



Weekly Update
March 22, 2023

News!

Save the Date: Retirement Celebration for Sherry Thomas!

The Office of Exceptional Children is honored to celebrate the retirement of Sherry Thomas, after 37 years of service to North Carolina. A retirement celebration will take place on April 24, 2023 from 1:00 to 4:00pm at 301 N Wilmington Street in Raleigh, NC.

Given space limitations, local educators are cordially invited to attend virtually, [via this link](#) to share retirement wishes with Sherry.

North Carolina 7th Annual Inclusion Summit

The North Carolina 7th Annual Inclusion Summit, June 26-27th, 2023, in Cullowhee NC is accepting Conference Proposals through April 15, 2023. See flyer for more information. [Click Here](#) for registration information to attend. **(ATTACHED)**

Items of Interest

Grant Meetings in Lieu of May Director/Coordinator Meetings

Please see the attachment concerning open house IDEA grant support meetings in lieu of May Director/Coordinator meetings. Please invite your finance director to work collaboratively with OEC staff on your PSU's grant submission **(ATTACHED)**.

SiMR Root Cause Analysis Tip of the Week

As we mentioned in the SiMR Self-Assessment Root Cause Analysis overview at March Institute and repeat virtual session on March 17 (find links to the recording and all the slide decks on the [SiMR Self-Assessment webpage](#)), we saw a statewide opportunity to improve the Precise Problems Statements. Some specific findings for improving Precise Problems Statements were:

- statement not connected to data in the analysis
- statement not related to improving literacy outcomes or opportunity gaps
- statement does not point to next steps/support coherent root cause analysis
- no actionable problem identified
- statement is broad/vague

Without an actionable, precise problem statement, we risk an inefficient and potentially off-target investigation of root cause. PSUs may want to consider reviewing and refining their Data Analysis Precise Problem Statement. This [self-review tool](#) from this [slide deck](#) may be helpful. You do not need to re-submit your Precise Problems Statement if you revise; you will have an opportunity to share your updated version when you submit your Root Cause Analysis by July 31, 2023.



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Please don't hesitate to reach out to your Regional Coordinator or any member of your OEC regional data team if you'd like to help with revisions. You can also bring ideas for changes to any of the upcoming Root Cause Analysis office hours (see below for details) and get support there.

Root Cause Analysis Office Hours at <https://ncgov.webex.com/meet/lauren.holahan>

DATE	TIME
April 4, 2023	3:00p
April 13, 2023	10:30a
April 28, 2023	8:30a
May 15, 2023	12:00p
May 25, 2023	10:30a
June 6, 2023	3:00p
June 21, 2023	8:30a
July 11, 2023	12:30p
July 21, 2023	8:30a

Autism Support Team Meeting

Autism Support Team (AST) meetings are for those Public School Units (PSUs) who maintain an AST for the purpose of building capacity in effective implementation of services to students with Autism Spectrum Disorder. This meeting will focus on the critical components that are needed to pursue that goal. Participants will receive updates from the NCDPI Autism Team as well as time to network with other PSUs.

The meetings will be held from 9:00 a.m. - 3:30 p.m. on the following dates and locations:

Date	Regions	Locations
May 2, 2023	Northwest and Western	Morganton
May 3, 2023	Piedmont-Triad and Southwest	Asheboro
May 4, 2023	North Central and Sandhills	Lillington
May 9, 2023	Northeast and Southeast	Williamston



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It is recommended that teams attend in their assigned region. If this is not feasible, it is required that all team members sign up and attend the same session as there will be opportunities during this meeting for ASTs to work collaboratively on PSU specific application of content.

Registration can be accessed at this [link](#) and will close on April 21, 2023. Attendance for the full day is required in order to earn 0.5 Continuing Education Credits (CEUs). Please email asdteam@dpi.nc.gov or contact your NCDPI Consultant for Autism with any inquiries

Music Braille Code

Music Braille Code is a specialized, unique code that differs from literary and mathematical braille. For students who require braille and are taking electives in music and/or band, it is important to ensure access to the curriculum. Access may include instruction in Music Braille Code and provision of appropriate Braille materials.

Producing or transcribing Music Braille Code requires a skill set that braillists may not acquire through traditional training programs; therefore, some Districts are finding it most efficient and timely to outsource the production of content requiring Music Braille Code. [Correction Enterprises](#) is one of the State's Accessible Media Producers (AMP) that is able to produce Music Braille Code and provide physical copies or electronic files for embossing by your local braillist. If your District is contracting for braille services from a provider other than Correction Enterprises, they may be able to provide Music Braille Code if it is needed.

For additional information about Music Braille Code, contact Consultants for Visual Impairment, [Dr. Alan Chase](#) or [Crystal Patrick](#).

CECLI Registration

Please see the attached registration notice for the Charter EC Leadership Institute (CECLI) (**ATTACHED**)

ICYMI

Save the Date - EC Office Hours: Responding to Formal Written State Complaints

The Dispute Resolution Consultants will host a micro-PD session regarding how to respond when formal written state complaints are filed. The use of Informal/formal dispute resolution and how to develop the PSU's response to the actual complaint within the required timelines will be addressed. Given the heightened activity with state complaints this year and the anticipated increase at the end of the school year, it is highly recommended that the EC Director and/or compliance staff plan to attend. The session will be recorded and distributed afterward via the Weekly Update.

Date: Friday, April 21, 2023

Time: 9:00 a.m. - 10:30 a.m.

Virtual: <https://ncgov.webex.com/meet/polly.lilly>

No Registration Required



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1% Justification Memo

Please see the attached memo detailing the justification document required for those public school units that exceed the 1% threshold for students on an alternate assessment. The document must be completed electronically, scanned, and emailed to alternateassessment@dpi.nc.gov by July 6, 2023. **(ATTACHED)**

72nd Conference on Exceptional Children Call for Proposals

The [Call for Proposals](#) is now open for the 72nd Conference on Exceptional Children and will be open through May 26, 2023. Proposals are being accepted and considered for 90-minute instructional sessions and poster presentations. This year's theme is *Opportunities to Learn, Opportunities to Succeed*. Please see the memo attached in the 3-15-22 weekly update for all the details and share broadly. Questions may be directed to ECCConfProposals@dpi.nc.gov.

Federal Reporting

- **Federal Reporting Office Hours**

As a reminder, the Federal Reporting Office Hours sessions begin at 10:00 AM and 2:00 PM on the first Wednesday of each month. Please contact Khalilah O'Farrow-Boulware at khalilah.ofarrow@dpi.nc.gov if you have any questions. To join the webinar and ask any questions about upcoming federal reporting, please use the following link: <https://ncgov.webex.com/meet/khalilah.ofarrow>.

- **Federal Personnel Survey: Due by March 31st!**

The Federal Personnel data collection for the 2022-23 school year will be submitted via a revised survey that combines the Related Service Workforce survey with the federally required personnel data. Here is the link to access the survey: https://ncdpi.az1.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_5ooVIRpkycSzRWe. You may need to copy and paste this link into your browser to access the survey. The federal personnel survey opened on February 8, 2023, and **the due date has been extended to March 31, 2023**. For more information about completing the federal personnel survey, please review the recorded training sessions and PowerPoint presentation located on the [ECATS Federal Reporting](#) website at <https://www.dpi.nc.gov/districts-schools/classroom-resources/exceptional-children/every-child-accountability-tracking-system-ecats/reporting>.

- **April 2023 Child Count schedule**

Child Count Correction and Certification Schedule	
April Child Count opens for all LEAs, Charters, and SOPs	4/3/2023
Deadline for Certification Status	4/24/2023



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EC Directors or Data Managers should review the April 2023 Child Count Report for errors such as duplicate records, incorrect age, grade, setting, and disability. Please remember that when certifying the child count, the EC Director assures that all data submitted is accurate. According to the State Auditors, Directors of Exceptional Children Programs and Lead Administrators of Charter schools must certify the child count data. For this to occur, Directors of Exceptional Children Programs must use their “username” and “password” to log into ECATS to verify and certify the child count data. If the EC Director does not certify the count, a signed and scanned verification form must be submitted to Khalilah O’Farrow-Boulware at khalilah.ofarrow@dpi.nc.gov. All errors must be corrected, and all Public School Units must certify their submissions no later than April 24, 2023.

- **Child Count Report – Exceptions Tab**

An update to the Child Count Report Exceptions tab has been released to ECATS. This update includes an exception if the student is missing a Provision of Services Parental Consent event. By creating this exception, the Child Count Report now displays students who are eligible but missing the Provision of Services Parental Consent event. To correct this exception, submit the Parent/Guardian/Student Consent for Services Response and Parent/Guardian/Student Consent for Services Date Signed on the EC Process > Consent page in ECATS. Navigate to the Student History screen to ensure that the Provision of Services Parental Consent event is created. Then, navigate to the Student Level Record Review screen for the current child count report and click Update Report. This will resolve the Provision of Services Parental Consent Date is blank error in the child count. Please do not exclude these records from the count if the student is currently receiving services with a valid Provision of Parental Consent as excluding them will lower the total child count. If you have any questions about this update, please contact Khalilah O’Farrow-Boulware at khalilah.ofarrow@dpi.nc.gov or Kelley Blas at kelly.blas@dpi.nc.gov.

- **Significant Disproportionality, Indicators 4, 9/10**

Please see attached memo regarding notification of the 2023 Reporting Year notifications for Significant Disproportionality and Indicators 4, 9 and 10. These notifications have been consolidated for PSUs to easily access the status of educational equity data in their districts and understand the requirements around each notification. **(ATTACHED)**

- **Important Federal Reporting Reminder: Submission Timeliness**

If your district does not certify the data required for Indicators by the due date, your data may be certified by state staff. The integrity of the data is always at risk when the Department of Public Instruction must finalize the data for your district.

- **Information from Monday Message – 03/20/2023**

[Monday Message 3.20.23.pdf \(govdelivery.com\)](#)

Grant Information

- **IDEA American Rescue Plan (ARP) for PRC 185, PRC 186, and PRC 187**



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ARP funds allocated through PRC 185, PRC 186, and PRC 187 have a period of availability from 7/01/2021-9/30/2023. All ARP funds must be encumbered by 9/30/2023 and liquidated by 12/31/2023.

There is currently \$50,405,046.90 in PRC 185, \$3,328,605.34 in PRC 186, and \$952,294.88 in PRC 187. These funds, if not liquidated, will be reverted to the federal government. The Office of Exceptional Children is currently reviewing each PSU's current carryover to determine next steps which may include a reversion of funds and re-allocating to districts who have utilized their funds. Please work with your finance officer to create a plan for spending these funds. If you need assistance, please reach out to your fiscal consultant and/or your regional consultant.

● **Developmental Day Center (DDC) Funds Reminder**

To be eligible for Developmental Day Center funds, each student must be placed in the DDC as the least restrictive environment by the IEP team. As discussed in the Special Grants training, the placement decision should be documented on the IEP or Prior Written Notice. As with all placement decisions, the placement in the DDC should be reviewed and documented at all subsequent IEP team meetings for the student. Additional criteria for receiving DDC funds for preschool students are:

- Require special education 5 days a week and one of the following
- At least three hours each day of specially designed instruction or
- At least two hours each day of specially designed instruction with at least one weekly related service
- At least one hour each day of specially designed instruction with at least two weekly related services

For school aged students, the need for specially designed instruction should be 5 days a week for a minimum of four hours each day.

PK EC Items of Interest

Coming Soon! New Grant Program to Support New or Expanding Child Care Facilities

DCDEE is pleased to announce a new \$20 million investment in quality childcare and NC Pre-K is coming in April. These Expansion and Access (E&A) grants will be available for new classroom or program startup, quality improvement for existing NC Pre-K and childcare programs, and expanding access in existing programs. Details of the program are still being finalized. More to come!

Announcing: 2023 LICC Mini Grant Application

The LICC Mini Grants are \$800 grants that are made available from the North Carolina Infant Toddler Program (NC ITP) that can be used towards costs for implementing Child Find activities, family engagement activities and/or providing information to families on the transition from Early Intervention services to Special Education Preschool services. These funds can be used toward a variety of activities including, but not limited to, costs related to holding Child Find events, printing materials, paying stipends to families for participating in LICC meetings, or hosting training events for families or community partners who work with young children and families on topics such as Child Find, developmental milestones, the Early Intervention referral process, transition to preschool, and utilizing resources such as "Learn the Signs. Act Early" materials from the CDC.



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The application period opens on March 20, 2023 and closes on April 20, 2023. All LICCs are encouraged to apply. LICCs that receive this grant will be required to fill out an activity report on how the funds were utilized.

Grant Timeline:

Application period: March 20, 2023 - April 20, 2023

Notification of grant award: On or by April 24, 2023

Checks will be mailed to LICCs within 2 weeks of notification date

Activity Report emailed to LICC contact on application: September 1, 2023

Activity Report due date: September 29, 2023

Please contact Terri Leyton at tleyton@ecacmail.org with questions.

Webinar: Transforming Kindergarten into A Sturdy Bridge From Early Learning to K-12

The ED-funded [Center to Improve Social and Emotional Learning and School Safety](#) is hosting a [webinar](#) on March 22 from 3–4:30 p.m. EDT to discuss the importance of the transition to kindergarten and providing young children with equitable and developmentally appropriate environments.

Allocation for PRC 119- Preschool Targeted Assistance:

The Office of Early Learning and the Office of Exceptional Children are pleased to announce the release of PRC119 funds. These Targeted Assistance Funds are used to support:

1. *PSU Preschool Coordinator professional learning,*
2. *Preschool Pyramid Model (PPM) Implementation, and*
3. *Preschool Regional Representative Support*

Each PSU has been allotted \$2,000 to ensure their preschool leaders and/or staff participates in professional learning events designed to support preschool initiatives related to child find and serving children with disabilities. Funds can also support related travel expenses as applicable. Cumberland, Charlotte-Mecklenburg, Wake, Guilford, and Forsyth Counties will be allotted \$4,000 to support additional staff participation. PSU Preschool Coordinators who serve as regional representatives will also receive additional funds.

A PRC119 budget or budget amendment must be submitted that aligns with the NCDPI Finance allotment amount. Allocation amounts for PPM implementation, and regional support must align with the approved activities, spending plans and assurances. The use of a unique identifier would assist with tracking and efficiently monitoring the use of funds per spending initiative.

Per the Federal Grant Programs [Allotment Policy](#), current year awards for which a PSU is eligible have been reduced by the amount of funds carried over from the previous fiscal year. If you have any questions, please contact Keashia Walker at Keashia.Walker@dpi.nc.gov.

Compliance Tip of the Week

No Tip this week



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March Calendar Items/What's Due?

- **March 31st**

Federal Personnel Survey - Training Material

- **April 1st**

Request to order Braille EOG/EOC

- **April 1**

Child Count opens

Certify by: 4/24