

COMMONWEALTH OF PENNSYLVANIA
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
February 8, 2016
PENN*LINK

TO: Early Intervention Preschool Supervisors
Early Intervention Coordinators
School District Special Education Directors
Charter School Special Education Directors
Intermediate Unit Special Education Directors
Approved Private Schools Special Education Directors

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SUBJECT: Annual Deaf-Blind Child Count for Infants, Toddlers, Preschoolers and Students

Annually, the U.S. Department of Education, Office of Special Education Programs (OSEP), requires the Pennsylvania Deaf-Blind Project to conduct the National Deaf-Blind Child Count, formerly called the National Deaf-Blind Census. The Deaf-Blind Child Count counts the number of infants, toddlers, preschoolers and students who have dual sensory impairments or who are at risk of developing dual sensory impairments and who are enrolled in early intervention or special education as of the December 1st Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) child count.

The count is conducted during the month of February. All information needs to be verified no later than February 28, 2016. It is important for Pennsylvania to have an accurate Deaf-Blind Child Count as this information is tied to funding of research, training, and technical assistance for this population of children.

For the Deaf-Blind Child Count, it is important to note that the federal definition of deaf-blindness is more inclusive and extensive than the one used for the IDEA child count. Infants, toddlers, preschoolers, and students should be reported in the count if they meet one or more of the following criteria:

- Infants, toddlers, preschoolers, and students whose primary or secondary diagnosis is deaf-blindness,
- Infants, toddlers, preschoolers, and students who have a mild to severe hearing loss and some degree of vision impairment that requires adaptations or modifications,
- Infants, toddlers, preschoolers, and students who have a diagnosis that places them at risk for developing a hearing loss and visual impairment, and/or
- Infants, toddlers, preschoolers, and students with multiple disabilities who may demonstrate inconsistent responses to light and sound.

It is important for each early intervention program and local educational agency (LEA) to participate in the Deaf-Blind Child Count.

- If you do not have any infants, toddlers, preschoolers, or students with deaf-blindness, you will still need to log in and identify that you are not educating anyone with deaf-blindness at the present time.
- If you are educating an infant, toddler, preschooler, or student with dual sensory impairments, you will need to either enter a new record or verify information about a child who already exists in the system.
- School-age and preschool programs are encouraged to work closely with contracted providers (e.g., Approved Private Schools, Chartered Schools for the Deaf or Blind) to ensure an accurate count of children.
- Connecting families of children who are deaf-blind with supporting networks and information is vital. A feature of the Deaf-Blind Child Count, initiated last year, is a letter which you will be asked to send to the family of each child listed in your count. The letter provides information which will link them to support and information for their family.

New information for this year's Deaf-Blind Child Count

This year, all Approved Private Schools (APS) have entered their student data prior to the Deaf-Blind Child Count being opened for early intervention programs, school districts, and service providers. While there are few infants and toddlers served in an APS, you may see a child in the Deaf-Blind Child Count which has been entered by an APS. For those programs with many students who qualify, this will save them valuable time. This was done by all APSs even if there are no students who qualify for the Deaf-Blind Child Count enrolled in their school. As the early intervention program or LEA for these respective students, you must either confirm that the student is your responsibility or deny them if the student is not within your catchment area. After you confirm that you are the LEA for the student, you can update other data if necessary. Only if the student is not within your catchment area can you deny the student being added to your data.

If you are the early intervention program responsible for providing early intervention services to the entered child, you should confirm that the child is your responsibility. If the child is not the responsibility of your program (i.e., the child is not within your county/county joiner or in the age range of children you serve), you may deny the child being added to your data. If you do have a child incorrectly assigned to your program, please email dbcensus@pattan.net.

The Deaf-Blind Child Count website: <http://www.leaderservices.com/DBCensus>

If you are unsure or need further information concerning entering your child count, please watch the webinar found at <http://tinyurl.com/DBCC-webinar>.

The process for entering information is as follows:

For Early Intervention Programs:

Log in using the login and password for the Deaf-Blind Child Count.

If you do not know or cannot remember the login or password for the Deaf-Blind Child County, use the "Forget your Login Info" link on the Deaf-Blind Child County website to have the information emailed to you automatically or contact dbcensus@pattan.net.

For School Districts and Charter Schools:

- Log in by using the LEA AUN number.
- The password for the system is the same password that the LEA or you use to access the Special Education monitoring system.
- If you do not know your password, use the “Forget your Login Info” link on the Deaf-Blind Child Count website to have the information emailed to you automatically or contact dbcensus@pattan.net.

For Preschool Early Intervention Providers:

- Log in by using the Early Intervention Provider PELICAN ID
- If you do not know or cannot remember the password for the Deaf-Blind Child Count, use the “Forget your Login Info” link on the Deaf-Blind Child Count website to have the information emailed to you automatically or contact dbcensus@pattan.net.

If you have any questions regarding the data collection system or your responsibilities for entering child data into the Deaf-Blind Child Count, please email dbcensus@pattan.net.