STATE OF SOUTH CAROLINA
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

MEMORANDUM

TO: Special Education Directors

FROM: Peter Keup, Director
Office of Special Education Services
Division of College and Career Readiness

DATE: May 16, 2023

RE: Child Find 2022-2023

The Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) contains a Child Find mandate that requires local educational agencies (LEAs) to seek out students who are potentially eligible under the IDEA and refer those students for an evaluation. Per the IDEA regulations at 34 CFR § 300.111, South Carolina has a continuing Child Find procedure in place to locate all children with disabilities residing in the State, including children with disabilities attending private schools and homeschool programs, regardless of the severity of their disability, and who are in need of special education and related services. This effort also includes highly mobile children with disabilities (such as migrant and homeless children) and children who are suspected of being a child with a disability and in need of special education, even though they are advancing from grade to grade. The purpose of this procedure is to ensure that a free appropriate public education (FAPE) is made available to all eligible students with disabilities.

The IDEA's Child Find requirements permit referrals from any source who believes a child may be eligible for special education and related services. Any source includes, but is not limited to, a parent, teacher, health care provider, or other individual with knowledge about the child. To make Child Find effective, it is important that LEAs work cooperatively with the medical community and agencies providing services to children, including health departments, social service agencies, local management entities for mental health, developmental disabilities and substance abuse services, and children's developmental service agencies. Other community programs should also be involved such as area services for the blind and the deaf, childcare programs, developmental day centers, Head Start programs, and private/parochial schools.

To assist in the local Child Find efforts, we encourage the use of every available resource including, but not limited to, posting notices on websites, social media, news releases, posters, and brochures. LEAs may consider posting in multiple languages spoken in the community to target a wide audience. Please ensure that Child Find materials are displayed for easy public access in prominent locations, including those areas frequented by children and families.

If you have questions, please contact Sherri Q. Evans, 619 Coordinator, at sqevans@ed.sc.gov or (803)734-1286. Thank you for all you do for students with disabilities.