



# PUBLIC SCHOOLS OF NORTH CAROLINA

DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC INSTRUCTION | Catherine Truitt, *Superintendent of Public Instruction*

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**TO:** Directors, Exceptional Children Programs  
Exceptional Children Coordinators, Charter Schools  
Directors, State-Operated Programs  
Directors, Private Educational Agencies  
Directors, Child Development Services Agencies

**FROM:** Sherry H. Thomas *STH*

**DATE:** January 26, 2022

## ANNUAL NORTH CAROLINA DEAF-BLIND CENSUS

It is time for the Exceptional Children Division and the NC Deaf-blind Project (NCDBP) to collect data for the Annual Census of Students with Deaf-Blindness which is a requirement of the Office of Special Education Programs (OSEP) Deaf-Blind Technical Assistance Grant. The child count is a point-in-time snapshot and should reflect the infants, toddlers, and youth identified from your December 1, 2021, headcount. The census will open February 15, 2022, and close March 15, 2022.

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 vision loss or may have a progressive condition such as Usher Syndrome. 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). **Students may be reported on the Deaf-blind Census if they have been found eligible under ANY one of the fourteen (14) categories as outlined in IDEA and have both a vision and hearing loss.**

The Exceptional Children Division has reorganized its NC Deaf-blind Project leadership within the Department of Public Instruction to strengthen its work throughout the state and to align collaborative priorities with its partners. Additionally, previous Census data collection efforts were cumbersome for those submitting information as well as challenging for the NCDBP to synthesize and report. **As a result, previous submissions will not be sent via an excel spreadsheet for updating this year. All entities will be required to submit information about all eligible students with deaf-blindness via a Qualtrics survey.** If an entity has no eligible students to report for the deaf-blind census, it must be indicated on the Qualtrics survey.

If you have questions about the NC Deaf-Blind Project, student eligibility, or the Annual Deaf-Blind Census, please contact Dr. Alan Chase, Co-Director of the North Carolina Deaf-Blind Project, 984-236-2582, [alan.chase@dpi.nc.gov](mailto:alan.chase@dpi.nc.gov).

ST/SV/ac

### EXCEPTIONAL CHILDREN DIVISION

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