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Early Childhood Special Education (ECSE) Guidance: Superintendents of Schools, Special Education Directors, Principals, Early Childhood Special Education Coordinators, and Teachers

This guidance document provides information to Local Education Agencies (LEA) for students on Individualized Education Plans (IEPs) who will transition to kindergarten for the upcoming school year. If you have any questions, please contact ECSE/ IDEA 619 Coordinator, Katie McCarthy at katie.mccarthy@vermont.gov.

Vermont Special Education Rules

2361.4 Transition for ECSE Children Moving into Kindergarten

In order to ensure a smooth transition to kindergarten, the IEP team shall:

- a. Meet 3 to 6 months (90 to 180 days) prior to the child's entrance into kindergarten to ensure that the child's IEP is ready to be implemented at the beginning of the school year.
- b. Include in the meeting the parents of the child with the disability, a kindergarten teacher in the school in which the child will be placed, and a special education teacher or other school representative from the LEA who is:
 - i. Knowledgeable about the LEA's resources;
 - ii. Qualified to provide or supervise the provision of specially designed instruction to meet the unique needs of children with disabilities; and
 - iii. Knowledgeable about the general education curriculum.

Other individuals with knowledge or specific expertise regarding the child may be included in the meeting.

Reminder: Full evaluations are not conducted until the child's 3 year re-evaluation.

Transition to Kindergarten Options

At the discretion of the LEA, IEP teams may choose one of the following options to either maintain and amend the child's current ECSE IEP or transition a child's ECSE IEP to a school age IEP:

1) Option 1: Maintain and amend the child's current ECSE IEP

- a. **Prior to kindergarten:** During the spring transition meeting, which must occur 3 to 6 months prior to the child's entrance into kindergarten, IEP members from the sending (ECSE) and receiving (elementary) team, may amend the child's ECSE IEP cover page and service page in order to prepare and implement the ECSE IEP on the first day of kindergarten.

b. During the kindergarten year:

- i. At least ten days prior to the child's 6th birthday, their ECSE IEP must be transferred to a school age IEP form and in the software system.
- ii. The student's educational environment/ placement (LRE) on the IEP must also reflect 6-21 educational environment.

Reminder: By the end of the school year, prior to the child's entrance into kindergarten, IEP teams must complete the Early Childhood Outcome Exit and Progress data rating.

2) Option 2

- a. Prior to kindergarten:** During the spring transition meeting, which must occur 3 to 6 months prior to the child's entrance to kindergarten, IEP members from the receiving (elementary) team, may write a school-age IEP in order to prepare and implement the school age IEP on the first day of kindergarten.
 - i. The date of the transition meeting will become the new annual review date.
 - ii. The child's disability category remains "Developmental Delay" on the school age IEP until the child's three year re-evaluation comes due **or** the parent or LEA requests an evaluation for specific reasons

Reminder: By the end of the school year prior to the child's entrance into kindergarten, IEP teams must complete Early Childhood Outcome Exit and Progress data.

Child Count "educational environment" Reporting Purposes

1. If the child's sixth birthday is on or before December 1st, the general characteristics of the child's "educational environment/ placement" must be amended to reflect ages 6-21.
2. Check one of the general characteristics of the child's educational environment/ placement, ages 6-21.
 - a. Inside regular class at least 80% of the time
 - b. Inside regular class 40%-70% of the time
 - c. Inside regular class less than 40% of the time
 - d. Separate day school (public or private)
 - e. Residential facility
 - f. Homebound/Hospital