EXCEPTIONAL CHILDREN
NC Department of Public Instruction

Weekly Update
January 4, 2023

News!

Happy New Year! We hope you had a wonderful holiday season. May the new year bring many blessings to each of you and your staff!

Postsecondary Education and Employment for Students and Youth with Disabilities
In response to the most frequently asked questions related to Transition Services, a resource document has been created to provide direct links to a series of weekly transition tips, as well as guidance related to the Summary of Performance and Age of Majority processes. Please share as appropriate with special educators and others in the field who work to support transition age students in the development of their individualized transition plan. **(ATTACHED)**

2023 Eastern Braille Challenge!
The 2023 Eastern NC Braille Challenge will be hosted by the State Library of North Carolina Accessible Books & Library Services. The Braille Challenge is for new to experienced braille readers and is an opportunity for students to challenge themselves, to see how they stand against other braille readers in their age group, and to meet old and new friends. A parent session will also be held so parents can connect with one another and learn from the presenters. The Eastern Braille Challenge will be held in Raleigh on Saturday, February 11, 2023, and the deadline to register is **Monday, January 9, 2023**. Please email clint.exum@ncdcr.gov with questions. Spanish versions of forms will be available soon. Please use this link to register.

Please note: information about the Western Braille Challenge will be coming soon.

Federal Reporting Preparation
In preparation for upcoming federal reporting, the following reports are available to check data each month for accuracy and address any possible errors that must be corrected prior to the certification schedule:

- April Child Count – April 2023 | 04/02/2022 – 04/01/2023
- Indicator 7 – August 2023 | 07/01/2022 – 06/30/2023
- Exit Count – September 2023 | 07/01/2022 – 06/30/2023
- Indicator 11 – October 2023 | 07/01/2022 – 06/30/2023

These reports are accessible in ECATS from Reporting > Standard Reports > Special Education tab. As a reminder, the schedule for the upcoming indicators and counts are listed in the Important Dates Calendar at the following link: https://www.dpi.nc.gov/districts-schools/classroom-resources/exceptional-children/every-child-accountability-tracking-system-ecats/reporting

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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:

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

World Braille Day and Braille Literacy Month!
January 4, 2023, is World Braille Day and the whole month is Braille Literacy Month! Find out where to learn braille, where to get free braille books, ideas to celebrate Louis Braille's birthday, and more resources on braille at Celebrate Braille Literacy Month! – Paths to Literacy

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Items of Interest

Community of Practice (COP) for Behavior Support Staff

The NC DPI Behavior Support Team is providing a professional learning COP in classroom management and Functional Behavior Assessment (FBA) and Behavior Intervention Plans (BIP). Due to a conflict with EC Directors Institute the second community of practice date has changed to February 22 2:00-3:30pm. The deadline to register is **January 9th at 12:00 pm EST**. Please see the associated document for additional information. **(ATTACHED)**

Educational Equity and Significant Disproportionality (EESD) Webinar Series
Session #4 of SY 2022-2023 EESD webinar series will be held on Thursday, January 26 from 3:00-4:30 pm. Each session is 90 minutes in length with questions and answers during the last 10 minutes of the webinar. This month's presenters are Lynn Makor, NC DPI Consultant for Psychological Services and Bridgette LeCompte, NC DPI Consultant for Occupational Therapy.

Please see the attached document for additional information on the upcoming webinar.
Questions regarding EESD Webinar series may be directed to Dreama.McCoy@dpi.nc.gov or Alysha.Gray@dpi.nc.gov. **(ATTACHED)**

Assistive Technology "Tech Tea Times" for Teachers of Students with Visual Impairments"
Texas School for the Blind and Visually Impaired (TSBVI) is hosting Tech Tea Times. These weekly one-hour gatherings are for individuals working with students with visual impairment who use various technologies to

access their curriculum. They will share new and exciting devices and advancements, helpful tips, tricks, and innovative lesson ideas for teaching students... all while building a robust community of practice for assistive technology support. Tech Tea Times will be on **Thursdays at 4:00 PM EST**. January sessions include JAWS and Abacus. If you have any questions, then please feel free to contact the host Donna Clemens.

Free Assistive Technology Webinars
Please see the list of free webinars for Assistive Technology (AT) to find a variety of different AT and accessibility topics for the month of January 2023.

ECU Assistive Technology - Professional and Continuing Education Course
During the spring semester ECU will be offering a Assistive Technology Foundations Course. This 5-week online, Continuing Education course will help participants learn about Assistive Technologies (AT): what it is, where to find it, how to match it to an individual's needs, how to prove it is effective, and avenues for procurement. Participants will engage in a variety of knowledge and skills activities and assessments. The first session will begin January 23rd. If you have any additional questions, please view the flier or contact Dr. Laura King at kinglau@ecu.edu.

Vocabulary Instruction for Students who are Deaf or Hard of Hearing
This professional development training will focus on the receptive and expressive vocabulary development of students with hearing loss of varying age ranges. This session will provide skills, strategies, and resources needed to teach vocabulary and word learning strategies to students who are deaf or hard of hearing. Participants will be granted 6 hours (0.6 CEU Credits) for attending this in-person training. **Space is limited for this face-to-face professional development.** If you are interested, please email your Regional Consultant for the Deaf & Hard of Hearing.

Date of Training: Friday January 27, 2023 (8:30am - 3:30pm)
Location: Winston-Salem, NC
To Register: Please email Virginia Madorin, at virginia.madorin@dpi.nc.gov

Date of Training: Friday April 21, 2023 (8:30am - 3:30pm)
Location: Raleigh, NC
To Register: Please email Nancy Woytowich, at nancy.woytowich@dpi.nc.gov

Professional Learning Opportunity for Special and General Educators
Title: Fostering Self-Advocacy in Students with Autism and Other Learning Differences Who Are Accessing the General Curriculum
When: January 25, 2023 from 1:00 p.m. to 4:00 p.m.
Target Audience: Special Educators, General Educators, School Administrators, Guidance Counselors, School Social Workers, and other school staff who work with students with disabilities.

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This professional learning opportunity will explore various factors that impact and support self-advocacy by students with autism and other learning differences who are accessing the general education curriculum. Presenters from the Autism Society of North Carolina will share the importance of teaching and facilitating self-advocacy skills to improve transition and post-secondary outcomes.
Registration Link: https://ncdpi.az1.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_2uwnJbWSGV9y4hE
Important: Registration will close on **January 18, 2023**. The link to access the webinar will be emailed to registrants one week prior to the event.

ICYMI

Coming Soon - Combined Expenditure Report
We are excited to announce that we are working on a Combined Expenditure Report to help you track all funds in PRC 118, PRC029, and PRC119! Be on the lookout for the Wednesday Communication announcing its release.

Federal Reporting
- **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.

Grant Information
- **IDEA American Rescue Plan (PRC 185, PRC 186, and PRC 187)**

New Grant Award Notifications (GANs) have been sent out through CCIP for PRC 185, PRC 186, and PRC 187. The previous GANs that were provided incorrectly stated that the Subaward Budget Period of Performance/Subaward Period ends on 9/30/2024. The newly issued GAN has the correct period of performance of 7/01/2021-9/30/2023 with a subaward amount of 0.00 because all funds are carryover funds with no new allotment. All funds must be encumbered by 9/30/2023 and spent by 12/31/2023.

- **IDEA Funds and Overtime Pay**

Overtime pay for classified employees is an allowable expense in federal grants. For the classified employee to receive overtime pay out of federal funds the employee is required to be serving students with disabilities 100% of the time. If the employee is serving non-disabled students in any capacity, then the overtime cannot be paid out of federal funds.

- **IDEA Grant and Budget Update**

The Object Code 122 EC-Salary-Interim Teacher-Non-Certified has been removed from the Chart of Accounts for all federal EC Funds. EC Teachers paid from federal funds are required to hold licensure in Exceptional Children.

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American Printing House (APH) Legally Blind Registration Census
The APH legally blind registration link is now open and spreadsheets are being sent to PSU contacts who had students registered last year. Please refer to the NCAPH Memo if you have additional questions.

PK EC Items of Interest

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.

Data Displays for Indicator 12 (Transition)
The FFY2021 data displays for Transition are now available here. Resources for analyzing local data as well as historical data displays can be found here.

Listserv Update
Beginning January 2023, preschool exceptional children updates transitioned to a DPI GovDelivery listserv specifically for the Preschool Exceptional Children Program. This is a closed listserv available to LEA staff members who have an interest in preschool exceptional children updates. The sign-up form is now closed; please email any requests to remove or add recipients to Dawn Meskil at dawn.meskil@dpi.nc.gov.

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Compliance Tip of the Week

Given the return from winter break, the next few weeks may be a critical data collection window to document whether a student has regressed during extended breaks from instruction. As a reminder, the following questions must be answered _and supported with data_ each time an IEP Team considers extended school year.

Yes	No	Factors for Consideration
		The student regresses or may regress during extended breaks from instruction and cannot relearn the lost skills within a reasonable time; or
		The benefits a student gains during the regular school year will be significantly jeopardized if he or she is not provided with an educational program during extended breaks from instruction; or
		The student is demonstrating emerging skill acquisition ("window of opportunity") that will be lost without the provision of an educational program during extended breaks from instruction.

January Calendar Items/What's Due?

☐ **January 1st**
Complete Semi-Annual Certifications for federally paid employees (for period of July 1 - December 31)

☐ **January 1st - February 14th Annual Registration of Legally Blind Students**

☐ **January 6th**
EC Office Hours: Topic - Functional Behavior Assessment/Behavior Intervention Plans
9:30a - 11:00a
No registration required. Join using this link. https://ncgov.webex.com/meet/carolann.hudgens

☐ **January 10th - January 13th** Regional Meetings - **registration closes on Jan.5**

☐ **January 31st**
PRC 29: Quarterly **Behavior Support Assessment NC Behavior Support Site**

☐ **January 31st**
SiMR Self-Assessment Data Analysis Submission

**Save the Date: March Institute**
Monday, February 27th - Wednesday, March 1st