity using the Snellen Chart |
| FDB | Functions at the Definition of Blindness: Use when visual functioning is reduced by a brain injury or dysfunction and visual acuity is not possible to determine using the Snellen Chart; includes cortical visual impairment (CVI) |
| HM | Hand Movements: Should be used only when an eye specialist finds it is not possible to obtain an acuity using the Snellen Chart |
| OP | Object Perception: Should be used only when an eye specialist finds it is not possible to use the Snellen Chart. This may be noted on the eye report as CSM (central steady maintained if an object is used in testing) or some variation of this descriptor |
| LP | Light Perception only or perceives and localizes light: This may be noted on eye report as LPP (light perception with projection), BTL (blinks to light), or CSM (central steady maintained if light is used in testing). If CSM is reported but the stimulus used in testing is not indicated, use Light Perception as the eye measurement |
| NIL | Totally Blind with no light perception |

Reading Media

Primary Reading Media and Reporting Codes: The primary reading medium is to be reported for each student using the following reporting codes. Only these codes will be accepted. Note: Infants and preschoolers identified as visual, Braille, or auditory readers should be reported using the appropriate media code.

| <u>Reporting Code</u> | <u>Primary Reading Medium</u> |
|------------------------------|---|
| B | Braille Readers: Students primarily using Braille in their studies |
| A | Auditory Readers: Students primarily using a reader or auditory materials in their studies |
| P | Pre-readers: Students working on or toward a readiness level; infants, preschoolers, or older students with reading potential |
| S-R | Symbolic/Non-readers: Non-reading students; students who show no reading potential; students who do not fall into any of the above categories (this code was formerly N-R but was changed for the 2018 registration for improved clarity) |
| DV | Optical Devices: Students using optical devices that may be used with standard print as an aid to reading print |
| EL | Screen Enlargement: Students using large print via electronic screen enlargement software or a video magnifier as an aid to read print |
| LT | Large Type/Large Print Hardcopy: Students using large print hardcopy |
| RP | Regular Print |

Secondary and Additional Reading Medium

- Secondary Reading Medium is the reading format used to some extent as a second choice.
- Additional Reading Medium is a reading format beyond the primary and secondary mediums that is used some of the time.

| <u>Reporting Code</u> | <u>Secondary/Additional Reading Medium</u> |
|------------------------------|--|
| B | Braille Readers: Students using Braille in their studies |
| A | Auditory Readers: Students using a reader or auditory materials in their studies |
| DV | Optical Devices: Students using optical devices that may be used with standard print as an aid to reading print |
| EL | Screen Enlargement: Students using large print via electronic screen enlargement software or a video magnifier as an aid to read print |
| LT | Large Type/Large Print Hardcopy: Students using large print hardcopy |
| RP | Regular Print: Students using standard print with no enlargement |
| NA | Not Applicable: Student with no additional reading media |

Written Education Plans/Assessments and Reporting Codes

| <u>Reporting Code</u> | <u>Written Plan/Assessment</u> |
|------------------------------|---|
| IEP | Individualized Education Program |
| 504 Plan | A legal document falling under the provisions of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973. It is designed to plan a program of instructional services to assist students with special needs who are in a regular education setting. It is not an IEP as is required for special education students. However, a student moving from a special education to a regular education placement could be placed under a 504 plan. |
| Other | Any other written education plan |
| LVA | Clinical Low Vision Evaluation: an assessment of visual functioning that is conducted by an optometrist or ophthalmologist who specializes in low vision and includes tasks to identify whether an individual could benefit from the use of optical devices (reading glasses, magnifiers) or services (instruction in the use of devices) |
| LMA | Learning Media Assessment: an objective process of systematically selecting learning and literacy media for students with visual impairments |

APPENDIX C - DESE Special Education Educational Environments and Dropout Categories

SPECIAL EDUCATION EDUCATIONAL ENVIRONMENT CATEGORIES

School-Age Educational Environment Categories (Ages Five and in Kindergarten to Twenty-One)

Inside regular class 80 percent or more of the day: Students with disabilities who are inside the regular classroom for 80 percent or more of the school day. This may apply to students with disabilities placed in

- regular class with special education/related services provided within regular classes.
- regular class with special education/related services provided outside regular classes.
- regular class with special education services provided in resource rooms.

This could include students with disabilities placed in an alternative school program with non-disabled peers. Do not include students with disabilities who are parentally placed in private schools to whom the LEA is providing special education and related services.

Inside regular class no more than 79 percent of the day and no less than 40 percent of the day: Students with disabilities who are inside the regular classroom between 40 and 79 percent of the day. This does not apply to students who are receiving education programs in public or private separate school or residential facilities. This may apply to students placed in

- resource rooms with special education/related services provided within the resource room.
- resource rooms with part-time instruction in a regular class.

This could include students with disabilities placed in an alternative school program with non-disabled peers. Do not include students with disabilities who are parentally placed in private schools to whom the LEA is providing special education and related services.

Inside regular class less than 40 percent of the day: Students with disabilities who are inside the regular classroom less than 40 percent of the school day. This does not apply to students who are receiving education programs in public or private separate school or residential facilities. This category may apply to students placed in

- self-contained special classrooms with part-time instruction in a regular class.
- self-contained special classrooms with full-time special education instruction on a regular school campus.

This could include students with disabilities placed in an alternative school program with non-disabled peers. Do not include students with disabilities who are parentally placed in private schools to whom the LEA is providing special education and related services.

State Operated Separate School: This category should only be used by MSB, Missouri School for the Deaf (MSD), and Missouri Schools for the Severely Disabled (MSSD). Other LEAs should not report resident students who are attending these state operated programs.

Private Separate (Day) Facility: Students with disabilities who receive all of their special education and related services, at public expense, for greater than 50 percent of the school day in private separate facilities. This includes students with disabilities who are served by a private educational agency other than a parochial school. This includes those approved private agencies with whom LEAs contract to provide special education services to resident students.

Public Separate (Day) Facility: Students with disabilities who receive all of their special education and related services for greater than 50 percent of the school day in public separate facilities. This includes those students with disabilities placed by the IEP team in a segregated facility operated by an LEA. This does not include residential facilities and does not encompass facilities that include non-disabled students such as alternative school programs.

Homebound/Hospital: Due to student's illness, medically fragile condition, or a disciplinary suspension, the student receives special education at home or in a hospital via a visiting teacher or telephone instruction based on the student's IEP.

Private Residential Facility: Children with disabilities who receive all of their special education and related services, at public expense, for greater than 50 percent of the school day in private residential facilities, who are placed by the LEA IEP team. This does not include students living in private residential facilities but attending LEAs.

Parentally Placed Private School Children: Students with disabilities who are parentally placed in private schools, including home schools, and are receiving special education and related services from the LEA.

SPECIAL EDUCATION DROPOUT CATEGORIES

Dropout Categories (Ages Fourteen to Twenty-One)

Received a Certificate: Students with disabilities who exited an educational program through the receipt of a certificate of attendance. This includes students who reached age twenty-one or otherwise terminated their education and who have met the LEA's attendance requirements.

Reached Maximum Age: Students with disabilities who exited an educational program because they reached the maximum age for receipt of educational services and did not receive a diploma or certificate of attendance.

Moved, Not Known to be Continuing: Students with disabilities who have moved out of the LEA and are not known to be continuing in any type of educational program (i.e. no records request from another educational program).

Dropped Out: Students with disabilities who are enrolled during the year and were not enrolled at the end of the year and did not exit through any of the other categories. This includes dropouts, runaways, expulsions, GED recipients, and status unknown.