UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

OFFICE OF SPECIAL EDUCATION AND REHABILITATIVE SERVICES

Dear Colleague:

As authorized under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), the Office of Special Education Programs (OSEP) funds State and Multi-State Technical Assistance Projects to Improve Services and Results for Children Who Are DeafBlind and the National Technical Assistance and Dissemination Center for Children Who Are DeafBlind CFDA 84.326T.

The state deafblind projects are funded specifically to increase the use of evidence-based practices with, and improve outcomes for, children who are deafblind; and to identify infants, toddlers, children, and youth who are deafblind (both with and without additional disabilities).

Your state deafblind technical assistance project is part of a larger National DeafBlind TA Network working to improve the educational infrastructure for children who are deafblind, improve early identification and intervention, facilitate family engagement, support successful transitions, and develop qualified personnel including interveners. This network includes other state deafblind projects, the National Center on Deafblindness, the National Family Association for DeafBlind, the CHARGE Syndrome Foundation, personnel preparation programs, and youth and adults with deafblindness.

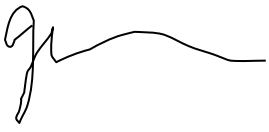
The National Center is funded to increase the ability of state and multi-state deafblind projects to assist personnel in SEAs, LEAs, LAs, and EIS providers to use evidence-based practices and products to improve outcomes for children who are deafblind. As part of that responsibility, the National Center is required to conduct an annual National Child Count of children who are deafblind, ensuring that accurate data to inform practice is presented in a way that is useful to States.

Children who are deafblind are among the most vulnerable, at-risk students because they have varying degrees of hearing and vision loss that is often complicated by other disabilities or health issues. The 2022 National Deafblind Child Count reports that 88% of children who are deafblind have additional disabilities. If not specifically identified as deafblind, these children and youth risk not receiving the services they require.

We encourage you to work to make sure others in your state and in your school districts are aware of the importance of an accurate identification and registry listing and the importance of the linkage to the technical assistance that state projects have to offer families and service providers. Contact information for your state project can be found through the National Center on Deafblindness website, https://nationaldb.org.

Thank you for your continued interest in improving results for children with disabilities.

Sincerely,



Kristen D. Rhoads, Ph.D.
Project Officer
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