



PUBLIC SCHOOLS OF NORTH CAROLINA

DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC INSTRUCTION | Mark Johnson, *Superintendent of Public Instruction*

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MEMORANDUM

TO: Directors, Exceptional Children Programs
Lead Administrators, Charter Schools
Directors, State Operated Programs
Directors, Private Educational Agencies

FROM: Sherry H. Thomas, Director

DATE: February 11, 2020

ANNUAL NORTH CAROLINA DEAF-BLIND CENSUS

It is time for the Exceptional Children Division to collect data for the Annual Census of Students with Deaf-Blindness which is a requirement of the Office of Special Education and Rehabilitative Services (OSERS) Deaf-Blind Technical Assistance Grant. The child count is a point-in-time snapshot and should reflect the infants, toddlers, and youth identified and eligible for services from the state deafblind project on December 1, 2019. The census will open February 17, 2020, and close March 17, 2020.

Deaf blindness is often mistaken for the total inability to see or hear. Most individuals are not totally blind and profoundly deaf; rather, have varying degrees of hearing and visual loss. When presented in children, this could result in "severe communication and other developmental and educational needs that cannot be accommodated in special education programs solely for children with deafness or children with blindness" (34 CFR 300.8 (c) (2), 2006) or multiple disabilities. Therefore, students may be reported on the Deaf-blind Census if they have been found eligible under the category of deaf-blindness or another category such as multiple disabilities.

The Exceptional Children Division will no longer use Qualtrics when collecting personally identifiable information (PII); a previous data collection process is being implemented for this year's census. Each LEA will be provided with a copy of their data submitted last year. This will be a password protected Excel spreadsheet. Each LEA should update any changes on the spreadsheet for each student (e.g. student moved, new grade, student graduated, etc.). A separate Excel spreadsheet will be provided for completion for new qualifying students this year. A drop-down menu will be available for most items for convenience.

To recap, the following outlines the new data collection procedure for this year's census:

1. February 17-19, 2020, EC Director receives the following:
 - Spreadsheet of data from previous year's census
 - Blank spreadsheet to record any NEW qualifying students
2. February 20-March 17, 2020, complete the following:
 - Review the information of qualifying students on your previous year's submission and update
 - Use the blank spreadsheet to add any NEW qualifying students to the census as of December 1, 2019
3. Save the spreadsheets with the same password protection that was used to open the document and email them both to Dottie Snyder, dorothy.snyder@dpi.nc.gov. Please use the subject line "2019 Deaf-blind Census"

4. The deadline to submit the data is March 17, 2020.

For LEAs or programs who have no qualifying students to report, a No Students to Report form, should be returned by March 17, 2020, to Dottie Snyder at the email address above. For your convenience, this form is attached.

LEAs are strongly encouraged to complete these requirements that provide educators, students and families with resources and training opportunities.

Information and instructions regarding the Annual Deaf-Blind Census will be posted on the EC Division website by February 17, 2020, <https://ec.ncpublicschools.gov/disability-resources/deaf-blind/census>. If you have questions about the NC Deaf-Blind Project, student eligibility, or the Annual Deaf-Blind Census, please contact Dottie Snyder, Co-Director of the North Carolina Deaf-Blind Project, 919-807-3690, dorothy.snyder@dpi.nc.gov.

ST/SV/ds
Attachment

EXCEPTIONAL CHILDREN DIVISION

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