

**TRANSITION FROM EARLY CHILDHOOD
TO KINDERGARTEN
SPECIAL EDUCATION PROGRAM
Revised 2-25-97**

The purpose of the Preschool Special Education Program is to provide services to children with disabilities, 3-5 years of age, in order to enable them to enter kindergarten needing little or no special education services. Through the transition process, it is determined whether a child has achieved age appropriate skills or if he/she needs to continue to receive special education services in the school-aged program. A carefully planned transition process should benefit children with special needs and their families and facilitate the education of children in the least restrictive environment.

1. To ensure an orderly transition for any child who has been in the preschool special education program, both sending and receiving programs agree to begin the pre-transition process in January prior to the child enrolling in kindergarten.
2. A transition team consisting minimally of the parent, the preschool early childhood representative and a local education agency representative will meet to define activities that will take place throughout the transition process, the timelines in which these activities must be completed, and person(s) responsible for carrying out these activities.

TRANSITION GUIDELINES

The purpose of these Transition Guidelines is to establish a cooperative transition plan at the administrative level. Use of these guidelines is an important step toward providing comprehensive and uninterrupted services. It is in the pre-transition period that the transition process is initiated and responsibilities are assigned. At the administrative level, the transition process involves representatives from both sending and receiving programs in joint planning along with the child's parent(s)/guardian(s). Through discussion, agency administrators plan transition strategies and activities within the established timelines for activities. Administrators and staff members must have a thorough working knowledge of services provided in order to facilitate a smooth transition.

The Strategy Outline provides a framework for the activities which will take place during the transition process. The primary areas to be addressed are:

- A. Transfer of Records, Child Data Information
- B. Timelines for Transition Activities
- C. Awareness of Programs
- D. Parental Involvement
- E. Decision-Making Process

Each phase of the transition process indicates when the activity should be initiated, what objective is to be accomplished, the accompanying activities for implementing the objective, who should be involved, who should be primarily responsible for the activity, and what materials will be required to complete the activity.

TRANSITION

STRATEGY OUTLINE - THE NEXT STEP

"R" denotes required timeframe "S" denotes suggested timeframe "*" Denotes primary person responsible for activity

NOTE: Where EC Coordinator and/or local Special Education Supervisor is listed, other appropriate personnel may be designated for transition responsibilities.

TIMEFRAME	OBJECTIVE	ACTIVITIES	PERSON(S) INVOLVED	MATERIALS
<p>R: January and February (and through end of year as new children enroll in EC Program)</p> <p>This is an ongoing process.</p>	<p>1. To provide the local education agency names of children enrolled in the Preschool Special Education Program who will be eligible to enter kindergarten in the fall.</p> <p>2. To provide parents information regarding the transition process and local school district programs.</p>	<p>1. EC Coordinator completes and submits the Data Notification Form to the Special Education supervisor.</p> <p>2. LEA Supervisor will inform parents of local school programs through a letter and/or local meeting.</p>	<p>1. Early Childhood (EC) Coordinator/DDTCS designee</p> <p>2. Local Special Education Supervisor</p>	<p>Special Education Early Childhood Child Data Notification Form</p> <p>Letters to Parents</p>
<p>S: March</p>		<p>1. EC Coordinator communicates with parents and discusses transition including transfer of records and local school district programs.</p> <p>2. EC Coordinator will encourage parents to visit public schools by providing Kindergarten Round-up date, setting up group meeting between parents and local school district staff, assist with transportation, etc.</p>	<p>1. and 2. *EC Coordinator</p> <p>Parents</p> <p>Local school district personnel</p>	<p>Appropriate information on transfer of records and local school district programs (i.e., Chapter 1, Section 504, regular kindergarten, Kindergarten Waiver, School Choice and Sp. Ed. 5-21 Programs.)</p> <p>School Choice and Special Education 5-21 Programs.</p>

TIMEFRAME	OBJECTIVE	ACTIVITIES	PERSON(S) INVOLVED	MATERIALS
S: March-April	To obtain and share current data in preparation for Annual Review or Separate Programming Conference	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Administer appropriate assessments, if any. 2. Submit a Child Information Profile to local Special Education Supervisor for analysis. 3. Coordinate dates for Annual Review/Separate Programming Conference with local Special Education Supervisor. 4. Reasonable prior notice must be given to parents and local Sp. Ed. Supervisors for the Annual Review/Separate Programming Conference. 	1. - 4. * EC Coordinator and Staff Parents Local school district personnel Local Special Education Supervisor	Current data, including written evaluation report(s) Child Information Profile Written parental notification of Annual Review/Separate Programming Conference
R: Date of Annual Review/Separate Programming Conference. Begin 60 day timeline for additional testing, if appropriate.	To conduct Annual Review/Separate Programming Conference	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. EC Coordinator meets with parents, local Special Education Supervisor and others as requested, sharing the information at this Programming Conference. <p>The local Special Education Supervisor will explain transition process to kindergarten including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> *evaluation process and eligibility for 5 to 21 year old Special Education Program *time lines, and parent rights, and *transfer of records 	1. * EC Coordinator Parent * Local Special Education Supervisor Others, as appropriate	IEP, Annual Review or Separate Programming Conference Decision Forms

TIMEFRAME	OBJECTIVE	ACTIVITIES	PERSON(S) INVOLVED	MATERIALS
		<p>2. The decision to be dismissed from Special Education or the need to determine school age eligibility will be documented on the Annual Review/Separate Programming Conference form. If the decision is to determine eligibility for the school age program, the school district has a maximum of 60 calendar days (from the Parent Notice of Annual Review/Separate Programming Conference Decision date) to conduct additional required evaluations. Upon completion of the testing, the local school district has 30 calendar days to hold an Evaluation/Programming Conference.</p> <p>3. The content of parent notification of the Annual Review/Separate Programming Conference and Decision forms must contain all relevant information pertaining to both Transition and Annual Review/Separate Programming Conferences.</p>	<p>2. Early Childhood Personnel Local School District Personnel</p> <p>3. Early Childhood Personnel</p>	<p>2. Annual Review/Separate Programming Conference Decision Form</p> <p>3. Written parental notification of Annual Review/Separate Programming Conference and parental notification of decision forms.</p>

TIMEFRAME	OBJECTIVE	ACTIVITIES	PERSON(S) INVOLVED	MATERIALS
R: Immediate	Transfer of records	4. The local school district will be provided copies of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Parental Notification of Conference • Annual Review/Separate Programming Conference Decision Form • Parental Notification of Conference Decision • Initial Consent to Place 5. In the event that a local school district representative is not present at the Annual Review/Separate Programming Conference the chairperson will immediately forward to the LEA Supervisor the items listed in number 4 above.	4. Early Childhood Personnel Local School District Personnel 5. Early Childhood Personnel Local School District Personnel	4. Copies of Records 5. Copies of Records

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION CONCERNING PROCEDURES FOR KINDERGARTEN ELIGIBLE PRESCHOOL CHILDREN

I. REEVALUATION PROCEDURES WILL BE IMPLEMENTED BEFORE ANY DISMISSAL OF CHILDREN FROM SPECIAL EDUCATION SERVICES.

- A. The Preschool ESC/LEA team used in IEP development should be the same team used to determine the reevaluation needs of the student.
- B. The Preschool ESC/LEA team will complete the Reevaluation Data Review Conference Decision Form. Review any existing data. If no additional data are needed to determine eligibility then proceed with the Preschool Evaluation/Programming Conference Decision Form.
- C. If testing is needed, preschool personnel must obtain a new Informed Consent. *Reasonable efforts must be made to obtain consent if the parent did not attend the conference. If consent cannot be obtained after reasonable efforts, the Preschool ESC/LEA may proceed with the evaluation. The Preschool ESC/LEA has 60 days to complete any assessments. Thirty (30) days after the completion of assessments, an Evaluation/Programming Conference must be held to discuss the results, determine eligibility, etc.
- D. If a parent requests a comprehensive reevaluation of the child, it must be done, even if the committee determined it was not needed for determining continued eligibility.

II. THE FOLLOWING PROCEDURES APPLY FOR CHILDREN RECOMMENDED TO CONTINUE RECEIVING SPECIAL EDUCATION SERVICES IN KINDERGARTEN:

- A. The Preschool ESC/LEA and LEA will continue to follow the *Transition-Strategy Outline-The Next Step* (Revised 2-25-97)
- B. The Preschool ESC/LEA will document on the Annual Review/Separate Programming Conference form the need to determine the child's eligibility for the school age program.
- C. The LEA will complete the Existing Data Review and Conference Decision Form. Review existing data from the Preschool Special Education Program. The LEA must obtain a new Informed Consent. The LEA has a maximum of 60 calendar days (from the Parental Notice of the Annual Review/Separate Programming Conference date) to conduct additional required evaluations. Upon completion of the testing, the LEA has 30 calendar days to hold an Evaluation/Programming Conference to discuss the results, determine eligibility, etc.

***NOTE:** According to the U.S. Department of Education, Office of Special Education Programs, a reasonable effort on behalf of an ESC/LEA would include some combination of the following: documented phone calls, letter, certified letters with return receipts, and visits to parents' last known address. The certified letter is a good tool for this process, but it alone is not sufficient.

Experience in the field indicates that many people will not sign for certified mail fearing summons or collection agencies. The return of a certified letter should be followed by a visit to the last known address of the parent. Contact should also be made with neighbors, relatives and other agencies in an effort to locate the parent. If these attempts are unsuccessful, all efforts should be carefully documented.