# West Virginia Department of Education – Office of Federal Programs, Special Education and Student Support

Indicator B8 – Sampling Plan

Administration of the West Virginia Parent Involvement Survey involves active collaboration between a private contractor (MI) and WVDE to ensure accurate and reliable data collection. The most recent results of this survey are reported with the administration dates each year on the SPP/APR. The summary below provides details of key elements that are implemented to support the survey administration and data collection processes.

Survey Production Process

The items used in the West Virginia Parent Involvement Survey were adapted from a larger survey that was developed by the National Center for Special Education Accountability Monitoring (NCSEAM) between 2002-2005. The data are to be collected by using two parent surveys. Both surveys are converted to a scannable survey format. One survey, containing 26 multiple choice questions plus an open-ended comment section, was prepared, and is administered to parents of preschool children (ages 3-5 not in kindergarten) and the other survey, containing 24 multiple choice questions plus an open-ended comment section, was prepared, and is administered to parents of school age children (ages 5 in kindergarten-21).

Survey Dissemination & Collection Method

The survey collection process involves 3 different methods. Paper method: Respondents are provided with a paper copy of the survey enabling them to complete and return the survey to MI in a postage-paid envelope. Online method: Respondents are provided with log-in information, a username and a password enabling them to complete the survey online using various devices (desktop or laptop computer, various hand-held devices, etc.). Direct email method: Over 3,000 households received direct emails containing pertinent instructions and a hyperlink to the survey. The initial surveys are distributed in April to parents of preschool children and parents of school age children. A second mailing to those parents who have not yet responded is administered in mid-May. To further boost the response rate, in mid-August direct emails are sent to parents. The direct email campaign has historically increased the response rate.

Sampling and Data Collection Procedure

As an initial step in the process, WVDE sampled the population of school districts statewide to provide a representative sample of families to survey. The sample database considers disability category, race/ethnicity, region, and district size. All parents of students with disabilities in the selected districts are surveyed and all districts are surveyed at least once within a three-year period. The districts are divided into groups based on geographic, demographic factors, and size to create a representative sample and reduce the margin of error. Specific school district distribution can be reviewed on the [Family and Public Partnership webpage](https://wvde.us/special-education/family-and-public-partnership/west-virginia-advisory-council-for-the-education-of-exceptional-children/) on the WVDE site. A sampling frame was created that provided a representative sample based on the state’s demographics, with all parents in a selected group of districts being surveyed each year. All districts will be surveyed once within a three-year period. Each of West Virginia’s 55 school districts has less than 50,000 students. This is also done to maintain high response rates, reduce selection bias, but obtain representative and current data from a small group of school districts. MI coordinates survey dissemination so that each survey is labeled with a code that could be linked to district and demographic data for each student. Each survey packet mailed to a parent contains a survey, an instructional letter, and a postage-paid return envelope addressed to MI. In this way, parents are assured that their responses come directly to the independent contractor to guarantee their confidentiality. The paper survey mailed to parents also includes instructions for completing the survey online (i.e., log-in information, username, password). Direct emails containing the survey’s hyperlink are also sent to a portion of the sample recipients (approximately 3,000 households).

Steps to Ensure Validity and Reliability

Data tracking procedures ensure that surveys were monitored at each step in the administration process. MI provides timely and ongoing communication to WVDE staff throughout the survey administration process. In the analysis phase of the project, MI examines the data in terms of its representativeness on key demographic variables, i.e., race/ethnicity, age group, gender, and disability category. These results allow WVDE to make determinations about how well the findings can be generalized to the overall population of West Virginia parents of children receiving special education services.