



Newsletter

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Welcome to the Annual Family Survey issue of the IDEA Data & Research Newsletter

An annual survey of families is a requirement of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (20 U.S.C. 1416(a)(3)(A)) as part of the Special Education Annual Performance Report (APR). This required measure is known as Indicator 8: Family Involvement.

The measurement of Indicator 8: Family Involvement is: **Percent of parents with a child receiving special education services who report that schools facilitated parent involvement as a means of improving services and results for children with disabilities.**

To meet this reporting requirement the Arkansas Department of Education's Special Education Unit (ADE-SEU) in conjunction with the IDEA Data & Research Office at the University of Arkansas at Little Rock (UALR) provides local education agencies (LEAs) school age and early childhood surveys for families to complete.

The LEAs **MUST** provide parents/guardians the opportunity to participate in the family survey. It is a requirement that LEAs document the offer to participate whenever the opportunity is provided. This is a compliance area which the Monitoring and Program Effectiveness program advisors will be reviewing.

In the Arkansas IEP forms districts **MUST** indicate if the parent/guardian was offered the opportunity to participate by marking one of the following on the IEP.

The guidance on the IEP form states: **Parent Survey: The survey is offered annually in paper format (scan form) or online. The district will mail the paper surveys to the IDEA Data and Research Office. (The district should use the original scan forms and not make photocopies.) If the parent completes the online survey, the IDEA Data and Research Office automatically receives the results. N/A would be selected only if the survey had**

Parent(s) received Parent Survey:

☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ N/A

been presented to the parent at a previous meeting that year. Indicate whether the Parent was provided the opportunity to participate.

Review of 2017-18 Family Survey Data

Arkansas's 2018-19 school year family survey data revealed 93.83% of parents responding to the preschool survey and 95.82% of parents responding to the school age survey indicated the education program facilitated parent involvement as a means of improving services and results for children with disabilities. Approximately, 70% of school age and 58% early childhood parents did not responded to the survey; this is an improvement from the previous year. Further, all 32 early childhood programs submitted surveys and of the 267 school age programs 16 had zero survey's submitted. An overview of the data is present below.

	Number of respondent parents who report schools facilitated parent involvement as a means of improving services and results for children with disabilities	Total number of respondent parents of children with disabilities	FFY 2016 Data*	FFY 2017 Target*	FFY 2017 Data
Preschool	3,602	3,839	92.26%	94.84%	93.83%
School-age	20,176	21,057	95.45%	96.45%	95.82%

Note: FFY 2018 is Federal Fiscal Year 2018-19; FFY 2017 is Federal Fiscal Year 2017-18

Providing Parents/Guardians the Opportunity to Participate in the Family Survey is a Requirement!!

As one can tell by the data on the previous page the response rate is very low considering that 98% or more of the programs submitted family survey data. Only 35% of the total child count (ages 3-21) are responding to the survey request.

The number of survey's being returned raises concerns about the if, how and when LEAs are offering the opportunity for families to participate. If all parents are being offered the opportunity to answer the survey for each child at annual review conference, parent teacher conferences, or other times during the year one would expect to have a much higher response rate.

Concerns include:

- LEAs are NOT offering parents the opportunity to participate each school year
- LEAs are NOT submitting the scan forms to IDEA Data & Research for processing by the deadline.
- LEAs are NOT keying photo copies of the survey into the web-based system prior to the fiscal year rollover on July 15th.
- Scan forms are not submitted with accurate LEA numbers, as well as building code, resident LEA number, race/ethnicity code , or primary disability code.
- Survey's are being mailed to families without any introduction, guidance on completing the survey, or stamped return envelop.

Family Survey – Strategies

LEAs with high response rates on the family surveys implement some or all of the following strategies for improving response rates. The most important strategy is to communicate with parents and staff.

Communication is KEY:

Communicate with parents/guardians as to why the survey is being conducted. The LEA staff should:

- inform parents about the survey, explaining how it is part of a federal data collection and the LEA is **required** to provide parents/guardians the opportunity to participate;
- Inform parents how important their answers are for the improvement of services to children with disabilities;
- review the survey format with the parents; and
- discuss any questions on the survey believed to be unclear.

Be proactive:

The single most important tip we can give is to actively monitor response rates within your district and take measures to address low rates. Members of the IEP meetings need to be aware of the requirement and obligation to offer and document the opportunity in the IEP.

Previous year response rates are shared with the LEAs Special Education Supervisor. Some districts discuss their Family Survey Response Rates (RR) in formal meetings, others distribute memorandums, and others have held competitions between schools or districts to reward those with highest RR's.

Family Survey – Strategies (con't)

Communicate expectations:

It is crucial to communicate your expectations for improving response rates to the all staff involved in meetings where parents can be given the opportunity to participate in the survey.

The introduction of accountability measures will not be effective if communication with families is poor. For example, LEAs request many surveys but have very low response rates may be experiencing the results of poorly communicated expectations.

Incorporate the family survey into annual conference:

The most logical time to offer parents the opportunity to participate is at the annual review conference. Most LEAs are utilizing this dedicated “face time” to offer the family survey. However, beyond that similarity what happens next can be very different.

While **We strongly suggest that you distribute surveys face-to-face**, how a LEA handles the opportunity will define your response rate. LEAs using the scan forms that do not have parents complete the form while at the conference tend to have lower response rates. The survey goes home with the parent and they rarely fill them out and mail back to the LEA or IDEA Data & Research.

The survey can also be completed online. Although the survey has a secure login, the passcode used is specific to the family survey application. **The login information can be shared with staff and families.** LEA staff can login to the web page and leave it up for ease of access during meetings. Or a parent who was unable to attend could complete the survey from home. Both the online and scan forms are available in English and Spanish.

Consider in-house data entry:

Some LEAs have internalized the data entry process by utilizing in-house staff to enter responses to Family Surveys into the online system (Link: [Online Family Surveys](#)). If a LEA is going to use in-house data entry they print a blank survey from the online version. The LEA can print/copy as many times as needed.

When in-house data entry is selected for family survey data submission, the LEA :

- does not need to request the scan forms;
- has a better understanding of which buildings have reported;
- how many have been completed; and
- can maintain a more accurate record of the process.

The opportunity to participate can occur before the meeting starts or at the end of the meeting. For example, as the annual review meeting comes to an end and staff steps out to make copies, ask the parent/guardian to take a few minutes to answer the survey questions while you make copies. The benefits of this include:

- Parent/guardian is occupied while staff is making copies and
- the LEA saves money on postage.

ALL collection methods requires staff to maintain confidentiality. Survey's are answered anonymously and families should feel free to answer honestly without reprisal.

Note: Any photocopies of the survey sent to IDEA Data & Research will be sent back to the LEA for data entry. Photocopies cannot be scanned.

Family Survey – Strategies (con't)

Online Family Survey

To use the online survey go to <https://arksped.k12.ar.us/applications/Surveys/>.

1. Select the Family Outcomes Survey link from the active survey list

Active Surveys
Special Education Early Childhood Services Survey (available between 12/01/2016 and 03/04/2017)
Family Outcomes Survey - School Age & Early Childhood

2. Sign in with the LEA 4 digit number and the family survey passcode. If a LEA does not know their passcode contact IDEA Data & Research.

User ID:

Password:

The School will provide the parent with the User ID and password.

3. Click on the survey needed: Early Childhood or School Age.. Both are available in English and Spanish.

Note: Depending on your LEA# you may have both Early Childhood and School Age Surveys. This screen will only show your District Surveys.

3. Click on the survey you need

[Early Childhood Family Outcomes Survey \(English\)](#)

[Early Childhood Family Outcomes Survey \(Spanish\)](#)

[School Age Family Outcomes Survey \(English\)](#)

[School Age Family Outcomes Survey \(Spanish\)](#)

[Sign out](#)

The survey will open and participants are asked to answer the demographic information about the child/student. The demographic information in the survey is slightly different for early childhood and school age. **It is important for the federal report data analysis to capture the child/student's race and disability as reported in the student management system (eSchool or MySped Resource).** If the demographic information is not answered it will not block the data submission.

Family Survey – Strategies (con't)

Online Family Survey: Early Childhood



SPECIAL EDUCATION

Early Childhood Survey

SURVEY: The Arkansas Special Education Early Childhood Family Outcomes

FY: 2013/14

Survey
MESSAGE:

This is a survey for parents/families of children receiving special education services. Your responses will help guide efforts to improve services and results for children and families. For each question, please select appropriate number [1 to 7] that best describes your family right now. If a statement almost, but not quite, describes your family select the number just below the statement. For example, if the statement under 3 almost describes your family, select the 2.

Resident LEA(District)
Race/Ethnicity ☐ Hispanic/Latino ☐ American Indian/Alaskan Native ☐ Asian ☐ Black ☐ Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander ☐ White
Disability

4. Select the Resident LEA from the Drop down box

5. Click on the Race/Ethnicity of the child, mark all that apply

Resident LEA(District)
Race/Ethnicity ☐ Hispanic/Latino ☐ American Indian/Alaskan Native ☐ Asian ☐ Black ☐ Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander ☐ White
Disability

6. Disability - Select from drop down
Choose only one

Disability
Understanding
1. Your child development
1
We are just beginning to understand our child's development
Autism
Deaf-Blindness
Hearing Impairments
Multiple Disabilities
Orthopedic Impairments
Other Health Impairments
Preschool Disabled (Non-categorical)
Speech/Language Impairments
Traumatic Brain Injury
Visual Impairments

7. Click on the bubble of each of the 10 questions marking the answer that best describes your interaction and services for your child.
8. Click Submit

Your survey has been entered in the state database and only you know how you answered each question. These surveys cannot be retrieved individually, but only by authorized state personnel by school and question totals. This is a total anonymous survey.

Thank you for your cooperation and participation to help us better serve you and your children.

Family Survey – Strategies (con't)

Online Family Survey: School Age



School Age Survey SPECIAL EDUCATION

SURVEY: Arkansas Special Education School Age Family Outcomes Survey

FY: 2013/14

MESSAGE:

Q2_opt2

This is a survey for parents/families of students receiving special education services. Your responses will help guide efforts to improve services and results for children and families. For each statement below, please select one of the following response choices: very strongly disagree, strongly disagree, disagree, agree, strongly agree, or very strongly agree. If an item does not apply to your child please select 'Not Applicable'.

Building Code

Disability -- Select --

4. Disability - Select from drop down box
Choose only one

-- Select --
-- Select --
Autism
Deaf-Blindness
Hearing Impairments
Multiple Disabilities
Orthopedic Impairments
Other Health Impairments
Preschool Disabled (Non-categorical)
Speech/Language Impairments
Traumatic Brain Injury
Visual Impairments

5. Click on the Race/Ethnicity of the child, mark all that apply

Race/Ethnicity ☐ Hispanic/Latino ☐ American Indian/Alaskan Native ☐ Asian ☐ Black ☐ Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander ☐ White

		1 Very Strongly Disagree	2 Strongly Disagree	3 Disagree	4 Agree	5 Strongly Agree	6 Very Strongly Agree	7 Not applicable
1	I was offered special assistance (such as alternate location or time) so that I could participate in the Individualized Educational Program (IEP) meeting	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

7. Click on the bubble of each of the 15 questions marking the answer that best describes your interaction and services for your child.
8. Click Submit

Your survey has been entered in the state database and only you know how you answered each question. These surveys cannot be retrieved individually, but only by authorized state personnel by school and question totals. This is a total anonymous survey.

Thank you for your cooperation and participation to help us better serve you and your children.

Family Surveys – Reminders

Use all opportunities to make contact with parents:

Depending upon your district's methods, there may be multiple opportunities to provide families with the opportunity to participate in the Family Survey.

- During the annual review conference, one district distributes the survey while parents are waiting to enter the conference room.
- Others distribute the survey at the end of the conference.
- Still others distribute the survey at parent teacher conferences for parents who can not attend the scheduled annual review conference.

Scan Form Reminders

- Only use the family surveys with six racial/ethnic categories. If your Scantron® forms do not include six racial/ethnic categories please request current forms and discard the previous forms.
- Surveys submitted to IDEA for processing must be on original Scantron® forms and must be completed in pencil.
- There are four areas which an LEA should fill out prior to giving the survey to the parent:
 - LEA Number (required no exceptions)
The corresponding bubbles MUST be filled in under the LEA Number. Failure to fill in the bubbles can result in a noncompliance for timely and accurate reporting
 - Race/Ethnicity (select all that apply)
 - Disability (select only primary)
 - Building Code or Resident LEA Number

- Supervisor with more than one district could in error give one districts surveys to another. Without the LEA number on the survey the original district would get the credit not the actual district who had the survey filled out.
- If you want survey reports at the building level (school age) or by resident LEA (early childhood) please be sure to fill in that portion of the survey form and send a request to jafiels@ualr.edu
- If an LEA prints the survey from the internet or photo copies a scan form, the LEA is responsible for entering the survey results into the online survey form.
- ♦ **Do Not staple or hole punch forms, it hinders scanning correctly.**
- ♦ **Do not write names and SS#'s on forms. They are to be completely confidential.**

Photo copied forms sent to the IDEA Data & Research Office will be returned to the LEA.

- Document the offering of the family survey in the IEP during the Annual Review Conference or at any other time.
- Family survey passcodes are different from MySped Resource passwords and can be shared with teachers and families. When sharing the passcode remember to provide instructions as outlined in the newsletter.

If you do not know your family survey passcode contact Nancy Rea at nerea@ualr.edu or 501-683-7219.



Requesting Scantron Survey Forms

To **request Scantron forms** email Nancy Rea at nerea@ualr.edu. Please include the following in your email:

1. District LEA Numbers
2. Type of Survey being requested:
School Age and/or Early Childhood
(EC English/Spanish)
3. Number surveys requesting
4. Name of the requestor
5. Contact Number of the requestor
6. Mailing Address

TRAINING OPPORTUNITIES

- Data Entry Training for eSchool and MySped Resource are located at the

ASPCN Computer Lab

101 East Capitol,

Little Rock, AR 72201

Please refer to ASTIS for dates and times. ASTIS is located on the [ARKSPED Portal](#) page.

- Cycle 7 Reporting Requirements and Review Webinars will be announced via Commissioner's Memo.

Watch for Commissioner's Memo for details.

Questions about training opportunities?

Call (501) 683-7219

Important Resources

IDEA Data & Research Office
(501) 683-7219

DIS/APSCN

(501) 682-HELP (4357) Option 3

1-800-435-7989 Option 3

DIS.CallCenter@arkansas.gov (24 hour email)

Special Education Home Page

<http://www.arkansased.gov/divisions/learning-services/special-education>

Important links from the Special Education home page:

The IDEA Data & Research web page is where you can find

- Data Dictionaries,
- User Guides,
- Training Opportunities,
- the LEA Annual Performance Report,
- links to recorded webinars, and more.

Please visit regularly as we are always adding new information.

ARKSPED Portal

A secured web portal where LEAs review and submit data to the ADE via MySped Resource. There is also a link to the **School Age and Early Childhood Family Outcomes Survey**.

[Click here to visit the ARKSPED Portal](#)