

The Pennsylvania Deaf-Blind Child Count



What is the Pennsylvania Deaf-Blind Child Count?

Each year, every local education agency (LEA), approved private school (APS), and count and state-run early intervention program (EI program) in the commonwealth is required to submit information to the Pennsylvania Deaf-Blind Project regarding the children and youth they serve who are deaf-blind. This count is required by the federal Office of Special Education Programs (OSEP) and every LEA, APS, and EI program is required to complete their count submission, even if they do not currently serve children and youth who are deaf-blind. It is important for Pennsylvania to have an accurate Deaf-Blind Child Count, as this information is tied to funding that supports technical assistance, training, and research for this unique student population, both across the commonwealth and nationally. This annual count is conducted during the months of January (APS) and February (LEAs and EI Programs), with all information verified by the last day of the month.

Who Submits: Every APS and LEA; County and State-run EI Programs

How Often: Annually

When: The months of January (APS) and February (EI Programs and LEA)

This count is required by the federal Office of Special Education Programs (OSEP). Every LEA, APS, and EI program is required to complete their count submission, even if they do not currently serve children and youth who are deaf-blind.



Questions?
Please contact us at
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For more information on Pennsylvania's Deaf-Blind Child Count, visit our website.

• [Frequently Asked Questions](#)



• [LEA and APS Responsibilities](#)



• [Who Should Be Counted](#)



Facts

About the Pennsylvania Deaf-Blind Child Count

- **What percentage of children on the Deaf-Blind Child Count have one or more disabilities (i.e., complex needs)?**

Approximately 96 percent of the children and youth included in the 2021 PA Deaf-Blind Child Count (the most recent year for which data is published) have one or more disabilities in addition to their combined hearing and vision needs.

- **Why are the majority of students identified on the Deaf-Blind Child Count not identified as deaf-blind on OSEP's Special Education Child Count (i.e., "the December 1 Count")?**

Due to the complex needs of the majority of children and youth included in the Deaf-Blind Child Count, most are classified under categories of IDEA eligibility other than deaf-blind on OSEP's Special Education Child Count, such as "multiple disabilities" or "other health impaired."



Myths vs. Truths

Myth	Truth
The PA Deaf-Blind Child Count includes children and youth who are deaf or blind.	The PA Deaf-Blind Child Count includes children and youth who have combined hearing and vision needs (not just one or the other).
"Deaf-blind" must be the student's primary classification on their IEP to be included.	In fact, ALL students with combined vision and hearing needs who meet the aforementioned criteria should be included on the PA Deaf-Blind Child Count.
Different programming and services must be provided if the student is entered on the Deaf-Blind Child Count.	It is the responsibility of every LEA, APS, and EI program that serves students with special education needs to provide a free and appropriate public education in the least restrictive environment that meets the child's needs. Thus, each program should be providing the individualized services, aids, and supports that each child requires in accordance with IDEA; this includes children and youth who are deaf-blind.

