

**Connecticut Preschool Special Education Needs Assessment
National Institute for Early Education Research**

The National Institute for Early Education Research (NIEER) is conducting a statewide needs assessment for the Connecticut State Department of Education (CSDE) to collect information about the quality of preschool programs in which 3-, 4-, and 5-year-olds receive services as part of their IEPs. The needs assessment will identify strengths and weaknesses of the preschool settings serving children with IEPs. Information collected will be shared with CSDE in aggregate form and will be used by CSDE to support professional development opportunities and other CSDE priorities in relation to serving preschool-age children with disabilities. The overarching goal of this needs assessment is to provide CSDE with information needed to ensure that preschool-age children with disabilities in the state receive high-quality services in their least restrictive environment (LRE), per federal IDEA requirements.

As part of these efforts, NIEER will disseminate surveys to three groups of stakeholders: Directors of Special Education (all), Early Childhood Supervisors (randomly chosen sample), and preschool center directors/principals in public schools offering preschool (randomly chosen sample). Surveys will be provided electronically, but paper surveys can be made available upon request. Respondents will be provided with an electronic gift card upon completion of the online survey as a thank you for participating.

Role of the Stakeholder group:

- Review the survey questions and provide feedback, including discussions with NIEER and CSDE
- If non-responsive rates are high, troubleshoot ideas for increasing survey participation
- Review and provide feedback on a draft of the report
- Work with CSDE to implement changes based on project results

Key Project dates:

- September 18, 2019: CSDE discusses study at the Back to School meeting
- October 2019: NIEER will host a webinar to explain the project and answer any questions. It will be recorded
- October/November 2019: Survey will be distributed electronically
- December 2019: Data collection ends
- December 2019/January 2020: Data analysis
- February 2020: Discuss draft of report
- March 31, 2020: NIEER to submit final report