



NC-SARA

ANNUAL DATA REPORT:

Technical Report for Fall 2022
Exclusively Distance Education
Enrollment & 2022 Out-of-State
Learning Placements



National Council for
State Authorization
Reciprocity Agreements

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About SARA

Recognizing the growing demand for distance learning opportunities, higher education stakeholders – including state regulators and education leaders, accreditors, the U.S. Department of Education, and institutions – joined together in 2013 to establish the State Authorization Reciprocity Agreements (SARA). SARA helps expand students' access to educational opportunities and ensures more efficient, consistent, and effective regulation of distance learning programs.

SARA is a voluntary agreement among 49 member states, the District of Columbia, Puerto Rico, and the U.S. Virgin Islands. The agreement establishes comparable national standards for interstate offerings of postsecondary distance education; participating colleges and universities must adhere to stringent requirements, including accreditation and remaining in good financial standing. To learn more, please visit [NC-SARA's website](#).

As of September 2023, over 2,400 institutions in 49 member states, the District of Columbia, Puerto Rico, and the U.S. Virgin Islands all voluntarily participate in SARA.

About NC-SARA

The National Council for State Authorization Reciprocity Agreements (NC-SARA) is a non-profit organization that provides national leadership, in partnership with the four regional compacts, of the State Authorization Reciprocity Agreements (SARA) for distance education regulation across the member states and territories.

NC-SARA helps ensure consistent compliance with distance education rules for state authorization among member states and participating institutions. NC-SARA also works with states, institutions, policymakers, and students to understand the purpose, benefits, and value of SARA.

NC-SARA's mission is:

- To provide broad access to postsecondary education opportunities to students across the country;
- To increase the quality and value of higher learning credentials earned via distance education; and
- To assure students are well served in a rapidly changing education landscape.

To learn more, please visit [NC-SARA's website](#).

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Introduction

The National Council for State Authorization Reciprocity Agreements (NC-SARA) has completed the collection, analysis, and reporting of eight years of exclusively distance education enrollment data and five years of out-of-state learning placement data from SARA-participating institutions. The purpose of this technical report is to provide a summary and analysis of these data from SARA-participating institutions for 2022, collected in 2023. This report is organized into three sections: an introduction and overview of institutional participation in SARA; data on exclusively distance education enrollment (EDEE); and data on out-of-state learning placement (OOSLP).

Why NC-SARA Collects Data

Collecting, reporting, and analyzing data about the interstate delivery of distance education are important parts of NC-SARA's mission, and SARA policy requires participating institutions to report EDEE and OOSLP annually. Since its inception, NC-SARA has maintained a strong commitment to transparency in data reporting. Prior to joining SARA, many member states had already been collecting data from out-of-state institutions providing distance education in their state; therefore, data collection became an important element agreed upon during the creation of SARA. Data collection and reporting help measure the impact of SARA nationally, and track changes in SARA-participating institutions and in SARA member states over time.

Institutions report data to NC-SARA through an online portal in the spring following the due date for their Fall Enrollment (EF) reports to IPEDS. (Institutions reported their 2022 data to NC-SARA in the spring of 2023.) The SARA reporting window is May 15 through June 15 each year. EDEE data are disaggregated by the state, territory, or district where the student is physically located while enrolled exclusively in distance education course(s). OOSLP data are disaggregated by the state, territory, or district where the learning placement is taking place.

Reporting instructions and screenshots of the online data reporting portal can be found in the *NC-SARA Data Reporting Handbook for Institutions*¹ available on the [Institution Directions for Data Reporting](#) webpage.

Terms Used in Data Reporting

Exclusively Distance Education Enrollment

SARA uses the term “exclusively distance education enrollment” (EDEE) to describe student enrollment reported exclusively in distance education courses. The data that has been collected for EDEE has remained consistent since NC-SARA began collecting data in 2015; the clarification of the term was made to ensure that stakeholders understand that these data are the same as the data that IPEDS refers to as “Enrolled exclusively in distance education courses.” Beginning with the 2018 reporting, NC-SARA requested that institutions include in-state EDEE in their annual reporting. For SARA reporting purposes, the EDEE is disaggregated

¹ NC-SARA *Data Reporting Handbook for Institutions* (2023), https://nc-sara.org/sites/default/files/files/2023-01/Data_Reporting_Handbook_for_2023_PUBLISH_01-20-23.pdf (Retrieved 7/18/2023.)

by state. (See *Appendix A: Technical Notes* for more information on the IPEDS distance education definitions.)

Out-of-State Learning Placements

SARA uses the term “out-of-state learning placements” (OOSLP) for on-site learning placements that occur **in a state other than the home state of the institution**. They include activities such as clinical rotations, student teaching, internships, and other similar activities, many of which are related to workforce development needs and requirements. SARA has used the term OOSLP to refer to this data since reporting began in 2018.

Unlike for EDEE reporting, there is no other existing national mechanism such as IPEDS for gathering and reporting OOSLP. Reporting OOSLP annually is required for institutions participating in SARA. This is the fifth year that reporting OOSLP has been mandatory. It is important to note that **all** on-the-ground, out-of-state learning placements are reported, not just those associated with distance education offerings. SARA does not currently require institutions to report virtual learning placements.

Some institutions participate in SARA for the ability to offer OOSLP to their students, with no intention of offering courses or programs exclusively through distance education.

Definition of “State”

For the purposes of this report, “state” is defined as a state, commonwealth, organized territory, or district (District of Columbia) of the United States. Additionally, “non-SARA states” refer to California and the U.S. territories that do not participate in SARA.

Using the NC-SARA Data

Many colleges and universities have staff that focus on data as a source of information for their future planning and development. The rich data collected by NC-SARA over the past several years may help institutional staff and other stakeholders better understand the distance education landscape in your state or region. These data also hold historical trends and may provide insights that could inform key decisions about distance education offerings.

NC-SARA’s Data Dashboards

Beginning with the 2021 Annual Data Report, the NC-SARA technical report has been supplemented with data dashboards on the NC-SARA website which allow users the opportunity to view the data interactively. Therefore, most of the data visualization associated with the current technical report is provided through the dashboards rather than as figures and data tables in the report itself. You may explore the data by region, state, institution, and SARA participating status using the [NC-SARA Data Dashboards](#) including:

- Reporting institutions
- Total EDEE
- Incoming EDEE
- Outgoing EDEE
- Incoming OOSLP
- Outgoing OOSLP

The [NC-SARA Data Dashboards](#) can be used to consider EDEE and OOSLP trends in your state

overall, trends reported by other institutions in your state and in nearby states, and the movement of students in and out of your state, and those states, over time. The data may be used to project the need for new programs and other decisions impacted by enrollment trends in your own and neighboring states.

The NC-SARA data is publicly available to help institutions consider such questions any time they arise; the data set becomes richer with each year of data collection.

Commitment to Transparency in Data Reporting

Since its inception, NC-SARA has maintained a strong commitment to transparency in data reporting. While based on IPEDS EF reporting, the EDEE data that institutions report to NC-SARA may not match IPEDS exactly because of the different approaches SARA uses to identify the location of military students, as well as the impact of branch campus reporting. Institutions self-report to NC-SARA, and there is currently no process to validate individual campus reporting back to their IPEDS data submissions. In addition, there are institutions that report to NC-SARA and not to IPEDS.

Methodology

In May 2023, NC-SARA sent email requests to the SARA institutional contacts at 2,374 institutions, with a link to report Fall 2022 EDEE and calendar year 2022 OOSLP. NC-SARA received complete responses from 2,364 institutions. Exemptions were extended to 7 institutions (6 were non-renewals or institutional closures, 1 joined SARA near the end of 2022). There were three institutions that did not report. NC-SARA staff recognize and appreciate the efforts of the institution staff for their commitment to their reporting obligations to NC-SARA.

Beginning with 2021 data reporting, NC-SARA instituted a process to clarify when new SARA-participating institutions would be required to report. Institutions must be participating in SARA on or before December 31st of the year prior to the reporting window (May 15 – June 15) to be invited to report their EDEE and OOSLP data. Institutions approved after that time are expected to report in the following year.

As has been the case since the first data collection for 2015 in the spring of 2016, institution staff may use the comment field in the online data reporting portal to provide context about their data. This year about 32% of the comments received were explanations of how the reported EDEE data differs from their IPEDS reporting. In addition, many comments included details of where international students were located while enrolled exclusively in distance education. Since SARA is a national reciprocity agreement, students outside of the U.S. are not reported.

Regional Compacts and SARA

The regional compacts have the critical role in the oversight and implementation of SARA. NC-SARA works with the country's four regional compacts to implement uniform standards and procedures for accepting and monitoring states' membership in each of their respective regions: New England Board of Higher Education (NEBHE), Midwestern Higher Education Compact (MHEC), Southern Regional Education Board (SREB), and Western Interstate Commission for Higher Education (WICHE).

Regional compact staff support the State Portal Entity (SPE) staff in each member state through regular interaction, SARA-related workshops and events, and general support.

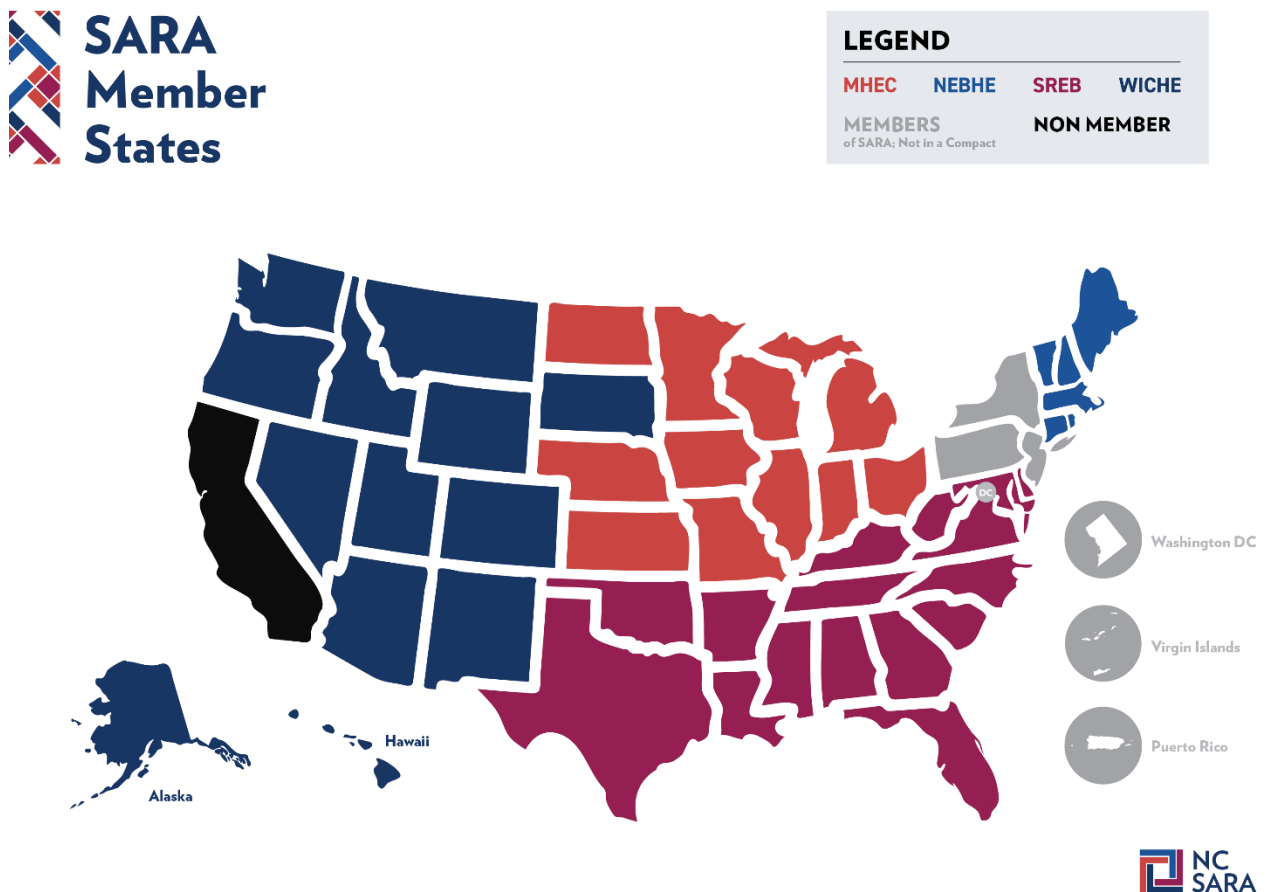
SARA Member States and State Portal Entities

There were no new member states accepted by SARA between the reporting window for 2021 and 2022. As of September 2023, all U.S. states except California are SARA members. In addition, the District of Columbia (DC) and the territories of Puerto Rico (PR) and the U.S. Virgin Islands (VI) are members of SARA. The following U.S. territories are currently not members of SARA: American Samoa (AS), Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands (CNMI), Federated States of Micronesia (FM), Guam (GU), Marshall Islands (MH), and Palau (PW).

SARA State Portal Entities (SPEs) are the state agency or other state body designated by each SARA member state to carry out SARA responsibilities for the state and to serve as the interstate point of contact for SARA questions, complaints, and other communications.

The map in Figure 1 shows the SARA states and territories and the regional compacts with which they are members or affiliated. States shown in gray are not members of a regional compact but have affiliated with one of the compacts for purposes of SARA.

Figure 1. Map of SARA States, Territories, & District



Summary of Results

2,364 institutions reported EDEE for Fall 2022 and OOSLP data for calendar year 2022 to NC-SARA during the 2023 spring reporting period. Analysis of these data submissions revealed the following key findings:

- There was a 2.3% increase in the number of institutions participating in SARA between 2021 and 2022, from 2,311 reporting institutions in 2021 to 2,364 reporting in 2022.
 - Public institutions made up 48.7% (1,152) of all institutions reporting data to NC-SARA;
 - Private non-profit institutions represent 44.4% (1,050) of all institutions reporting data to NC-SARA;
 - Private for-profit institutions account for 6.7% (157) of all institutions reporting data to NC-SARA.
 - Five tribal institutions reported to NC-SARA for 2022, representing 0.2% of the total. Three tribal institutions reported to NC-SARA for 2021, representing 0.1% of the total.
- Consistent with prior years' reporting, the majority of out-of-state EDEE occurred in the private non-profit sector with 44.9%, while private for-profits reported 30.4% of out-of-state EDEE in Fall 2022, and public institutions reported 24.7%. The five tribal institutions reported 174 out-of-state EDEE, or 0%.
 - The proportions of EDEE reported by sector remain consistent over time, indicating that public institutions are more likely to enroll in-state students exclusively via distance education, while private non-profits are more likely to enroll out-of-state students.
- Institutions participating in SARA reported 1,659,309 out-of-state EDEEs, 96.1% in SARA states and 3.9% in non-SARA states (California and the territories not participating in SARA). This compares to 90.1% in SARA states and 9.9% in non-SARA states in 2021 and 90.0% in SARA states and 10.0% in 2020. This represents a shift towards more EDEE reported in SARA states, as the historic ratio of SARA to non-SARA EDEE has been at approximately 90% to 10% since data reporting began in 2015.
- The EDEE data reported in 2021 revealed some continuation of emergency remote learning being reported as EDEE, therefore inflating the EDEE reported. Given that 2022 was the second year of data post the height of the COVID-19 pandemic, the EDEE data was expected to return to pre-pandemic levels, with a relative increase based on the continued growth in the number of SARA-participating institutions.
 - There was a small decline (5.2%) in reported EDEE in 2022 (4,039,467) compared to 2021 (4,258,806).
 - There was a significant increase (33.4%) in reported EDEE in 2022 (4,039,467) compared to pre-COVID data from 2019 (3,016,944). This increase from pre-COVID levels suggests that institutions that instituted distance learning in 2020 may have kept some of their online course offerings.

- In Fall 2022, 1,500,912 students attended out-of-state institutions exclusively through distance education under SARA. This is down slightly (0.08%) from 1,502,175 in Fall 2021, but up from 1.27 million in Fall 2019 (18.6%).
- Out-of-state EDEE comprised 41.1% (1,659,309) of the reported EDEE for 2022 compared to 39.1% (1,666,953) for 2021.
- Since 2020, the majority of EDEE at SARA-participating institutions have been in-state, comprising 58.9% (2,380,158) of reported EDEE enrollment for 2022.
- Post-pandemic, proportions of in-state EDEE have not returned to 2019 levels (30%), suggesting that in state students are continuing to avail themselves of fully online education at levels almost 100% higher than pre-pandemic.
- There were 372,040 OOSLP reported by participating institutions for the calendar year 2022. Reported OOSLP increased 17.9% from the 315,504 reported in 2021. Reported OOSLP has continued to increase since 2021 after a decline during the COVID-19 pandemic in 2020.
- The CIP program area with the largest number of OOSLP was Health Professions and Related Programs (CIP #51), with 224,562 placements, representing 60.4% of all placements reported. Education (CIP #13) had the second highest number of placements with 27,183 placements, representing 7.3% of the total placements, followed by Business (CIP #52) with 19,043 placements, which accounted for 5.1% of reported placements. All other program area CIP codes combined accounted for 27.2% of reported learning placements. Figure 16 provides a graphic representation of the 2022 OOSLP data reported.
- The proportion of reported OOSLP between CIP program areas has remained consistent since mandatory reporting began in 2018. However, there were significant changes between 2021 and 2022 OOSLP reporting within the program areas. Health professions reported a 22.9% increase; Education reported a 10.0% decline, and Business reported a 16.1% increase. The Other category remained consistent at 27.3% in 2021 and 27.2% in 2022. These are only learning placements across state lines, so do not necessarily represent trends that affect the availability of professions in these fields.

Commentary on 2022 Results:

- There was a net increase of 53 SARA-participating institutions from 2021 to 2022 representing a 2.3% growth in participation. This slowing of growth in participating institutions was expected, given that some institutions began participating in SARA in 2020 and 2021 to help ensure compliance during the COVID pandemic.
- The 2022 data reveals a slight decline in reported EDEE as more institutions return to regular on-campus operations and as enrollment declines are evident throughout higher education. Distance education remains less affected by enrollment declines than on-ground enrollment. Students may have realized the benefits of online learning and have decided to continue incorporating distance education into their educational plans.
- There was a substantial increase in reported OOSLP between 2021 and 2022, suggesting the learning placements across state lines have resumed post-pandemic. In addition, institutional staff may be more aware of the OOSLP reporting requirements and

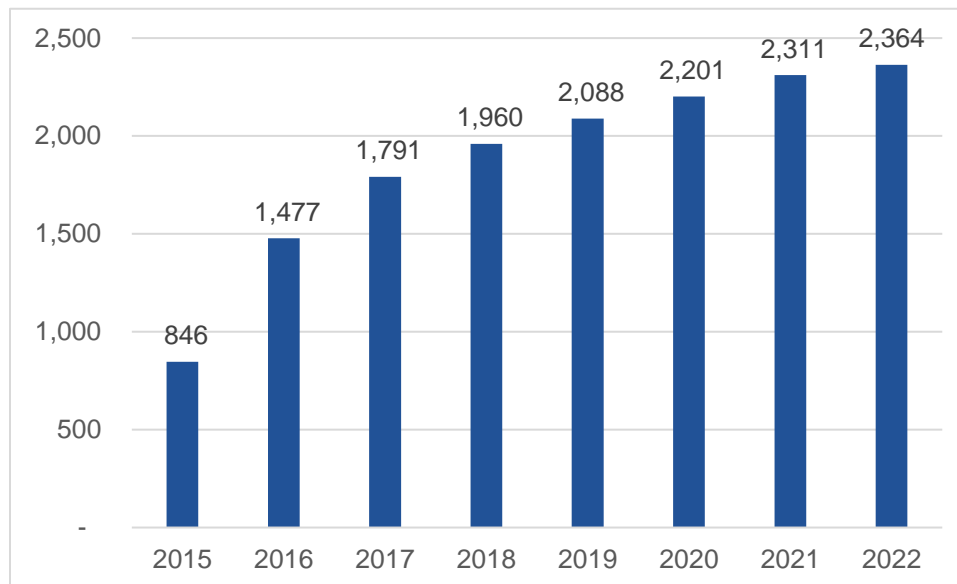
may have improved their systems for collecting and reporting those learning placements.

Reporting Institutions

There was an increase of 53 institutions – 2.3% – participating in SARA during the 2022 reporting period. Of the 2,364 complete responses received, 141 institutions (6.0%) reported no EDEE and 786 institutions (33.2%) reported no OOSLP in 2022. The OOSLP number is a decline from 817 institutions (35.4%) reporting zero OOSLP in 2021.

Figure 2 provides trend data over time on the number of participating institutions since data reporting was first required in 2015.

Figure 2. Number of Reporting Institutions 2015-2022



Reporting Institutions by State

The number of institutions participating in SARA varies greatly by state. Texas and New York have the most participating institutions with 140 each, while the U.S. Virgin Islands currently has just one SARA-participating institution.

Figure 3 is a screenshot of NC-SARA's online data dashboard for SARA-participating institutions. ([NC-SARA's data dashboard](#) is available on the website.) The data table in Figure 4 provides the number of participating institutions per state requested to submit data during the 2022 data reporting period.

Figure 3. NC-SARA Data Dashboard: Number of Participating Institutions

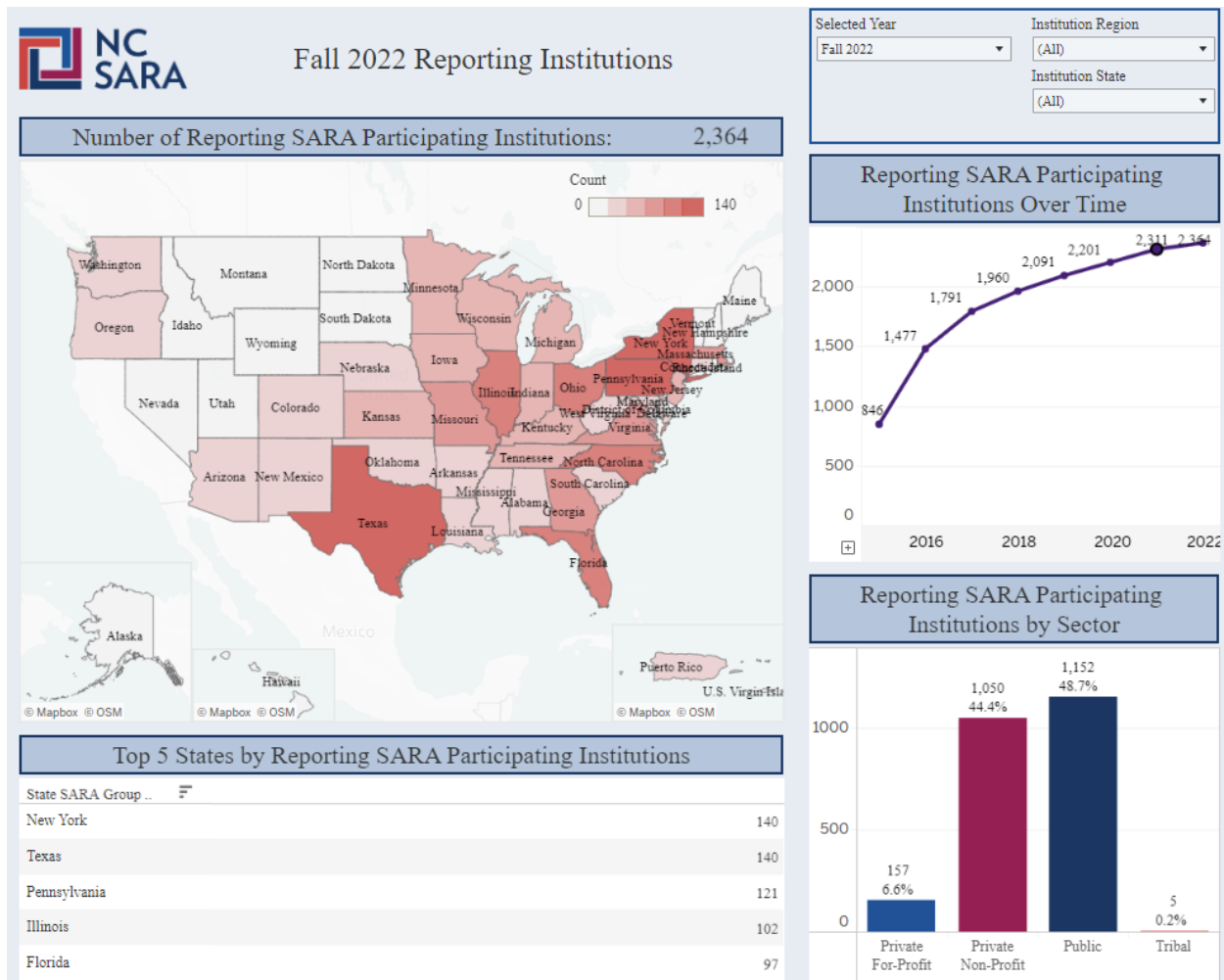


Figure 4. Reporting Institutions by State

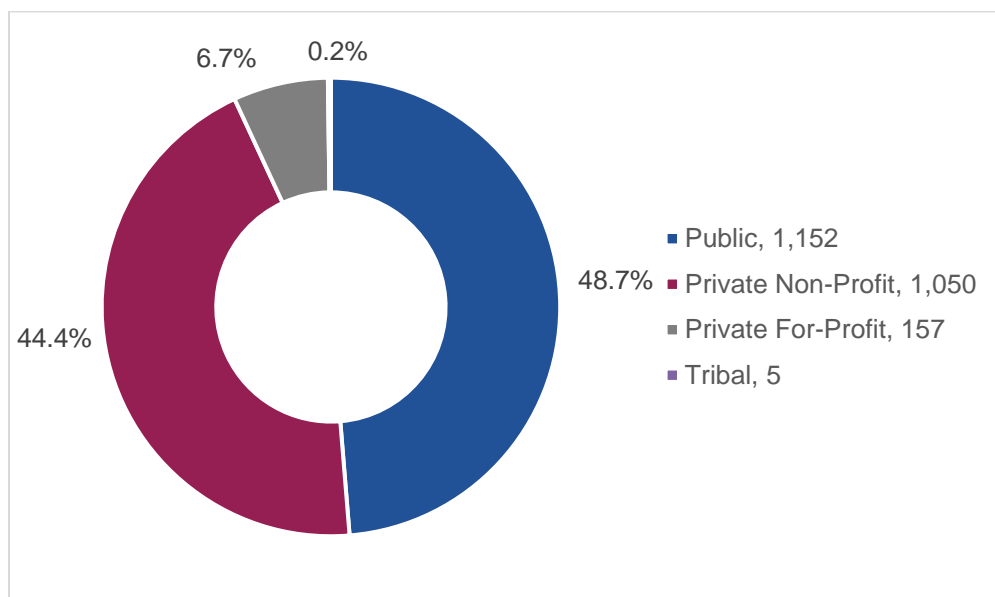
State/Territory (A-M)	Total Reporting Institutions	State/Territory (N-Z)	Total Reporting Institutions
Alabama	42	Nebraska	26
Alaska	4	Nevada	10
Arizona	37	New Hampshire	17
Arkansas	38	New Jersey	50
Colorado	42	New Mexico	24
Connecticut	33	New York	140
Delaware	5	North Carolina	97
District of Columbia	14	North Dakota	14
Florida	97	Ohio	94
Georgia	87	Oklahoma	37
Hawaii	14	Oregon	31
Idaho	13	Pennsylvania	121
Illinois	102	Puerto Rico	23
Indiana	59	Rhode Island	12
Iowa	52	South Carolina	45
Kansas	47	South Dakota	16
Kentucky	48	Tennessee	64
Louisiana	38	Texas	140
Maine	22	US Virgin Islands	1
Maryland	40	Utah	18
Massachusetts	74	Vermont	16
Michigan	69	Virginia	75
Minnesota	63	Washington	46
Mississippi	31	West Virginia	29
Missouri	74	Wisconsin	51
Montana	14	Wyoming	8

Reporting Institutions by Sector - 2022

- Public institutions made up 48.7% (1,152) of all institutions reporting data to NC-SARA;
- Private non-profit institutions represent 44.4% (1,050) of all institutions reporting data to NC-SARA;
- Private for-profit institutions account for 6.7% (157) of all institutions reporting data to NC-SARA.

In addition, five tribal institutions reported to NC-SARA for 2022, representing 0.2% of the total. Figure 5 illustrates the sector percentages for the 2,364 reporting institutions.

Figure 5. Reporting Institutions by Sector for 2022



Exclusively Distance Education Enrollment

Exclusively Distance Education Enrollment (EDEE) reporting has been a mandatory requirement for institutions participating in SARA since 2015. This section of the *NC-SARA Annual Data Technical Report* focuses on reported EDEE.

Exclusively Distance Education Enrollment is Based on IPEDS

SARA EDEE reporting requirements are based on the institutions' EF reporting to IPEDS each fall. Participating SARA institutions report student enrollment exclusively in distance education courses disaggregated by state, territory, or district where the learning takes place. Detailed descriptions of the IPEDS' definitions and how SARA EDEE reporting differs from IPEDS reporting can be found in *Appendix A: Technical Notes*.

Since the IPEDS' EF reporting represents just the fall term, it represents less than half of all EDEE at most institutions. Therefore, the reported EDEE is not representative of annual distance education activity, though it is the industry standard.

Total Exclusively Distance Education Enrollment Reported

There was a 5.2% decline in reported EDEE from Fall 2021 to Fall 2022: from 4,258,806 (2021) to 4,039,467 (2022). The decline in reported EDEE was expected, since 2021 reported EDEE was likely still inflated by including some emergency remote learning due to the COVID-19 pandemic, especially among in-state students. The reported EDEE remains above that reported for 2019.

The modest decline in reported EDEE in 2022 is predictable, given that EDEE reported to IPEDS for 2021 declined significantly (from 8.7 million in 2020 to 5.7 million in 2021). The decline was expected in 2022 as institutions returned to their normal teaching modalities post COVID-19 pandemic. At the same time, students enrolled in "Some distance education" increased (from 5.4 to 5.6 million) in 2021 (the most recent year for which IPEDS data is publicly available). According to Phil Hill, in his On Ed Tech Blog, "There was fewer online enrollment, but the numbers were significantly higher than pre-pandemic numbers."² The NC-SARA data is a first look at the EDEE data reported for Fall 2022. IPEDS generally publishes the full Distance Education data set in December of the following year.

There were 141 institutions (6.0%) that reported no EDEE in 2022. This is an increase from the 121 institutions (5.2%) reporting zero EDEE in 2021.

Total reported EDEE for 2019 through 2022 are displayed in Figure 6.

² Hill, Phil. "Fall 2021 IPEDS Data: Profile of US Higher Ed Online Education". *Phil On Ed Tech Blog*, December 12, 2022. <https://philhillaa.com/onedtech/fall-2021-ipeds-data-profile-of-us-higher-ed-online-education/> (Retrieved 7/18/2023.)

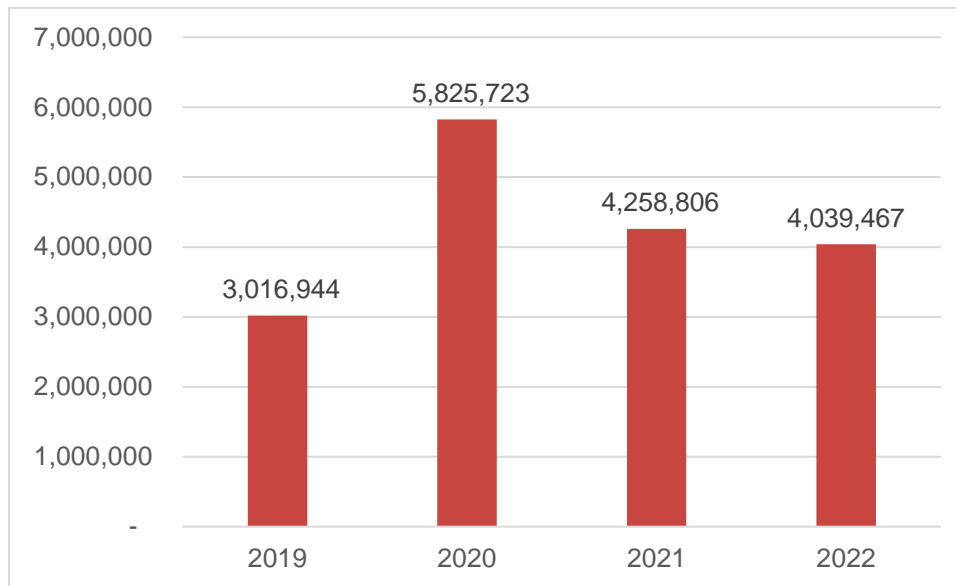
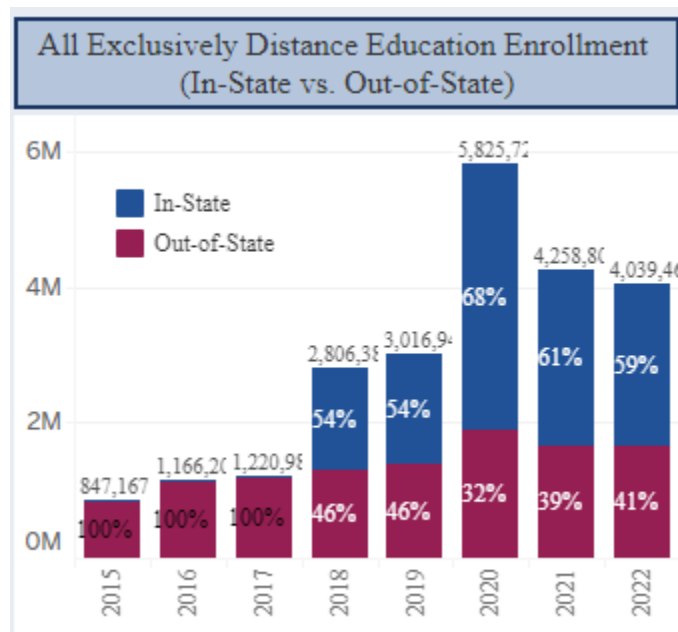
Figure 6. 2019-2022 Reported Total EDEE

Figure 7 displays the reported EDEE for 2015-2022, including the proportion of in-state and out-of-state reported EDEE. (It's important to note that NC-SARA began requiring the reporting of in-state EDEE in 2018.) The majority of EDEE at SARA-participating institutions are still in-state. In-state EDEE comprised 58.9% (2,380,158) of reported enrollment, while out-of-state reporting comprised 41.1% (1,659,309) for 2022. Proportions of in-state EDEE are not yet back down to 2019 levels (30%), suggesting that an increased number of in-state students are continuing to take advantage of distance education in 2022.

Figure 7. Reported In-State & Out-of-State EDEE 2015-2022

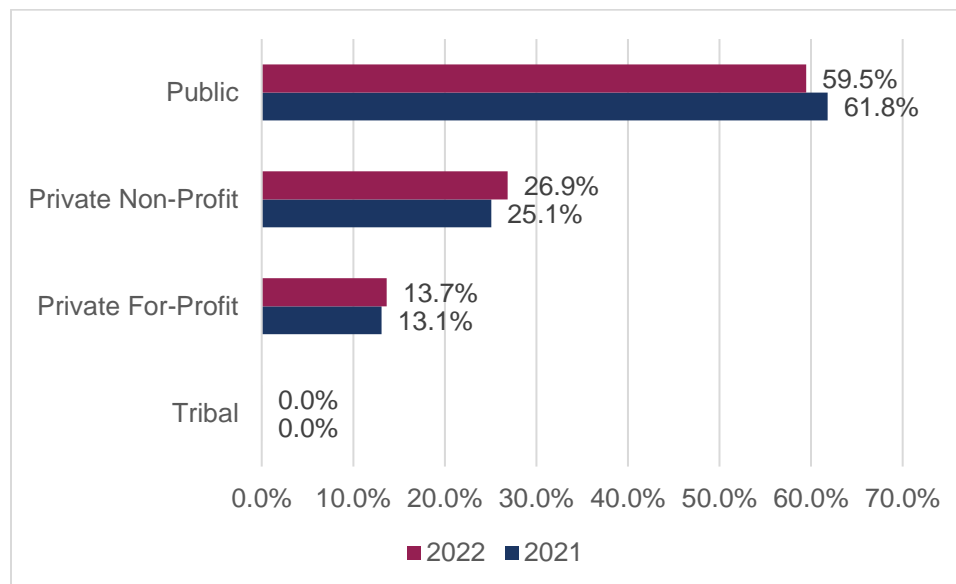
Total Exclusively Distance Education Enrollment Reported by Sector

Analysis of EDEE reported for 2022 by institutional sector reveals a decline in the proportion represented by public institutions compared to 2021. Public institutions represented 66.5% of 2020 at the height of the COVID-19 pandemic. This is likely because reported 2020 public EDEE was inflated due to the reporting of emergency remote learning. The reported decline in public institutions' EDEE marks movement towards a return to pre-pandemic levels (52.7% in 2019).

- Public institutions represented 59.5% (2,401,795) in 2022 compared to 61.8% (2,632,779) of total reported EDEE in 2021.
- Private non-profit institutions represented 26.9% (1,085,134) of total reported EDEE in 2022 compared to 25.1% (1,067,601) in 2021.
- Private for-profit institutions represented 13.7% (551,614) of total reported EDEE in 2022, compared to 13.1% (557,948) in 2021.
- The five tribal institutions represented 924 (0.0%) of total reported EDEE in 2022 compared to 478 (0.0%) of total EDEE in 2021. Two additional tribal institutions began participating in SARA in 2022.

Total Reported EDEE for 2021 and 2022 are presented in Figure 8.

Figure 8. Total Reported EDEE by Sector 2021-2022 (with in-state enrollment)



Reported Exclusively Distance Education Enrollment vs. Number of Institutions by Sector

The shift in the proportion of reported EDEE by sector is important to understand in the context of the associated proportion of participating SARA institutions by sector. [Historic analysis](#)³ of

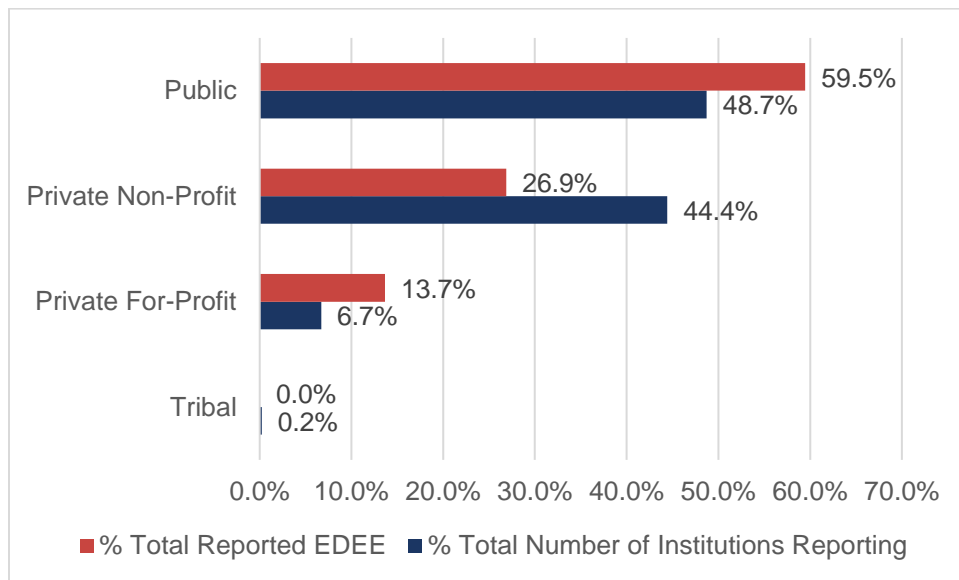
³ NC-SARA Data Report: Fall 2019 Distance Education Enrollments & 2019 Out-of-State Learning Placements, p.31-32. https://nc-sara.org/sites/default/files/files/2021-01/NC-SARA.AnnualDataReport.December2020_01.06.21.pdf. (Retrieved 7/18/2023.)

reported EDEE by sector has revealed that public institutions represent the majority of participating institutions as well as the majority of reported EDEE.

- Public institutions represented nearly half (48.7%) of institutions and 59.5% of reported EDEE in 2022.
- Private non-profits represented 44.4% of reporting institutions and 26.9% of EDEE reported in 2022.
- Private for-profit institutions represented 6.7% of institutions and 13.7% of reported EDEE in 2022.
- Tribal institutions represented 0.2% of institutions and 0.0% of reported EDEE in 2022.

Figure 9 provides details of reported EDEE and the number of institutions by sector.

Figure 9. Reporting EDEE vs. Number of Institutions by Sector (with in-state enrollment)



Out-of-State Exclusively Distance Education Enrollment by Sector

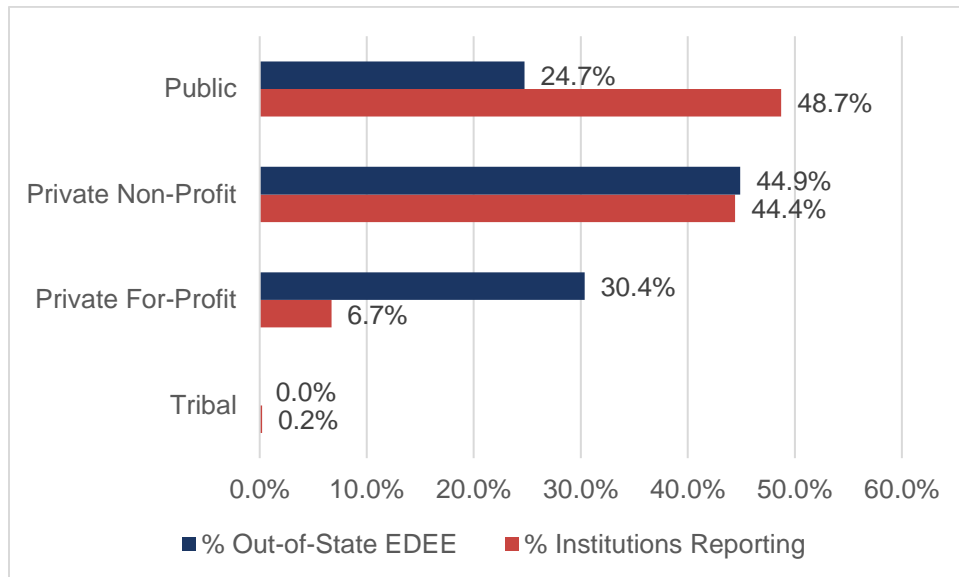
Because SARA was created to facilitate distance education across state lines, another measure of distance education activity that NC-SARA has been collecting since 2015 is **out-of-state** EDEE. There were 1,659,309 out-of-state EDEE at SARA-participating institutions.

For Fall 2022:

- Private non-profit institutions continued to report the largest out-of-state EDEE with 44.9% of the total (744,817);
- Private for-profit institutions reported 30.4% out-of-state EDEE (503,645);
- Public institutions reported 24.7% out-of-state EDEE (410,673);
- Tribal institutions reported 0% out-of-state EDEE (174).

The proportions remain consistent by sector over time, indicating that public institutions are more likely to enroll in-state students exclusively via distance education, while private non-profits are more likely to enroll out-of-state students. The sector enrollment percentages and proportion of reported enrollment by sector for 2022 are presented in Figure 10.

Figure 10. 2022 Reporting Institutions and Out-of-State EDEE by Sector

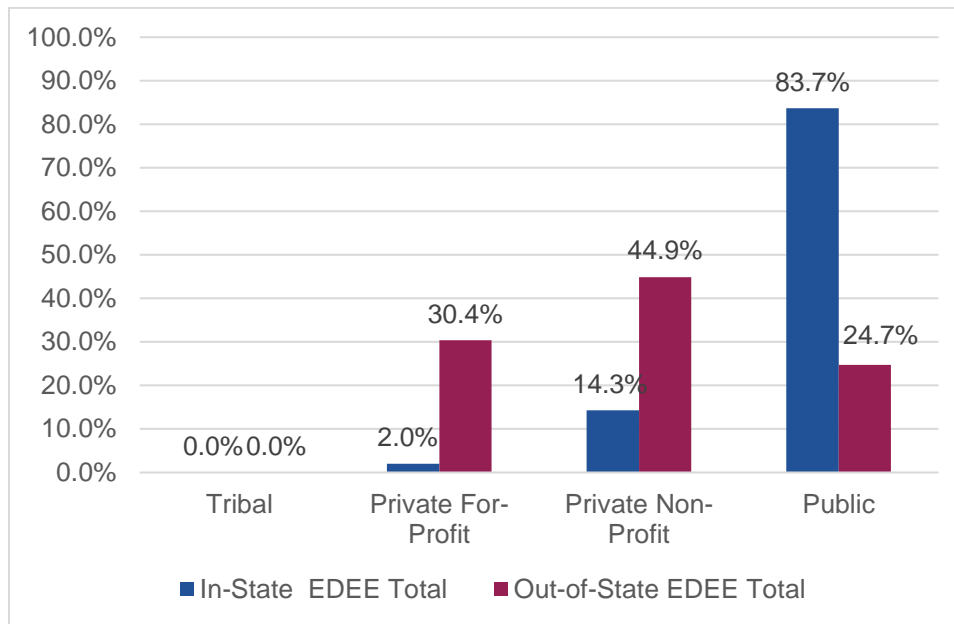


Analysis of EDEE by sector is important to understand the complete picture of distance education activity among SARA-participating institutions. These data reveal considerable variation among the sectors when comparing in-state and out-of-state EDEE.

- **Out-of-State:** Consistent with prior years' reporting, out-of-state EDEE is led by the private non-profit sector with 44.9% (42.9% in 2021), while private for-profits reported 30.4% of out-of-state EDEE in 2022 (30.7% in 2021).
- **In-State:** Public institutions represented 83.7% of reported in-state EDEE in 2022, compared to 84.6% in 2021. Public institutions have historically dwarfed the other sectors in reported in-state exclusively distance education enrollment.⁴

Figure 11 displays the reported EDEE sector data for 2022.

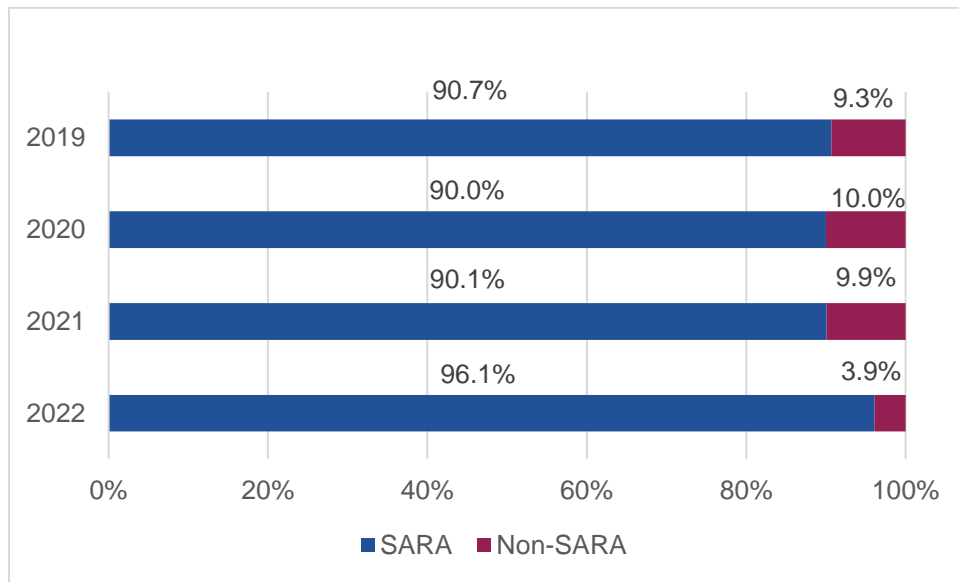
⁴ NC-SARA Annual Data Report: Technical Report for Fall 2021 Exclusively Distance Education Enrollment & 2021 Out-of-State Learning Placements, p.20. https://nc-sara.org/sites/default/files/files/2021-01/NC-SARA.AnnualDataReport.December2020_01.06.21.pdf. (Retrieved 7/18/2023.)

Figure 11. 2022 Reported Out-of-State & In-State EDEE by Sector

Out-of-State Exclusively Distance Education Enrollment by SARA and Non-SARA States

Institutions participating in SARA reported 1,659,309 out-of-state EDEEs, 96.1% in SARA states and 3.9% in non-SARA states (California and the territories not participating in SARA). This compares to 90.1% in SARA states and 9.9% in non-SARA states in 2021 and 90.0% in SARA states and 10.0% in 2020. The 2022 data represents a shift towards more EDEE reported in SARA states than has been the case historically. The ratio of SARA to non-SARA EDEE has been at approximately 90% to 10% since data reporting began in 2015.

SARA-participating institutions reported 1,500,912 students enrolled exclusively in distance education through SARA in 2022. This is a decline from the 1,502,175 reported in 2021. Figure 12 presents the EDEE data for 2019 through 2022 for SARA and non-SARA out-of-state EDEE. The proportion of SARA and non-SARA enrollments remained relatively consistent throughout the COVID-19 pandemic. However, there is an increase in the proportion of reported SARA EDEE for 2022. The data in terms of SARA and non-SARA enrollments may be fully explored through NC-SARA's Data Dashboards on the [NC-SARA website](#).

Figure 12. 2019-2022 Reported SARA and Non-SARA States' EDEE (out-of-state only)

State Summary of Exclusively Distance Education Enrollment Data

Institutions participating in SARA report their EDEE by state for each state outside of their own physical location. The state level EDEE data reported by SARA-participating institutions are available in the NC-SARA Data Dashboards on the [NC-SARA website](#).

The state level data does not include in-state EDEE. Although total EDEE data are important in general, the focus of SARA is distance education activity **across** state lines.

Figure 13 provides each state's:

- State level SARA EDEE (out-of-state EDEE, SARA states).
- State-level non-SARA EDEE (out-of-state EDEE, non-SARA states).

Total reported EDEE in the state by other SARA participating institutions (a measure of in-state EDEE for that SARA state).

Total state level data are available in the NC-SARA Data Dashboards on the [NC-SARA website](#).

Figure 13. Reported State Level EDEE (out-of-state only)

State/District/ Territory	Total Reported EDEE in SARA States/Territory	Total Reported EDEE in Non- SARA States/Territory	Total Reported EDEE	EDEE in State Reported by Other SARA Institutions
Alabama	28,686	1,965	30,651	26,195
Alaska	703	90	793	7,594
Arizona	256,708	44,464	301,172	24,464
Arkansas	6,877	231	7,108	17,598
Colorado	59,742	6,180	65,922	32,353
Connecticut	17,319	1,022	18,341	19,713
Delaware	7,816	595	8,411	6,389
District of Columbia	47,788	2,233	50,021	5,580
Florida	56,177	6,130	62,307	103,912
Georgia	41,852	4,234	46,086	80,257
Hawaii	1,757	1,235	2,992	10,995
Idaho	15,371	2,265	17,636	10,746
Illinois	38,332	3,860	42,192	58,982
Indiana	62,500	4,430	66,930	27,387
Iowa	9,993	715	10,708	12,607
Kansas	16,125	812	16,937	14,256
Kentucky	21,465	838	22,303	20,517
Louisiana	11,488	639	12,127	24,458
Maine	8,153	480	8,633	6,230
Maryland	33,978	3,894	37,872	40,921
Massachusetts	20,231	2,565	22,796	29,285
Michigan	7,673	693	8,366	37,362
Minnesota	49,989	3,611	53,600	20,543
Mississippi	6,698	284	6,982	16,828
Missouri	27,700	1,997	29,697	30,707
Montana	1,197	253	1,450	6,413
Nebraska	14,672	1,357	16,029	7,336
Nevada	789	538	1,327	2,980
New Hampshire	139,443	10,699	150,142	6,189
New Jersey	8,452	682	9,134	47,349
New Mexico	4,702	610	5,312	11,463
New York	28,959	2,454	31,413	70,398
North Carolina	7,329	456	7,785	67,094
North Dakota	5,122	312	5,434	5,277
Ohio	43,999	8,076	52,075	52,419

State/District/ Territory	Total Reported EDEE in SARA States/Territory	Total Reported EDEE in Non- SARA States/Territory	Total Reported EDEE	EDEE in State Reported by Other SARA Institutions
Oklahoma	7,247	517	7,764	19,743
Oregon	9,922	2,788	12,710	17,831
Pennsylvania	33,182	3,073	36,255	61,484
Puerto Rico	5,834	89	5,923	6,727
Rhode Island	3,173	203	3,376	6,298
South Carolina	4,882	279	5,161	37,902
South Dakota	2,832	163	2,995	4,322
Tennessee	12,170	319	12,489	40,928
Texas	19,748	3,292	23,040	150,762
U.S. Virgin Islands	10	3	13	586
Utah	143,062	16,261	159,323	16,730
Vermont	3,164	339	3,503	3,279
Virginia	80,417	4,314	84,731	61,871
Washington	4,908	1,058	5,966	53,941
West Virginia	49,269	4,107	53,376	9,538
Wisconsin	10,591	658	11,249	21,856
Wyoming	716	35	751	5,317
Totals	1,500,912	158,397	1,659,309	1,500,912

Top Ten Institutions by Size of Reported Exclusively Distance Education Enrollment

For 2022, the institutions that reported the largest EDEE are Western Governors University, Southern New Hampshire University, and University of Phoenix. These were the top three institutions based on reported EDEE in 2019 through 2022 as well. The complete list of SARA-participating institutions, including the ability to filter by sector, is available in the [NC-SARA Data Dashboards](#).

The ten institutions reporting the largest EDEE to NC-SARA in 2022 are shown in Figure 14.

Figure 14. Top Ten Institutions by Size of 2022 Total Reported EDEE

Institution Name	State	Sector	Reported SARA State EDEE	Reported Non-SARA State EDEE	Total Reported EDEE
Western Governors University	UT	Private Non-Profit	146,882	14,314	161,196
Southern New Hampshire University	NH	Private Non-Profit	144,828	10,653	155,481
University of Phoenix	AZ	Private For-Profit	76,978	11,717	88,695
Liberty University	VA	Private Non-Profit	76,274	3,300	79,574
Penn Foster College	AZ	Private For-Profit	73,841	4,978	78,819
Grand Canyon University	AZ	Private Non-Profit	65,489	11,459	76,948
Arizona State University	AZ	Public	52,291	11,915	64,206
University of Maryland Global Campus	MD	Public	47,072	2,109	49,181
American Public University System	WV	Private For-Profit	42,639	3,740	46,379
Purdue University Global	IN	Public	41,530	2,991	44,521

Out-of-State Learning Placements

NC-SARA's annual data reporting began requiring the reporting of out-of-state learning placements (OOSLP) in 2019 for OOSLP that took place in calendar year 2018. Details regarding the history of reported SARA OOSLP can be found in *Appendix B: Classification of Instructional Programs (CIP)* of this report. This section of the *NC-SARA Annual Data Technical Report* focuses on reported OOSLP.

Some institutions participate in SARA for the ability to offer OOSLP to their students, with no intention of offering courses or programs exclusively through distance education.

Out-of-State Learning Placements Defined

Out-of-state learning placements are on-ground out-of-state experiential learning activities. They include clinical rotations, student teaching, internships, and other similar activities, many of which are related to workforce development needs. They are also often required as part of obtaining a degree and/or license to practice in a particular profession. SARA allows reciprocity for certain OOSLP.

It is important to note that reporting includes on-ground students as well as distance education students' in-person OOSLP. Institutions do not currently report virtual or fully remote learning placements to NC-SARA.

NC-SARA uses the National Center for Educational Statistics (NCES) Classification of Instructional Programs (CIP) system to categorize and report OOSLP and requires reporting by the two-digit CIP code only. Those unfamiliar with CIP codes may reference the CIP website directly⁵ or Appendix B of this report for more information.

Criteria for Inclusion in Out-of-State Learning Placement Reporting

Institutions reported out-of-state learning placements that met the following criteria:

1. The placement started between January 1, 2022, and December 31, 2022.
2. The placement is outside the home state of the SARA institution.
3. The placement involves the physical presence of the student at the out-of-state location(s).
4. One or more of the following is true:
 - a. The placement is an activity required for degree completion.
 - b. The placement is an activity required for professional licensure.
 - c. The placement is offered for credit.
 - d. The placement is offered for a fee.

Placements that meet the above criteria should be reported as follows:

- Disaggregate by two-digit CIP code;
- Disaggregate by the state in which the placement was made.

⁵ U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Educational Statistics, *The Classification of Instructional Programs*, <https://nces.ed.gov/ipeds/cipcode/default.aspx?y=56>. (Retrieved 07/17/2023.)

Total Out-of-State Learning Placements Reported

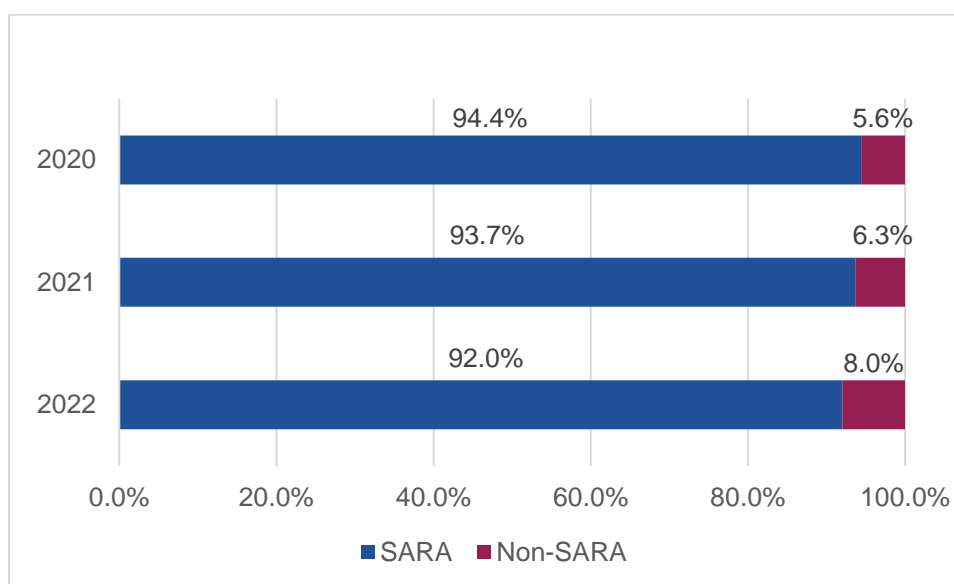
There were 372,040 OOSLP reported by participating institutions for the calendar year 2022, an increase of 17.9% from the 315,504 reported in 2021. Reported OOSLP has continued to increase since 2021 after a decline during the COVID-19 pandemic in 2020.

There were 786 institutions (33.2%) that reported no OOSLP in 2022. This is a decline from 817 institutions (35.4%) reporting zero OOSLP in 2021.

SARA and Non-SARA States' Out-of-State Learning Placement Data

For 2022, 342,389 (92.0%) of reported learning placements took place in SARA states and 29,651 (8.0%) took place in non-SARA states. These data are consistent with the reported SARA and non-SARA states' OOSLP reported in 2021 and prior years. Please see Figure 15 for additional details; SARA and non-SARA states' OOSLP are also available to explore in the interactive NC-SARA Data Dashboards on the [NC-SARA website](#).

Figure 15. 2020-2022 Reported SARA and Non-SARA States' OOSLP



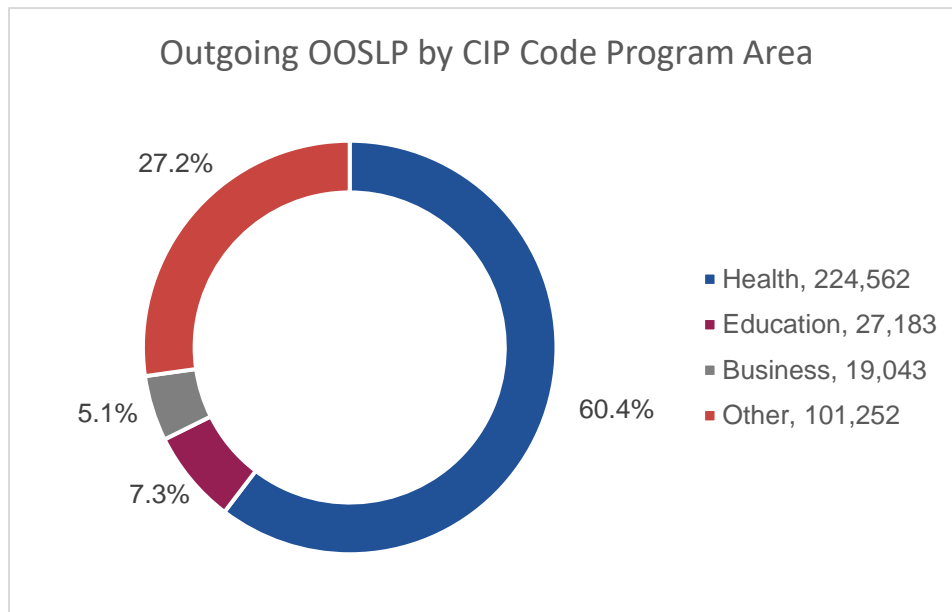
Reported CIP Code Program Areas

The CIP program area with the largest number of OOSLP was Health Professions and Related Programs (CIP #51), with 224,562 placements, representing 60.4% of all placements reported. Education (CIP #13) had the second highest number of placements with 27,183 placements, representing 7.3% of the total placements, followed by Business (CIP #52) with 19,043 placements, which accounted for 5.1% of reported placements. All other program area CIP codes combined accounted for 27.2% of reported learning placements. Figure 16 provides a graphic representation of the 2022 OOSLP data reported.

Historically, the proportion of reported OOSLP across CIP program areas has remained consistent. However, there are significant changes between 2021 and 2022 OOSLP reporting

within the program areas. Health professions reported a 22.9% increase; Education reported a 10.0% decline, and Business reported a 16.1% increase. The Other category remained consistent at 27.3% in 2021 and 27.2% in 2022. These are learning placements across state lines and do not necessarily represent trends that affect the availability of professions in these fields.

Figure 16. 2022 Outgoing OOSLP Reported by CIP Code Program Area



State Summary of Out-of-State Learning Placement Data

Because SARA stakeholders are often interested in the flow of students across state lines, the table in Figure 17 reports outgoing and incoming OOSLP for each member state.

Figure 17. State Summary of Out-of-State Learning Placement Data

State/Territory	Outgoing OOSLP (Reported OOSLP Sent FROM Institutions in State)	Incoming OOSLP (Reported OOSLP Sent TO State from Institutions in Other SARA States)
Alabama	9,275	4,080
Alaska	77	1,473
Arizona	24,452	8,384
Arkansas	3,134	3,113
Colorado	5,626	6,704
Connecticut	4,289	5,617
Delaware	1,171	4,050
District of Columbia	4,922	4,802
Florida	11,263	25,761
Georgia	5,077	13,367
Hawaii	859	1,471
Idaho	5,153	2,987
Illinois	19,361	15,536
Indiana	19,452	6,169
Iowa	5,741	3,710
Kansas	4,160	3,948
Kentucky	11,746	6,526
Louisiana	1,872	3,518
Maine	3,690	2,704
Maryland	2,513	9,518
Massachusetts	25,216	7,921
Michigan	4,891	7,986
Minnesota	16,055	9,308
Mississippi	2,716	3,661
Missouri	17,874	8,058
Montana	424	1,578
Nebraska	4,249	2,168
Nevada	781	4,894
New Hampshire	5,034	3,065
New Jersey	2,034	14,300
New Mexico	1,858	2,046
New York	14,662	17,313
North Carolina	4,772	14,311
North Dakota	2,404	2,300

State/Territory	Outgoing OOSLP (Reported OOSLP Sent FROM Institutions in State)	Incoming OOSLP (Reported OOSLP Sent TO State from Institutions in Other SARA States)
Ohio	14,832	11,443
Oklahoma	1,149	2,915
Oregon	2,289	4,626
Pennsylvania	21,047	10,849
Puerto Rico	996	543
Rhode Island	2,974	2,362
South Carolina	3,905	9,410
South Dakota	1,435	1,491
Tennessee	13,907	10,150
Texas	6,708	19,125
U.S. Virgin Islands	12	50
Utah	11,189	5,312
Vermont	1,324	1,431
Virginia	22,226	9,094
Washington	3,146	10,972
West Virginia	4,757	2,731
Wisconsin	13,054	6,195
Wyoming	287	1,343
Total SARA States	372,040	342,389
Total Non-SARA States		29,653
Total OOSLP Reported	372,040	372,040

Top Ten Institutions by Size of Reported Outgoing Out-of-State Learning Placements

For 2022, the institutions that reported the most outgoing OOSLP are Northeastern University, Grand Canyon University, and ECPI University. In addition to the state summary data, OOSLP are reported at the institution level by NC-SARA. The reported OOSLP data for the complete list of SARA-participating institutions is available in the [NC-SARA Data Dashboards](#). The ten institutions reporting the largest number OOSLP to NC-SARA in 2022 are reported in Figure 18.

Figure 18. Top 10 Institutions by Size of Reported Outgoing OOSLP

Institution Name	State	Sector	Reported
Northeastern University	MA	Private Non-Profit	13,130
Grand Canyon University	AZ	Private Non-Profit	12,532
ECPI University	VA	Private For-Profit	8,114
Purdue University	IN	Public	8,079
Herzing University	WI	Private Non-Profit	7,527
Liberty University	VA	Private Non-Profit	7,384
Western Governors University	UT	Private Non-Profit	7,181
A. T. Still University of Health Sciences	MO	Private Non-Profit	6,480
Rasmussen University	MN	Private For-Profit	6,272
Chamberlain University	IL	Private For-Profit	5,844

Conclusion

NC-SARA staff acknowledge and thank the staff at reporting SARA-participating institutions for their efforts to accurately collect and report EDEE and OOSLP data for 2022. We also thank our State Portal Entity (SPE) and regional compact partners who assist in the data collection effort annually by providing additional communications and follow-up with institutions who have questions about data reporting.

Both reported EDEE and OOSLP have increased significantly since 2019, with a slight decline in EDEE and a significant increase in OOSLP between 2021 and 2022. The data suggests a reporting system that is working as designed and provides data that helps describe the distance education landscape.

NC-SARA continues to improve the transparency of and access to the SARA data collected annually. The [NC-SARA Data Dashboards](#) debuted in 2020, and in 2021, institution-level OOSLP data were included in the dashboards for the first time. It is our sincere hope that institutional staff and other stakeholders find ways to use the SARA data to inform their own distance education strategies to better meet the needs of the students they serve.

Continuous improvement in the reporting system and process is a priority for the NC-SARA staff. NC-SARA staff work with the Data Advisory Committee, the Institution Advisory Committee, and other stakeholders to develop and implement improvements in the systems, processes, and communication about data reporting for all SARA stakeholders. The hard work of the SPE staff, regional compact staff, and NC-SARA staff to improve the process for annual reporting are contributing to improvement in all aspects of SARA data reporting.

APPENDICES

Appendix A. Technical Notes

IPEDS Distance Education Definitions

The following definitions are provided by The Department of Education, National Center for Educational Statistics (NCES)⁶.

Distance Education – Education that uses one or more technologies to deliver instruction to students who are separated from the instructor and to support regular and substantive interaction between the students and the instructor synchronously or asynchronously. Technologies used for instruction may include the following: Internet; one-way and two-way transmissions through open broadcasts, closed circuit, cable, microwave, broadband lines, fiber optics, satellite, or wireless communication devices; audio conferencing; and video cassette, DVDs, and CD-ROMs, if the cassette, DVDs, and CD-ROMs are used in a course in conjunction with the technologies listed above.

Distance Education Course – A course in which the instructional content is delivered exclusively via distance education. Requirements for coming to campus for orientation, testing, or academic support services do not exclude a course from being classified as distance education.

Distance Education Program – A program for which all the required coursework for program completion is able to be completed via distance education courses.

NC-SARA Uses IPEDS Definitions

NC-SARA relies on the existing definitions and reporting schedules required by the federal government's [Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System](#) (IPEDS). Using these existing structures and processes, which are likely familiar to institutional staff, is part of NC-SARA's commitment to not creating an undue additional reporting burden for participating institutions. IPEDS data collection is managed by the U.S. Department of Education through the [National Center for Education Statistics](#) (NCES), and reporting is required of all institutions of higher education that offer federal financial aid in the U.S. states and territories. NCES has been requiring institutions to report distance education data since the IPEDS Fall Enrollment (EF) reporting in 2012. These data are the basis of institutional exclusively distance education enrollment reporting to NC-SARA.

IPEDS Distance Education Reporting

IPEDS defines a distance education course as "a course in which the instructional content is delivered exclusively via distance education. Requirements for coming to campus for orientation, testing, or academic support services do not exclude a course from being classified as distance education."⁷ The definition also includes detail regarding delivery modality. NC-

⁶ U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, *IPEDS Glossary for 2022-2023 Data Collection System* <https://surveys.nces.ed.gov/ipeds/Downloads/Forms/IPEDSGlossary.pdf>, (Retrieved 7/18/2023.)

⁷ U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, *IPEDS Glossary for 2022-23 Data Collection System* <https://surveys.nces.ed.gov/ipeds/public/glossary>. (Retrieved 7/25/2023.)

SARA uses the IPEDS definition of distance education. Using the IPEDS definition and data is meant to lessen the reporting burden for participating institutions, since most are already reporting to IPEDS.

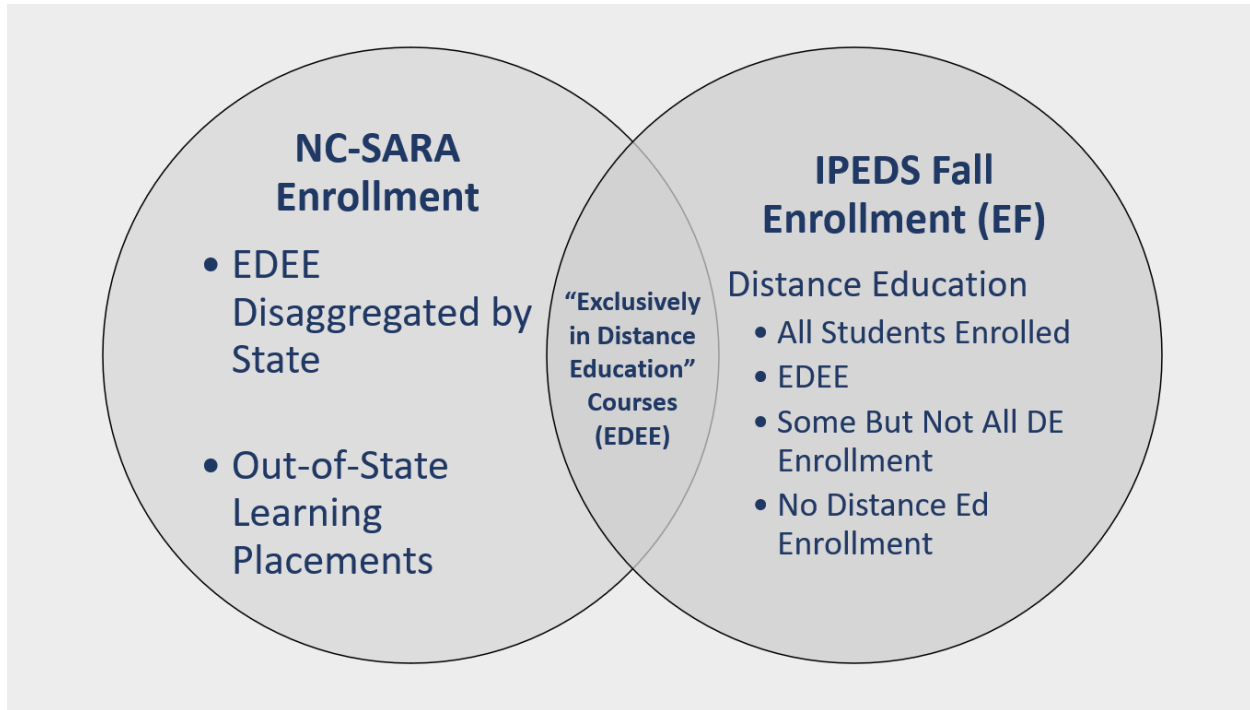
Importantly, IPEDS distance education reporting requires providing enrollment data in four categories. These categories are listed below:

- All students enrolled
- Students enrolled exclusively in distance education courses
- Students enrolled in some but not all distance education courses
- Student not enrolled in any distance education courses

In addition to these fields, the data provided for students enrolled exclusively in distance education courses is disaggregated by where the students are located. These five IPEDS categories include:

- Students enrolled exclusively in distance education courses and are located in the same state/jurisdiction as institution
- Students enrolled exclusively in distance education courses and are located in U.S. not in the same state/jurisdiction as institution
- Students enrolled exclusively in distance education courses and are located in U.S. state/jurisdiction unknown
- Students enrolled exclusively in distance education courses and are located outside U.S.
- Students enrolled exclusively in distance education courses and location of student unknown/not reported

NC-SARA distance education enrollment reporting includes only students enrolled exclusively in distance education courses. NC-SARA requests that institutions disaggregate the EDEE data reported to IPEDS by state for purposes of NC-SARA annual distance education enrollment reporting. For the purposes of this report, the term “distance education” is used synonymously with the IPEDS “exclusively in distance education”. Figure 19 shows the distance education enrollment data reported to IPEDS and to NC-SARA.

Figure 19. Reporting Requirements of NC-SARA and IPEDS EF

NC-SARA Requires Out-of-State Learning Placement (OOSLP) Reporting

Enrollment captured and reported under the SARA exclusively distance education reporting provisions did not include on-the-ground, out-of-state learning placements (e.g., clinical rotations, student teaching, internships, etc.) until 2018. Learning placement activities are an important part of many academic programs and the number and extent of such placements are of great interest and concern to educators, practitioners, licensing bodies, and state regulators. Therefore, it was agreed during the formation of SARA, that after successfully creating the process for reporting exclusively distance education enrollments, NC-SARA would create a similar process for collecting and reporting out-of-state learning placements (OOSLP).

Unlike exclusively distance education enrollment reporting, which is also captured through IPEDS, there is no existing mechanism for gathering and reporting OOSLP.

SARA does not currently require reporting of virtual learning placements.

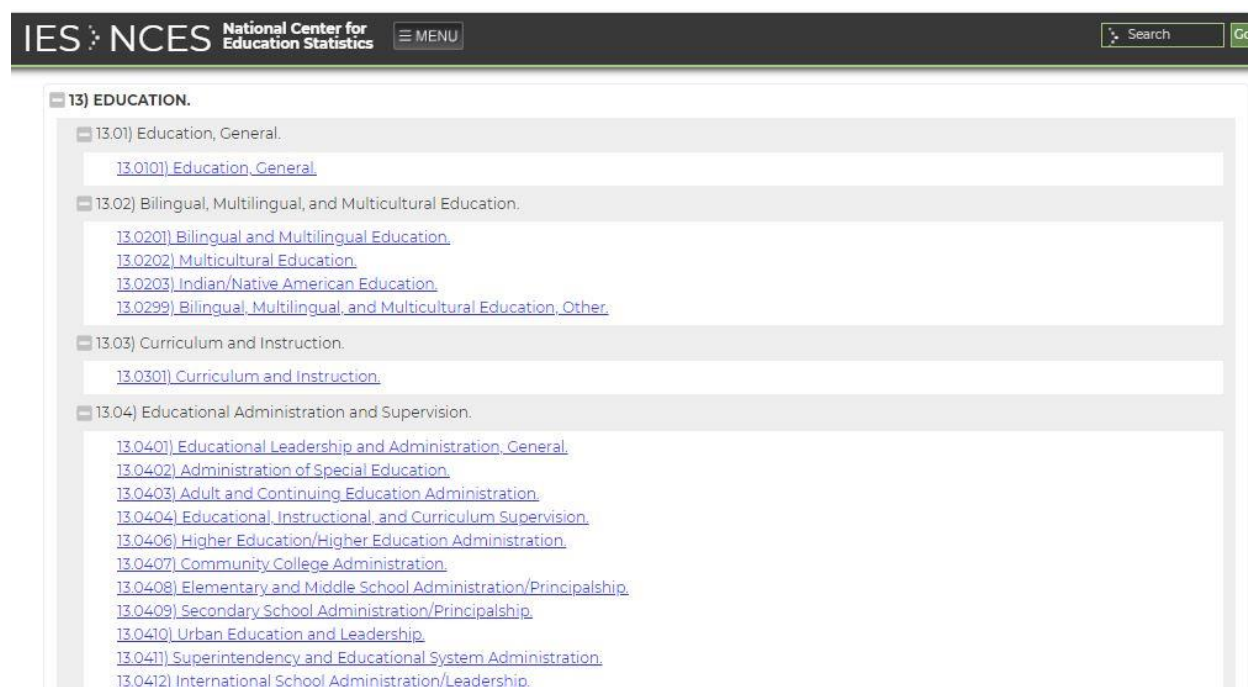
Appendix B. Classification of Instructional Programs (CIP)

One fundamental characteristic of SARA is its reliance on certain previously existing, workable mechanisms (such as accreditation, federal financial responsibility composite scores, etc.), rather than inventing similar mechanisms anew. Because it is used by almost all U.S. institutions of higher education, NC-SARA is using the Classification of Instructional Programs (CIP) system to categorize and report OOSLP.

According to National Center for Education Statistics (NCES), the Classification of Instructional Programs (CIP) provides a taxonomic scheme that supports the accurate tracking and reporting of fields of study and program completion activity⁸. Developed by NCES in 1980, the CIP has been revised five times, most recently in 2019 for use in 2020. The 2020 CIP Codes are used for reporting to NC-SARA beginning with 2020 OOSLP reporting in the spring of 2021.

The highest order of the taxonomy has 47 two-digit CIP codes that represent program areas. Each program area code may be further subdivided, resulting in either two digits (xx), four digits (xx.xx), or six digits (xx.xxxx). Figure 20 below is a screenshot that illustrates the initial portion of the CIP code for program area Education⁹.

Figure 20. CIP Code Example for Education (CIP #13.0)



Institutions have already assigned CIP codes to their academic programs, and NC-SARA does not expect or desire institutions to revisit those decisions for the purpose of SARA reporting.

⁸ Classification of Instructional Programs (CIP 2020). (n.d.) Retrieved from NCES website. <https://nces.ed.gov/ipeds/cipcode/browse.aspx?y=56>, (Retrieved 7/25/2023.)

⁹ Classification of Instructional Programs (CIP 2020). (n.d.) Retrieved from NCES website. <https://nces.ed.gov/ipeds/cipcode/cipdetail.aspx?y=56&cip=13>, (Retrieved 7/25/2023.)

Rather, SARA institutions are to report learning placements categorized by the codes already assigned to the related programs.

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