



NEW HAMPSHIRE

2011-2012 Parent Involvement Statewide Survey Results

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Executive Summary

In spring 2012, Measurement Incorporated (MI) conducted the survey administration and data analysis of the New Hampshire Statewide Parent Involvement Survey. For the fifth year in a row there was **an increase in the percentage of parents** with a child receiving special education services who indicated that their school facilitated parent involvement as a means of improving services and results for children with disabilities.

Nearly 32,000 surveys were mailed to school districts across NH for distribution to parents. Parents had one month to complete and return their survey in the postage-paid envelope provided. Survey completion is supported by a number of activities including “hotline” telephone support, online technical support, and language translation for families whose primary language is other than English. The use of alternative methods and supports has increased over the past five years.

Based on the statewide results for this year, **51% of parents** with a child receiving special education services reported that schools facilitated parent involvement as a means of improving services and results for children with disabilities. **This is a 1% increase from last year’s results and 15% higher than the state target for this year.** Across the past five years of survey administrations there has been continued improvement (19%) in parent ratings on this parent involvement indicator. These positive results suggest that the improvement activities implemented for this indicator—by the New Hampshire Department of Education (NHDOE), Bureau of Special Education and their partners—are working and have had a dramatic effect on parent involvement and family-school partnerships.

This year, 4,891 surveys were received. This represents a 15% response rate. This is a decrease from a 19% response rate in 2011 and the 16% response rate in the baseline year 2008. The population of parents responding to this year’s survey is representative of the statewide population of parents of students receiving special education services in terms of gender and ethnicity. However, they were not representative for certain disability categories and age groups. These disability categories and age groups are presented in Tables 5 and 6 of this report.

For this indicator, the state is required to set a target annually. Baseline data from 2008-2009 were used to establish a starting point and the target for the indicator was increased by one percent for each subsequent year through 2012-2013. In 2008-2009, 32% of parents with a child receiving special education services reported that schools facilitated parent involvement as a means of improving services and results for children with disabilities. Subsequently, the statewide target for 2011-2012 was set at 36%.

I. Background and Survey Administration

In January 2012, the New Hampshire Department of Education (NHDOE), Bureau of Special Education, contracted with Measurement Incorporated (MI) to conduct a statewide parent involvement survey. The goal of the contract was to provide data for reporting requirements for the Department of Education's Special Education State Performance Plan. The State Performance Plan (SPP) is required to be submitted from each state to the United States Department of Education (USDOE), Office of Special Education Programs (OSEP), pursuant to the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA). Federal reporting requirements mandate that states report their progress relating to special education in their Annual Performance Reports (APRs). Specifically, NHDOE reports on Indicator B-8 by measuring "the 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."

In the spring of 2012, MI conducted the fifth year of statewide data collection using two parent surveys that were adapted from the National Center for Special Education Accountability and Monitoring (NCSEAM) item banks. In 2007-2008, MI worked closely with NHDOE and the Indicator B-8 Work Group to develop these instruments. One survey was prepared and administered to parents of preschool children (3 - 5 year olds) and the other to parents of school age children (kindergarteners through 21 year olds). These NCSEAM surveys have been shown to be valid and highly reliable in measuring the concept of parent involvement in improving special education services and results. In this fifth year—as in previous years of administering this survey—the *NH Statewide Parent Involvement Survey* was conducted with the support of NHDOE and key stakeholders. Communication has steadily improved at the district level and additional promotional materials and support are continually being developed to raise parental awareness about the survey.

Of the 175 NH school districts, 26 reported that they had no preschool children receiving special education services. Nearly 32,000 surveys were mailed to school districts across NH for distribution to parents. In total, 2,832 preschool surveys were mailed to parents of preschoolers and 29,090 school age surveys were mailed to parents of school age children receiving special education services (through age 21).

Surveys were mailed to parents at their homes in March 2012. Parents had one month to complete and return their survey in the postage-paid envelope provided. Over the course of the data collection period, 4,891 useable surveys were received; 634 were from parents of preschoolers and 4,257 were from parents of school age students.

II. Methodology

In this fifth year of administering the New Hampshire Parent Involvement Surveys, MI worked collaboratively with NHDOE and NH Connections to make improvements in the survey administration process based on the results from the previous year. The summaries below provide details of key elements in the survey administration process and reflect the changes that were implemented this year.

Data Collection Procedures—MI worked with NHDOE special education directors in each School Administrative Unit (SAU) to coordinate the details of survey administration. Arrangements were made for the surveys to be labeled and mailed to parents directly from each school district. Each survey packet mailed to a parent contained a postage-paid return envelope addressed to MI. School districts were reminded in advance to verify family addresses. Parents were assured that their responses would come directly to the independent contractor to guarantee their confidentiality.

Strategies to Promote Survey Participation/Provide Survey Access—as part of the contracted services, MI worked with the Indicator B-8 Work Group and NH Connections to promote survey participation. MI developed and provided copies of a flyer (in both English and Spanish) that were shared with the special education directors and NH Connections who then forwarded the information to other key parent advocacy and support groups. Additionally, to promote participation and to ensure survey access, MI provided an online version of the preschool and school age surveys in both English and Spanish. For the past five years MI has tracked the methods of survey administration to report the success of using alternative methods to promote parent participation (**Table 1** presents data for 2008-2012). This year's data is very similar to data reported for last year (2010-2011)

Table 1
Methods of Survey Administration

Method of Administration	2007-08	2008-09	2009-10	2010-11	2011-12
	n (%)	n (%)	n (%)	n (%)	n (%)
Online	385 (6%)	456 (9%)	596 (10%)	660 (13%)	566 (12%)
In English	5,473 (99%)	5,007 (99%)	5,979 (99%)	5,857 (99%)	4,821 (99%)
In Spanish	37 (.7%)	35 (.7%)	43 (.7%)	42 (.7%)	39 (.8%)
In Other Languages	16 (.3%)	16 (.3%)	7 (.1%)	33 (.6%)	31 (.6%)

Steps to Ensure Validity and Reliability—data tracking procedures continue to be improved over the years of the statewide survey. The procedures implemented in 2012 ensured that surveys were monitored at each step in the administration process. MI provided timely and ongoing “hotline” communication to NHDOE staff, special education directors, school district personnel, and parents throughout the survey administration process. In the analysis phase of the project, MI examined the data in terms of its representativeness on key demographic variables, i.e., race/ethnicity, gender, age group, and disability category. These results allow NHDOE to make determinations about how well the findings can be generalized to the overall population of New Hampshire parents of children receiving special education services.

III. Findings

In this section of the report, data are presented for the current year as compared to baseline data from 2007-2008. MI compares the data and reports key findings in three critical areas:

- Response Rates
- Representativeness of the Data
- Survey Results

Response Rates

The overall survey response rate for the New Hampshire 2012 Parent Involvement Survey was 15% which reflects a decrease of 4% from 2010-2011 and a slight decrease compared to baseline (see Table 2).

Table 2
NH Statewide Parent Involvement Survey Administration
Comparing Baseline, 2010-2011, and 2011-2012¹

	2007-2008 Administration			2010-2011 Administration			2011-2012 Administration		
	Pre-school	School Age	Total	Pre-school	School Age	Total	Pre-school	School Age	Total
Surveys sent	2,766	32,698	35,464	2,772	29,190	31,962	2,832	29,090	31,922
Surveys received	576	4,950	5,526	665	5,267	5,932	634	4,257	4,891
Statewide response rate	21%	15%	16%	24%	18%	19%	22%	15%	15%

¹ Response rate was calculated on the number of surveys delivered to families. Those surveys that were returned based on invalid addresses or surpluses at the district level were omitted from the count before response rate calculations. Any survey received from a parent is counted in the response rate even if the parent did not respond to any of the survey items.

Representativeness of the Data

The following set of tables (**Tables 3-6**) compare data from 2012 survey respondents to the NH Child Count data from 2011. These comparisons indicate how well the group of parents, who voluntarily responded to the survey, represents the total population of parents in New Hampshire who have children receiving special education services. The 2012 responding group of parents is compared to the Child Count data on four important variables: race/ethnicity, gender, age, and disability categories. For all of these comparisons the IDEA guidelines are followed, i.e., a difference of three percentage points (higher or lower) than the Child Count data is significant, and indicates that the group of parents who voluntarily responded to the survey is different from the total population of statewide parents on that specific category of data.

The sample of parents who responded to the survey is representative of the statewide population of parents with children with IEPs in terms of race/ethnicity and gender (see Tables 3 and 4).

**Table 3
Comparison of Respondents' Children to Special Education Population:
Race/Ethnicity**

Race Category	October 1, 2011 Child Count of Eligible Population	Percentage of Eligible Population	Count of Respondent Sample	Percentage of Respondent Sample	Over/Under Representation**
White	27,082	92.3%	4,360	91.7%	-0.5%
Black or African American	754	2.6%	106	2.2%	-0.3%
Hispanic or Latino	1,100	3.7%	157	3.3%	-0.4%
Asian or Pacific Islander	340	1.2%	110	2.3%	1.2%
American Indian or Alaskan	80	0.3%	20	0.4%	0.1%
TOTAL*	29,356	100.0%	4,753	100.0%	

* over (+)/under (-) representation is the percent of respondent children minus the percent of eligible population; anything greater than +/- 3 is considered significant.

In all five years 2008, 2009, 2010, 2011 and 2012 there were ***no significant differences in the race/ethnicity*** of the children whose parents responded to the survey as compared to the most recent Child Count data for each of those years.

Table 4
Comparison of Respondents' Children to Special Education Population:
Gender

Gender Category	December 1, 2010 Child Count of Eligible Population	Percentage of Eligible Population	Count of Respondent Sample	Percentage of Respondent Sample	Over/Under Representation**
Male	19,476	66.2%	3,241	67.4%	1.2%
Female	9,946	33.8%	1,568	32.6%	-1.2%
TOTAL	29,422	100.0%	4,809	100.0%	

* over (+)/under (-) representation is the percent of respondent children minus the percent of eligible population; anything greater than +/- 3 is considered significant.

Parents were asked to provide information about their child's gender in 2009, 2010, 2011 and 2012. There were ***no significant differences in gender*** between the children of the survey respondents and the Child Count data reported for the current year of each survey administration. Child gender data were not collected on the 2008 survey administration.

For two age group categories, the respondent sample either over- or under-represents New Hampshire's percentage for that group, as reported on the 2011 Child Count (see Table 5).

Table 5
Comparison of Respondents' Children to Special Education Population:
Age Category

Age Category	October 1, 2011 Child Count of Eligible Population	Percentage of Eligible Population	Count of Respondent Sample	Percentage of Respondent Sample	Over/Under Representation*
Ages 3-5	3,158	10.7%	709	15.0%	4.2%
Ages 6-11	10,795	36.7%	1,781	37.6%	0.9%
Ages 12-14	6,987	23.7%	1,052	22.2%	-1.6%
Ages 15-21	8,482	28.7%	1,198	25.3%	-3.6%
TOTAL	29,422	100.0%	4,740	100.0%	

* over (+)/under (-) representation is the percent of respondent children minus the percent of eligible population; anything greater than +/- 3 is considered significant.

For the 2012 sample of respondents, ***there is significant over-representation*** (4.2%) of parents with children that are 3-5 years old and ***significant under-representation*** (3.6%) of parents with 15-21 year olds.

For five disability categories, the respondent sample either over- or under-represents NH's percentage for that group, as reported on the 2011 Child Count (see Table 6). Parents voluntarily select their child's disability category. This pattern of over- or under-representation for certain disability categories has been consistent across the five years of statewide data collection for Indicator B-8.

**Table 6
Comparison of Respondents' Children to Special Education Population:
Disability Category**

Disability Category	October 1, 2011 Child Count of Eligible Population	Percentage of Eligible Population	Count of Respondent Sample	Percentage of Respondent Sample	Over/Under Representation**
AUTISM	1,943	6.6%	576	12.5%	5.9%
DEAF-BLINDNESS	8	0.0%	8	0.2%	0.1%
DEVELOPMENTAL DELAY	2,592	8.8%	568	12.4%	3.5%
EMOTIONAL DISTURBANCE	2,268	7.7%	227	4.9%	-2.8%
HEARING IMPAIRMENTS	250	0.8%	48	1.0%	0.2%
INTELLECTUAL DISABILITY	789	2.7%	92	2.0%	-0.7%
MULTIPLE DISABILITIES	403	1.4%	386	8.4%	7.0%
ORTHOPEDIC IMPAIRMENTS	90	0.3%	23	0.5%	0.2%
OTHER HEALTH IMPAIRMENTS	5,072	17.2%	463	10.1%	-7.2%
SPECIFIC LEARNING DISABILITIES	10,743	36.5%	1,350	29.4%	-7.1%
SPEECH OR LANGUAGE IMPAIRMENTS	5,076	17.3%	802	17.4%	0.2%
TRAUMATIC BRAIN INJURY	66	0.2%	25	0.5%	0.3%
VISUAL IMPAIRMENTS	122	0.4%	28	0.6%	0.2%
TOTAL	29,422	100.0%	4,596	100.0%	

* over (+)/under (-) representation is the percent of respondent children minus the percent of eligible population; anything greater than +/- 3 is considered significant.

Survey Results-Percentages for Survey Items

Table 7
Percentage of Parent Agreement on the Preschool Survey Items

<i>Survey Item Number</i>	<i>Preschool: Partnership Efforts and Quality of Services</i>	<i>% Agree Baseline (2007-2008)</i>	<i>% Agree 2011-2012</i>
11.	People from preschool special education, including teachers and other service providers respect my culture	97	96
8.	People from preschool special education, including teachers and other service providers are available to speak with me	93	95
1.	I am part of the IEP decision-making process	94	94
4.	My child's evaluation report (written summary) was written using words I understand	92	94
12.	People from preschool special education, including teachers and other service providers value my ideas	88	92
2.	My recommendations are included on the IEP	90	92
13.	People from preschool special education, including teachers and other service providers ensure that I have fully understood my rights related to preschool special education	89	92
9.	People from preschool special education, including teachers and other service providers treat me as an equal team member	86	90
10.	People from preschool special education, including teachers and other service providers encourage me to participate in the decision-making process	85	89
3.	My child's IEP goals are written in a way that I can work on them at home during daily routines	84	87
21.	People from preschool special education, including teachers and other service providers offer parents different ways of communicating with people from preschool special education (e.g., face-to-face meetings, phone calls, email)	83	86
17.	People from preschool special education, including teachers and other service providers give me enough information to know if my child is making progress	79	86
23.	People from preschool special education, including teachers and other service providers give parents the help they may need, such as transportation, to play an active role in their child's learning and development	76	84
14.	People from preschool special education, including teachers and other service providers communicate regularly with me regarding my child's progress on IEP goals	77	83

Survey Item Number	Preschool: Partnership Efforts and Quality of Services	% Agree Baseline (2007-2008)	% Agree 2011-2012
5.	The preschool special education program involves parents in evaluations of whether preschool special education is effective	79	82
18.	People from preschool special education, including teachers and other service providers give me information about the approaches they use to help my child learn	77	82
22.	People from preschool special education, including teachers and other service providers explain what options parents have if they disagree with a decision made by the preschool special education program	73	80
16.	People from preschool special education, including teachers and other service providers provide me with strategies to deal with my child's behavior	75	80
15.	People from preschool special education, including teachers and other service providers give me options concerning my child's services and supports	70	79
6.	I have been asked for my opinion about how well preschool special education services are meeting my child's needs	67	75
7.	People from preschool special education, including teachers and other service providers provide me with information on how to get other services (e.g., childcare, parent support, respite, regular preschool program, WIC, food stamps)	56	68
19.	People from preschool special education, including teachers and other service providers give me information about organizations that offer support for parents (for example, Parent Training and Information Centers, Family Resource Centers, disability groups)	53	64
24.	People from preschool special education, including teachers and other service providers offer supports for parents to participate in training workshops	44	59
20.	People from preschool special education, including teachers and other service providers offer parents training about preschool special education	55	54
25.	People from preschool special education, including teachers and other service providers connect families to one another for mutual support	38	52

Table 8
Percentage of Parent Agreement on the School Age Survey Items

Survey Item Number	School age: School's Efforts to Partner with Parents	% Agree Baseline (2007-2008)	% Agree 2011-2012
1.	I was given information about my rights as a parent of a child who is eligible for special education services	88	96
2.	At the IEP meeting, we discussed accommodations and modifications that my child would need	86	96
3.	I am comfortable asking questions and expressing concerns to school staff	82	92
22.	My child's evaluation report (written summary) is written in terms I understand	80	90
19.	The evaluation results were thoroughly explained to me	79	89
24.	IEP meetings are scheduled at a time and place that are convenient for me	80	88
18.	All of my concerns and recommendations were documented on the IEP	75	86
23.	I have a good working relationship with my child's teachers	76	86
25.	Teachers treat me as a team member	76	86
21.	I felt part of the decision-making process	73	84
20.	Teachers and administrators encourage me to participate in the decision-making process	73	84
16.	I feel I can disagree with my child's special education program or services without negative consequences for me or my child	71	82
17.	I am considered an equal partner with teachers and other professionals in planning my child's program	68	81
13.	I was given all reports and evaluations related to my child prior to the IEP meeting	67	79
11.	The school communicates regularly with me regarding my child's progress on IEP goals	70	77
12.	My child's school gives me enough information to know whether or not my child is making adequate progress	67	77
6.	The school gives parents the help they may need to play an active role in their child's education	62	75
15.	Teachers and administrators seek out parent input	62	74
14.	Teachers and administrators at my child's school invite me to share my knowledge and experience with school personnel	61	73
10.	The school explains what options parents have if they disagree with a decision of the school	63	72
8.	The school gives me choices with regard to services that address my child's needs	56	72
7.	I have been asked for my opinion about how well special education services are meeting my child's needs	56	67

Survey Item Number	School age: School's Efforts to Partner with Parents	% Agree Baseline (2007-2008)	% Agree 2011-2012
26.	In preparation for my child's transition planning meeting I was given information about options my child will have after high school	34	66
9.	I was given information about the research that supports the instructional methods used with my child	41	53
5.	My child's school has helped me find resources in my community such as after-school programs, social services, etc.	39	51
4.	The school offers parents training about special education issues	36	50

Survey Results- Indicator 8 and Rasch Analysis

In 2012, there was a 1% increase in the statewide percentage of parents who indicated that schools facilitated parent engagement as a means of improving special education services. This represents continued improvement (19%) over the past five years in parent ratings on this parent involvement indicator (see Figure 1 and Table 9).

Figure 1
Percentage of Agreement with Indicator B-8
Across the Past Five Years

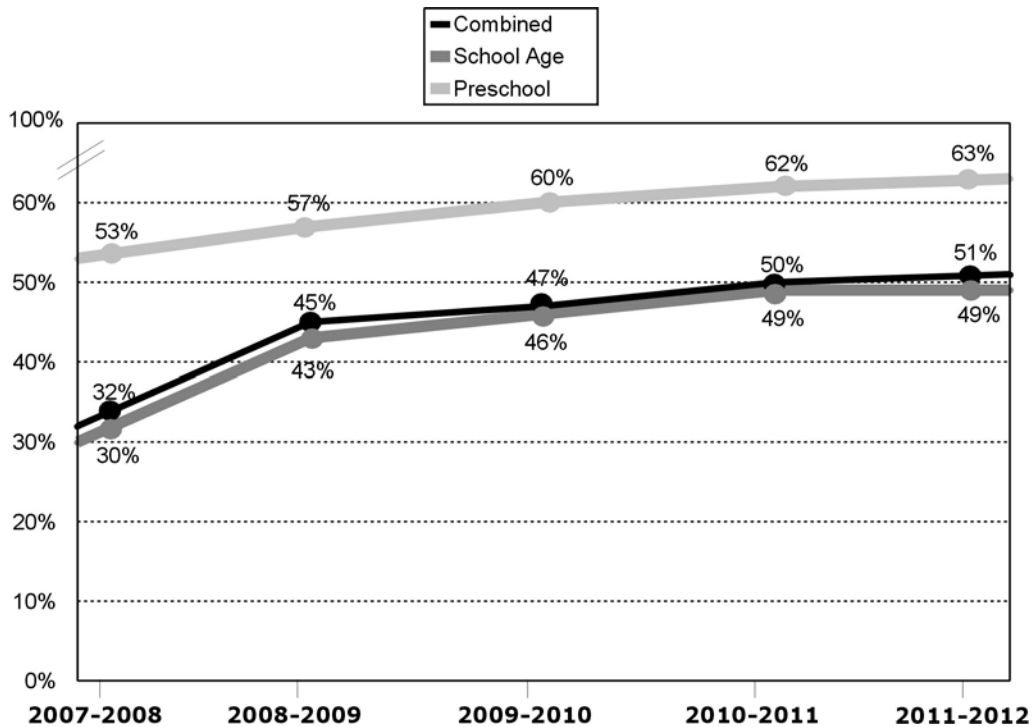


Table 9
Percentage of Parent Response At or Above the Standard²

2007-2008 (Baseline)					
STATEWIDE	TOTAL RESPONSE	RESPONSES AT OR ABOVE THE STANDARD*		95% CONFIDENCE INTERVAL	
		NUMBER	PERCENT	LOW	HIGH
Preschool	574	304	53%	48.9%	57%
School Age	4,935	1,462	30%	28.4%	31%
Combined	5,509	1,766	32%	30.8%	33.3%
2011-2012					
STATEWIDE	TOTAL RESPONSE	RESPONSES AT OR ABOVE THE STANDARD*		95% CONFIDENCE INTERVAL	
		NUMBER	PERCENT	LOW	HIGH
Preschool	634	398	63%	59.1%	66.6%
School Age	4,257	2,096	49%	47.9%	50.9%
Combined	4,891	2,494	51%	49.8%	52.6%

* the standard is set at a Rasch score of 600 based on recommendations from the NCSEAM pilot study

Using the Rasch method of data analysis, each parent survey is scored and then the percentage of parent surveys above the “cut off” score is tallied. A score above the standard (cut-off score) indicates ***agreement that the child’s school district facilitated parental engagement as a means of improving the child’s special education services.*** In 2012, these results continued the positive trend, the percentage of preschool parents rose from 62% to 63%, the percentage of school age parents remained the same at 49%, and the combined percentage of parents (preschool plus school age) rose from 50% to 51%.

Confidence intervals are provided for the percent of parents who met the standard (**Table 9**). The 95% confidence interval means that we can be 95% sure that the actual percent falls in the range between the low and high values that are reported.

² The percentage of parents *at or above the standard* is based on the number of surveys received from parents with at least one survey item response. This percentage calculation does not include surveys that were received blank or with only demographic data.

IV. Conclusions

For the past five years there has been continued improvement (19%) in the 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. In 2011-2012 the percentage of preschool parents rose from 62% to 63%, the percentage of school age parents remained the same at 49%, and the combined percentage of parents (preschool plus school age) rose from 50% to 51%. These results demonstrate a pattern of improvement across the past five years of statewide data collection.

The final section of this report highlights possible reasons for the ongoing success of the *NH Parent Involvement Survey* and makes recommendations to improve the survey administration process, increase response rates, and use data to inform improvement activities.

Reasons for Success

NHDOE and MI....

In collaboration with parent organizations and school districts successfully administered the *NH Statewide Parent Involvement Survey* to nearly 32,000 parents of children receiving special education services.

Worked collaboratively with the Indicator B-8 Work Group and NH Connections to encourage collaboration and engagement with all key stakeholders in facilitating parental involvement with special education services.

Obtained consensus about ways to promote survey response and to raise parent awareness and understanding of the survey purpose/process. MI provided guidelines about *Effective Practices for Promoting Parent Participation* to NHDOE who then posted this information to their website.

MI provided data analysis and technical support for NHDOE webinars and conferences as part of the state's improvement activities. These presentations were targeted to district staff, advocacy groups, and parent group organizations to improve family and school partnerships.

Established an ongoing system for communicating based on lessons learned from the past four survey administrations. A “hotline” response system was implemented to address questions from school district personnel and/or parents.

Provided interpreters for other languages, as well as readers for families with limited literacy skills, where these needs were identified by school districts. For the 2011-2012 survey administration all NH districts were contacted to offer translation services.

Developed and implemented data monitoring procedures; a data analysis plan; and a reporting format to make information useful for NHDOE, school district personnel and parents.

Strategies for Improving the Process

MI and NHDOE can work together to...

Continue to improve the accuracy of survey numbers needed for individual school districts and work directly with local school district contacts to reduce dissemination inefficiencies.

Increase response rates by developing additional promotional efforts for survey participation at the local level (e.g., post flyers in schools, use other local media options to promote survey awareness). Continue the process of sending an additional 10 copies of the flyer to each school district to promote participation at the local level.

Increase the use of alternative survey methods (i.e., interpreters, readers, online access) in more school districts for more families in need of these services.

Use the evaluation feedback gained from special education directors to revise the process and procedures for the 2013 survey administration.

Suggestions for Improving Response Rate

Continue the ongoing process of improving the accuracy of school district counts of children receiving special education at the preschool and school age levels.

Improve the accuracy of parent addresses by working directly at the school district level to verify addresses. This year all school districts were notified about returned surveys and asked to obtain new current address for families whose surveys were returned.

Use more public media opportunities at the local and state level to promote survey participation.

Collaborate with the parent group organizations early in the process and identify proactive strategies based on “lessons learned” from previous survey administrations.

Use the web site/links established over the past five years to reach all parents whose children are receiving special education services.

Provide guidance and assist NHDOE in offering technical assistance to school districts to boost their survey return rates and to use the results of the survey to improve services to children and families.

Develop strategies to specifically address improving response rate from parents with middle school and high school students.

In this fifth year of the project, MI again would like to acknowledge the contributions made by the New Hampshire Department of Education, the Indicator B-8 Work Group and NH Connections. We thank them for their cooperation throughout the process. Their assistance and support helped to ensure another administration of a high-quality, useful survey. Results from these efforts provide data that NHDOE can include as part of their Annual Performance Report to the United States Department of Education (USDOE), Office of Special Education Programs (OSEP) and share with school districts and parents to strengthen partnerships between families and schools.