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Wer wird die Zahlen veröffentlichen? Daten zur Deaf Education nach dem Abkommen des Bildungsministeriums mit HHS

Heather Grizzle · October 8, 2026

Die Sondervereinbarung zwischen dem Bildungsministerium (ED) und dem Gesundheitsministerium (HHS) zur Sonderpädagogik umfasst die Datenarbeit zu Gallaudet, NTID und IDEA, sagt jedoch nicht aus, wer künftig die Section-618-Dateien veröffentlichen wird.

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The agreement that moved special education's daily work to HHS also covers Gallaudet, NTID and the Helen Keller National Center, and it never says who will keep publishing the numbers

KURZ GEFASST

- On June 15, 2026, the Education Department and HHS signed an agreement under which HHS provides services to run IDEA's grant programs, monitoring, state performance determinations and data work.
- Dieselbe Vereinbarung erfasst die Programme des Education of the Deaf Act, einschließlich NTID, sowie Gallaudet University, das Helen Keller National Center und das American Printing House for the Blind.
- It splits data between the two agencies, with the Education Department keeping "data collection" and HHS providing services to support "the collection, reporting, and analyzing of data." It never names the IDEA Section 618 data, the EDFacts system, or the Annual Report to Congress.
- Diese Bundesdaten sind die einzige Quelle, die gehörlose und schwerhörige Schüler in allen Bundesstaaten nach demselben Maßstab erfasst. Niemand hat öffentlich gesagt, wer sie weiterhin veröffentlichen wird.

Every state file in the National Deaf Education Data Index starts in the same place: a school district's own website, a state agency's own reports, and a federal spreadsheet. The first two vary wildly. Some states publish a careful count of deaf and hard of hearing students by district every fall; others publish nothing a parent could find. The federal spreadsheet is the constant. When NDEDI built its Nevada file in September, the clearest picture of where deaf and hard of hearing students actually learn came from that federal file: of 518 students aged 5 to 21 served under the hearing impairment category in 2024-25, 307 spent at least 80 percent of their day in a regular classroom, and none were reported in a separate school or residential setting. The state's own count could be checked against it. Without it, there would have been nothing to check against.

Diese Tabelle ist Teil der IDEA-Section-618-Daten – der Zahlen, die jeder Bundesstaat dem Bund jährlich über die Kinder meldet, die er im Rahmen des Individuals with Disabilities Education Act betreut, aufgeschlüsselt nach Behinderungskategorie, Alter, Lernumfeld und mehr. Die Bundesstaaten übermitteln sie über ein Bundessystem namens EDFacts. Das Bildungsministerium veröffentlicht sie als länderbezogene Dateien auf seiner offenen Datenplattform und fasst sie in einem Jahresbericht an den Kongress zusammen. Für jeden, der vergleichen möchte, wie gehörlose Kinder in

Kansas und Kentucky unterrichtet werden, ist dies die einzige Quelle, die alle Bundesstaaten nach demselben Maßstab erfasst.

Was sich im Juni geändert hat

On June 15, 2026, the Education Department and the Department of Health and Human Services signed an interagency agreement on special education and rehabilitative services, announced the next day alongside a separate agreement moving civil rights enforcement to the Justice Department. The agreement is short, eight pages, and plain about what moves. Under section 3.A, HHS commits to provide services, "in coordination with and at the direction of ED-OSERS," supporting the administration of IDEA's grant programs under Parts B, C and D; enforcement, compliance and monitoring; the "annual performance determinations" that rate each state; fiscal audits; and "the collection, reporting, and analyzing of data for monitoring compliance with statutory and regulatory requirements and for improving outcomes for infants, toddlers, children, youth, and adults with disabilities."

The Education Department keeps statutory responsibility for IDEA. Under section 3.B, it retains "Management and leadership of OSERS' programs and activities," which the agreement says includes "but not limited to enforcement, compliance, monitoring, fiscal management and data collection," along with representation before its Data Governance Board, the Inspector General and the Government Accountability Office. The agreement took effect on the date of the last signature, has no end date, and can be terminated by either side on 90 days' written notice. The contact named for HHS sits in its Administration on Disabilities.

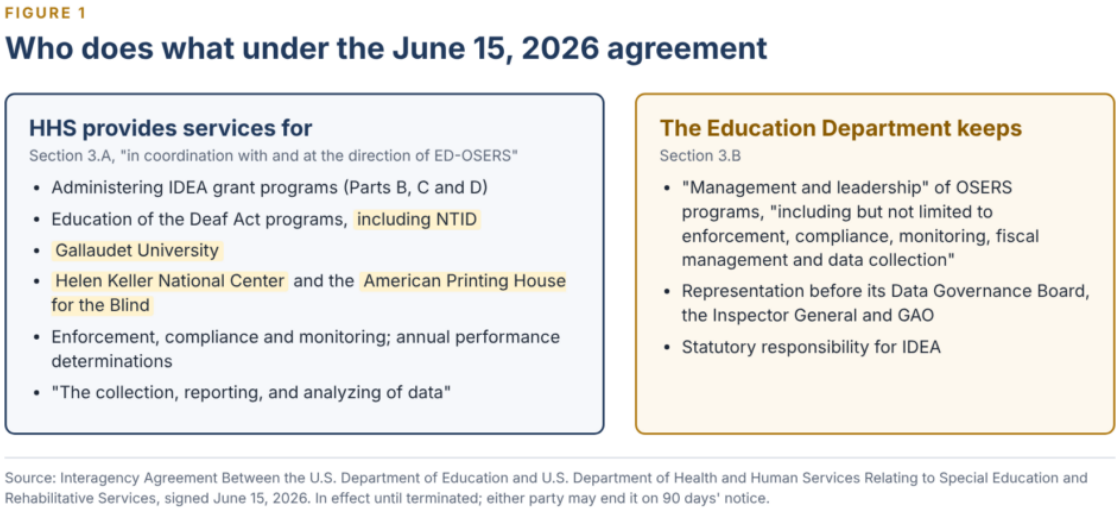


Abbildung 1. Wer macht was im Rahmen der Vereinbarung vom 15. Juni 2026. Hervorgehoben sind die Punkte, die der Deaf- und DeafBlind-Bildung am nächsten stehen.

Der Teil der Liste, den gehörlose Leser nicht überspringen sollten

Most coverage of the agreement has focused, reasonably, on IDEA and on what it means for students' individualized education programs. Further down the same list are four items that bear directly on Deaf and DeafBlind education. HHS will provide services supporting "the administration of program components authorized under the Education of the Deaf Act of 1986, including the National Technical Institute for the Deaf"; supporting "the administration of Gallaudet University," described in the agreement as "intended to provide education and training to individuals who are deaf and otherwise to further the education of individuals who are deaf"; supporting the Helen Keller National Center Act programs; and supporting the American Printing House for the Blind.

The agreement does not change what any of these institutions are, and it does not say what "services supporting the administration" of a university means in practice. It does mean that the federal relationship with the two national institutions of Deaf higher education, and with the national center for DeafBlind adults, now runs in part through a health department rather than an education department. In the coverage NCG reviewed, that has drawn far less attention than it deserves.

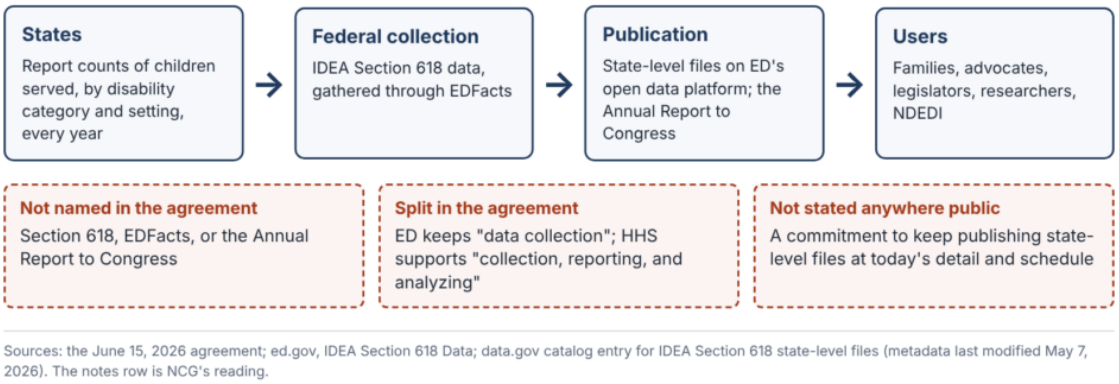
Wo die Daten verstummen

Read closely, the agreement splits the data work between the two departments without saying how. The Education Department keeps "data collection" as part of its management and leadership. HHS provides "services to support the collection, reporting, and analyzing of data." Who designs the collection, who runs EDFacts, who checks the states' submissions, who publishes the state-level files, and who writes the Annual Report to Congress are not stated. The agreement never uses the words "Section 618," "EDFacts" or "Annual Report to Congress," and it contains no commitment to keep publishing the data at its current level of detail or on its current schedule.

Das mag schlicht daran liegen, wie Interagency Agreements formuliert werden. Sie beschreiben Dienstleistungen und Finanzierung, nicht jedes einzelne Produkt. Doch die Lücke ist bedeutsam angesichts dessen, was vor der Vereinbarung geschah. Im Oktober 2025, während des Government Shutdown, gingen Kündigungswellen (Reduction-in-Force) durch das Bildungsministerium, und K-12 Dive berichtete, Leiter von Sonderpädagogik-Verbänden seien der Ansicht gewesen, dass der Großteil des Office of Special Education Programs entlassen worden sei. Im November stellte ein Überbrückungsgesetz zur Haushaltsfinanzierung das Personal des Office of Special Education and Rehabilitative Services vorübergehend wieder ein. Sieben Monate später ging das Tagesgeschäft an das HHS über. Ein Datensystem kann vieles überstehen, aber es überlebt durch Menschen, die es kennen, und das öffentliche Protokoll sagt nicht, wo diese Menschen jetzt angesiedelt sind.

FIGURE 2

The chain that produces the national numbers, and where the agreement goes quiet



Sources: the June 15, 2026 agreement; ed.gov, IDEA Section 618 Data; data.gov catalog entry for IDEA Section 618 state-level files (metadata last modified May 7, 2026). The notes row is NCG's reading.

Abbildung 2. Die Kette, die die nationalen Zahlen erzeugt, und wo die Vereinbarung verstummt. Die untere Zeile ist die Lesart von NCG.

Was seitdem bekannt wurde

The record since June is mixed, not alarming. The Office of Special Education Programs held its annual conference in August, with sessions on "high-quality section 618 data." Its September 9 bulletin announced that the 47th Annual Report to Congress on IDEA had been released, with a companion fact sheet, and a panel at the conference said IDEA rights "cannot and will not change through our partnership." The federal catalog entry for the state-level 618 files was last updated on May 7, 2026, before the agreement was signed. Nothing NCG located says the next files will be late, or thinner, or published somewhere else. Nothing says they won't be, either. And K-12 Dive's reading of the agreement in June found that states and districts were still asking which HHS office would oversee the work and who would send them guidance.

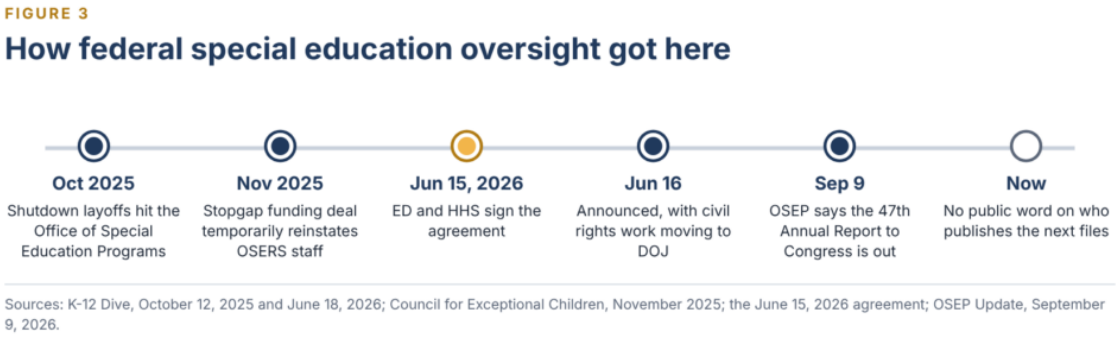


Abbildung 3. Wie die föderale Aufsicht über die Sonderpädagogik hierher gelangt ist.

Warum die Bildung gehörloser Kinder dies als Erstes spürt

Jede Behinderungskategorie ist auf diese Dateien angewiesen, aber die Bildung gehörloser Kinder hängt in besonderer Weise von ihnen ab. Gehörlose und schwerhörige Schüler sind eine Bevölkerungsgruppe mit geringer Fallzahl, ein kleiner Anteil von Kindern, dünn über viele Schulbezirke verstreut – genau die Gruppe, die bei der Berichterstattung von Bundesstaaten und Bezirken häufig unter den Tisch fällt. Kleine Fallzahlen werden aus Datenschutzgründen unterdrückt. Schulbezirke, die zwei gehörlose Schüler über eine Kooperative oder ein regionales Programm betreuen, veröffentlichen oft überhaupt nichts. In dieser Lage ist die Bundesdatei häufig der einzige Ort, an dem eine landesweite Zahl existiert, und der einzige Ort, an dem ein Bundesstaat mit einem anderen verglichen werden kann. Wenn die 618-Daten ins Rutschen geraten, sind es gerade die Schüler, die am ehesten aus dem öffentlichen Protokoll verschwinden, die ohnehin am schwersten zu erfassen waren.

Was schriftlich festgehalten werden sollte

Nichts davon erfordert die Annahme von bösem Willen. Es erfordert nur ein paar Sätze, die die Vereinbarung nicht enthält. Das Bildungsministerium und das HHS könnten die Frage öffentlich klären, indem sie erklären:

- That the IDEA Section 618 collection through EDFacts will continue on its existing schedule, at its existing level of detail, including disability category by state.
- Which department, and which office, publishes the state-level files and the Annual Report to Congress from now on, and where.
- That historical files will stay available at their current addresses.

- Who to contact with questions about the data, now that the HHS contact for the agreement sits in the Administration on Disabilities.

Families, state special education directors, state deaf commissions and legislators can ask for exactly that, in writing, through the Education Department's Office of Special Education and Rehabilitative Services. NDEDI's state files cite the federal data by school year and source, so any change in what is published will show up in the record rather than disappearing into it. NDEDI's state release schedule is at ndedi.org.

Quellen

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TIPS

Know something about a sign language AI system that the public should know? Send it to tips@novaracg.com. Every tip is read by me and kept confidential. If you work in the UK, writing to us is not by itself a protected disclosure under the Public Interest Disclosure Act 1998, so before you share employer information, check your options with Protect (protect-advice.org.uk), the free whistleblowing advice line.

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Zitierweise

Grizzle, H. M. (2026, October 8). Who Will Publish the Numbers? Deaf Education Data After the Education Department's Deal With HHS. Novara Consulting Group. https://www.novaracg.com/de/2026/10/08/who-will-publish-the-numbers-deaf-education-data-after-the-education-departments-deal-with-hhs/