

TO: School District Superintendents and Special Education Directors

FR: Jeanne Heaston, Nebraska Department of Education

RE: Nebraska IDEA Part B Parent Survey: Pre-School and School-Aged Children With Disabilities (Ages 3 through 21)

The Office of Special Education Programs (OSEP) is requiring states to provide information on parent opportunities to participate in program/school improvement activities that result in improved outcomes for children and youth with disabilities. The OSEP requires this parent involvement information as part of a six-year State Performance Plan (SPP) to measure aspects of Nebraska's Special Education program. Each year the State must provide information in an Annual Performance Report (APR), indicating the State's progress toward meeting the rigorous targets for each of the Indicators included in the SPP. In addition to the APR, NDE must gather information on each school district's efforts in meeting the rigorous targets and report those results publicly. The Nebraska IDEA, Part B, Parent Survey is the data collection method being used to gather information on opportunities provided to parents to participate in program/school improvement activities. The Part B Parent Survey was originally developed for the Improving Learning For Children With Disabilities (ILCD) process, Nebraska's monitoring system for Special Education and Early Intervention Services, and has been used by school districts during the 2004-05 and 2005-06 school years to gather data.

#### **The Nebraska IDEA Part B Parent Survey**

This is a survey for Nebraska parents of children and youth with disabilities from age 3 through age 21. The Nebraska Parent Survey was developed as part of the ILCD data gathering activities in Phase 2 of the process. The survey has been modified from its original version (2003) in two areas: 1) to meet the new requirements of IDEA 2004 Questions 30 and 31 were combined-transition services all begin at age 16 and, 2) to analyze family outcomes as a result of special education services (additional questions 31 through 35). A Spanish and Arabic translation of the Parent Survey will also be developed for use with the appropriate populations.

#### **Monitoring Cycle and Sampling Plan**

Nebraska has a five-year monitoring cycle in which school districts must complete the four (4) Phases of the ILCD self- assessment/continuous improvement process. When the ILCD process was introduced and begun, during the 2003-04 school year, school districts began a systemic method of collecting information from parents as well as other sources to evaluate and improve their special education services and programs. The Mountain Plains Regional Resource Center (MPRRC) has assisted NDE in developing the sampling plan for gathering data over this five (5) year period.

#### **Sampling Plan**

The 252 districts are categorized into five groups for ILCD purposes. Each of the five groups is representative of the entire state in terms of the Nebraska Part B Parent Involvement Survey Plan. The groups were selected and grouped using geography, size of school district, and rates for race/ethnicity, free/reduced lunch, and special education. In addition to statistical information and geography, the degree to which the districts might differ in a systematic, non-statistical way that potentially could impact parental attitudes was considered.

We have completed the 5 year cycle, and are gathering information in the sixth year to reestablish a baseline, and determine if there has been growth on the part of districts to improve parent involvement.

#### **Distribution of Survey Questionnaires to Parents**

School districts are to distribute the questionnaire to families of children with disabilities. If the family has more than one child with a disability, they will receive only one survey per family, **NOT one per child with a disability**. Parents

will be asked to return the completed form to the district. All results will be sent to MPRRC for analysis and reporting results for the Part B SPP. The results will be reported as part of the February 1, 2012 Annual Performance Report.

### **Timeline for the Nebraska IDEA Part B Parent Survey (ages 3 through 21) – Baseline Year**

**District will request** an informational letter and surveys from one of the following:

- Their ILCD Facilitator- Shelly Skogstad ([sskogstad@esu1.org](mailto:sskogstad@esu1.org)) or call 402-287-2061
- The SRS Help Desk- Wade Fruhling ([wfruhli@esu1.org](mailto:wfruhli@esu1.org)) or call 402-429-7771
- NDE ILCD Team Leader- Jeanne Heaston ([jeanne.heaston@nebraska.gov](mailto:jeanne.heaston@nebraska.gov)) or call 402-595-2092

**District submits the** surveys for scanning to:

Educational Service Unit #1  
Attention: Julie Rose  
211 10<sup>th</sup> St.  
Wakefield, NE 68784

Surveys have the best scan results if:

- They are not folded
- Nothing is stapled to the tic marks found on the left side of each survey
- Additional comments are not added in the borders
- Use pencil only

After the surveys are scanned, Julie Rose will send a .dlm file back to the districts. The districts are then responsible for uploading the .dlm file onto their ILCD portal, as well as sending a copy of the .dlm file to:

***Jeanne Heaston ([jeanne.heaston@nebraska.gov](mailto:jeanne.heaston@nebraska.gov))***

**Parent survey baseline data for Indicator 8** of the Part B State Performance Plan is reported in the Annual Performance Plan to OSEP.

Thank you for your assistance in conducting the IDEA Part B Parent Survey to measure the opportunities for involvement provided parents of children and youth with disabilities in Nebraska. A similar activity is being conducted with the families of infants and toddlers with disabilities in completing the Nebraska Part C Family Survey. Please contact Jeanne Heaston at (402) 595-1155, if you have questions concerning the IDEA Part B Parent Survey.