

COMMONWEALTH OF PENNSYLVANIA
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

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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

FROM: Carole L. Clancy, Director
Bureau of Special Education
Office of Elementary and Secondary Education

Lisa Parker, Director
Bureau of Early Intervention Services and Family Supports
Office of Child Development and Early Learning

SUBJECT: 2021-2022 Annual Deaf-Blind Child Count for Infants, Toddlers, Preschoolers, and Students Due
February 28, 2022

Annually, the U.S. Department of Education, Office of Special Education Programs, 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 records 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 1, 2021 Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) child count.

The count will be conducted **beginning February 1, 2022**. Early Intervention Programs and Local Education Agencies (LEAs) must verify and submit their information no later than **February 28, 2022**. It is important for Pennsylvania to have an accurate Deaf-Blind Child Count as this information is tied to funding research, training, and technical assistance for this population of children.

Please be aware that for the Deaf-Blind Child Count, the federal definition of deaf-blindness is more inclusive and extensive than the one used for the IDEA Child Count. Children ages birth to 21 should be reported in the count if they meet one or more of the following criteria:

1. Infants, toddlers, preschoolers, and students who have a diagnosis of deaf-blindness and/or receive both vision and hearing support services;
2. Infants, toddlers, preschoolers, and students who have mild to profound hearing loss and vision loss with correction that still requires adaptations or modifications;
3. Infants and toddlers (ages 0-3) who have a diagnosis that places them at risk for an intellectual disability with inconsistent responses to light and sound. (At risk means a diagnosis that does not guarantee hearing/vision loss); or
4. 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 LEA to participate in the Deaf-Blind Child Count.

1. 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.
2. 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.
3. School-age and preschool programs are encouraged to work closely with contracted providers (e.g., Approved Private Schools or Charter Schools for the Deaf or Blind) to ensure an accurate count of children.
4. Connecting families of children who are deaf-blind with supporting networks and information is vital. A feature of the Deaf-Blind Child Count, initiated two years ago, is a letter that you will be asked to send to the family of each child listed in your count. This letter provides information that will link them to support and information for their family.

Deaf-Blind Child Count – Approved Private School Entries

All Approved Private Schools (APSs) entered their student data prior to the Deaf-Blind Child Count being opened for Early Intervention programs, school districts, charter schools, 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 that 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 children, you must either confirm that the child is your responsibility or reject the entry if the child is not within your catchment area or in the age range of children you serve. After you confirm that you are the Early Intervention Program or LEA for the child, you can update other data as necessary.

Deaf-Blind Child Count – Early Intervention Programs

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), please email dbchildcount@pattan.net.

Log In Information

The Deaf-Blind Child Count website is: https://www.leaderservices.com/_DBCensus.

The process for entering information is as follows:

1. Log in with your username and password at https://www.leaderservices.com/_DBCensus.
2. If you do not know or cannot remember your username or 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 or email dbchildcount@pattan.net for support.

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 dbchildcount@pattan.net.