



STATE OF CONNECTICUT
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION



TO: Special Education and Pupil Personnel Services Directors

FROM: Marcus E. Rivera, Education Consultant, Bureau of Special Education *MSR*

CC: Nancy Prescott, Executive Director, CT Parent Advocacy Center (CPAC)
Jane Hampton-Smith, Parent Advocate, CPAC

DATE: June 26, 2013

RE: **2012-13 Connecticut Special Education Parent Survey**

Each year, near the end of the school year, the Bureau of Special Education conducts a statewide survey of parents of students receiving special education services, ages 3 through 21. The statewide survey is the continuation of an ongoing collaborative effort between the Bureau of Special Education and the Connecticut Parent Work Group (PWG) to collect information on family satisfaction and parent involvement in their child's special education program. Information from this survey will be used to monitor progress in improving special education services in Connecticut.

The 2012-2013 statewide survey represents the second year of the second cycle of the six-year sampling protocol for the State Performance Plan (SPP). The 2012-2013 CT Special Education Parent Survey will be sent to a sample of parents within the 29 districts identified for 2012-13. **Your school district has been identified for sampling in this year's survey cycle and it is anticipated that the surveys will be mailed to parents in early July.** For the second time, parents will be able to complete the survey online using the six-digit code that they will receive in the mail. Both the online and paper survey will be available in English and Spanish.

The survey is disseminated by the Bureau of Special Education through Glen Martin Associates (GMA) and completed surveys are returned to Glen Martin Associates in prepaid envelopes or completed online. The envelope will state that the CT State Department of Education has enclosed important parent information.

Last year, over 500 surveys were returned non-deliverable. In order to ensure that GMA is mailing the parent survey to the current parent addresses for your school district, please review the attached list of parent addresses for this year's sample. Please run a query on the SASIDs on the attached Excel spreadsheet to ensure that the eight fields below are accurate. If it is easier to send me a new Excel spreadsheet with these field columns for each SASID enclosed, that is acceptable as well. Please remember to include the SASID field in your spreadsheet.

| LastName | FirstName | Address1 | Address2 | City | State | Zip | Email Address |
|----------|-----------|----------|----------|------|-------|-----|---------------|
|----------|-----------|----------|----------|------|-------|-----|---------------|

Please know that the "Email Address" field is new. If your school district includes email addresses in its directory information, please fill this field so that we may contact parents by mail and electronic mail.

The attached Excel spreadsheet for your school district is password protected. Please contact Ms. Terry-Jo Wright at the Bureau of Special Education at 860.713.6917 or terry-jo.wright@ct.gov to receive your district's unique password. Please run the query outlined above and send the revised Excel spreadsheet to marcus.rivera@ct.gov no later than **Tuesday, July 2**, so that GMA can send the survey to parents the following week. If you need any clarification, please send me an e-mail message or call at 860.713.6932.

Districts identified in this year's sampling are asked to encourage parent responses by notifying parents and supporting their participation in the survey process. Several suggestions include (1) sending a brief note home about the importance of the upcoming survey mailing, (2) sending a "robocall" or computerized auto dialer to deliver a pre-recorded message about the survey mailing to the families identified in the spreadsheet, and (3) posting survey information on the district/school websites. Other suggestions developed by the Parent Work Group and the CT State Advisory Council on Special Education are listed below. The attached letter to parents describes the survey completion process and will be included in the materials they will receive by mail.

If you have any *questions about the survey*, please call Marcus E. Rivera, Education Consultant, Bureau of Special Education at 860.713.6932 or by e-mail at marcus.rivera@ct.gov. If parents *need assistance completing the survey*, please contact the Connecticut Parent Advocacy Center at 1-800-445-CPAC, or by e-mail at cpac@cpacinc.org. CPAC support for Spanish-speaking families is also available. All services are free for parents and all information is kept confidential.

Statewide and district level summary reports will be available by December 2013 and will provide a comprehensive summary of findings. You can review the 2011-12 CT Special Education Parent Survey results, and the results from your school district when it was last surveyed in 2006-07, at the following websites:

- **2011-12 CT Special Education Parent Survey District Report:**
http://www.sde.ct.gov/sde/lib/sde/pdf/deps/special/parent_survey_district_report_2012.pdf; and
- **2011-12 CT Special Education Parent Survey Summary Report:**
http://www.sde.ct.gov/sde/lib/sde/pdf/deps/special/parent_survey_summary_report_2012.pdf,
- **2006-07 CT Special Education Parent Survey District Report:**
http://www.sde.ct.gov/sde/lib/sde/PDF/DEPS/Special/ParentSurvey_DistrictReport07.pdf; and
- **2006-07 CT Special Education Parent Survey Summary Report:**
http://www.sde.ct.gov/sde/lib/sde/PDF/DEPS/Special/ParentSurvey_Summary07.pdf.

Thank you for your leadership and support! Please send me an email reply to acknowledge receipt of this message. Thank you again.

ATTACHMENT

2012-2013 CT Special Education Parent Survey Suggestions to Encourage Parent Responses

- send a brief flyer home in English and Spanish, alerting parents of students with disabilities to look for the survey in their mail and the importance of completing it
- let parents of students with disabilities know that the survey is available in English and Spanish – and can now be completed online
- inform students and staff during morning announcements or summer programming
- send a “robocall” or computerized auto dialer to deliver a pre-recorded message about the special education parent survey mailing
- post on District and School websites
- inform district ELL directors/teachers, family resource aides, family resource centers, PTO directors, parent advisory committees, community partners, faith leaders, parent advocates and disability organizations about the survey so they can communicate with parents:
 - community assistance may help parents who may have difficulty reading the survey
 - a “Parent night” over dinner may make it easier to complete the survey; please remember possible childcare needs when sponsoring a community event
- let outreach contacts know that the survey takes about 10 minutes to complete; there will be a stamped, self-addressed envelope in which to return a paper copy
- let parents know that they can receive free educational materials from the CT Parent Advocacy Center at no cost, just for completing the survey
- let parents know that if they **need assistance completing the survey**, they can contact the Connecticut Parent Advocacy Center at 1-800-445-CPAC, or by e-mail at cpac@cpacinc.org; CPAC support for Spanish-speaking families is also available
- let parents know that if they **have questions about the survey**, they can contact Marcus E. Rivera at the Bureau of Special Education at 860.713.6932 or marcus.rivera@ct.gov
- let parents know that all information is kept confidential
- see if high school students can complete community service hours by disseminating information to local newspapers, radio stations, houses of worship
- alert local newspapers and radio stations; public service announcements are free in many cases for school district announcements
- place flyers in laundromats and clinics

- use computer labs in schools and public libraries as ways for parents to complete the online survey: parents will need the six-digit code sent my mail and can only answer questions about the name of the child on the survey envelope.

2012-13 CT Special Education Parent Survey Cohort

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|--------------|-------------|-----------------|--------------|
| Bozrah | Branford | Bridgeport * | Brookfield |
| Cheshire | Colchester | Cornwall | East Windsor |
| Manchester * | Naugatuck | New Milford | North Canaan |
| Norwich * | Oxford | Regional 05 | Regional 08 |
| Regional 16 | Regional 19 | Sherman | Simsbury |
| Stafford | Sterling | Stonington | Suffield |
| Thompson | Voluntown | West Hartford * | Winchester |
| Windham | | | |

* a sample of parents will receive the survey