



Washington Office of Superintendent of  
**PUBLIC INSTRUCTION**

## REPORT TO THE LEGISLATURE

# UPDATE: Safety Net Survey 2025

**Authorizing Legislation: RCW 28A.150.392**

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# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Safety Net funding is available to Local Education Agencies (LEAs) that demonstrate need for additional special education funding. Applicants must show need beyond state and federal funding already available to the LEA.

The Legislature requires OSPI to annually survey LEAs about their satisfaction with the Safety Net process. The survey is used to consider feedback from LEAs to improve the Safety Net process. More than 440 people from LEAs that applied for Safety Net received the survey in October 2025. The survey included 12 questions and was open for two weeks. OSPI received 142 responses.

# BACKGROUND

There are two types of Safety Net funding, High-Need Individual and Community Impact. High-Need funding is on behalf of an individual student. Community Impact funding is for a factor that impacts the LEA. OSPI provides a [bulletin](#), instructions, and application forms each school year.

OSPI provided training to eight ESDs prior to the initial 2024–25 submission date. OSPI hosted two general trainings and recorded two training videos (one general overview and one walkthrough of the application platform). OSPI provided more than 200 scheduled one-on-one zoom meetings with nearly 500 participants and 27 office hours with more than 700 participants during the submission process.

The Safety Net Oversight Committee awards funding to applicants. The Committee has awarded more than one billion dollars since the program's beginning in 1996–97. In 2024–25, the Committee awarded funding to 152 LEAs. These LEAs included:

- School districts
- An Educational Service Agency (ESA)
- Six charter schools
- Two state schools

Of the 163 LEAs that applied for High-Need Individual funding, eleven did not receive funding mainly due to lack of capacity demonstrated on Worksheet A, although one was submitted without any applicant information completed.

Of the 25 districts that applied for Community Impact funding, three were not funded due to lack of supporting student data necessary to compute award eligibility.

## Funding Awarded by the Committee

7,236 High-Need Individual applications totaling \$262,813,801

22 Community Impact applications totaling \$14,330,942

# UPDATE STATUS

Respondents rated eight of the 12 questions on a scale of one to five, with one being the lowest and five being the highest. Depending on the question, the lowest response was either 'not helpful' or 'disagree.' The highest response was either 'helpful' or 'agree.' 'Not applicable' was an available selection for eight of the questions. One question was a yes/no answer, and four questions were open ended. Survey responses were anonymous.

## Survey Changes

There were no changes to the survey this year.

## Survey Responses

The average response decreased slightly on several questions. Each of the eight questions had an average response above 4.0.

In the written comments, respondents said the process could be improved by:

- Improving the application platform;
- Providing detailed feedback when applications are not funded;
- Providing an FAQ for common application issues;
- Simplifying the process for associating contracted service providers.

**Table 1: Average Response by Question**

Question	Average Response
Q1. The 2024–25 Safety Net Bulletin—which outlined the process changes, application criteria, and submission deadlines—was clear.	4.43
Q3. The training provided by OSPI for the 2024–25 safety net process was helpful.	4.25
Q4. The safety net website includes information that is helpful to my LEA in the safety net application process.	4.11
Q5. OSPI staff members are helpful to my LEA in the safety net application process.	4.73
Q7. The safety net committee carefully considers my LEA's requests for safety net funding.	4.41
Q8. Although I may not always agree with the results, I was informed why my safety net applications were or were not funded.	4.64
Q10. My LEA's IEPs have improved as a result of the safety net process.	4.02
Q11. Although I may not always agree with the results, I believe the safety net standards are uniformly applied to all LEAs.	4.31

Source: 2024–25 Safety Net Survey results

## Follow-up from Workgroup Recommendations

[House Bill 2242, Sec. 408 \(2017\)](#) directed OSPI to review and make recommendations of possible adjustments to improve the Safety Net process. The study was performed by a Workgroup of 21 individuals who met multiple times during the 2017–18 school year. The [Special Education Safety Net Study Report](#) was submitted to the Legislature November 1, 2018.

The Workgroup recommended examining non-public agency (NPA) placement data as an area for further review. The table below contains data for out-of-district placements by placement type for the past three years. The data shows that the percentage of applications funded through Safety Net for out-of-district placements further increased by 2.8 percent in 2024–25. This is likely due to the increase in the overall number of applications awarded.

Type of Placement	Total awarded for out of district placement	Number of Applications	Percent of Applications
<b>2024–25</b>			
ESD program	\$27,205,680	301	4.2%
In state NPA	\$77,581,251	685	9.5%
Out of state NPA	\$31,967,750	128	1.8%
School district	\$15,165,816	186	2.6%
	\$151,920,497	1300	18.0%
<b>2023–24</b>			
ESD program	\$17,734,049	235	3.9%
In state NPA	\$57,767,147	592	9.9%
Out of state NPA	\$30,391,393	131	2.2%
School district	\$13,788,416	184	3.1%
	\$118,258,382	1,142	19.1%
<b>2022–23</b>			
ESD program	\$12,587,998	185	3.8%
In state NPA	\$44,752,644	550	11.4%
Out of state NPA	\$22,073,843	117	2.4%
School district	\$12,639,839	202	4.2%
	\$92,054,324	1,054	21.8%

\*Please note that the total awarded for the out of district placement types is the cost before threshold deduction. The cost before threshold is used as opposed to the award amount because applications may contain other costs and include more than one out-of-district placement location. The number of applications column may contain duplicate counts as a student may have attended more than one placement type during the school year.

**Source: Safety Net EGMS Reporting**

## **CONCLUSION & NEXT STEPS**

OSPI continues to offer intensive training options on using the application platform (debuted 2023-24). OSPI staff provided training and support to applicants in varied formats, to include: in-person and Zoom trainings; Q&A sessions with ESDs; webinars; office hours and 1:1 work sessions. The Safety Net Bulletin and submission instructions are currently under development for the 2024–25 school year. OSPI continues to work with the application platform developer to provide improvements based on LEA feedback, develop additional training resources and follow up with districts that have never applied for Safety Net.

## **ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS**

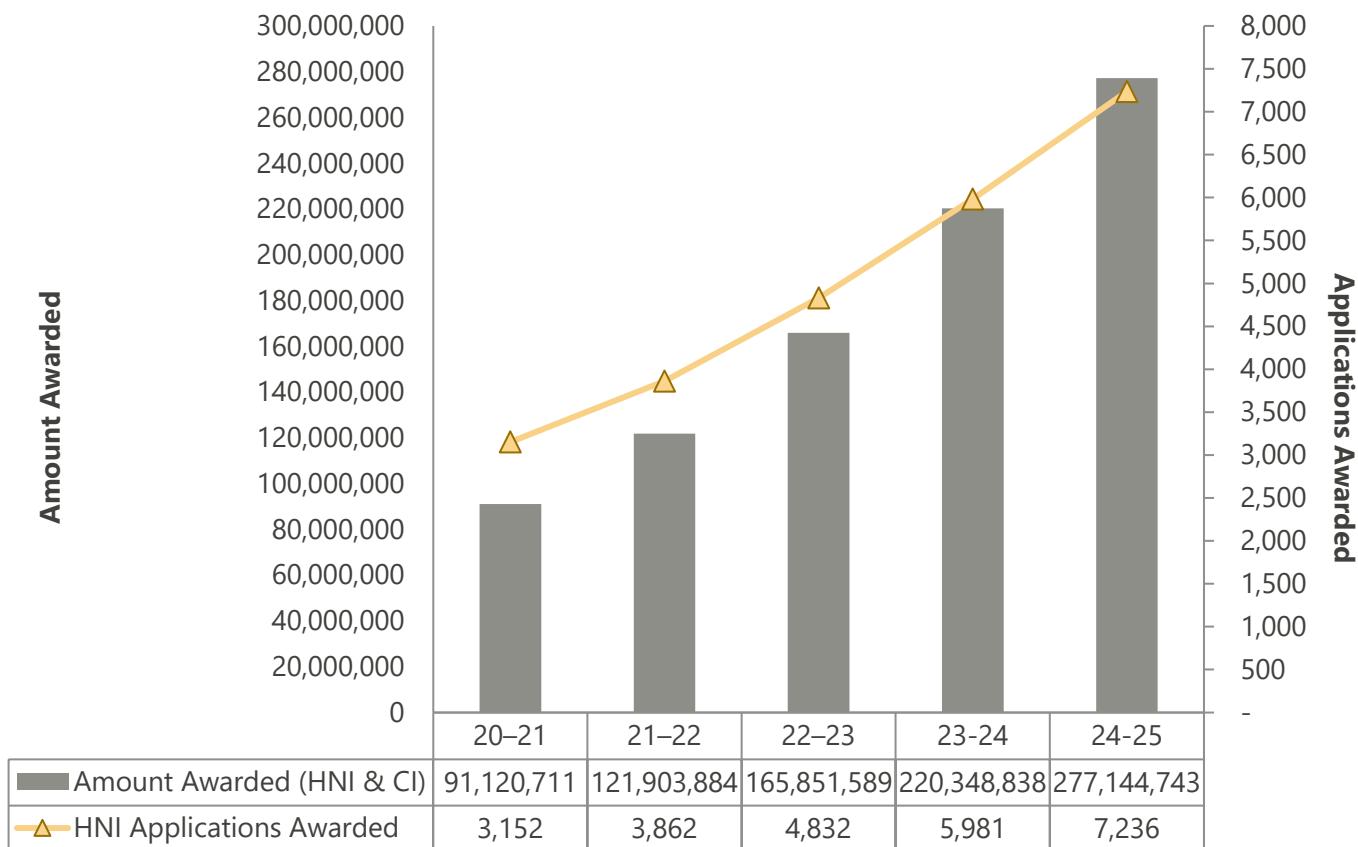
OSPI would like to acknowledge the effort and hard work that both applicants and committee members contribute to this process.

# APPENDICES

## Appendix A: Safety Net Funding Amounts

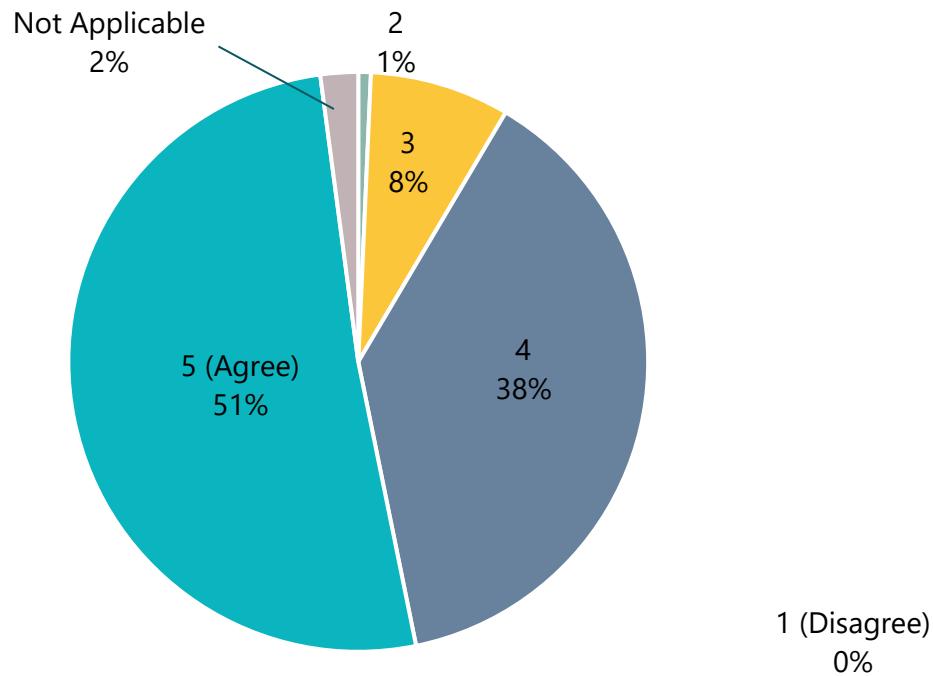
In 2024–25, the State Safety Net Committee approved 152 LEAs for Safety Net funding. The committee awarded 7,236 High-Need Individual student applications, and 22 Community Impact applications for a total of \$277,144,743 (see Figure 1).

**Figure 1: Safety Net Funding 2020–21 through 2024–25**

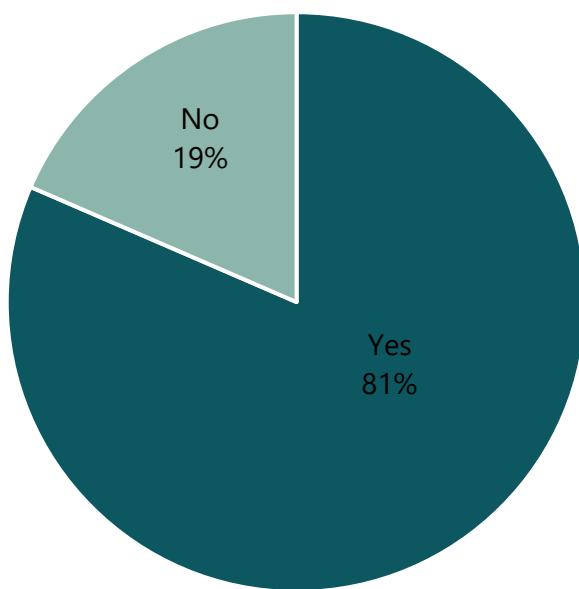


## Appendix B: Safety Net Survey Results

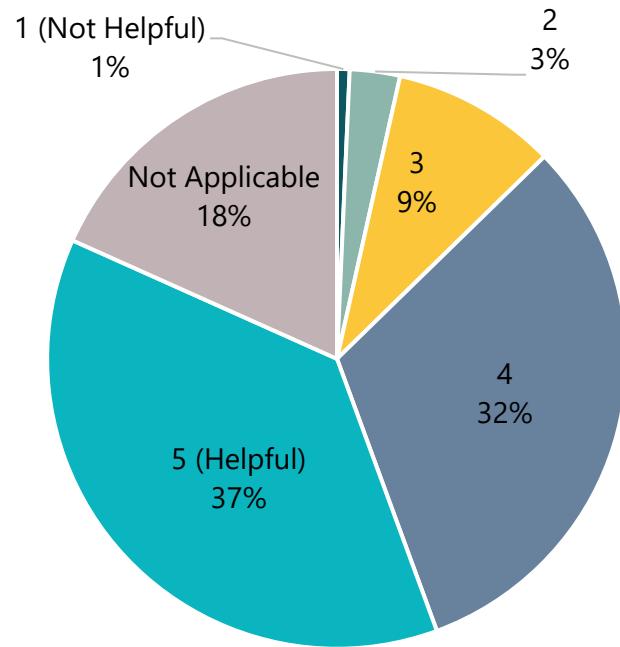
1. The 2024–25 Safety Net Bulletin which outlined the process changes, application criteria, and submission deadlines was clear.



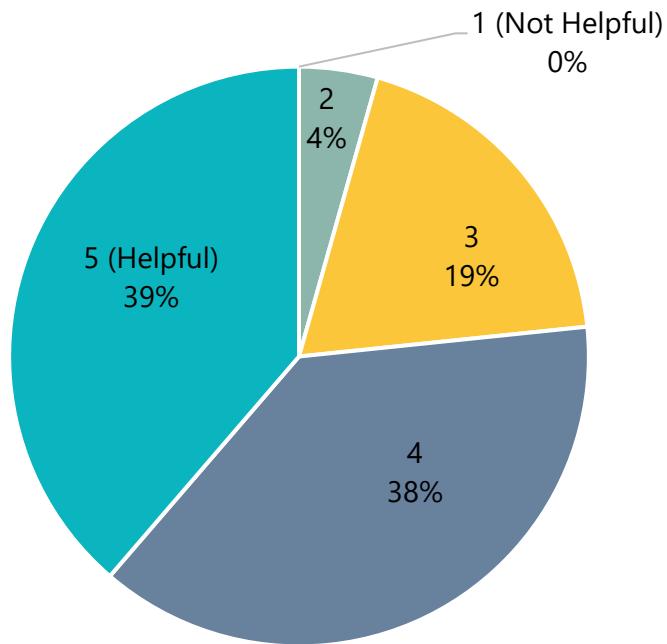
2. Did you utilize training provided by OSPI-such as in person trainings, Zoom meetings, webinars, or training videos-for the 2024–25 Safety Net process?



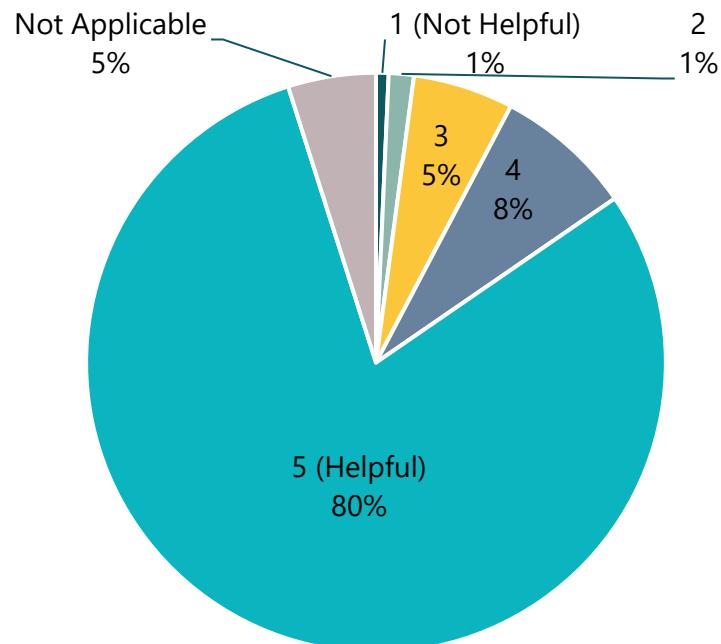
3. The training provided by OSPI for the 2024–25 Safety Net process was helpful.



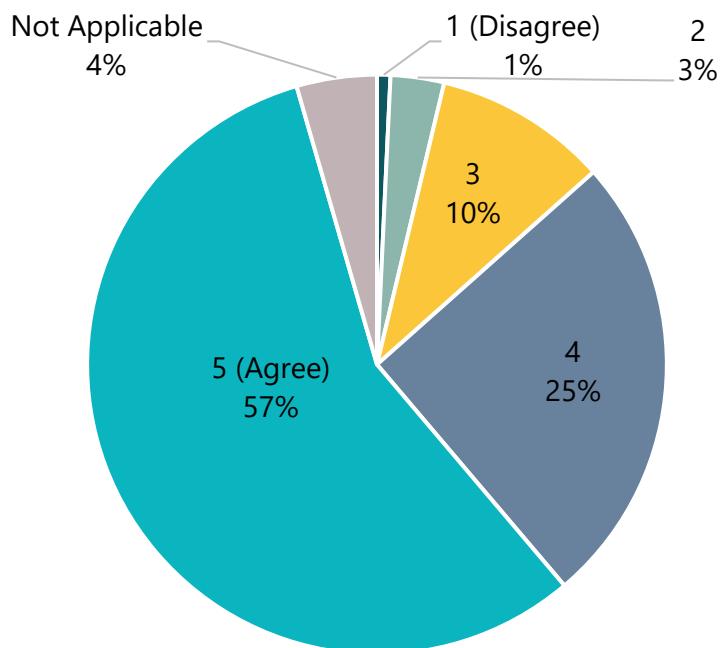
4. The Safety Net website includes information that is helpful to my LEA in the Safety Net application process.



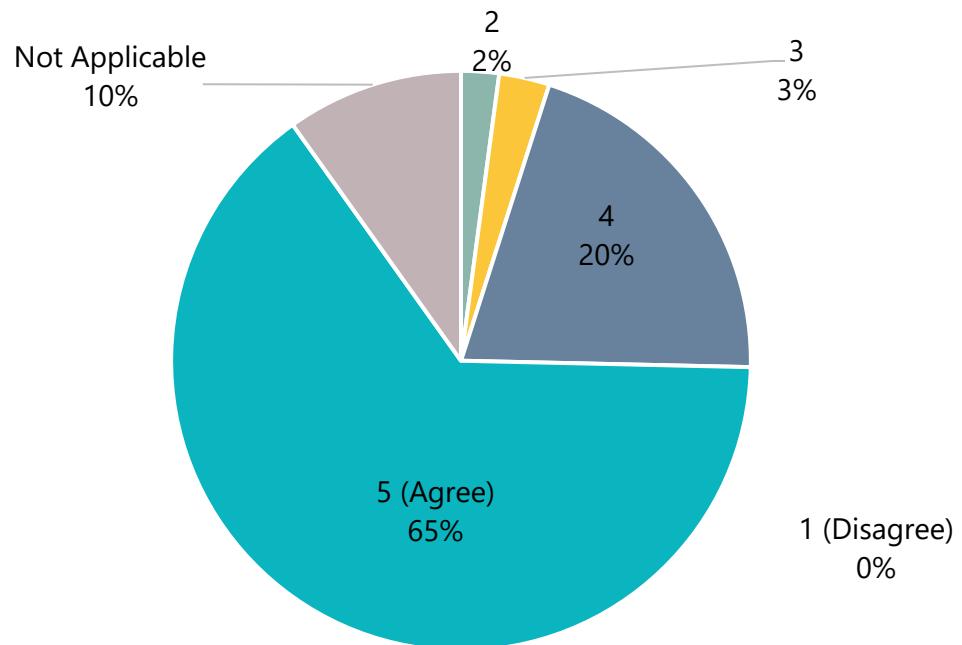
5. OSPI staff members are helpful to my LEA in the Safety Net application process.



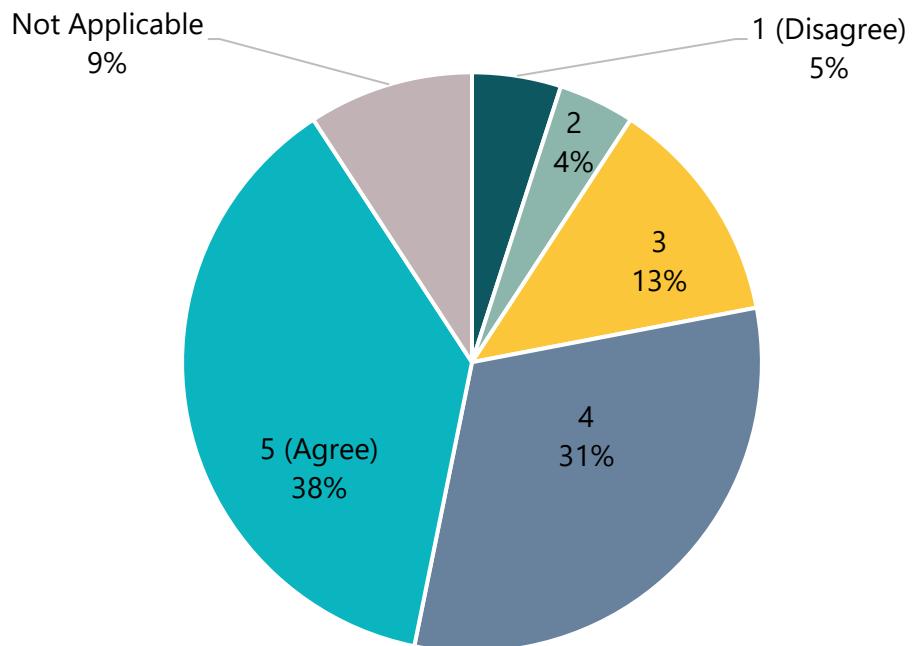
7. The Safety Net committee carefully considers my LEA's requests for Safety Net funding.



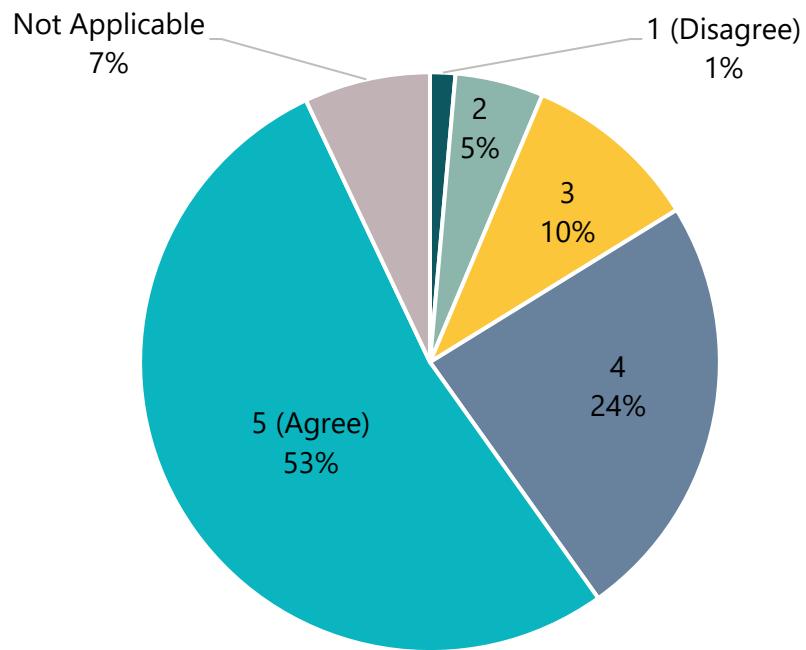
8. Although I may not always agree with the results, I was informed why my Safety Net applications were or were not funded.



10. My LEA's IEPs have improved as a result of the Safety Net process.



11. Although I may not always agree with the results, I believe the Safety Net standards are uniformly applied to all LEAs.



## Appendix C: Safety Net Survey Comments

**Table 3: Survey Question 6**

<b>Please provide an example for question 5</b>
Sarah is super duper
I asked for targeted support and emailed the appropriate contacts in OSPI. I was not able to work with anyone to get guidance while working on my application.
Quickly able to fix any issues or respond to questions about application and process.
Sarah and Amber always return emails in a timely manner; they answer any questions thoroughly; they have held individual meetings with our SN facilitator or other district staff to go through general information or individual application information; they have provided opportunities for individual consults during office hours in separate break out rooms, etc.
I have emailed them and they have Zoomed with me to help explain things.
They are always very quick to reply to emails to answer any questions.
Answer phone calls and emails about specific questions quickly.
Anytime I had a question or needed extra guidance, the Safety Net team was always helpful and friendly.
They answer emails and calls quickly with supportive information and guidelines. Additionally, they are always friendly.
I contacted the OSPI safety net team a couple of times this year for support on specific issues with forms within EGMS.
Staff were responsive in answering questions and navigating relevant procedures.
They always respond quickly to any question. If a virtual check in is needed, they set that up quickly. They are positive and always helpful.
give clear answers via email
As we go through the application, we send emails to safety.net@k12.wa.us with questions or to clarify the process. They are always prompt and clear with their response.
Responsive to questions right away
Their response time during the months LEAs are working on Safety Net is crucial, and I want to believe they acknowledge that, so for myself - their response time in answering questions, is amazing.
They are always responsive to questions and willing to go over anything that is missing or unclear. I always appreciate their help
Sarah and Amber are very responsive and helpful in navigating what is a very complex and detailed process that requires a lot of manpower.
Whenever I email a question to OSPI, I get a very prompt and helpful email response.
Any questions that my team had were answered quickly.
The OSPI staff are responsive to emails and questions. They will help problem solve or answer nuanced questions as needed.
As a new user to budgets and EGMS, they were very patient and extremely helpful.

### Please provide an example for question 5

Whenever I have asked a question, the support has been incredibly helpful!
Quick responses, readily available, office hours, etc.
Return phone calls and emails
I have emailed several times, and the responses are quick and clear. I really appreciate this
OSPI staff are beyond helpful and supportive in the process. Last year was only my second year completing the process and staff have always been amazing supports through phone calls, emails, and virtual help through zoom meetings.
We reached out to them on a regular basis via email and they were quick to respond and problem solve.
We received email with detailed instructions and deadlines. It's very helpful.
We receive timely and supportive responses to our inquiries for technical assistance.
They are quick to respond, very clear in their instructions and always kind
Prompt and quality responses to questions
There was support in how to navigate not having a provisional NPA on the list. It was almost immediate.
Very responsive- thoughtful and prompt
OSPI staff could not define case manager in terms of consistence in providing minutes for each case manager. Each district defines that role differently and it could be different between elementary and secondary. It would be helpful to have a clear definition/formula for calculating the minutes you want for each staff member. Thanks!
Sara is always prompt in responding to emails and offering help!
The OSPI Safety Net team is amazing! They provided a training session, drop-in hours, offered 1:1 breakout room conversations, responded to emails, and provided guidance and support throughout the entire process.
Staff were accessible when we had questions going through the process.
I called OSPI for help and I was able to schedule a zoom to get 1:1 support. All staff that I dealt with at OSPI was very kind and helpful.
They are always very responsive to emails and willing to set up appointments to assist districts in the process. This is extremely beneficial when you are applying with a new circumstance (which tends to be often). Each student is unique and the application process is not always crystal clear depending how things have worked with that student.
Each year there is conflicting information given by Safety Net staff regarding how worksheet C's should be completed. It's confusing and frustrating.
Sarah Kahne and Amber O'Donnell have always been so responsive and helpful!
Yes, the safety net staff has been extremely helpful during the process. Replying to emails in a timely manner.
The OSPI staff members are available for phone calls to walk us through EGMS and are responsive with out questions about our documentation.
Staff were able to answer individual questions by phone to assist us.

### Please provide an example for question 5

The zoom office hours were great; Safety Net staff helped when I had questions, even on weekends and after hours. It was incredible. The responsiveness was impressive.

They are always available to answer any question that I have!

Extremely responsive and helpful to our team, our questions, and needs! Not only did they provide office hours, but they also offered individualized check ins when requested and needed.

We are part of a Co-op, but OSPI support in this area is great.

They are helpful in walking us through the application.

Excellent communication from the staff working within the system.

All questions were answered promptly.

The staff hopped on zoom with districts in our county whenever needed.

Staff was available via email and phone to answer questions and get clarification from while filling out the forms

Amber and Sarah are helpful and respond in a timely manner to emails and requests for support.

I have frequently asked Amber and Sarah for support in both the group office hours and individually. Even though I know they are super busy they always find time to meet and are gracious with everyone's many questions!

When we had a unique situation, Amber was available for a 1:1 virtual meeting to discuss how to best document it.

Our district will encounter unique situations that we will email the safety net team and get a response within a day which is very helpful.

The team was always so kind and helpful during office hours, 1:1 meetings, and through email. They are the best! I felt supported, especially this being my first year going through the process.

I get immediate responses to all my questions. I was able to have several 1:1 consultations when I wasn't sure how to do something (this was my first year with responsibility for the entire safety net process).

Staff is always willing to provide support even with the little questions.

The weekly trainings were very helpful. The staff were kind, patient and knowledgeable. When emails were sent with questions, the response was quick.

I frequently e-mail Amber or Sarah with a "burning" questions and they respond via e-mail or call usually within an hour or so.

Whenever I missed a step or forgot to include something I was given an opportunity to fix it.

Someone at OSPI was reviewing my application and supporting me.

The Team is very responsive and provides timely and knowledge answers to questions.

There is a lot of clear information for submitting for high need individual safety net, however, it is extremely limited for community impact. Sarah Kahne was extremely helpful in being a thought partner and providing resources to support the application. She was extremely responsive and a joy to work with!

Very prompt and clear in answering questions

**Please provide an example for question 5**

Our administrator reached out for assistance and received the help needed
They were willing to do 1:1 office hours with me, too.
Always responsive to questions or requests for assistance.
They are willing to do 1:1 office hours upon request.
The OSPI team is very responsive and helpful when I reached out for support through email, zoom chat, etc. I appreciate the whole team!
Emails were responded to very promptly
Amber and Sarah are ROCK STARS! They have promptly responded to every email inquiry I have sent with clear and helpful answers. I could not have done my job without them!
EGMS was new to me having stepped away from Special Education world for a few years. I really appreciated Sarah Kahne's willingness to meet 1:1 with my team and answer our questions; specifically around transportation worksheet.
Responsive/timely responses to phone calls and emails.
Staff were very responsive and very helpful in problem solving. I cannot say how much I appreciate the open office hours and/or willingness to jump in to a Zoom/call and problem solve
Emailed when asked questions. Emailed when they had questions, sometimes questions have answers available within the items uploaded but need to breakdown and re-upload documents. Then email back the info and completed.
The staff respond to questions in a timely manner.
Always responded my emails very quickly.
The OSPI staff members were willing to schedule multiple 1:1 meetings with our District to ensure the questions specific to our District were answered.
Whenever I have emailed the safety net email address, I always get an answer within 24 hours.
Questions are answered promptly and clearly.
Promised "easy" process and "guaranteed" funding for preschool hearing impaired student was complicated and no funding provided.
Quick turn around time and support from Amber was extremely valuable to us, in this process
Had several system questions which were answered quickly
Always available to jump on and answer questions.
Offered separate meetings, quickly responded to emailed questions.
Time of responses from OSPI are not timely. OSPI personnel still are working from home which is one reason for this delay.
Amber was/is very responsive and timely in her help.
When I called with questions, they answered in a timely way.
When reaching out via email or office hours I consistently get responses.
The staff is more than willing to meet with districts to help guide and review the work offering feedback. I appreciate their time and work so much. Without them I would have been lost.
Sarah and Amber were quickly responsive to any and all questions.

### Please provide an example for question 5

The Safety Net team got back to us right away and were more than willing to meet with us to go over our questions and concerns.

The ESY portion was new for us this year and OSPI staff were very helpful in navigating the process.

I always appreciate the prompt responses to our questions.

I've always been happy with the promptness of email replies from OSPI staff. One example is the documentation we are required to submit in July around expenditure reports. It is supposed to include expenditures through the end of July, but it's due before the end of July. We've always had quick replies when we point that out and ask for a slight extension on the deadline.

I can email a question and I get a timely response with an answer and offer to meet outside of office hours.

Questions are answered in a prompt manner.

Available to answer questions as needed. Thank you.

Amber is AWESOME! She has been very responsive and helpful to our district about this process.

FY25 was my first year, and I had to ask quite a few questions, and the entire OSPI crew was very helpful, especially Amber O'Donnell. She was outstanding!

They answer questions and when it comes time to get ready for submission they support with the task and are flexible in that support.

When I asked for clarification they sent emails quickly. When I went to office hours they were helpful.

Quick email responses.

Very timely with response to questions and always willing to help anyway they can. Much appreciated. Thank you for all your efforts.

Jennifer Story and team have always been supportive and helpful.

OSPI staff always responded to my emails in a timely manner. Recommendations and advice was given in a way I could understand.

We had several zoom meeting and even more questions answered by email.

OSPI staff members have been incredibly helpful to my LEA throughout the safety net application process. There are many examples of their support, but what stands out most is their understanding of the time-sensitive nature of this process. Many situations we encounter are unique and require creative, "outside-the-box" thinking. Sarah and Amber, in particular, bring a wide range of experience and insight that help us navigate complex issues and keep the process moving forward efficiently.

**Table 4: Survey Question 7**

<b>Please list helpful tools or supports that were available or provided to your LEA.</b>
1:1 meetings
Outline of each application with detailed information re why an application had reduced funding, etc.; Individual meetings to go through the application, with opportunities for us to ask questions and provide clarification.
The calculators are very helpful
YouTube videos and Office Hours are very helpful.
PDF with a documented information by line item. The excel sheets to preload information. However, I only submitted one with basics on the student files. I did not load into the other files for some of the info is duplicated and then I think it is better to work off IEPO and input in the info to the EGMS system. For that shows the most current information on the IEP.
safety.net@k12.wa.us for questions and training videos saved on youtube are the biggest resource we use.
It would be helpful to have the worksheets out earlier so we can start working on them.
Clear communication by case
Weekly zoom meetings provided by the Safety Net Office. During the late summer of 2024; 1:1 conversation with Sarah; and she was extremely helpful and assisted my LEA with teacher caseloads/minutes.
Office hours Trainings Individual help Safety net hand out/directions
Office hours, answering individual questions and written materials
Office hours; quick responses to emails;
The 2024-2 SN EGMS Application User Guide, though I wish it included page numbers. Also appreciated OSPIs SN and EGMS office hours.
I appreciate the detail of the denials, which helps point me in the right direction. We got dinged on Medicaid costs, and the calculator was helpful but still I was missing something. I emailed at the busiest time, and still a response came. I plan to follow up on this.
You often have to dig to get a complete picture of why funds were withheld.
The explanations and breakdowns of our approved Safety Net funding in letters and other communications are informative and include clear explanations.
The team is very easy to connect with and their feedback is clear - we made the corrections and received the funding!
Bulletins, training/info session, regular drop-in Zoom sessions, email communication, and 1:1 support as needed.
Access to safety net staff to work through issues or questions.
The recorded trainings and materials on the website were very helpful.
Online meetings to help with the process were the most beneficial for me.
User Guide for EGMS and safety net email
Online support Video Training
When asked for in the past, I was provided the data used to correct the calculation.

**Please list helpful tools or supports that were available or provided to your LEA.**

Office hours, calls, bulletins, and emails

Zoom office hours. Even during non zoom office hours, Amber and the others were willing to enter into a zoom so they could see my screen which was enormously helpful. EGMS is a HORRIBLE platform for Safety Net purposes.

The excel forms to upload are extremely helpful and save a lot of time! Also, the office hours are really helpful to get any questions I have answered quickly.

The letter was helpful, additionally, I had the opportunity to check in to clarify my understanding of what was/wasn't needed.

As part of a co-op, we get support to ensure our IEPs are written correctly.

Office hours were available for support.

direct email support from OSPI staff

Explanation on worksheet A

The explanations of why things are denied are not very clear. Nor do they give. Ways to correct the mistakes/denial.

Final Award Summary letter and information.

Safety Net Bulletin, Office Hours

The Safety Net bulletin is our main guide, and supplemented by other OSPI resources.

Office hours are very helpful because sometimes another district will ask a question that will be helpful to our district as well.

Weekly zoom meetings, bulletins

Having someone to call for assistance was helpful. Also the spreadsheets I could use to input information before uploading was helpful.

Most helpful is the conversation about EGMS

Clear directions. EGMS is sometimes hard to navigate but we are getting better with it.

Office Hours and walking us through EGMS.

YouTube tutorials Zoom Trainings

Office hours are fantastic! Please keep those going this year. I may not always need them but it's nice to know they are there for us when we need them.

Ability to get information/guidance on specific issues

email

Calculators Specific Examples

Weekly training, links to user guides, worksheet templates, cost calculators, direct contact info for OSPI staff.

Email with document enclosures showing results of application submissions

1:1 meetings, transportation tracker

Amber is helpful

More clarity around teacher minute reports and calculations for overall funding requests.

OSPI website with links that provided explanations ESD overview of safety net

Office Hours

**Please list helpful tools or supports that were available or provided to your LEA.**

The feedback form by SSID is very helpful.

Safety Net & EGMS Office Hours

OSPI safety net staff; tools for uploading staff to the EGMS file

We appreciated the EGMS system where we only have to put staff in once and can attach staff to various students.

Online training and literature were very valuable.

OSPI Staff Videos trainings

Twice weekly office hours. Clear naming conventions and other training/info materials.

Please keep offering help to the districts for all processes. It is beyond helpful to get 1 on 1 zoom time to get our specific needs met and questions answered.

The tools and supports provided to our LEA included weekly Zoom "office hours" and timely responses to emails. These resources were especially valuable in ensuring we had consistent access to guidance and clarification throughout the safety net application process.

**Table 5: Survey Question 10**

<b>Please list additional ways in which you think the safety net process can be improved.</b>
More funding
Office hours or training at the beginning of the year to cover how to properly document and set up IEP systems that align with OSPI/SN expectations. Compliance training, in general, or IEP courses would be a great addition.
Some of the information OSPI already has. It would be nice if that could somehow be automatically entered once we include a student's SSID number on the Worksheet.
Worksheet C would be nice to have as an Excel document like it used to be. It was much easier to access and fill in.
More detailed feedback about issues with submitted candidates so improvements can be made for future submissions.
Wish the EGMS system would allow us to export to an excel file to double check our numbers. Same with the PDF summary file. Wish there was a way to access the full student file in EGMS once submitted. This would allow us to see our errors and address them the next year.
The EGMS guide could be greatly improved. There are areas where it references some buttons that are hard to find if there at all, and is hard to follow.
The process can be simplified - especially when it comes to contracted services. Submitting invoices should be sufficient to support the cost of services in the IEP. POs and contracts don't seem necessary.
One of the most impactful improvements to the Safety Net process would be increasing clarity and consistency in guidance, particularly around allowable costs, required documentation, and program eligibility. Streamlining the application and audit process with clearer exemplars, training modules and feedback loops would reduce the administrative burden and ensure schools, specifically charters, can focus on serving scholars rather than paperwork. Additionally, aligning Safety Net timelines more closely with budget planning cycles would allow schools to make staffing and service decisions proactively rather than reactively, ultimately improving equity and access for students with the most significant needs.
Provide clearer explanations regarding the conditional awards as it relates to the final fiscal capacity being determined at the end of the year.
There seems to be ever changing rules about what is written in an IEP in order to make services clear.
I think we are light years ahead of where we were nine years ago when I started doing this. I love that we are digital and not redacted paper copies. I love that we send them securely through EGMS. I feel like EGMS, while it has its faults, has helped streamline the process and ensures mistakes are not made. I feel like prorated reimbursements are so helpful rather than the total denials that used to come from one mistake. You all deserve kudos for improving the process especially over the last five years.
We are unaware of other District's SN details.

**Please list additional ways in which you think the safety net process can be improved.**

The second application that is due in May is a little confusing when it is reopened. Not sure how to do that differently.

The process is cost prohibitive for smaller districts and does not capture students with high needs with costs that are not easily outlined on IEPs. Additionally the threshold is prohibitive. I have several students that are expensive but not quite at threshold

provide a checklist of documents to be uploaded and things to be added to the application. It varies student by student, but I think it wouldn't be too hard to come up with a general list of things to include in the application.

An earlier review and process would be helpful. Thank you.

Shared above regarding case manager and minutes. I do not believe that our IEPs are better since there is not a compliance component - we are just better at documenting minutes for services so we can get funding for our most expensive kids.

The Safety Net training was held on 12/6/24. If possible, could this please be held earlier in the year to ensure we have the most current information, along with the confirmed submission due date? I can only imagine all the working going on behind the scenes, so I understand this may not be possible.

I was new to safety net last year. It is a very complex process that is difficult to wrap your head around. I don't understand the process enough to suggest improvements. I am very thank for the supports offered!

Providing funding earlier in the year would be very helpful. Waiting until August puts more stress on the district.

Safety net could be improved by having a mechanism in which you put in the information earlier in the year to learn what will be covered and to have time to implement technical changes which then allows more of actual costs to be covered at the time of the actual submission.

EGMS is ridiculous. It's not intuitive at all, and is cumbersome. Having to upload each individual file is tediously ridiculous. It makes NO SENSE.

Students who have 1:1's due to behavior, need to be safety net funded. We have more and more students who have this need each year.

Support in understanding what is needed to show capacity.

While this answer may not belong directly in this question, I think the districts with larger staff, higher funding, or stronger organizations are more able to complete the entries and dig deeper on recovery, and that leaves funding on the table for those who don't have the resources and likely need it most.

Providing a more extensive list of what qualifies and does not qualify for safety net. Example: how to show when a student requires two hair professionals at one time, yet it's denied because it's too many minutes on a students IEP.

Though the process is manageable and worth the effort when reimbursements are awarded, it is a VERY TIME CONSUMING and LABOR INTENSIVE process. For small and medium districts with

**Please list additional ways in which you think the safety net process can be improved.**

very small district level teams, it means very long days for months out of the year. We spend our typical working hours doing our regular duties and then spend hours into the nights working on Safety-Net applications and documentation. Though we understand the need for thoroughness and equity in the process which means lots of documentation, the process is a massive undertaking (especially for districts like ours who don't have the means to have a specific Safety-Net Team who can devote much of their work-day time to the process.)

Any simplification would be helpful. It was very helpful to have employee information roll over from year to year. As much student data as possible rolling over would also be helpful. If the calendar automatically populated for any previously entered students or new students when one calendar was entered that would save time.

Is it possible to develop a list of FAQs that address some common, yet unusual, circumstances? Examples include documenting costs outside of the school day (transportation services, transportation aide services, interpretation services outside the school day), costs when staff is on extended leave and has a sub (nurse, interpreter, 1:1 para, etc.), or documenting the cost of IEP required equipment (wheelchair ramp, AAC, AT, etc.). The team does a wonderful job navigating these circumstances in 1:1 conversations, but FAQs may save everyone some time.

The switch to a digital submission has been extremely helpful however there are still some areas that could be improved. Such as being able to upload multiple documents at once instead of the zip folder upload. I like to be able to see all the documents that are uploaded and have to download the zip folder to make sure all the documents uploaded.

More written documentation about how to complete parts of the EGMS grant. The transportation piece in particular wasn't clearly explained.

I believe the process went very smoothly this year.

I dislike EGMS, the process is supposed to be streamlined, but it's clunky. Getting all of the docs out in early to mid-January (to include the transportation sheet) would be super helpful. It gets old having to constantly wait for that piece and then transportation gets made at me for not getting it to them sooner. It stresses our relationship.

Though you may call them uniform because the same rules apply to everyone, I would say that the process places a lot of pressure on small districts who not only don't have staff to work on the application, but also relies on the reimbursements for safety net for district programs. One denial of reimbursement could mean the difference in staffing levels for the following year. I believe small districts need some sort of modified application that makes the process more equitable.

I think this year felt clumsy because we were using EGMS (which is a clumsy system in itself!) and required me to revise some of the behind the scene systems I use to match EGMS. During the training, the system wasn't yet aligned to what the training was showing us. I think it will get easier next year! I appreciate the work the team has done over the years to streamline it more and reduce the complexity and workload. Thank you!

EGMS is a pain, and the threshold is too high

**Please list additional ways in which you think the safety net process can be improved.**

EGMS is difficult to navigate. Also, the threshold is too high.

Batch Uploads to Application Files

I would hope & pray that we stay with the once per year submission.

We were told that because we were at the beginning of the alphabet that we were scrutinized more harshly than those at the end of the alphabet. That was really upsetting to hear.

I feel that they did a good job and we were able to access a good percentage of what we needed. That said, I believe that by not paying all of the costs for required services the state is negligent.

Uploading information into the system needs to be easier and more streamlined. Separation of district staff is by certificated and classified. Contracted staff needs to also be entered the same way, certificated and classified.

The ability to create a master calendar that automatically populates across all applications, rather than requiring the calendar to be entered separately for each individual application.

Clearer instructions in the EGMS User Guide. More details around transportation and Medicaid would be helpful. EGMS system can be cumbersome and very slow at times.

Safety net is in equitable due to staffing resources. Large districts have more staff to analyze IEPs and calculate staffing FTE per student. Districts with FTE of 3000 or less student enrollment should be allowed to submit Safety Net quarterly due to financial hardship.

Samples, lower threshold, including independent evaluations or other testing and materials

The quarterly process for some out of state students will be helpful. It would be great if more students or districts qualified for this type of financial support.

I dislike the high school and beyond plan aspect. It is very difficult to tell my teachers why they are essentially writing two versions of the same transition plan (one of which is explicitly a general ed, not a special ed, requirement). I'd also like it if the community impact calculations were a bit less inflexible. They only allow us to calculate costs by counting the number of students by which we exceed our maximum % of SWDs. My district is proud of the fact that we do not over-identify students, and therefore we are well under the legal maximum percentage. This doesn't mean we don't have significant expenses from unique community factors though. I think I could create an argument for why our community has certain students with a higher cost per student, which is totally different from the traditional argument that we simply have more IEPs.

Being able to download all the Worksheet C would be extremely helpful. I have to track things manually, so this would speed up the process considerably.

Get rid of it and shift the mechanism to yearly financial audits and technical assistance based on the earmarked allocation to the LEAs. The knowledge of the greater system around safety net creates a perception that no bottom line exists. Requests from inside and outside of the system are increased because of this and contractors move their price point with the knowledge of where the threshold falls. A provider or contractor that seeks to ethically operates is pushed out due to not having services that qualify for Safety Net. This current system is stifling good

**Please list additional ways in which you think the safety net process can be improved.**

practice and pigeon holing districts into bad service choices for students or parent/guardian directed lawsuits.

I would like a way to check if an IEP qualifies without having to enter all of the information into EGMS. Prior to EGMS I would have a copy of the Worksheet C with average yearly minutes, wages, etc. and use that as a way to know if I should keep a student on my list. I really appreciate the online office hours!!

An additional way I believe the safety net process could be improved is by providing a detailed, step-by-step guide that outlines the process from start to finish. This would be especially helpful for both new and returning staff, ensuring greater clarity, consistency, and efficiency when completing the application. Ideally, the guide would include: A clear timeline with key dates and deadlines. Required documentation for each step and examples of acceptable formats. Instructions for navigating the submission platform, with screenshots outlining each step from start to submission. Common errors or pitfalls to avoid, with solutions or tips. Contact information for support at each stage of the process. A checklist to track completion of each requirement. Having these components in a centralized, easy-to-access format would make the process more manageable and reduce the likelihood of delays or errors.



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