Preschool Updates

SELDA
October 18, 2022
“Begin with the End in Mind”

Stephen Covey, *The 7 Habits of Highly Effective People*
State Performance Plans/Annual Performance Reports (SPP/APR)

Training from Early Childhood Technical Assistance Center

SPP/APR Basics What You Need to Know Training Series

- These self-directed training modules provide a basic understanding of IDEA Part C and Part B of Section 619 SPP/APR indicators and their requirements.
**Why Intervene Early?**

- Neural circuits, which create the foundation for learning, behavior, and health, are the most flexible or "plastic" during the first three years of life.

- Persistent "toxic" stress such as extreme poverty, abuse and neglect, or severe maternal depression can damage the developing brain leading to lifelong problems in learning, behavior, and physical and mental health.

*Harvard University Center on the Developing Child*
Why Intervene Early?

• High quality early intervention services can change a child's developmental trajectory and improve outcomes for children, families and communities.

• Intervention is likely to be more effective and less costly when it is provided earlier in life rather than later.

Harvard University Center on the Developing Child
Why Intervene Early?

• The brain is strengthened by **positive early experiences**, especially stable relationships with caring and responsive adults, safe and supportive **environments**, and appropriate nutrition.

Harvard University Center on the Developing Child
Section 619 of IDEA Part B

The Individual with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) Part B Section 619 is intended to help states ensure that all preschool-aged children (3 through 5 years of age) with disabilities receive special education and related services.
IDEA 619 - Purpose and Philosophy

• It is well documented that the beginning years of all children's lives are critical for building the early foundations of learning and wellness needed for success in school and later in life.

• During these years, children's brains develop rapidly, influenced by the experiences they share with their families, teachers, peers, and in their communities.

• It is critical for children with disabilities to be exposed to a variety of rich experiences where they can learn in the context of play and everyday interactions and engage with their peers with and without disabilities.

Indicators
State Performance Plan/Annual Performance Reports (SPP/APR)

**Preschool Only**

- Indicator B-6: Early Childhood Environments
- Indicator B-7: Early Childhood Outcomes
- Indicator B-12: Early Childhood Transition

**Preschool Included**

- Indicator B-4: Suspension and Expulsion
- Indicator B-8: Parent Involvement
- Indicator B-11: Evaluation Timelines
- Indicator B-15: Resolution Settlement Agreements
- Indicator B-16: Mediation Agreement
1) EARLY CHILDHOOD

Are young children with disabilities entering kindergarten ready to learn?

- Indicator 6: Preschool Settings
- Indicator 7: Preschool Outcomes
- Indicator 12: Early Childhood Transition from Part C to Part B

Adapted from Oklahoma Department of Education
Indicator 6: Environments
Policy Statement on Children with Disabilities in Early Childhood Programs

Recommendations

• Setting an expectation for high-quality inclusion in early childhood programs

• Increasing public understanding of the science that supports meaningful inclusion of children with disabilities, from the earliest ages, in early childhood programs

• Highlighting the legal foundations supporting inclusion in high-quality early childhood programs

• Increasing inclusive early learning opportunities for all children

• Identifying free resources for States, programs, early childhood personnel, and families to support high-quality individualized programming and inclusion of children with disabilities in early childhood programs

OSEP Policy Statement September, 2015
Inclusive Environments (Research)

- Evidence based strategies can be implemented successfully in inclusive childhood programs.
- Children with disabilities can make significant developmental and learning progress in inclusive settings.
- Children with disabilities in inclusive settings experience greater cognitive and communication development.
- Children with disabilities have similar levels of engagement as their peers.
- Children with disabilities are more likely to practice newly acquired skills.
- Desired outcomes achieved only noted when included several days per week in social and learning opportunities.
- High quality inclusion that begins early and continues into school likely produces the strongest outcomes.

OSEP Policy Statement September, 2015
Inclusive Environments
(Research)

Compared to their peers in separate special education settings...

- Children with disabilities demonstrated stronger interpersonal skills.
- Children with disabilities demonstrated more social interaction.
- Children with disabilities had larger networks of friends.
- Children with disabilities were more socially competent.
- Children with disabilities were absent fewer days.
- Children with disabilities had higher test scores in reading and math.

OSEP Policy Statement September, 2015
What does your district need in order to improve inclusion services for young children with disabilities? (Padlet here?)
Schools need...

- System supports
- Resources for professional development
- Ongoing coaching and collaboration
- Time for communication and planning

OSEP Policy Statement September, 2015
Inclusive Environments (Legal)

• Office of Special Education Programs
  • Dear Colleague letter January 9, 2017
  • Emphasizes the IDEA Section 612(a)(5) requirement
  • “maximum extent appropriate”…LRE provision does not distinguish between school-aged and preschool-aged children and therefore, applies equally to all preschool children with disabilities.

• Variety of placement options are identified in section 618 (a) with no distinction related to the student’s age
• LEAs are responsible for providing a continuum of placement options to preschool students
Preschool Environments (Legal)

• The LRE requirements of IDEA apply to all children with disabilities ages 3-21
• LRE requirements apply equally to preschool children with disabilities ages 3-5
• LEAs must make available a full continuum of placements options to preschool students with disabilities
Considering Placement

**FAPE for preschool children with a disability in the least restrictive environment - REGARDLESS of whether the LEA operates public preschool programs for children without disabilities.**

Possible settings include:
- regular pre-kindergarten class
- public or private preschool program
- community-based childcare facility
- placement in another federal program like Head Start

*If an LEA determines that private preschool is necessary for a child to receive FAPE, it must be made available at no cost to the parent.*
# Preschool Environments

- Regular Early Childhood Education Setting
- Special Education Early Childhood Setting
- Home
- Service Provider Location
- Separate School
- Residential Setting
Data Reporting

Regular Early Childhood Program - majority (at least 50%) of nondisabled children and includes: Head Start, Pre-Kindergarten, Public and Private Preschools and group child development centers or childcare.

Special Education Program - Children attend a special education program in a class with less than 50% non-disabled children.
*Does not include children who attend a regular education early childhood program.

[Link to FTE Guidelines for Special Education Environments: Early Childhood]
What is a Service Provider Location?

1) Children who received **all of their special education and related services** from a service provider and

2) Who did not attend an Early Childhood Program or a Special Education Early Childhood Program provided in a separate class, separate school, or residential facility, or receive services in their home.

*Includes* children who received all of their special education and related services from a service provider in **a location that is not in any other category**. For example, Speech and Language Services provided in:

- Private Speech/Language Pathologists' offices
- Hospital facilities on an outpatient basis
- Speech/Language Pathologists' offices located in school buildings

(Do not include children who also received special education services at home. Children who received special education services both in a service provider location and at home should be reported in the home category.)
Indicator 7: Outcomes
Child Outcomes Summary (COS)  
Georgia's Process

- Districts use the Child Outcome Summary process to gather data using multiple sources:  
  - Evaluation data  
  - Progress on goals and objectives  
  - Observation  
  - Parent and Teacher input

- Data is collected using the Child Outcome Summary Form
- Data is entered on the Preschool Outcomes Template
- Data is reported in our State Longitudinal Data System
- Districts report Summary Data to the GADOE
  - Districts should maintain their student level data
- Georgia reports Summary Data to OSEP
Preschool Outcomes
Outcome 1

Positive Social-Emotional Skills

- Relating with Caregivers
- Attending to Other People in a Variety of Settings
- Interacting with Peers
- Participating in Social Games and Communicating with Others
- Following Social Norms and Adapting to Change in Routines
- Expressing Own Emotions and Responding to Emotions of Others

Early Childhood Technical Assistance Center
Preschool Outcomes
Outcome 2

Acquisition and Use of Knowledge and Skills

- Showing Interest in Learning
- Attending to Other People in a Variety of Settings
- Engaging in Purposeful Play
- Understanding Pre-Academics and Literacy
- Acquiring Language to Communicate
- Understanding Questions and Directions Given

Early Childhood Technical Assistance Center
Preschool Outcomes
Outcome 3

Use of Appropriate Behaviors to Meet Needs

- Moving Around and Manipulating Things to Meet Needs
- Eating and Drinking with Increasing Independence
- Dressing and Undressing with Increasing Independence
- Diapering/Toileting and Washing with Increasing Independence
- Communicating Needs
- Showing Safety Awareness

Early Childhood Technical Assistance Center
COS Data to OSEP Progress Categories
Child Outcome Modules

- Modules are in Georgia Learns
- Access through SLDS
- Participation can be monitored
Indicator 12: Transition
Timely Transition (Indicator 12)

Be sure that your district has procedures in place to monitor submission of Preschool Timelines.

Part C
- Notify LEA
- Develop Transition Plan
- Coordinate Transition Conference
- Provide necessary documentation to LEA to assist in the Part B referral process

Part B
- Attend Part C Transition Conference
- Conduct Part B Eligibility Evaluation
- Develop and Implement IEP prior to child's 3rd birthday.
Referral Process Information

• Helpful:
  • Birth Certificate
  • Recent passed hearing and vision screening
  • Recent shot record
  • Proof of residence

❖ School districts, Head Start and BCW staff should work collaboratively to gather these documents prior to referral whenever possible to ensure a smooth transition. Referrals can be accepted if one of more of these items has not been obtained prior to the transition meeting.

• Required:
  • BCW provider data
  • Current/recent evaluation information (BCW and Private Providers)
Additional Referral Process Clarification

• Hearing and Vision Screenings
  • **IDEA: Sec. 300.304 Evaluation procedures**
    The child is assessed in all areas related to the suspected disability, including, if appropriate, health, vision, hearing, social and emotional status, general intelligence, academic performance, communicative status, and motor abilities;

    Hearing and Vision Screenings are part of the evaluation, not a precursor.

    Consent to evaluate should not be provided contingent upon a passed hearing and vision screening.
Information on Hearing Screening  
(Email Blast October 11, 2019)

There is no functional hearing screening used in place of a student’s inability to perform a traditional hearing screening.

**The student should be referred for comprehensive hearing evaluation by an audiologist who can perform specialized testing that is chosen based on the student’s developmental level.

**Passing scores require responses to decibel levels of 20-25 decibels (dB) for frequencies 1000, 2000 and 4000 Hertz (Hz). (500 and 6000 Hz are also acceptable added screening frequencies).

*The guidance for hearing does not vary by age. Please review Power Point Slides from the General Supervision Training dated September 25, 2019 and available on the Ga Doe Website. State contacts can provide you with guidance regarding accessing resources throughout the state.

**Recommendations from the Department of Public Health, American Academy of Pediatrics and the American Speech Language Hearing Association
Information on Vision Screening
(Email Blast October 11, 2019)

There is **no functional vision screening** used in place of a student’s inability to perform a traditional hearing screening.

The 3300 screening form states that for a student to pass a vision screening, he or she must have 20/30 vision in each eye for children age 6 and above and 20/40 vision in each eye for children below age 6.

*Please review Power Point Slides from the [General Supervision Training dated September 25, 2019](#), and available on the Ga Doe Website. State contacts can provide you with guidance regarding accessing resources throughout the state.*
Resources for Hearing and Vision

- GA DOE – Trainings for Hearing & Vision screenings
  - Vision and Hearing Resources
  - Training manual for hearing screenings
- Georgia’s (new) Mobile Audiology Program
  - Program Manager: Jessica Bergeron – jbergeron@doe.k12.ga.us
- Early Childhood Hearing Outreach (ECHO) (for children ages 3-5)
- Prevent Blindness Georgia
- Free or low-cost glasses & hearing aids for children
Things to Consider

**Child Find**

• Ask the question - **Who** is responsible for Child Find?

**Always the LEA of Residence** with one exception

*Exception* - the child attends a school in another district that meets the definition of a private school. In this case, the LEA where the school is located must conduct Child Find activities.
Things to Consider

Child Find

A parent of a child in a private school may request evaluations from both the LEA of residence and the LEA where the school is located, but this is discouraged.

OSEP states, “[s]ubjecting a child to repeated testing by separate LEAs in close proximity of time may not be the most effective or desirable way to ensure that the evaluations are meaningful measures of whether a child has a disability, or of obtaining an appropriate assessment of the child’s educational needs.”
Infants and toddlers were disproportionately impacted by the pandemic compared to their peers.

SEAs and LEAs are expected to developed processes and procedures to ensure that students can attend school safely.
Definition of a Private School

Under IDEA, a school is a private school *IF* it meets the following requirements:

1. Includes grade K or higher
2. Has a non-profit status

*ONLY preschool students who attend private schools that meet these two requirements can access a Service Plan (SP) through Proportionate Share Funding.*
### After Eligibility-Parent Options

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Accept FAPE</th>
<th>Reject FAPE</th>
<th>*Reject FAPE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Accept <em>FAPE</em> and enroll the student in the LEA of residence, IEP is developed and services are provided</td>
<td>Reject <em>FAPE</em>, no services</td>
<td>*Reject <em>FAPE</em> and agree to a Service Plan (SP) offered by the LEA where the private school is located</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*This option only applies if the student attends a school that meets the definition of a private school.*
Name the five areas of development that are assessed for preschool children ages 3-5

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Preschool Evaluations

The comprehensive evaluation for children ages 3-5 includes assessing the following areas of development:

- Adaptive development (e.g., dressing, eating, toileting);
- Cognitive development (e.g., thinking and learning);
- Communication (e.g., hearing, speaking, language skills);
- Motor development (e.g., physical development, large and small muscle development);
- Social–emotional development (e.g., relating with adults and other children)
What the related services *might* be assessed for preschool?
How would you determine which related service areas *should* be included as part of the comprehensive evaluation?
Preschool Evaluations (SDD)

• Preschool-aged students may be determined to be eligible in any disability category.

• The most common is Significantly Developmentally Delayed (SDD) [See 34 C.F.R. § 300.8(b)].

• A young child is eligible for special education and related services in the SDD category when team members agree that the evaluation information indicates the child meets the eligibility criteria in one or more of the five areas of development.

• The team must agree that special education and related services are required for the child to learn and be part of an appropriate educational setting.
Preschool Evaluations (SDD)

- The SDD eligibility may be used for children from ages 3-9. Initial eligibility must be established and an IEP in place on or before the child’s 7th birthday.

- Eligibility can continue to the end of the school year in which the child turns 9, if the child is not reevaluated and found eligible in another disability category prior to the end of the school year.

- The IEP Team shall reevaluate the child no later than 3 years from the date of initial eligibility.
How are you doing?

• How is your district performing in the three preschool specific indicators?

• How are the data collected, monitored and used for improvement?

• What, if any, are your responsibilities for the development of and implementation of the SPP/APR?
Padlet

- Which of the three areas does your district need to improve?

  Environments, Outcomes, or Timelines?

- Name one action that you will take to improve that specific area.
Collaboration
Did you know that Georgia has an MOU for our early intervention system?
Understanding Our Partner Programs

- Georgia Department of Education
- Babies Can’t Wait
- Head Start
Memorandum of Understanding

The MOU is an agreement that defines the collaboration between five entities that provide services to children with disabilities age birth – five years old:

• Georgia Department of Education
• Georgia Department of Community Health- Part C Early Intervention Program (Babies Can’t Wait)
• Bright from the Start: Georgia Department of Early Care and Learning (DECAL)
• Georgia Head Start Association
• United States Department of Health and Human Services, Administration for Children and Families, Region IV
What is Babies Can’t Wait (BCW)?

Part C of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) guarantees all eligible children ages birth to 36 months, regardless of their disability, have access to services that will enhance their development.

BCW is Georgia’s Part C early intervention program for families of infants and toddlers with developmental delays and disabilities. BCW is housed at the Georgia Department of Community Health.

The Individuals with Disabilities Education Act states that services should be provided in Natural Environments—settings that are natural or normal for the child's age peers who have no disabilities.
What is Head Start?

• Head Start is a federal program for preschool children from low-income families (federally-funded/locally-designed programs).

• Head Start has served more than 30 million children since 1965, growing from an eight-week summer project to include full day/year services and many program options.

• Currently, Head Start is administered by the Administration for Children and Families (ACF) in the Department of Health and Human Services.

• Head Start programs promote the school readiness of children ages birth to 5 from low-income families by supporting their development in a comprehensive way.
Head Start Placement Determination

• Head Start and Early Head Start (EHS) have a 10% mandate for enrollment of students with disabilities.
• Head Start/EHS shall serve on the team making eligibility decisions for young children with disabilities or suspected disabilities.
• Head Start/EHS will participate in the development and implementation of the IEP/IFSP for each infant or toddler or preschool child currently enrolled in Head Start/EHS or may be enrolled as a service delivery option.
Head Start Program Performance Standards

Coordination and collaboration with the local agency responsible for implementing IDEA

(a) A program must coordinate with the local agency responsible for implementing IDEA to identify children enrolled or who intend to enroll in a program that may be eligible for services under IDEA and through participation in the local agency Child Find efforts.

(b) A program must work to develop interagency agreements with the local agency responsible for implementing IDEA to improve service delivery to children eligible for services under IDEA including:

• Service coordination
• The referral and evaluation process
• Promotion of service provision in the least restrictive appropriate community-based setting
• Reduction in dual enrollment which causes reduced time in a less restrictive setting,
• Transition services as children move from services provided under Part C of IDEA to services provided under Part B of IDEA and from preschool to kindergarten.
Head Start Program Performance Standards

Coordination and collaboration with the local agency responsible for implementing IDEA

(c) A program must participate in the development of the IFSP or IEP if requested by the child’s parents, and the implementation of the IFSP or IEP. At a minimum, the program must offer:

• (1) To provide relevant information from its screenings, assessments, and observations to the team developing a child’s IFSP or IEP
• (2) To participate in meetings with the local agency responsible for implementing IDEA to develop or review an IEP or IFSP for a child being considered for Head Start enrollment, a currently enrolled child, or a child transitioning from a program.

(d) A program must retain a copy of the IEP or IFSP for any child enrolled in Head Start for the time the child is in the program
Use of IDEA Part B funds for preschool children with disabilities

LEAs must use IDEA funds (611 and 619) to pay the excess costs of providing special education and related services for students with disabilities.

HOWEVER, the excess cost requirement does not prevent an LEA from using Part B funds to pay for ALL of the costs directly attributable to the education of children ages 3-5 if NO local or state funds are available for nondisabled children of these ages.
Preschool Consortia

• Currently have 15 Preschool Consortia meeting

• Uniquely designed by GLRS Directors and Consortia Leads to meet the needs of each area

• Some guidance from DOE

• Please encourage participation by your Preschool Staff
Consortia Pillars

- Outcomes
- Disproportionality
- Self Determination
- Parent Engagement
State Resources

• GaDOE Website = https://www.gadoe.org/Curriculum-Instruction-and-Assessment/Special-Education-Services/Pages/Preschool-Special-Education.aspx

• Georgia Early Learning and Development Standards (GELDS) = http://gelds.decal.ga.gov/

• PBIS Early Learning = https://www.gadoe.org/Curriculum-Instruction-and-Assessment/Special-Education-Services/Pages/PBIS-Early-Learning.aspx

• Parent to Parent of Georgia = http://p2pga.org/
• Preschool special education teachers can take online training courses that are approved by the Georgia Department of Early Care and Learning. There are 7 courses designed for preschool teachers. To review the program and sign up visit the following link:

• Welcome to the Cox Campus | Read Right from the Start
National Resources

• Early Childhood Technical Assistance Center (ECTA) = http://ectacenter.org/decrp/

• Division for Early Childhood of the Council for Exceptional Children (DEC) = https://www.dec-sped.org/

• National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC) = https://www.naeyc.org/

• National Center for Pyramid Model Innovations (NCPMI) = https://challengingbehavior.cbcs.usf.edu/
Important Georgia Websites Related to Young Children

- Babies Can’t Wait (BCW) = https://dph.georgia.gov/Babies-Cant-Wait
- Department of Early Care and Learning (DECAL) = http://decal.ga.gov/
- Georgia Head Start Association = https://georgiaheadstart.org/
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