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September 27, 2012

Dear Families and Schools,

Thank you so much for investing your time in distributing and/or completing the Parent Involvement Survey in Special Education 2011-2012 survey. The New Hampshire Department of Education (NHDOE), Bureau of Special Education is very pleased to announce the release of the Statewide Parent Involvement Survey in Special Education Results. You can access this data and report at the link below. The Parent Involvement Survey in Special Education provides important information to help the NH Department of Education, Bureau of Special Education better understand how we can support and strengthen family/school partnerships in special education.

The Office of Special Education Programs (OSEP) pursuant to the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) requires that States measure the percentage of parents of children receiving special education services who report that school facilitated parent involvement as a means of improving services and results for children with disabilities. To meet this, the NHDOE distributed the survey to all NH families who have a preschool and/or school age child/youth receiving special education services. Based on the statewide results for 2011-2012, 51% of parents who completed the survey reported that schools facilitated parent involvement as a means of - improving services and results for children with disabilities. This is a 1% increase from the 2010-2011 results and 15% higher than the state target for the year. Across the past five years of the survey there has been continued improvement in parent ratings. These positive results suggest that the improvement activities implemented on a state and local level has had a dramatic effect on parent involvement and family-school partnerships in special education. Other highlights from the survey include:

Over 90% of parents who returned the surveys (both preschool and school age combined) strongly agreed that:

- Families were given information about their rights as a parent(s) of a child who is eligible for special education services;
- Parent(s) are part of the IEP decision making process.

Research clearly shows that when families and schools work together, children with disabilities are more likely to experience success in school and achieve their goals and NHDOE recognizes the importance of family involvement. We are also committed to continuing to support families and schools in working together and have resources and trainings available to support your efforts to improve family/school partnerships in special education. During the 2012-2013 school year the NHDOE will continue to provide targeting technical assistance to schools and families through the NH Connections project funded by the Bureau of Special Education as well as continue to hold statewide webinars and other training opportunities in collaboration with the Data Accountability Center and NH Connections.

The Statewide Parent Involvement Survey in Special Education data and report is now available on the New Hampshire Department of Education website:

http://www.education.nh.gov/instruction/special_ed/parent_involv.htm

We hope this information helps you to create a conversation in your community on how we can work together to support children receiving special education.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Virginia M. Barry". The signature is written in dark ink and is positioned to the left of a faint, light-colored circular stamp or watermark.

Virginia M. Barry, Ph.D.
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