



PUBLIC SCHOOLS OF NORTH CAROLINA

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March 2, 2009

MEMORANDUM

TO: Directors, Exceptional Children Programs
Directors, Charter Schools
Programs Serving Children and Youth with Deaf-Blindness

FROM: Mary N. Watson, Director *MNW*
Exceptional Children Division

RE: 22nd Annual Conference for Families/Teachers of Deaf-Blind
June 19-23, 2009

The North Carolina Department of Public Instruction, Exceptional Children Division, is pleased to announce the 22nd Annual Conference for Families/Teachers of Deaf-Blind at the Embassy Suites in Greensboro on June 19-23, 2009. The conference will address innovative techniques and approaches to educating students with deaf-blindness. National and local experts in the field of Deaf-Blind Education will present on selected topics. There will be time for families and teachers to meet individually or in small groups with the experts to discuss their particular issues.

Please duplicate and share this information with the family of any child that meets the criteria for deaf-blind (i.e., between the ages of birth and twenty-two who has both a vision and hearing impairment) and with the child's teacher. As in previous years, we are inviting the child's teacher to participate with the family. This team approach will strengthen the relationship between the family and teacher, assist with communication, and encourage cooperation to achieve common goals. Teachers will receive information that will assist them in planning classroom activities. A teacher may attend even if the student or family is not able to attend. **The teacher will receive renewal licensure credit for participating.** This invitation is also extended to the Exceptional Children Director and related service personnel serving any student who is deaf-blind.

You recently received a packet of information to update your annual census data for students with deaf-blindness. Please return the information if you have not already done so. This census generates funds for the North Carolina Deaf-Blind Project under the Federal Deaf-Blind Grant. This conference is a benefit provided under this grant. It is provided to the family and teacher at little or no cost. Most meals and accommodations will be provided. Transportation will be the responsibility of the participants.

EXCEPTIONAL CHILDREN DIVISION

Mary N. Watson, Director

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AN EQUAL OPPORTUNITY/AFFIRMATIVE ACTION EMPLOYER

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Conference registration forms are enclosed. **THE DEADLINE FOR REGISTRATION IS MAY 12, 2009.** Sponsorship under the North Carolina Deaf-Blind Project is restricted to immediate family members and approved service providers (e.g., teacher). It is designed to meet the needs of the family and the teacher. Due to strict federal regulations, only immediate family members and approved service providers will be sponsored to attend unless special arrangements (e.g., nursing care, etc.) have been approved by the conference coordinator. **Also, due to fiscal constraints, no child over the age of 14 may attend the conference unless it is the child who is deaf-blind.**

We have had an excellent response to this conference over the years and space is limited. We hope to be able to accommodate all registrants but there is no guarantee. Please encourage families and teachers to register early. The family and teacher registration forms should be submitted together. Priority will be given to those families who are bringing the classroom teacher but all families and teachers are invited to attend.

NOTE: Families are encouraged to bring one person for childcare. However, if this is a hardship, contact Chris Jones to inquire about available options. We will provide childcare for any family who needs it. We do not want anyone to miss this conference because of childcare issues. The family's designated childcare provider must be someone other than the parents. Parents are expected to attend all sessions. This designated childcare provider MUST take full responsibility for the child(ren). There will be organized activities for the children and an indoor pool will be available. The childcare provider will stay in the same hotel unit with the family unless special arrangements have been made with the conference coordinator.

A tentative agenda and additional information about the conference will be available soon on our project web page (<http://www.ncpublicschools.org/ec/instructional/deafblind/>). More detailed information about the conference will be forwarded upon acceptance. A \$50 registration deposit check made payable to DBMANC (Deaf-Blind Multihandicapped Association of NC) is required for each family reservation. A \$25 registration deposit is required for teachers. No registration will be accepted without a properly completed form and deposit. The deposit will reserve your a space but will be refunded to participants at the conference. This must be done to confirm reservations. Persons who fail to attend and do not cancel the reservation by May 22 will forfeit the deposit, which then will be donated to the DBMANC.

Please contact Chris Jones (919/807-3991 or cjones@dpi.state.nc.us), conference coordinator and Consultant for Deaf-Blind, if you have any questions about the conference or eligibility. We look forward to another successful conference and hope you and the eligible families and teachers in your LEA are able to participate.

MNW/cj

Enclosure(s)