

Handbook on *Transition* From Early Childhood Special Education Programs



Handbook □
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from
Early Childhood
Special Education
Programs



Publishing Information

The *Handbook on Transition from Early Childhood Special Education Programs* was developed by the Special Education Division, California Department of Education. It was edited by Faye Ong, working in cooperation with Terence Williams, Consultant, Special Education Division. It was prepared for printing by the staff of CDE Press: the cover and interior design were created and prepared by Paul Lee; typesetting was done by Jeannette Reyes. It was published by the Department, 1430 N Street, Sacramento, CA 95814-5901. It was distributed under the provisions of the Library Distribution Act and *Government Code* Section 11096.

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ISBN 0-8011-1586-8

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Copies of this publication are available for \$16.50 each, plus shipping and handling charges. California residents are charged sales tax. Orders may be sent to California Department of Education, CDE Press, Sales Office, 1430 N Street, Suite 3207, Sacramento, CA 95814-5901; FAX (916) 323-0823. See page 65 for complete information on payment, including credit card purchases. Prices on all publications are subject to change.

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The Department of Education gratefully acknowledges Jennifer A. Faulkner and Janine Swanson for the use of the photographs in this publication.

Notice

The guidance in *Handbook on Transition from Early Childhood Special Education Programs* is not binding on local educational agencies or other entities. Except for the statutes, regulations, and court decisions that are referenced herein, the document is exemplary, and compliance with it is not mandatory. (See *Education Code* Section 33308.5.)

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A Message from the State Superintendent of Public Instruction



Early intervention programs and specialized preschool services are extraordinarily effective in helping young children with special needs acquire the skills and supports necessary to be successful in school and in later life. California has long recognized its responsibilities and the importance of providing programs and services designed for children with disabilities and other special needs as part of its comprehensive educational system for all students.

The *Handbook on Transition from Early Childhood Special Education Programs* provides specific information and resources to assist families, early intervention professionals, and school district personnel to navigate the move from services for infants and toddlers to special education services and programs for preschool-aged children in a seamless and efficient manner. The handbook offers timely information to those supporting children in a range of environments, including the regular preschool classroom.

This handbook is one of a series of resources designed to provide information about services, programs, and strategies available to families and professionals supporting children with special needs. I hope you find it helpful.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Jack O'Connell".

JACK O'CONNELL
State Superintendent of Public Instruction

Acknowledgments □

The California Department of Education appreciates the work of everyone who contributed to the development of this handbook. The principal author was **Linda M. J. Brault**, Early Childhood Consultant, California Institute on Human Services, Sonoma State University. The following persons provided valuable feedback:

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Introduction

*All transitions end with
a beginning . . .*



The purpose of this handbook is to provide guidance to programs involved in helping young children and families make the transition between educational environments. It is hoped that this information will assist programs in developing procedures that allow each family's journey through transition to occur smoothly and achieve optimal results.

Transition is the process that occurs before, during, and after a change. It involves moving from one place, stage, or relationship to another. This handbook addresses the legal requirements and preferred practices regarding transitions for young children with disabilities. These young children experience at least three types of transitions: daily transitions between different appointments and services; transitions within settings or between activities; and transitions from one program or service setting to another.¹

Note: The recommended practices in this handbook are consistent with the federal Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act of 2004 (the reauthorized Individuals with Disabilities Education Act of 1977), which went into effect on July 1, 2005.

¹Mark Wolery, "Children with Disabilities in Early Elementary School," in *The Transition to Kindergarten*. Edited by Robert C. Pianta and Martha J. Cox. Baltimore: Paul H. Brookes Publishing Company, 1999.

This handbook will focus on the last, more formal transition—from one educational or intervention program to another. Specifically, this handbook will examine the transition for children at age three to preschool services and the transition from preschool services to kindergarten.

Many young children experience transitions due to changes in child care and the start of preschool. Transitions for young children with disabilities, however, are generally made to receive services, and changes are often determined by the child's age or particular need. Frequently, these transitions do not occur at natural or expected times or by family choice.

Planning for the Transition



Everyone has dealt with transitions or changes in life. Successful transitions are well-planned, thoughtful actions designed to accomplish particular outcomes.

The California Department of Education's publication *Transition Issues* noted three components for successful transitions for families in early childhood programs: (1) individualized support for families that lessens their stress; (2) a team effort between families and the agencies involved; and (3) a planned transition process.²²

Planning and communication are essential to provide a smooth transition and to encourage and sustain collaboration among the families and the agencies involved. A transition plan includes several systems and serves as a guide to participants throughout the transition process. The plan will reflect preferred practices that include individual family preferences. Written procedures and timelines are integral to the plan. A model transition plan will:

²² Linda Brekken and Andrea Knowlton, *Transition Issues: A Model for Early Childhood Special Education*. Sacramento: California Department of Education, 1990.

- Comply with federal and state laws and regulations (See Appendices C, D, and E).
- Incorporate effective practices that reflect current theory and research.
- Build on existing processes and models in the local community.
- Use suggestions from key stakeholders.
- Include a provision for ongoing evaluation of the transition process.
- Ensure that timelines are clear; forms facilitate the process (see Appendixes B and F); sending and receiving agencies receive administrative support; and responsibilities are clearly defined and delineated.

Effective Practices



Individuals, families, local educational agencies, special education local plan areas, regional centers, private programs, and other community agencies often collaborate to ensure a smooth and timely transition for children at age three and for those transferring to kindergarten. The Individuals with Disabilities Education Act Amendments of 1997 (IDEA '97) and the Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act (IDEA 2004) mandate such a partnership.

Transition planning includes partnerships among families (i.e., parents, guardians, and others raising the child), sending agencies/programs that currently serve the child, and receiving agencies/programs. The unique characteristics of each of these systems must be addressed in transition planning.³

Families and service providers often express frustration with the transition process. See Table 1 for strategies to meet family needs.

³ Ibid.

Table 1. Agency Strategies to Meet Family Needs □

Family members	Sending and receiving agencies
Need information about: The transition process The assessment process Eligibility procedures Available programs and services Placement procedures	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Emphasize transition as a process and not as a single event. • Begin discussions about transition early in the process. • Discuss the transition process with parents, family members, and parent groups at times convenient for families. • Recognize that family members may perceive the transition process in different ways. • Provide information, discussion, and training in a variety of ways (in writing and through talks and videos). • Provide timelines and explain due dates. • Maintain a current file of community resources. • Give families opportunities to see examples of programs and services (through preplacement visits, videos).
Need opportunities to talk to: One person knowledgeable about transition and the child Other parents Service providers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Assign a single contact person at each agency. • Provide service providers an opportunity to meet the family and discuss steps to prepare the child. • Keep the service coordinator/case manager and local educational agency representative informed of transition policies and timelines. • Refer families to parent support groups. • Maintain a file of families willing to talk about their child's transition experiences with other families.
Need: Understanding of new systems and services Preparation for changes in: Policies, procedures, and services Family schedules Transportation Programs Coordination of services	<p>Enable family members to participate as equal partners in planning their child's transition by taking the following actions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maintain a family-centered, family-focused approach. • Plan steps to ensure the child's success and comfort in the new environment by considering routines, skills, expectations, and schedules. • Communicate to parents the similarities and differences between programs, plans (individualized family service plan, individualized education program, individual program plan), and services for infants/toddlers, preschoolers, and kindergartners. • Explain the program and the services that the family may expect for the child. • Include the family as active, informed decision makers.

Source: The table was developed from interviews with families and personnel experienced in the transition process and from a review of the literature: Jane Ross-Allen and Michael Conn-Powers, *TEEM (Transition into the Early Education Mainstream) Manual: A Manual to Support the Transition of Young Children with Special Needs and Their Families from Preschool into Kindergarten and Other Regular Education Environments*. Burlington: University of Vermont, Center for Developmental Disabilities, 1991; Sandra Newcomb and Lynn Brown, "Supporting Families During Transition," in *Strategies for Working with Families of Young Children with Disabilities*. Edited by Paula J. Beckman. Baltimore: Paul H. Brookes Publishing Company, 1996; Sharon E. Rosenkoetter, Ann H. Hains, and Susan A. Fowler, *Bridging Early Services for Children with Special Needs and Their Families: A Practical Guide for Transition Planning*. Baltimore: Paul H. Brookes Publishing Company, 1994; Marcie J. Hanson and others, "Entering Preschool: Family and Professional Experiences in the Transition Process," *Journal of Early Intervention*, Vol. 23, No. 4 (Fall 2000), 279-93.

The sending or receiving agency staff members need to focus on the transition process: the philosophy, procedures, and personnel involved. The transition philosophy should be consistent with the existing program philosophy and recognize the essential role of the family. Procedures should be developed that clearly explain the transition process and meet legal requirements and timelines. Personnel from a variety of disciplines who have working knowledge of the transition policies, guidelines, and procedures should be designated and trained to deal with families.

The sending and receiving staff members can help with systematic, timely, and collaborative planning for the individual child and family. Staff should be available as a resource for the family and other agencies before, during, and after the transition. Staff members should also be responsive to the family's priorities and concerns. Knowledge of the child, the family, other agencies, and procedures ensures a smooth transition.

Administrators need to follow timelines and assessment procedures, support the staff and the decisions being made, and provide the time and personnel necessary for a successful transition.

The sending staff members need to provide information to families about the transition process and procedures, including assessment, and information from receiving agencies/schools about the child's unique attributes. Staff members should work with families to include information about transition throughout the child's involvement with the agency. Staff should also obtain permission to share information with the receiving school district or program. Information should be shared with families in

a variety of ways: individually, in groups through discussion or videos, or in writing.

Receiving agencies/schools should know the requirements and timelines of the transition plan and request the name or job title of the primary contact person at the sending agency. To prepare the child for success in the next environment, both the sending and receiving agencies/programs should ensure that the child's educational program provides opportunities to learn developmentally appropriate skills that promote the child's success. Specific ideas for teaching those skills should be noted on the transition plan.

The receiving agency needs information from families. Staff members should invite the family members to discuss the child's strengths and how the child learns and their hopes for the child.

The sending agencies should communicate timelines, assessment requirements, policies, procedures, and guidelines to receiving agencies/schools. In turn, the receiving agencies need to verify that relevant information is requested and received from sending agencies. All staff members, including support staff, must be familiar with referral procedures, programs, and services. Staff should coordinate with child find activities and outreach.

The receiving agency should ensure that services are tailored to the child's strengths and needs. To that end, the agency should communicate and collaborate with the family regarding the child's strengths, needs, learning styles, and the family's vision for the child. Personnel should be adequately trained in family-focused interview techniques and data interpretation. The agency needs to use current assessment information and the sending agency's information.

The Family's Experience of Transition □

I think one thing that I could have been told was that [transition] is a process. It's a process that takes years, and every time that something changes, it's going to be different. And you're never going to be comfortable with it. Every change you go through is going to be a reminder that it's different for you and that it's different for your child and that it's hard.

—Anonymous parent



The family's experience of transition is influenced by various □ factors. Family satisfaction and the child's adjustment are the goals educators should strive for in developing a transition process and procedures. Early transitions affect later transition experiences for the child and family.¹ And emotional issues surface for many families during transition (e.g., loss of familiar staff, awareness that the child may be unable to participate in the neighborhood program). The transition process is more effective when programs are sensitive to those issues. Early childhood educators advocate “a family-centered approach in all decisions and phases of service delivery (system entry, . . . transition, etc.), including presenting families with flexible and individualized options for the location, timing, and types of services, supports and resources that are not disruptive of family life.”²

Professionals throughout their careers move through the transition process with many children and families, but an individual family encounters each transition only once. By focusing on the unique

¹ Sandra Newcomb and Lynn Brown, “Supporting Families During Transition,” in *Strategies for Working with Families of Young Children with Disabilities*. Edited by Paula J. Beckman. Baltimore: Paul H. Brookes Publishing Company, 1996.

² Susan Sandall, Mary E. McLean, and Barbara J. Smith, *Division for Early Childhood Recommended Practices in Early Intervention/Early Childhood Special Education*. Longmont, Colo.: Sopris West, 2000, p. 72.

experience for each family, educators can make the transition less “driven and dominated by the system and the professionals employed through these service agencies.”³

As stated in the *Preschool Special Education Program Handbook*:

Families are the primary decision maker for their child. Transition planning should be approached as though the team were consultants to the family, providing them with the information they need to assess the various program options in light of their child’s and family’s needs and resources.⁴

This approach should permeate the entire system and influence each service and each transition that a family experiences.

Families of children with disabilities who are making the transition from infant care to preschool and preschool to kindergarten programs experience stress from many sources:

- □ Loss of support persons in their lives and in their child’s life
- □ Anxiety regarding separation and safety issues, particularly if the child is unable to communicate
- □ Responsibility for making placement decisions that will affect the child’s future
- □ Adjustment to a new system of service provision to establish relationships with the child’s new support people and to be an advocate for the child in the new situation
- □ The need to adopt new family routines, depending on the location and schedule of the child’s new program

³ Marcie J. Hanson and others, “Entering Preschool: Family and Professional Experiences in the Transition Process,” *Journal of Early Intervention*, Vol. 23, No. 4 (Fall 2000), 291.

⁴ *Preschool Special Education Program Handbook*. Edited by Linda Brekken and Virginia Reynolds. Sacramento: California Department of Education, 1988, p. 2.

The stressors may be exacerbated when the disability is initially diagnosed and the family first learns of the ramifications of the diagnosis for the child and the whole family.

Early childhood programs provide critical skills during the family’s journey through special education. Discussion, planning, and support for a child’s transition to the next set of services should begin upon entry in the current program. The experience of professionals in early childhood programs indicates that ongoing program services should be designed to connect families with each other and their communities. It is important for families to have opportunities to develop ongoing relationships that will continue beyond their enrollment in a particular program.

The transition process “can be viewed as consisting of two components: (a) an emotional component that accounts for the differences among families in terms of child and family backgrounds, experiences, needs and responses to the service system; and (b) a procedural or task component that addresses regulations and legal mandates, paperwork, meetings, information exchange, and so on.”⁵

Family concerns are discussed in several handbooks and other publications of the California Department of Education (e.g., *Handbook on Family Involvement in Early Childhood Special Education Programs*).⁶ Programs can assist families in identifying the steps to prepare themselves for any transition. (See Appendix A, *Moving On*, for an example of the steps toward a transition for the child.)

⁵ Marcie J. Hanson and others, “Entering Preschool: Family and Professional Experiences in the Transition Process,” *Journal of Early Intervention*, Vol. 23, No. 4 (2000), 279–293.

⁶ *Handbook on Family Involvement in Early Childhood Special Education Programs*. Sacramento: California Department of Education, 1999.

The Transition Process from Infant Services to Preschool

Under state and federal laws, children with suspected disabilities must be referred to the LEA before age three so that the flow of services can continue with minimal disruption.



Children under age three who are eligible for services under the federal Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), Part C, receive services through the California Early Start program. The Department of Developmental Services is the lead agency for implementing Part C of the IDEA in collaboration with the California Department of Education. The two agencies are responsible for the development of Early Start policy. Regional centers, through a contractual agreement with the Department of Developmental Services, share responsibility with local educational agencies (LEAs) for coordinating and providing early intervention services at the local level. Regional centers serve eligible infants and toddlers except those with solely low-incidence disabilities (vision, hearing, severe orthopedic impairments, or any combination thereof). LEAs serve all infants and toddlers with solely low-incidence disabilities and provide services for infants and toddlers eligible for LEA services within the LEA's funded capacity.

The responsibility for providing educational services for eligible children shifts from California Early Start (under Part C of the IDEA) to the LEA (under Part B of the IDEA) when a child reaches three years of age. Under state and federal laws, children with suspected disabilities must

be referred to the LEA before age three so that the flow of services can continue with minimal disruption. Transition referral and planning before age three are required for *all* children enrolled in the California Early Start program even if the child may not be eligible for special education preschool services. Both the Department of Developmental Services (the lead agency under Part C) and the California Department of Education (the lead agency under Part B and the provider under Part C) are responsible for the “smooth and effective transition” of children leaving a Part C program and entering a Part B preschool special education program (*Title 34, Code of Federal Regulations [CFR] § 300.132; § 303.148*) or a community preschool or exiting the program (IDEA 2004, § 637[a][9][A]).

An interagency agreement is required when the state educational agency, which administers the preschool special education programs, is not the lead agency for Part C early intervention services (*34 CFR § 303.148[c]*). Transition planning is the responsibility of the service coordinator under California Early Start. Children leaving the Early Start program at age three may be eligible for LEA special education services and related services or may exit Early Start and be served by other public and private agencies.

The requirement that a child must be referred to the LEA before age three does not always fit into a natural transition for children, families, or programs. Many preschool services, such as Head Start, community preschools, and even public school special education classes, operate on a traditional school-year calendar. Children who turn three during the school year may be unable to transfer immediately to preschool. Community classes may be filled and difficult to enter at midterm. Families of young children may prefer their child to enter a preschool program on a part-time

basis or wait until the child is older.¹ Those system-driven issues, rather than family-driven issues, are factors to consider in the support of families and children in the transition process.

Eligibility for Special Education at Age Three

A child receiving services under California Early Start must be reassessed by age three to determine eligibility and the need for services due to the disabling conditions cited in *Education Code Section 56441.11*. (Relevant laws, regulations, and *Education Code* sections are referenced in Appendixes C, D, and E.) Additional information on eligibility can also be found in the *Handbook on Assessment and Evaluation in Early Childhood Special Education Programs*.² Once a child is determined eligible, any necessary special education placement option or related service is available to ensure the child’s educational progress.

Legal Requirements for Transition Planning

State and federal requirements direct the transition process for children at age three. (See Appendixes C, D, and E.) The *Code of Federal Regulations (CFR)* specifies certain requirements for state agencies and programs. The individualized family service plan (IFSP) must contain the steps supporting the transition of the child to a Part B preschool special education program, if appropriate, or to other available services. The transition plan in the IFSP

¹ Beth Swedeon, “Birth to Three Transition: One Family’s Story,” *Young Exceptional Children*, Vol. 4, No. 2 (2001), 12–14.

² *Handbook on Assessment and Evaluation in Early Childhood Special Education Programs*. Sacramento: California Department of Education, 2000, p. 19.

must include the following steps, according to 34 CFR § 303.366(b):

- □ Discussions with, and training of, parents regarding future placements and other matters related to the child's transition
- □ Procedures to prepare the child for changes in service delivery, including steps to help the child adjust to, and function in, a new setting
- □ With parental consent the transmission of information about the child to the LEA to ensure continuity of services, including evaluation and assessment information . . . and copies of IFSPs that have been developed and implemented

The California state plan is required to describe how families will be included in the transition plans (34 CFR § 303.148 [a]), how LEAs will be notified that the child is approaching the age of preschool eligibility (34 CFR § 303.148[b][1]), how the child's program options will be reviewed for the period from the child's third birthday until the conclusion of the school year (34 CFR § 303.148[b][3]), and how a transition plan will be established (34 CFR § 303.14[(b)][4]). With the approval of the child's family, the agency providing Part C services (either the regional center on behalf of the Department of Developmental Services or the LEA on behalf of the California Department of Education) is responsible for convening a conference attended by the agency providing early intervention services, the family, and the LEA at least 90 days before the child's third birthday. This transition conference may occur up to six months before the child's third birthday at the discretion of the involved parties (34 CFR § 303.148 [b][2][i]). IDEA 2004

changes the timing of the transition conference from *up to six months* before the child's third birthday to *not more than nine months* before the child's third birthday, meaning the transition conference may occur between nine months and 90 days prior to the child's third birthday (§ 637[a][9][A] [ii][II] of IDEA 2004). (See Appendix B for the templates of forms to use in setting up the IFSP conference.)

Children Referred for Special Education Services

Part B of the IDEA requires policies and procedures to ensure that children participating in early intervention programs under Part C will participate in preschool programs under Part B, if eligible, and experience a smooth and effective transition. The LEA is required to participate in transition planning conferences arranged by the agency providing Part C services (34 CFR § 300.132), and an individualized education program (IEP) must be developed and implemented for each child by age three.

The California Early Intervention Services Act states: □

The individualized family service plan shall be in writing and shall address . . . the steps to be taken to ensure transition of the infant or toddler upon reaching three years of age to other appropriate services. These may include, as appropriate, special education or other services offered in natural environments (Government Code § 95020[d][8]).

The following scenario provides an example of compliance with this section:

Mario's Story



Mario, at two years six months, has been receiving early intervention services through California Early Start since his diagnosis of profound deafness at four months of age. Mario's hearing, with hearing aids, is in the mild range across the speech spectrum. He has received special instruction in his home; he and his parents have received service coordination, respite, and parent education from the LEA program.

Sample Steps for Mario

An outcome statement was written in Mario's IFSP: "In order for Mario to have a smooth transition at age three, Mario's family will be provided information regarding the transition process over the next year." At the IFSP review, steps to prepare Mario and his family for the transition were added as follows:

Two years six months A transition summary will be completed, with assistance from the family, and will be given to the receiving school district. This summary will include the following family priority regarding transition: "Mario will have access to children who are deaf or hard of hearing or are learning language orally and to adults who know and use sign language."

Person/agency responsible: Service coordinator, LEA Early Start program

Two years nine months An IFSP/transition conference will be held with the representatives from the school district of residence. The specific timelines for the transition, including any needed assessments, will be discussed. If agreed upon by the team, Mario and his family will have some visits with the early intervention staff in the classroom for children who are deaf/hard of hearing. The purpose of these visits is to assist Mario in moving to a preschool setting and enable the family to observe the program and interact with the district staff.

Person/agency responsible: Service coordinator, LEA Early Start program

By Mario's third birthday An IEP meeting will be held and the IFSP will be concluded. Goals and objectives will be written in the IEP and a placement determined. Other related services, such as therapy and transportation, will be indicated in the IEP. A start date for services will be decided and also documented in the IEP.

Person/agency responsible: The receiving school district and service coordinator, LEA Early Start program

A detailed section on the transition from early intervention services may be found in the *California Code of Regulations (CCR), Title 17*, Section 52112(d)(5) (see Appendix C). For a child who was previously served under Part C, IDEA 2004 requires that an invitation to the initial IEP meeting, at the request of the parent, be sent to the Part C service coordinator or other representatives of the Part C system to assist with the smooth transition of services. In the case of a child transferring into preschool special education from the Part C program, IDEA 2004 also requires the IEP team to consider the

IFSP. Both those procedures under federal law are embedded in California state law (*17 CCR § 52112[d][5]*). The Early Intervention Services Act requires that the transition conference take place in conjunction with an IFSP meeting. More information about IFSPs, including sample forms to address transition requirements, may be found in the *Handbook on Developing Individualized Family Service Plans and Individualized Education Programs in Early Childhood Special Education*.³ A timeline for planning the transition of children to special education services at age three is displayed in Table 2.

Table 2. Timeline for a Child Referred for Special Education Services at Age Three

Child's age	Mandatory actions by the sending agency/ California Early Start service coordinator	Recommendations for effective practice
By 2 years	<p>Transition steps are included on the individualized family service plan (IFSP).</p> <p><i>Note:</i> An IFSP must always include a statement of the transition steps to be initiated when the child reaches 2 years 9 months (or, at the discretion of the parties, 2 years 6 months).</p>	<p>Obtain parental consent/release to exchange information between the sending and receiving agencies (including the LEA).</p>
Between 2 years 3 months and 2 years 9 months	<p>Notify the family of an IFSP/transition conference within the next three months.</p> <p>With parental consent:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Notify the LEA of a mutually agreed-on date for a meeting to identify transition steps. • Send information to the receiving LEA, including evaluations and assessments, and copies of all IFSPs. 	<p>Obtain current medical and developmental information.</p> <p>Discuss with the family the information to be shared about the child:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Family priorities and concerns related to the transition • Current developmental information • Health (including vision and hearing) • Equipment needs • Current services
30 days later	<p>An IFSP/transition conference is scheduled at a mutually agreed-on date.</p> <p>The time and location of the IFSP/transition</p>	<p>conference are determined by the preferences of the family. The conference includes all appropriate agency personnel.</p> <p>At 2 years</p>

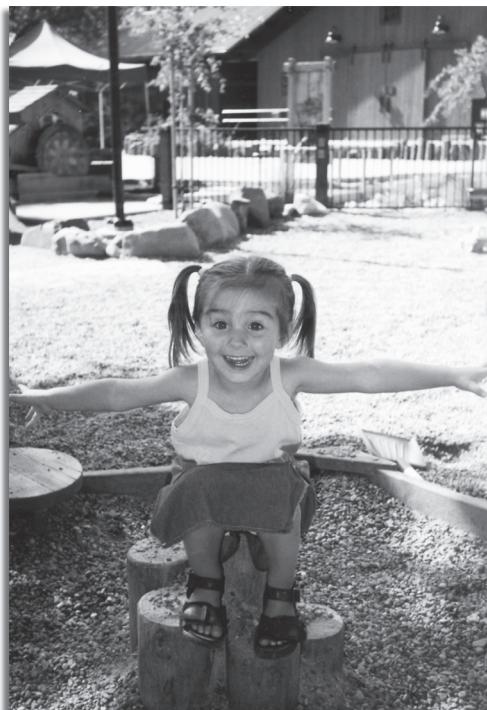
³ *Handbook on Developing Individualized Family Service Plans and Individualized Education Programs in Early Childhood Special Education*. Sacramento: California Department of Education, 2001, pp. 17–19, 47–48.

Table 2 (Continued)

Child's age	Mandatory actions by the sending agency/ California Early Start service coordinator	Recommendations for effective practice
9 months or earlier	<p>An IFSP/transition conference is attended by the family, the California Early Start service coordinator (regional center or LEA), providers of infant-toddler services, and the receiving LEA representative.</p> <p>At the IFSP/transition conference, transition steps are developed for ensuring a smooth transition with minimal interruption. Steps shall include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Discussion with the family regarding transition into Part B services and steps to prepare the toddler for changes in service delivery• Information on the services available through public education, private programs, and community programs• Identification of assessments to determine the child's eligibility for regional center services and special education, the person responsible for making assessments, and the timelines• Projected meeting date for final review of the IFSP and development of the individualized education program (IEP) if the child is eligible for education services	Other attendees may include friends or advocates invited by the family, a community preschool teacher, and other agency personnel as appropriate.
About 2 years 10 months	The assessment plan is completed and signed by the receiving LEA and family, beginning the 50-day timeline to the IEP meeting.	Assessments are coordinated with other agencies (e.g., regional center).
By 2 years 11 months	Assessments are completed by the receiving LEA.	Assessments are completed by other agencies, such as the regional center; with family permission the receiving LEA reviews the results.

Table 2 (Continued)

Child's age	Mandatory actions by the sending agency/ California Early Start service coordinator	Recommendations for effective practice
By 3 years	<p>An IEP meeting is held to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Close out the IFSP (the Early Start service coordinator is to be present).• Review assessment results.• Determine the child's eligibility for preschool special education and related services.• Discuss the child's strengths and needs.• Develop goals, objectives, and benchmarks.• Determine related services and placement. <p>Participants at the IEP meeting include the family (and anyone the family chooses to invite), an administrative representative, a special education teacher, the child's current teacher/service provider, the Early Start service coordinator, a general education teacher, and a representative who assessed the child.</p>	For children who continue to be eligible for regional center services, the individual program plan (IPP) can be completed during this meeting at the discretion of the family and regional center representative. Other agency personnel may also attend this meeting.
At 3 years	The IEP is in effect, and services begin as indicated on the IEP. If the child's birthday is in the summer, the child's IEP team determines the date that IEP services will begin.	



Children Not Referred for Special Education Services

The rules on planning for transition differ for a child exiting the program at any time before age three or who is *not* eligible for preschool special education services. Federal regulations require the agency responsible for providing Part C services to work with families to establish a transition plan for the child (*34 CFR § 303.148[b][4]*). The agency representative providing service coordination is responsible for making a reasonable effort to convene a conference, with the approval of the child's family, to include the

lead agency, the family, and the providers of other services for children who are ineligible for preschool services under Part B. The purpose of the conference is to discuss appropriate services (*34 CFR § 303.148[2][ii]*). Under state law the agency must adhere to a set of timelines to hold this IFSP/conference. The IFSP must include the steps supporting the transition of the child to other services that may be available when it is not appropriate for the child to receive services under Part B (*34 CFR § 303.344[h][1][ii]*).

The following scenario illustrates this situation:

Jessica's Story



Jessica, two years six months, was born prematurely and began receiving early intervention services at fourteen months of age when concern arose about her visual skills due to retinopathy of prematurity. She also showed moderate delays in all developmental areas. She has made substantial progress, especially in the past six months, and her development was recently tested as being within normal limits for her age. Her visual acuity is being corrected with glasses, and no further complications are apparent. An ophthalmologist and other doctors monitor Jessica's vision, health, and development.

Sample Steps for Jessica

An outcome statement was written in Jessica's IFSP: "For Jessica to have a smooth transition at age three, Jessica's family will be provided information regarding the transition process over the next year." At the IFSP/transition conference the following steps were added to prepare Jessica and her family for the transition:

Two years six months The family requested that Jessica not be referred to the local school district. Because her recent assessment indicates development within the normal range, her family is interested in moving out of California Early Start and into a local preschool. Community preschool options will be discussed at the IFSP/transition conference.

Person/agency responsible: Service coordinator, LEA Early Start program

Two years seven months

A list of local preschools and guidelines for choosing a preschool will be provided to Jessica's family.* Once a preschool is selected, the IFSP/transition conference will be held with a representative from the community preschool. The service coordinator will assist in the transition.

Person/agency responsible: Service coordinator, LEA Early Start program

Before age three

Jessica's family will enroll Jessica in a community preschool program, and the IFSP will be closed. Phone numbers and contact information for the local school district will be provided to Jessica's family in case concerns arise about Jessica's development in the future.

Person/agency responsible: Service coordinator, LEA Early Start program

**Choosing a Good Early Childhood Program*. Washington, D.C.: National Association for the Education of Young Children, 1997 (brochure); *A Good Early Preschool for Your Child*. Washington, D.C.: National Association for the Education of Young Children, 1997 (brochure).

A child's eligibility for special education services at age three can be determined *only* with the receiving LEA through the IEP team process. At times a child in California Early Start may no longer be eligible because developmental delays or risk factors have been resolved. In those cases the service coordinator notifies the family and the LEA about a transition conference. If the service coordinator, after consultation with the family, is unsure about a child's eligibility for

special education services at age three, the LEA must still be notified and the family must be referred to it. If a family does not want a referral made to the LEA, the family must be informed that services from the LEA will not be provided unless the LEA has received both notification of such need and a referral. The family must also be informed that a delayed referral may result in a different timeline for receiving services. The LEA must document these



discussions. A timeline for planning the transition of children not eligible for (or not proceeding to) special education services at age three is displayed in Table 3.

Table 3. Timeline for a Child Not Referred for □ Special Education Services at Age Three

Child's age	Mandatory actions by the sending agency/ California Early Start service coordinator	Recommendations for effective practice
By 2 years	Transition steps are included on the individualized family service plan (IFSP).	Obtain parental consent/release to exchange information between the sending and receiving agencies (including the LEA).
Between 2 years 3 months and 2 years 9 months	Notify the family of an IFSP/transition conference within the next three months. With parental consent, notify the LEA of a mutually agreed-on date for a meeting to specify transition steps.	Obtain current medical and developmental information. Discuss with the family the information to be shared about the child: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Family priorities and concerns related to the transition• Developmental status, including health• Current services
30 days later	An IFSP/transition conference is scheduled.	The time and location of the IFSP/transition conference are determined by the preferences of the family, and the conference includes all appropriate agency personnel. With parental consent the LEA may be notified.
At 2 years 9 months or earlier or when the child is determined ineligible for Early Start	An IFSP/transition conference is attended by the family, the California Early Start service coordinator (regional center or LEA), and providers of infant/toddler services. At the IFSP/transition conference, transition steps are developed to ensure a smooth transition with minimal interruption. The conference shall include: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Discussion with the family regarding transition from Early Start services and steps to support the toddler's continued progress• Information on the services available through public education, private programs, and community programs• Steps to take if the family becomes concerned about the child's development in the future (include contact information on the regional center or LEA)• Projected meeting date for the final IFSP	Other attendees may include friends or advocates invited by the family, a regular preschool teacher from the community or from Head Start, a representative of the receiving LEA, or other agency personnel as appropriate.
By 3 years or earlier	A meeting is held to close out the IFSP. Participants include the family (and others invited by the family) and the Early Start service coordinator.	For children who continue to be eligible for regional center services, the individual program plan (IPP) can be completed.



Development of a Community Process

The IDEA requires an inter-agency approach to planning for a transition from infant to preschool programs (*34 CFR § 303.148[c]*). In most communities several agencies are involved in providing services to young children with disabilities and their families, and a team approach to interagency planning is needed to ensure smooth, successful transitions. Interagency agreements are often used as a tool for defining responsibilities in the transition process.⁴ An interagency committee that will review all transition issues is recommended. The committee should follow the effective practices described earlier in this handbook. Membership of the committee includes persons in the agencies with the authority to bring about changes in current policies and procedures. It is also critical for the committee to include family representatives (to ensure sensitivity to a family-centered approach) and direct-service providers (to ensure that logistical and practical issues are addressed). The primary responsibility of the committee is to develop and formalize transition policies and procedures and identify administrative and staff roles and responsibilities in transition activities. This community-wide process can lead to a seamless system for families and participating agencies.

Community policies and procedures should focus on the entire transition process for families. When a child turns three, families and professionals alike may focus too intensely on the change in the program itself and not concentrate on the process of transition.⁵ The process that

occurs for everyone before, during, and after the change should be clearly defined and communicated.



The Transition □ Conference

Federal and state laws require that a transition conference at an IFSP meeting be held before the child turns two years and nine months (or two years six months at the discretion of the family and community). The purpose of the meeting is to begin a comprehensive and thoughtful transition process designed especially for the child and family. The IFSP/transition conference covers the following topics:

- □ Family questions, priorities, and concerns
- □ Assessments, including timelines for completion
- □ Next steps, including activities, to prepare the child and family
- □ Service options for the child at age three
- □ Identification of roles and responsibilities
- □ Date for the final IFSP and IEP prior to the child's third birthday

Although early intervention services (Part C) and special education services (Part B) are both provided as a part of the IDEA, they differ in many areas. Because an IEP must be developed by the time a child is three years old for a child referred for special education services, participants must discuss and observe the requirements of the provisions of Part B (see Table 4). When the family signs an assessment plan 50 days before the child's third birthday, the LEA will complete the assessments and implement the IEP by the child's third birthday (*17 CCR § 52112(d)(3), (4); EC § 56321 and 56344*).

⁴ Michael W. Wischnowski, Susan A. Fowler, and Jeanette A. McCollum, "Supports and Barriers to Writing an Interagency Agreement on the Preschool Transition," *Journal of Early Intervention*, Vol. 23, No. 4 (Fall 2000), 294–307.

⁵ *Handbook on Family Involvement in Early Childhood Special Education Programs*. Sacramento: California Department of Education, 1999.

**Table 4. Referral, Assessment, and Placement □
Under Part B of the IDEA**

Process	Action and timeline
Referral for Assessment —A parent, teacher, or another person may request a referral in writing. (<i>EC § 56029</i>)	A written referral is received.
Assessment Plan —Within 15 calendar days of the referral (excluding school vacations of more than five days), an assessment plan is developed and a copy given to the parents along with notification of parents' rights and responsibilities. (<i>EC § 56321[a]</i>)	Within 15 days an assessment plan is developed.
Parental Consent —Written parent permission must be obtained to begin the assessment. Parents have at least 15 calendar days to make a decision. (<i>EC § 56321[c]</i>)	Parents have 15 days to decide to consent to the assessment.
IEP Team —Within 50 calendar days of receipt of a signed assessment plan (excluding school vacations of more than five days), an IEP team meeting is held and an IEP is developed for a student eligible for special education. (<i>EC § 56344</i>) Parents must be invited to any meeting regarding the child's eligibility for an IEP and must be given reasonable notice in advance to ensure their attendance. (<i>EC § 56341.5</i>)	Within 50 days an IEP meeting is held. Parents must receive a notice of their child's eligibility for special education and advance notice of IEP meetings.
Parental Consent —Written permission must be obtained from the parents for placement of the child in special education and the implementation of the IEP. Those parts of the IEP to which the parent has consented may be implemented. (<i>EC § 56346[a]</i>)	Recommendations of the IEP approved by the parents are implemented.
Placement —The recommended placement and services should begin as soon as possible after the date of the parent's written approval of the IEP. (<i>5 CCR § 3040[a]</i>)	
Annual Review —A student in special education must have his/her IEP reviewed at least every 12 months. (<i>EC § 56380</i>)	The IEP is reviewed annually.

It is important to remember that special education is not a place, but a system of services and supports for children with disabilities.

—Sharon Walsh, Barbara J. Smith, and Ross C. Taylor,
IDEA Requirements for Preschoolers with Disabilities

Appropriateness of the Placement

A thorough discussion of programs and services for preschool children may be found in the *Handbook on Developing and Implementing Early Childhood Special Education Programs and Services*.⁶ The IDEA '97 amendments "contain many provisions for ensuring access to the general curriculum for 3- to 21-year-olds and to 'natural environments' for birth to 2-year-olds . . . with a clear pref-

erence for children with disabilities to be educated and receive services with their nondisabled age-mates in typical early childhood settings."⁷

One of the requirements of the IDEA is that, to the maximum extent appropriate, children with disabilities are to be educated in the least restrictive environment with children who are not disabled. The concepts of "natural environment" and "least restrictive environment" are outlined below. Additional legal citations may be found in Appendixes C, D, and E.

Natural Environments for Children Birth to Age Three	Least Restrictive Environments for Children Ages Three to Twenty-two
<p>The state definition of natural environments is "settings that are natural or typical for the infant or toddler's age peers who have no disability including home and community settings in which children without disabilities participate" (<i>17 CFR § 52000[b]</i>)[35]).</p> <p>The intent of the IDEA for placing children birth to age three in the natural environment is that the child should be served wherever the child would be if he/she did not have a disability. Settings that are natural for children of this age include the home; child care settings such as family child care or center-based care; community activities; and extended family gatherings. Services should be designed to enhance the child's competence in and access to the natural environment. The emphasis is on bringing early intervention services and supports to everyday routines, activities, and places.</p>	<p>The federal law on special education in the least restrictive environment states "to the maximum extent appropriate, children with disabilities . . . are educated with children who are nondisabled. . . [R]emoval of children with disabilities from the regular educational environment occurs only if the nature or the severity of the disability is such that education in regular classes with the use of supplementary aids and services cannot be achieved satisfactorily" (<i>34 CFR § 300.550</i>). Additionally, a child with a disability is not removed from education in age-appropriate regular classrooms solely because of needed modifications in the general curriculum (<i>34 CFR § 300.552[e]</i>). The intent of the provision is to ensure that the first place considered for educating a child with a disability is a regular class with appropriate supplementary aids and services to facilitate such placement. For preschool children this necessitates examining community-based settings with typically developing age peers. A "full continuum of alternative placements, including integrated placement options, such as community-based settings with typically developing age peers, must be available to preschool children with disabilities."*</p>

⁶ *Handbook on Developing and Implementing Early Childhood Special Education Programs and Services*. Sacramento: California Department of Education, 2001.

⁷ Barbara J. Smith and Mary Jane K. Rapport, *IDEA and Early Childhood Inclusion*. Denver, Colo.: Collaborative Planning Project, 1999, p. 2.

Children leaving early intervention services in natural environments may already be enrolled in a setting that can be supported as an appropriate placement after age three. The requirement that special education services be provided in the natural environment for children under the age of three means that families will be connected to their communities and will want their children to continue to be supported in a variety of natural settings. Many children will be enrolled in age-appropriate child care and preschool settings before their third birthday and will have received early intervention services and supports in those environments.

The IEP team determines where the child will receive special education and related services in the least restrictive environment in accord with the requirements of Part B. The team considers the family's goals and priorities, the child's strengths and needs, and the design of the preschool when making the decision regarding the child's education program and services. Selecting a preschool is an important decision; therefore, families should visit several preschool programs and consider

the options. It is also important for staff to describe the child's present levels of educational performance and to consider the child's ability to participate in general preschool activities with support services. State and federal requirements mandate the participation of a general education teacher on the IEP team to fully consider program modifications and curriculum adaptations. The recommendation is that the general educator for a preschooler with a disability be an early childhood educator.

In applying the federal definition of the least restrictive environment, the IEP team must start with the presumption of educating the child in the regular environment. Separate schooling and removal from regular education environments may occur only after a determination is made that the nature or severity of the child's disability precludes education in that environment. The extent, if any, to which the child will not participate with nondisabled peers in a regular preschool must be explained in the IEP. Many children receive specialized services in their community preschool setting or at home.



The Transition Process from Preschool Services to Kindergarten

Transition is a process in which child, family, school, and community interrelate across time.

—The Transition to Kindergarten



Unlike the child's transition to preschool services at age three years, the transition to kindergarten is a natural transition for families of children with disabilities. Although many children are enrolled in child care and have preschool experiences before entering kindergarten, most families of children with disabilities consider kindergarten the beginning of their child's *formal* school experience. This assumption results in mixed feelings for families of children who have been receiving special education services at a public school. For those families this transition may evoke sadness at the fact that their children have already started "school."

Families may have anxiety about their child's future educational experience and how participation in special education will influence the child's future. However, some families may be excited about passing this milestone along with neighbors and friends and are grateful that their child has supports and services in place for a successful journey. The transition to kindergarten for all children can be enhanced by focusing on "forming a network of social connections that support children and families during the transition. . . . These

Note: Although most children enrolled in special education services move from preschool services to kindergarten, state law allows children to move directly into first grade. For the purposes of this section of the handbook, the transition from preschool services to kindergarten means transition to any school-age services.

For young children, the transition from preschool to kindergarten may be met with a mixture of delight and concern. On the one hand, there is the pleasure of accomplishment as they move on to something new. On the other hand, there may be some anxiety over leaving friends and teachers that they know and love, for something less familiar.

—Easing the Transition from Preschool to Kindergarten

social connections are important for supporting competencies in young children that can ensure their school success. In short, these connections are resources for children.”¹



Eligibility for Special Education in Kindergarten

To be eligible for special education or related services between the ages of five and eighteen years inclusive, a child must be identified by an IEP team as having a disability as defined under the *Code of Federal Regulations* (names of disabling conditions are also listed in 5 CCR § 3030) and an impairment that requires instruction, services, or both and needs that cannot be met with modification of the regular school program. The child's eligibility for special education must be re-established before the transition from preschool services. *Education Code* Section 56445 details the requirements for reassessment of a child before his or her transition to kindergarten or first grade. (See Appendix C.)



Transition into the Community

Transition into kindergarten is natural or expected for most children. The procedures used for the transition of children

from early childhood special education services must fit into the overall process for transition to kindergarten in the community. Several publications provide insight and helpful references for the special education professional.²

Each community is unique, and the transition process needs to be developed in accord with the needs of families and programs. It is important to develop a process that meets the needs of all children in transition and the needs of sending and receiving programs and agencies. The process should also pave the way for families moving into new service systems. Identifying the family's resources, priorities, and concerns assists the family in communicating its goals. Although no legislation requires interagency planning for the transition to kindergarten, many communities have found the process helpful when agencies plan together to develop a system. Suggested participants include parents, general education preschool personnel (including state-funded preschools, private preschools, Head Start, and other groups), special education preschool personnel and administrators, site principals, kindergarten teachers, and LEA special education staff and administrators.

Specific timelines are not outlined in legislation for the transition from preschool services. A good practice is for the

¹ Marcia E. Kraft-Sayre and Robert C. Pianta, *Enhancing the Transition to Kindergarten: Linking Children, Families, & Schools*. Charlottesville: University of Virginia, National Center for Early Development & Learning, 2000, p. 1.

² *Continuity for Young Children: Transition to Elementary School*. Sacramento: California Department of Education, 1997; *The Transition to Kindergarten*. Edited by Robert C. Pianta and Martha J. Cox. Baltimore: Paul H. Brookes Publishing Company, 1999.

community to develop a calendar that allows adequate time for school district personnel to receive new students. As noted before, this timeline works best when it coincides with the general education transition activities for the school year. Scheduling transition activities in accord with those for general education provides families with opportunities to learn about the school district programs and services early in the school year and to develop relationships with program staff.

Communities may wish to compile a planning guide for staff involved in transitions. The following items might be included:

- ☐ Sample community transition timeline
- ☐ Timeline of transition from preschool to kindergarten

- ☐ Preschool programs and services in the area (e.g., Head Start, general child care programs, state preschools, community preschools, special education programs and services)
- ☐ Elementary schools (with general neighborhood boundaries) in the local educational agency, special education local plan area, or school district
- ☐ Preschool to kindergarten transition work sheet
- ☐ Local educational agency survey on transition
- ☐ Evaluation forms for staff and parents

Appendix F contains samples of some of these forms. The forms were either developed for this handbook or were adapted from the Santa Barbara County Education Office *Transition Handbook* (1996).





Planning for Individual Children

Staff and families must gather some key information to ensure a successful school experience for the individual child in the

new program. Traditional assessment conducted prior to transition provides a foundation, but there are alternative methods to gather information. The accompanying box “Transitions Affect Everyone” suggests questions for children, parents, and teachers.

Despite the variety of previous experiences, all children need to be accepted at their own developmental level. Preparing children for the transition to kindergarten does not mean “getting them ready” by focusing on a narrow range of academic skills, drilling on new rules, or retaining them in preschool for another year. School is a place where children and parents expect to find opportunities for growth and development from whatever starting point the child brings to the new setting.

—*Easing the Transition from Preschool to Kindergarten*



Transitions Affect Everyone□

A child's transition from preschool or home to elementary school marks an important step that involves not only the child but also the parents, preschool teacher, and kindergarten teacher. Each plays a different role in the transition and, therefore, has different questions about the experience.

The new kindergartner wants to know:

- Will my teacher like me?
- Who will be my friend?
- Will everyone be like me?
- Where will I hang my jacket?
- How will I know where the bathroom is?

A parent of a new kindergartner asks:

- Is my child ready for school?
- Will the teacher like my child?
- Will my child be safe and nurtured?
- Am I a good parent?
- Will there be other children in class like my child?
- Will my child be successful in school?
- What will my child be expected to learn?

The questions asked by a Head Start or preschool teacher might be:

- Does our program meet the children's needs and prepare them for kindergarten?
- How can I offer comments and advice about my students to their kindergarten teachers?
- Will kindergarten continue my developmentally appropriate practices?
- Will the parent I worked with so closely feel part of the new school?
- How can I know what the kindergarten teacher expects?

Finally, the kindergarten teacher wonders:

- Are the children ready to learn?
- Will the parents and children understand and value what I am trying to do?
- Am I ready for the children I will have this year?
- What preschool and home experiences have the children had that will help them learn?
- Will my students be ready for first grade next year?
- Am I clear about what my students should be learning?

Source: Continuity for Young Children: Positive Transitions to Elementary School. Sacramento: California Department of Education, 1997, p. 2.

Conclusion

*If you don't know where
you're going, any road
will get you there.*



Professionals have a unique opportunity to support children and families on their road to school during early childhood transitions. All children deserve to be valued members of their community, and school is a large part of the community life for children. Professionals must develop their transition policies and practices to support the child and family in their community. The laws, regulations, effective practices, and resources on transition provide assistance; however, it is important to remember where the road is leading—to a meaningful, satisfying life.

The National Center for Early Development & Learning developed a set of guiding principles that are useful to communities developing or modifying transition processes and practices. The principles are as follows:

1. Foster Relationships as Resources

Supportive, effective relationships are resources for children. When a child is involved in and surrounded by supportive relationships, the transition . . . occurs more smoothly.

2. Promote Continuity from [Infant to] Preschool to Kindergarten

Fundamental to a smooth transition are relationships that serve as a bridge between the family and school and

provide continuity from [infant programs to] preschool to kindergarten. These relationships can be found among parents, teachers, family workers, other school staff, and the child's peers.

3. Focus on Family Strengths

Relationships between schools and families, reflecting the strengths of families, can be developed through supportive, positive interactions initiated by the school.

4. Tailor Practices to Individual Needs

The actual set of transition practices enacted with a given family . . . must be based on the needs and strengths of that child, family, teacher, school, and community. Thus, this approach is . . . designed to be flexibly applied across a wide range of needs and strengths.

5. Form Collaborative Relationships

Collaboration among key players in the transition process . . . is fundamental in developing and implementing successful transition practices.¹

With these principles firmly in mind, professionals can facilitate the transition journey and thereby support children and families on the road to success in the next environment.

¹Sharon Walsh, Barbara J. Smith, and Ross C. Taylor, *IDEA Requirements for Preschoolers with Disabilities*. Reston, Va.: The Council for Exceptional Children, 2000.

Appendix A □

Moving On

A brochure from San Diego County, *Moving On*, provides an example of the steps a family can take to prepare for a transition.¹

Although there are many different types of transitions, getting ready for any change works best when you plan ahead. The following steps should help you prepare for any transition that comes up for your child or family.

1. Identify the specific changes.

What is really happening? For example, making a change from child care in the home to a child care center involves changes in location, people and the environment.

2. Organize your thoughts.

Remembering that you know the needs of your family and child, think about the “big picture.” In other words, what are your immediate and long-term goals for your child and family? What are your resources, what are your family’s other commitments and responsibilities, what are your preferences? How does this transition fit into the more complete picture you have of your family’s and child’s needs?

3. Gather information.

Find out what options are available. For example, if you are changing pediatricians, your choices may be limited by your insurance coverage.

Know your rights and responsibilities. For example, there are federal and state laws giving parents rights in special education. Other agencies have different guidelines and policies they can make available to you. Be sure to ask each agency.

4. Preparation.

Prepare your family and your child. Develop a plan. Everyone involved should take a part in listing:

- a. What needs to be done? (Exchanging information, transferring records, visiting programs and meeting new people)
- b. Who is going to do it? (Parent, other family member, professional)
- c. When does it need to be completed? (Set realistic timelines.)

Look at how the changes affect your family and child. For example, if your child will be riding a school bus, you may need to rearrange your morning or afternoon schedule. Also, since this will be a new situation for your child, practice and familiarity may help your child adjust. Meet the bus driver, show your child the bus and talk with [him/her] about the change.

5. Keep the lines of communication open.

Sometimes you will not be able to prepare for a transition. In this case, a positive attitude can help you adjust, and communication with those involved will help make the best of the situation.

It is important to communicate openly with other family members and professionals to ensure a smooth transition. For example, if the new therapist has openings only during your child’s nap time, sharing this information will help everyone find a solution.

¹ *Moving On: A Transition Guide for Families of Children with Special Needs*. San Diego: Transition Committee of the Infant/Toddler Interagency Collaboration Project, 1990 (brochure). Reprinted by permission.

Appendix B □

Sample Forms for the IFSP/Transition Conference

- Transition Report
- Mailing Packet Checklist
- Notice of Transition Conference/IFSP Meeting
- IFSP/Transition Conference Agenda
- Summary of Periodic IFSP Review
- Desired Outcomes for the Child and/or Family

Note: The sample forms came from the San Diego County Office of Education. They were used by the Imperial County Office of Education, the East County SELPA, Exceptional Family Resource Center, the San Diego Regional Center, the San Diego City Schools Infant Development Program, and the California Early Start Program.

Transition Report

Today's Date:

Child's Name	Birth Date	IFSP Date
Parent's Name	Telephone Number	Primary Language

Foster Parent/Surrogate Needed?

Address	City	ZIP Code
School District/Home School (if known)	Service Coordinator/Agency	Telephone Number
<i>Person Completing This Form with the Family—NAME/AGENCY</i>		Telephone Number

1. Family needs, concerns, and priorities (*Related to transition*) _____

2. Description of child's development (*Highlights from major areas of development*) _____

3. Health concerns (*Specify vision and hearing tests and results.*) _____

4. Low-incidence disability or special equipment needed (*List equipment in use and anticipated need, especially if duplicate is needed in next setting.*) _____

5. Handicapping condition, diagnosis, or reason for eligibility _____

6. Current early intervention services (*Names and/or agencies of providers, frequency of service*) _____

7. Other pertinent health, medical, or educational information can be obtained from (*Give names and/or agencies of providers.*) _____

Mailing Packet Checklist

To: (Receiving Agency) _____

Date: _____

From: _____

Regarding: _____
Child's Name _____ Birth Date _____

Packet Contents

- ___ Transition Report (*Required*)
- ___ Individualized Family Service Plan (IFSP)—Most recent/current only (*Required*)
- ___ Multiagency Intake Questionnaire (MAIQ)—Updated by/with the family (*Required*)
- ___ State of California School Immunization Record (*Recommended if available*)

The following assessment, evaluation, and progress reports were completed recently (within past six months) and include the date of report. (*Recommended if available, but do not hold packet to wait for reports to be completed. Note whether the report is in progress or is generated by another agency and how to obtain it. Not all listed areas will have been assessed.*)

Date/Available from

- ___ Psychological/Developmental _____
- ___ Speech and Language _____
- ___ Occupational Therapy _____
- ___ Physical Therapy _____
- ___ Behavior _____
- ___ Medical _____
- ___ Audiological _____
- ___ Vision _____
- ___ Nursing _____
- ___ Nutrition _____
- ___ Other _____

Notice of Transition Conference/IFSP Meeting □

California Early Start Program/ Programa de Comienzo Temprano de California

Meeting Notice Confirmation/Confirmación del Aviso de Reunión

- Individual Family Service Plan (IFSP)/Plan Individual de Servicios para la Familia (IFSP)
- Periodic Review/Revisión Periódica
- Transition Meeting/Reunión de Transición

Date/Fecha: _____ Name/Nombre: _____

Address/Domicili: _____

City/State/Zip/Ciudad/Estado/Código Postal: _____

Re: _____

DOB/FDN: _____

Dear/Estimado(a): _____

This is to confirm that our meeting is scheduled for:

Lo siguiente es para confirmar que nuestra reunión se ha fijado para:

Date/Fecha	Time/Hora	Location/Ubicación

You may invite anyone else (family member, friend, advocate, other) that you would like to be involved in the development or review of your family's service plan.

Tómese la libertad de invitar a cualquier persona (miembro de su familia, amigo, abogado, otro) que usted desee que participe durante la reunión, con el propósito de escribir o revisar el plan de servicios de su familia.

If this time is no longer convenient for you, please contact me at _____ as soon as possible so that the meeting can be rescheduled.

Si esta cita no es conveniente para usted, por favor llámeme al _____ lo más pronto posible para fijar una nueva cita.

Sincerely/Atentamente,

Service Coordinator/Coordinador(a) de Servicios

IFSP/Transition Conference Agenda □

- Introduce participants and review the agenda.
- State the purposes of the meeting:
 - Review possible preschool service and program options as child turns three.□
 - Develop transition plan.□
- Review transition summary.□
- Provide brief review of the current IFSP and progress toward outcomes.□
- Discuss assessments:
 - What assessments are already planned for the child?□
 - What assessments need to be completed for the transition?□
 - What are the details of the transition plan? (Specify who will conduct the assessment, □ the type of assessment needed, and the date of the assessment.)
- Discuss timelines and steps for:
 - Preparing the child and the family for the transition
 - Developing an IEP if the child is eligible (School district representative may do this.)
- Write the transition plan in added outcomes on the IFSP, the IFSP summary of periodic □ review, or the IFSP team meeting notes.□
- Summarize the meeting and outline the next steps (*orally and in writing on IFSP team □ meeting notes if desired*).
- Have participants sign the transition plan.
- Distribute copies of the transition plan.

Summary of Periodic IFSP Review

Source: California Early Start program, San Diego County. Used with permission.

The IFSP dated (*current IFSP date*) was reviewed with (*child's name*)'s family on (*date completed*).

Modification or additions were needed in the following areas: Yes (as noted below) No

- | | |
|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Service coordinator | <input type="checkbox"/> Current abilities (<i>See attached pages.</i>) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Agency eligibility/availability | <input type="checkbox"/> Outcomes (<i>See attached pages.</i>) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Family concerns, priorities, or resources | <input type="checkbox"/> Services (<i>See attached pages.</i>) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Health | <input type="checkbox"/> Other _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Exceptional Family Resource Center | _____ |

Summarize modifications made in the areas checked above in response to child/family needs:

The family agreed with the modifications made in the areas checked above. The following team members were notified and/or consulted for the periodic review of this IFSP:

<i>Team Members</i>	<i>Agency</i>	<i>Team Members</i>	<i>Agency</i>

cc: Parents
Service Coordinator
Other Team Members
File

Source: California Early Start program, San Diego County. Used with permission.

Desired Outcomes for the Child and/or Family

The family wants the following outcomes to happen. The steps, the persons responsible, and the timeline are indicated so that _____ (child) can receive appropriate services by the time he/she turns three years old.

Outcome and Timelines	Steps and Person Responsible	Date Accomplished
1. Future services and community resources will be discussed with the family. <i>(2 years 3 months to 2 years 9 months)</i>	Options discussed: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Special education programs and services • Regional center services • Community resources such as Head Start, child development centers, private preschools, etc. Person(s) responsible: _____	
2. Information will be shared with the appropriate educational personnel. <i>(2 years 3 months to 2 years 9 months)</i> Family declined (date) _____	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Obtain written consent for referral to special education programs and services. Person(s) responsible: _____ <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Transition packet completed and sent to _____ School District. Person(s) responsible: _____	
3. IFSP transition meeting will be held when or before the child is 2 years 9 months.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Transition meeting notice sent to all members of IFSP team, including family, school district representative, and other appropriate educational service providers. Person(s) responsible: _____ <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Transition meeting held. 	
4. An evaluation will be completed to determine eligibility for special education programs and services <i>(2 years 9 months to 2 years 11 months)</i> Family declined (date) _____	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Parents will sign and return written consent to begin assessments for special education programs and services. • An individualized education program (IEP) to be completed by _____ School District prior to third birthday. 	
5. Evaluations will be completed to determine continuing eligibility for regional center services at age three. <i>(2 years 9 months to 3 years)</i> Family declined (date) _____	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Service coordinator to obtain appropriate collateral. • Service coordinator to schedule <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Medical evaluation – Developmental evaluation • Service coordinator to convene an individual program plan (IPP). 	
6. Child will be prepared for transition. <i>(2 years 9 months to 3 years)</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Discuss with family steps to prepare the child for adjusting to and functioning in a new setting. Person(s) responsible: _____	
7. The IFSP team will conduct a final review of the IFSP by the child's third birthday.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Service coordinator will convene final IFSP review. 	

Appendix C □

Legal Citations—California Codes

California Code of Regulations

Title 5. Education

Division 1. State Department of Education

Chapter 3. Handicapped Children

Subchapter 1. Special Education

Article 3.1. Individuals with Exceptional Needs

§3030. Eligibility Criteria.

A pupil shall qualify as an individual with exceptional needs, pursuant to Section 56026 of the Education Code, if the results of the assessment as required by Section 56320 demonstrate that the degree of the pupil's impairment as described in Section 3030 (a through j) requires special education in one or more of the program options authorized by Section 56361 of the Education Code. The decision as to whether or not the assessment results demonstrate that the degree of the pupil's impairment requires special education shall be made by the individualized education program team, including personnel in accordance with Section 56341(d) of the Education Code. The individualized education program team shall take into account all the relevant material which is available on the pupil. No single score or product of scores shall be used as the sole criterion for the decision of the individualized education program team as to the pupil's eligibility for special education. The specific processes and procedures for implementation of these criteria shall be developed by

each Special Education Local Plan Area and be included in the local plan pursuant to Section 56220(a) of the Education Code.

(a) A pupil has a hearing impairment, whether permanent or fluctuating, which impairs the processing of linguistic information through hearing, even with amplification, and which adversely affects educational performance. Processing linguistic information includes speech and language reception and speech and language discrimination.

(b) A pupil has concomitant hearing and visual impairments, the combination of which causes severe communication, developmental, and educational problems.

(c) A pupil has a language or speech disorder as defined in Section 56333 of the Education Code, and it is determined that the pupil's disorder meets one or more of the following criteria:

(1) Articulation disorder.

(A) The pupil displays reduced intelligibility or an inability to use the speech mechanism which significantly interferes with communication and attracts adverse attention. Significant interference in communication occurs when the pupil's production of single or multiple speech sounds on a developmental scale of articulation competency is below that expected for his or her chronological age or developmental level, and which adversely affects educational performance.

(B) A pupil does not meet the criteria for an articulation disorder if the sole assessed

disability is an abnormal swallowing pattern.

(2) Abnormal Voice. A pupil has an abnormal voice which is characterized by persistent, defective voice quality, pitch, or loudness.

(3) Fluency Disorders. A pupil has a fluency disorder when the flow of verbal expression including rate and rhythm adversely affects communication between the pupil and listener.

(4) Language Disorder. The pupil has an expressive or receptive language disorder when he or she meets one of the following criteria:

(A) The pupil scores at least 1.5 standard deviations below the mean, or below the 7th percentile, for his or her chronological age or developmental level on two or more standardized tests in one or more of the following areas of language development: morphology, syntax, semantics, or pragmatics. When standardized tests are considered to be invalid for the specific pupil, the expected language performance level shall be determined by alternative means as specified on the assessment plan, or

(B) The pupil scores at least 1.5 standard deviations below the mean or the score is below the 7th percentile for his or her chronological age or developmental level on one or more standardized tests in one of the areas listed in subsection (A) and displays inappropriate or inadequate usage of expressive or receptive language as measured by a representative spontaneous or elicited language sample of a minimum of fifty utterances. The language sample must be recorded or transcribed and analyzed, and the results included in the assessment report. If the pupil is unable to produce this sample, the language, speech, and hearing specialist shall document why a fifty utterance sample was not obtainable and the contexts in which attempts were

made to elicit the sample. When standardized tests are considered to be invalid for the specific pupil, the expected language performance level shall be determined by alternative means as specified in the assessment plan.

(d) A pupil has a visual impairment which, even with correction, adversely affects a pupil's educational performance.

(e) A pupil has a severe orthopedic impairment which adversely affects the pupil's educational performance. Such orthopedic impairments include impairments caused by congenital anomaly, impairments caused by disease, and impairments from other causes.

(f) A pupil has limited strength, vitality or alertness, due to chronic or acute health problems, including but not limited to a heart condition, cancer, leukemia, rheumatic fever, chronic kidney disease, cystic fibrosis, severe asthma, epilepsy, lead poisoning, diabetes, tuberculosis and other communicable infectious diseases, and hematological disorders such as sickle cell anemia and hemophilia which adversely affects a pupil's educational performance. In accordance with Section 5626(e) of the Education Code, such physical disabilities shall not be temporary in nature as defined by Section 3001(v).

(g) A pupil exhibits any combination of the following autistic-like behaviors, to include but not limited to:

(1) An inability to use oral language for appropriate communication.

(2) A history of extreme withdrawal or relating to people inappropriately and continued impairment in social interaction from infancy through early childhood.

(3) An obsession to maintain sameness.

(4) Extreme preoccupation with objects or inappropriate use of objects or both.

(5) Extreme resistance to controls.

- (6) Displays peculiar motoric mannerisms and motility patterns.
- (7) Self-stimulating, ritualistic behavior.
- (h) A pupil has significantly below average general intellectual functioning existing concurrently with deficits in adaptive behavior and manifested during the developmental period, which adversely affect a pupil's educational performance.
- (i) Because of a serious emotional disturbance, a pupil exhibits one or more of the following characteristics over a long period of time and to a marked degree, which adversely affect educational performance:
- (1) An inability to learn which cannot be explained by intellectual, sensory, or health factors.
 - (2) An inability to build or maintain satisfactory interpersonal relationships with peers and teachers.
 - (3) Inappropriate types of behavior or feelings under normal circumstances exhibited in several situations.
 - (4) A general pervasive mood of unhappiness or depression.
 - (5) A tendency to develop physical symptoms or fears associated with personal or school problems.
- (j) A pupil has a disorder in one or more of the basic psychological processes involved in understanding or in using language, spoken or written, which may manifest itself in an impaired ability to listen, think, speak, read, write, spell, or do mathematical calculations, and has a severe discrepancy between intellectual ability and achievement in one or more of the academic areas specified in Section 56337(a) of the Education Code. For the purpose of Section 3030(j):
- (1) Basic psychological processes include attention, visual processing, auditory processing, sensory-motor skills, cognitive abilities including association, conceptualization and expression.
 - (2) Intellectual ability includes both acquired learning and learning potential and shall be determined by a systematic assessment of intellectual functioning.
 - (3) The level of achievement includes the pupil's level of competence in materials and subject matter explicitly taught in school and shall be measured by standardized achievement tests.
 - (4) The decision as to whether or not a severe discrepancy exists shall be made by the individualized education program team, including assessment personnel in accordance with Section 56341(d), which takes into account all relevant material which is available on the pupil. No single score or product of scores, test or procedure shall be used as the sole criterion for the decisions of the individualized education program team as to the pupil's eligibility for special education. In determining the existence of a severe discrepancy, the individualized education program team shall use the following procedures:
 - (A) When standardized tests are considered to be valid for a specific pupil, a severe discrepancy is demonstrated by: first, converting into common standard scores, using a mean of 100 and standard deviation of 15, the achievement test score and the ability test score to be compared; second, computing the difference between these common standard scores; and third, comparing this computed difference to the standard criterion which is the product of 1.5 multiplied by the standard deviation of the distribution of computed differences of students taking these achievement and ability tests. A computed difference which equals or exceeds this standard criterion, adjusted by one standard error of measurement, the adjustment not to exceed 4 common standard score points, indicates a severe discrepancy when such discrepancy is corroborated by other

assessment data which may include other tests, scales, instruments, observations and work samples, as appropriate.

(B) When standardized tests are considered to be invalid for a specific pupil, the discrepancy shall be measured by alternative means as specified on the assessment plan.

(C) If the standardized tests do not reveal a severe discrepancy as defined in subparagraphs (A) or (B) above, the individualized education program team may find that a severe discrepancy does exist, provided that the team documents in a written report that the severe discrepancy between ability and achievement exists as a result of a disorder in one or more of the basic psychological processes. The report shall include a statement of the area, the degree, and the basis and method used in determining the discrepancy. The report shall contain information considered by the team which shall include, but not be limited to:

1. Data obtained from standardized assessment instruments;
2. Information provided by the parent;
3. Information provided by the pupil's present teacher;
4. Evidence of the pupil's performance in the regular and/or special education classroom obtained from observations, work samples, and group test scores;
5. Consideration of the pupil's age, particularly for young children; and
6. Any additional relevant information.

(5) The discrepancy shall not be primarily the result of limited school experience or poor school attendance.

Authority cited: Statutes of 1981, Chapter 1094, Section 25(a); and Section 56100(a), (g) and (i), Education Code.

Reference: 20 USC 1401(a)(15) and 1412(5); 34 CFR 300.5(b)(7) and (9), 300.532(a)(2), (d) and (e), 300.533,

300.540, 300.541–43; and Sections 56026, 56320, 56333 and 56337, Education Code.

Article 4. Instructional Planning and Individualized Education Program

§3040. Individualized Education Program Implementation.

(a) Upon completion of the individualized education program, that individualized education program shall be implemented as soon as possible following the individualized education program team meeting.

California Code of Regulations

Title 17. Public Health

Division 2. Health and Welfare Agency, Department of Developmental Services

Chapter 2. Early Intervention Services

Subchapter 2. General Provisions

Article 1. Definitions

§52000. Meaning of Words.

(b) The following definitions shall apply to the words used in this subchapter: . . .

(35) Natural environments means settings that are natural or typical for the infant or toddler's age peers who have no disability including the home and community settings in which children without disabilities participate.

Subchapter 3. Individualized Family Service Plan

Article 3. Transfer and Transition Procedures

§52112. Transition from Early Intervention Services.

(a) LEAs shall provide special education and related services to eligible children at age three. Pursuant to the requirements contained in Title 34 Code of Federal Regulations, §303.344, each LEA shall participate in the transition planning for

toddlers served under the Early Intervention Services Act, Government Code Sections 95000–95030, who may be eligible for preschool programs under Part B of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act, Title 20 United States Code Sections 1400–1420, before the toddler is two years nine months, or at the discretion of all parties up to six months before the child turns three to ensure that an IEP has been developed and is implemented by the toddler’s third birthday.

(b) The service coordinator, six months before the third birthday of the toddler receiving early intervention services, shall:

(1) Notify the parent of a toddler who may be eligible for special education and related services under Part B of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act that transition planning will occur within the next three to six months;

(2) Notify the LEA where the toddler resides that there will be an IFSP meeting requiring the attendance of an LEA representative pursuant to 34 CFR 300.132, before the toddler is two years nine months, or at the discretion of all parties, up to six months before the toddler turns three years old to specify the transition steps necessary for movement into services under Part B of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act; and,

(3) Within thirty days following notification of the parent and the LEA, the family, service coordinator, and LEA shall agree on the date for the IFSP to specify the transition steps necessary for movement into services under Part B.

(c) For all toddlers with an IFSP, the transition steps contained in the IFSP at two years nine months or earlier shall include all of the following:

(1) Discussions with and providing information to parents regarding:

(A) The toddler’s transition to special education for a toddler with a disability who may be eligible for special education and related services under Part B of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act, Title 20 United States Code Sections 1400–1420; and,

(B) Steps to prepare the toddler for changes in service delivery, including steps to help the toddler adjust to, and function in, a new setting;

(2) Provide information about community resources such as Head Start, Child Development Preschools, private or public preschool, for a toddler who will not be eligible for special education services after thirty six months of age; and,

(3) A projected date for conducting a final review of the IFSP to review the early intervention services and the transition outcomes by age three.

(d) For toddlers who may be eligible for preschool services from the LEA under Part B of The Individuals with Disabilities Education Act, Title 20 United States Code Section [sic] 1400–1420, the transition steps necessary for movement into services under Part B or other appropriate program, written at the IFSP meeting before the toddler is two years nine months, or, at the discretion of all parties, up to six months before the toddler’s third birthday, shall include all of the following:

(1) With parental consent, the transmission of information about the toddler to the LEA including evaluation and assessment information and copies of IFSPs that have been developed and implemented;

(2) Identifying needed assessments to determine regional center and special education eligibility and determining the regional center or LEA responsible and time lines for completing the needed assessments;

- (3) Statements of the steps necessary to ensure that the referral to an LEA is received by the LEA in a timely manner to ensure that assessments required under the provisions of Part B of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act are completed and an IEP is implemented by the toddler's third birthday;
- (4) A referral for evaluation and assessment for services under Part B of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act, Title 20 United States Code Sections 1400–1420, no later than the time that the toddler is two years nine months of age or before the LEA's break in school services if the toddler will become three years of age during a break in school services. The transition IFSP shall contain steps necessary to satisfy the referral and IEP development requirements contained in Education Code sections 56321 and 56344;
- (5) Identification of the people responsible for convening an IEP and final IFSP meeting, and the person responsible for convening an IPP meeting, if necessary, for a toddler by age three to:
- (A) Review the progress toward meeting the early intervention services outcomes identified in the IFSP;
- (B) Determine the eligibility for special education and develop the IEP; and,
- (C) Develop an IPP if the toddler is also eligible for services under the Lanterman Developmental Disabilities Services Act as required in Welfare and Institutions Code Section 4646.
- (e) If a toddler is older than two years and six months on the date of the initial IFSP, the IFSP shall include steps to ensure transition to Special Education Services under Part B of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act or other services that may be appropriate.
- (f) Regional centers may continue providing or purchasing services for a preschooler who has been determined eligible for regional center services:
- (1) Until the beginning of the next school term after the toddler's third birthday during a period when the LEA special education preschool program is not in session; and,
- (2) When the multidisciplinary team determines that services are necessary until the LEA special education program resumes.
- Authority: Sections 95009 and 95028, Government Code.
- Reference: Section 1436(d)(8), Title 20 United States Code; Sections 303.148, 303.322, 303.340, 303.342, 303.343, 303.344(h), and 303.346, Title 34 Code of Federal Regulations; and Sections 56321, 56343, and 56344, Education Code.

Government Code

Title 14. California Early Intervention Services Act

Chapter 5. Services

§95020 (a) Each eligible infant or toddler shall have an individualized family service plan. The individualized family service plan shall be used in place of an individualized program plan required pursuant to sections 4646 and 4646.5 of the Welfare and Institutions Code, the individual education plan required pursuant to Section 56340 of the Education Code, or any other applicable service plan.

(b) For an infant or toddler who has been evaluated for the first time, a meeting to share the results of the evaluation, to determine eligibility and, for children who are eligible, to develop the initial individualized family service plan shall be conducted within 45 calendar days of receipt of the

written referral. Evaluation results and determination of eligibility may be shared in a meeting with the family prior to the individualized family service plan. Written parent consent to evaluate and assess shall be obtained within the 45-day timeline. A regional center, local education agency, or their designees shall initiate and conduct this meeting. Families shall be afforded the opportunity to participate in all decisions regarding eligibility and services.

(c) Parents shall be fully informed of their rights, including the right to invite any other person, including a family member or an advocate or peer parent, or any or all of them, to accompany them to any or all individualized family service plan meetings. With parental consent, a referral shall be made to the local family resource center or network.

(d) The individualized family service plan shall be in writing and shall address all of the following:

(1) A statement of the infant or toddler's present levels of physical development including vision, hearing, and health status, cognitive development, communication development, social and emotional development, and adaptive developments.

(2) With the concurrence of the family, a statement of the family's concerns, priorities, and resources related to meeting the special developmental needs of the eligible infant or toddler.

(3) A statement of the major outcomes expected to be achieved for the infant or toddler and family where services for the family are related to meeting the special developmental needs of the eligible infant or toddler.

(4) The criteria, procedures, and timelines used to determine the degree to which progress toward achieving the outcomes is being made and whether modifications or revisions are necessary.

(5) A statement of the specific early intervention services necessary to meet the unique needs of the infant or toddler as identified in paragraph (3), including, but not limited to, the frequency, intensity, location, duration, and method of delivering the services, and ways of providing services in natural environments.

(6) A statement of the agency responsible for providing the identified services.

(7) The name of the service coordinator who shall be responsible for facilitating implementation of the plan and coordinating with other agencies and persons.

(8) The steps to be taken to ensure transition of the infant or toddler upon reaching three years of age to other appropriate services. These may include, as appropriate, special education or other services offered in natural environments.

Education Code

Part 30. Special Education Programs

Chapter 4. Identification and Referral, Assessment, Instructional Planning, Implementation, and Review

Article 2. Assessment

§56321. (a) Whenever an assessment for the development or revision of the individualized education program is to be conducted, the parent of the pupil shall be given, in writing, a proposed assessment plan within 15 days of the referral for assessment not counting days between the pupil's regular school sessions or terms or days of school vacation in excess of five schooldays from the date of receipt of the referral, unless the parent agrees, in writing, to an extension. However, in any event, the assessment plan shall be developed within 10 days after the commencement of the subsequent regular school year or the pupil's regular school term as

determined by each district's school calendar for each pupil for whom a referral has been made 10 days or less prior to the end of the regular school year. In the case of pupil school vacations, the 15-day time shall recommence on the date that the pupil's regular schooldays reconvene. A copy of the notice of parent rights shall be attached to the assessment plan. A written explanation of all the procedural safeguards under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (20 U.S.C. Sec. 1400 and following), and the rights and procedures contained in Chapter 5 (commencing with Section 56500), shall be included in the notice of parent rights, including information on the procedures for requesting an informal meeting, pre-hearing mediation conference, mediation conference, or due process hearing; the timelines for completing each process; whether the process is optional; and the type of representative who may be invited to participate.

(b) The proposed assessment plan given to parents shall meet all the following requirements:

- (1) Be in language easily understood by the general public.
- (2) Be provided in the primary language of the parent or other mode of communication used by the parent, unless to do so is clearly not feasible.
- (3) Explain the types of assessments to be conducted.
- (4) State that no individualized education program will result from the assessment without the consent of the parent.
- (c) No assessment shall be conducted unless the written consent of the parent is obtained prior to the assessment except pursuant to subdivision (e) of Section 56506. The parent shall have at least 15 days from the receipt of the proposed assessment plan to arrive at a decision. As-

essment may begin immediately upon receipt of the consent.

Article 3. Instructional Planning and Individualized Education Program

§56341.5. (a) Each district, special education local plan area, or county office convening a meeting of the individualized education program team shall take steps to ensure that one or both of the parents of the individual with exceptional needs are present at each individualized education program meeting or are afforded the opportunity to participate.

(b) Parents shall be notified of the individualized education program meeting early enough to ensure an opportunity to attend.

(c) The individualized education program meeting shall be scheduled at a mutually agreed upon time and place. The notice of the meeting under subdivision (b) shall indicate the purpose, time, and location of the meeting and who shall be in attendance. Parents may also be informed in the notice of the right to bring other people to the meeting who have knowledge or special expertise regarding the individual with exceptional needs.

§56344. An individualized education program required as a result of an assessment of a pupil shall be developed within a total time not to exceed 50 days, not counting days between the pupil's regular school sessions, terms, or days of school vacation in excess of five schooldays, from the date of receipt of the parent's written consent for assessment, unless the parent agrees, in writing, to an extension. However, such an individualized education program shall be developed within 30 days after the commencement of the subsequent regular school year as determined by each district's school calendar for each pupil for whom a referral has been made 20 days or less prior to the end of the regular school year. In the case of pupil

school vacations, the 50-day time shall recommence on the date that pupil school-days reconvene.

§56346. (a) No pupil shall be required to participate in all or part of any special education program unless the parent is first informed, in writing, of the facts that make participation in the program necessary or desirable, and of the contents of the individualized education program, and after this notice, consents, in writing, to all or part of the individualized education program. If the parent does not consent to all the components of the individualized education program, then those components of the program to which the parent has consented shall be implemented so as not to delay providing instruction and services to the pupil.

Article 5. Review

§56380. (a) The district, special education local plan area, or county office shall maintain procedures for conducting, on at least an annual basis, reviews of all individualized education programs. The procedures shall provide for the review of the pupil's progress and the appropriateness of placement, and the making of any necessary revisions.

Chapter 4.45. Special Education Programs for Individuals with Exceptional Needs Between the Ages of Three and Five Years Inclusive

§56441. The Legislature hereby finds and declares that early education programs for individuals with exceptional needs between the ages of three and five years, inclusive, that provide special education and related services within the typical environment appropriate for young children, and include active parent involvement, may do the following:

(a) Significantly reduce the potential impact of any disabling conditions.

(b) Produce substantial gains in physical development, cognitive development, language and speech development, psychosocial development, and self-help skills development.

(c) Help prevent the development of secondary disabling conditions.

(d) Reduce family stresses.

(e) Reduce societal dependency and institutionalization.

(f) Reduce the need for special class placement in special education programs once the children reach school age.

(g) Save substantial costs to society and our schools.

§56441.1. (a) Services rendered by state and local agencies serving preschool children with exceptional needs and their families shall be provided in coordination with other state and local agencies. Educational agencies offering similar educational services shall coordinate and not duplicate these services. The Superintendent of Public Instruction shall identify similar services by other state and local agencies. Any child identified as currently being served and qualified as an individual with exceptional needs as defined in Section 56026, and who meets the eligibility criteria of Section 56441.11 shall be counted as an individual under the funding cap prescribed by Section 56447.

(b) As the preschool child approaches the age to enter an elementary school environment, the child's preparation shall be geared toward a readiness for kindergarten and later school success.

§56441.2. An early education program for individuals with exceptional needs between the ages of three and five, inclusive, shall include specially designed services to meet the unique needs of preschool children and their families. To meet this purpose, the program focus is on the young

child and his or her family and shall include both individual and small group services which shall be available in a variety of typical age-appropriate environments for young children, including the home, and shall include opportunities for active parent involvement.

§56441.3. (a) Early education services for preschool children may be provided to individuals or small groups and shall include:

(1) Observing and monitoring the child's behavior and development in his or her environment.

(2) Presenting activities that are developmentally appropriate for the preschool child and are specially designed, based on the child's exceptional needs, to enhance the child's development. Those activities shall be developed to conform with the child's individualized education program and shall be developed so that they do not conflict with his or her medical needs.

(3) Interacting and consulting with the family members, regular preschool teachers, and other service providers, as needed, to demonstrate developmentally appropriate activities necessary to implement the child's individualized education program in the appropriate setting pursuant to Section 56441.4 and necessary to reinforce the expansion of his or her skills in order to promote the child's educational development. These interactions and consultations may include family involvement activities.

(4) Assisting parents to seek and coordinate other services in their community that may be provided to their child by various agencies.

(5) Providing opportunities for young children to participate in play and exploration activities, to develop self-esteem, and to develop preacademic skills.

(6) Providing access to various developmentally appropriate equipment and specialized materials.

(7) Providing related services as defined in Section 300.13 of Title 34 of the Code of Federal Regulations, that include parent counseling and training to help parents understand the special needs of their children and their children's development, as that section read on May 1, 1987.

(b) The duration of group services shall not exceed four hours per day unless determined otherwise by the individualized education program team.

§56441.4. Appropriate settings for these services include any of the following:

(a) The regular public or private nonsectarian preschool program.

(b) The child development center or family day care home.

(c) The child's regular environment that may include the home.

(d) A special site where preschool programs for both children with disabilities and children who are not disabled are located close to each other and have an opportunity to share resources and programming.

(e) A special education preschool program with children who are not disabled attending and participating for all or part of the program.

(f) A public school setting which provides an age-appropriate environment, materials, and services, as defined by the superintendent.

§56441.5. Appropriate instructional adult-to-child ratios for group services shall be dependent on the needs of the child. However, because of the unique needs of individuals with exceptional needs between the ages of three and five years, inclusive, who require special education and related

services, the number of children per instructional adult shall be less than ratios set forth in subsection (b) of Section 18204 of Title 5 of the California Code of Regulations, as it read on May 1, 1987, for young children in a regular preschool program. Group services provided to individuals with exceptional needs between the ages of three and five years, inclusive, identified as severely disabled pursuant to Section 56030.5 shall not exceed an instructional adult-to-child ratio of one to five.

§56441.6. Early education services for preschool children shall be provided through a transdisciplinary team approach of professionals as described in Section 56426.6. Responsibilities of early education program staff shall include consultation with regular preschool program providers, consultation with other specialists, assessment services, and direct services.

§56441.11. (a) Notwithstanding any other provision of law or regulation, the special education eligibility criteria in subdivision (b) shall apply to preschool children, between the ages of three and five years.

(b) A preschool child, between the ages of three and five years, qualifies as a child who needs early childhood special education services if the child meets the following criteria:

(1) Is identified as having one of the following disabling conditions, as defined in Section 300.7 of Title 34 of the Code of Federal Regulations, or an established medical disability, as defined in subdivision (d):

- (A) Autism.
- (B) Deaf-blindness.
- (C) Deafness.
- (D) Hearing impairment.
- (E) Mental retardation.

- (F) Multiple disabilities.
 - (G) Orthopedic impairment.
 - (H) Other health impairment.
 - (I) Serious emotional disturbance.
 - (J) Specific learning disability.
 - (K) Speech or language impairment in one or more of voice, fluency, language and articulation.
 - (L) Traumatic brain injury.
 - (M) Visual impairment.
 - (N) Established medical disability.
- (2) Needs specially designed instruction or services as defined in Sections 56441.2 and 56441.3.
 - (3) Has needs that cannot be met with modification of a regular environment in the home or school, or both, without ongoing monitoring or support as determined by an individualized education program team pursuant to Section 56431.
 - (4) Meets eligibility criteria specified in Section 3030 of Title 5 of the California Code of Regulations.
 - (c) A child is not eligible for special education and services if the child does not otherwise meet the eligibility criteria and his or her educational needs are due primarily to:
 - (A) Unfamiliarity with the English language.
 - (B) Temporary physical disabilities.
 - (C) Social maladjustment.
 - (D) Environmental, cultural, or economic factors.
 - (d) For purposes of this section, “established medical disability” is defined as a disabling medical condition or congenital syndrome that the individualized education program team determines has a high predictability of requiring special education and services.

(e) When standardized tests are considered invalid for children between the ages of three and five years, alternative means, for example, scales, instruments, observations, and interviews shall be used as specified in the assessment plan.

(f) In order to implement the eligibility criteria in subdivision (b), the superintendent shall:

(1) Provide for training in developmentally appropriate practices, alternative assessment and placement options.

(2) Provide a research-based review for developmentally appropriate application criteria for young children.

(3) Provide program monitoring for appropriate use of the eligibility criteria.

(g) If legislation is enacted mandating early intervention services to infants and toddlers with disabilities pursuant to the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (20 U.S.C. Sec. 1400 et seq.), the superintendent shall reconsider the eligibility criteria for preschool children, between the ages of three and five years, and recommend appropriate changes to the Legislature.

§56441.13. The superintendent shall provide training and technical assistance for the implementation of early education programs for preschool children with exceptional needs, and shall develop:

(a) Methods and models for modifications to the regular program prior to referral.

(b) Guidelines for program providers.

(c) Curriculum and content for programs.

(d) Personnel standards for program providers.

(e) A plan to meet the unique needs of preschool children who require special education services and who are limited-English proficient and of diverse cultural backgrounds.

§56441.14. Criteria and options for meeting the special education transportation needs of individuals with exceptional needs between the ages of three and five, inclusive, shall be included in the local transportation policy required pursuant to paragraph (5) of subdivision (b) of Section 56195.8.

§56442. The superintendent shall ensure that state preschool programs and programs for individuals with exceptional needs between the ages of three and five years, inclusive, provided pursuant to this part, are coordinated at the state and local levels.

§56443. (a) The State Department of Education shall amend its interagency agreement with the Administration for Children, Youth, and Families, Region IX, Head Start, United States Department of Health and Human Services, to permit a district, special education local plan area, or county office to contract with a Head Start program for special education and services for individuals with exceptional needs between the ages of three and five years pursuant to this part.

(b) Apportionments allocated to Head Start programs for special education and services to individuals with exceptional needs between the ages of three and five years shall supplement and not supplant funds for which the Head Start programs are eligible, or are already receiving, from other funding sources.

§56445. (a) Prior to transitioning an individual with exceptional needs from a preschool program to kindergarten, or first grade as the case may be, an appropriate reassessment of the individual shall be conducted pursuant to Article 2 (commencing with Section 56320) of Chapter 4 to determine if the individual is still in need of special education and services.

(b) It is the intent of the Legislature that gains made in the special education program for individuals who received special education and services, in accordance with this chapter, are not lost by too rapid a removal of individualized programs and supports for these individuals.

(c) As part of the transitioning process, a means of monitoring continued success of the child shall be identified by the individualized education program team for those children of kindergarten or first grade equivalency who are determined to be eligible for less intensive special education programs.

(d) As part of the exit process from special education, the present performance levels and learning style shall be noted by the individualized education program team. This information shall be made available to the assigned regular education teacher upon the child's enrollment in kindergarten or first grade as the case may be.

§56446. Public special education funding shall not be used to purchase regular preschool services or to purchase any instructional service other than special education and services permitted by this chapter.

§56447.1. (a) Nothing in this chapter shall be construed to limit the responsibil-

ity of noneducational public agencies in the State of California from providing or paying for some or all of the costs of a free appropriate public education for individuals with exceptional needs between the ages of three and five years, inclusive.

(b) Nothing in this chapter shall be construed to permit a noneducational public agency to reduce medical and other assistance available or to alter eligibility under Titles V and XIX of the Social Security Act (Subchapter V (commencing with Section 701) and Subchapter XIX (commencing with Section 1396) of Chapter 7 of Title 42 of the United States Code) with respect to the provision of a free appropriate public education for individuals with exceptional needs between the ages of three and five years, inclusive, within the State of California.

§56449. When a child between the ages of three and five years with special education needs will be transferring to a local public school, the program may choose, with the permission of the parent or guardian, to transfer information from the previous year deemed beneficial to the pupil and the teacher, including, but not limited to, development issues, social interaction abilities, health background, and diagnostic assessments, if any, to the public school.

Appendix D□

Legal Citations–Federal Law

The following statute from the *Code of Federal Regulations* was promulgated in May 1999.

Part 300. Assistance to States for the Education of Children with Disabilities
§300.132. Transition of children from Part C to preschool programs.

The State must have on file with the Secretary policies and procedures to ensure that—(a) Children participating in early-intervention programs assisted under Part C of the Act [Individuals with Disabilities Education Act], and who will participate in preschool programs assisted under Part B of the Act, experience a smooth and effective transition to those preschool programs in a manner consistent with section 637(a)(8) of the Act;

(b) By the third birthday of a child described in paragraph (a) of this section, an IEP or, if consistent with section 300.342(c) and section 636(d) of the Act, an IFSP, has been developed and is being implemented for the child consistent with section 300.121(c); and

(c) Each LEA will participate in transition planning conferences arranged by the designated lead agency under section 637(a)(8) of the Act.

(Authority: 20 U.S.C. 1412[a][9])

§300.550. General LRE requirements.

(a) Except as provided in §300.311(b) and (c), a State shall demonstrate to the satisfaction of the Secretary that the State has in effect policies and procedures to ensure that it meets the requirements of sections 300.550-300.556.

- (b) Each public agency shall ensure—
(1) That to the maximum extent appropriate, children with disabilities, including children in public or private institutions or other care facilities, are educated with children who are nondisabled; and
(2) That special classes, separate schooling or other removal of children with disabilities from the regular educational environment occurs only if the nature or severity of the disability is such that education in regular classes with the use of supplementary aids and services cannot be achieved satisfactorily.

(Authority: 20 U.S.C. 1412[a][5])

§300.552. Placements.

In determining the educational placement of a child with a disability, including a preschool child with a disability, each public agency shall ensure that—

- (a) The placement decision—
(1) Is made by a group of persons, including the parents, and other persons knowledgeable about the child, the meaning of the evaluation data, and the placement options; and
(2) Is made in conformity with the LRE provisions of this subpart, including sections 300.550-300.554;

(b) The child's placement—
(1) Is determined at least annually;

- (2) Is based on the child's IEP; and
 - (3) Is as close as possible to the child's home;
- (c) Unless the IEP of a child with a disability requires some other arrangement, the child is educated in the school that he or she would attend if nondisabled;
- (d) In selecting the LRE, consideration is given to any potential harmful effect on the child or on the quality of services that he or she needs; and
- (e) A child with a disability is not removed from education in age-appropriate regular classrooms solely because of needed modifications in the general curriculum.

(Authority: 20 U.S.C. 1412[a][5])

Part 303. Early Intervention Program for Infants and Toddlers with Disabilities

§303.148 Transition to preschool programs.

Each application must include a description of the policies and procedures to be used to ensure a smooth transition for children receiving early intervention services under this part to preschool or other appropriate services, including—

- (a) A description of how the families will be included in the transition plans;
- (b) A description of how the lead agency under this part will—
 - (1) Notify the local educational agency for the area in which the child resides that the child will shortly reach the age of eligibility for preschool services under Part B of the Act, as determined in accordance with State law;
 - (2) (i) In the case of a child who may be eligible for preschool services under Part B of the Act, with the approval of the family of the child, convene a conference among the lead agency, the family, and the

local educational agency at least 90 days, and at the discretion of the parties, up to 6 months, before the child is eligible for the preschool services, to discuss any services that the child may receive; or

- (ii) In the case of a child who may not be eligible for preschool services under Part B of the Act, with the approval of the family, make reasonable efforts to convene a conference among the lead agency, the family, and providers of other appropriate services for children who are not eligible for preschool services under Part B, to discuss the appropriate services that the child may receive;

(3) Review the child's program options for the period from the child's third birthday through the remainder of the school year; and

(4) Establish a transition plan; and

- (c) If the State educational agency, which is responsible for administering preschool programs under part B of the Act, is not the lead agency under this part, an inter-agency agreement between the two agencies to ensure coordination on transition matters.

(Authority: 20 U.S.C. 1437[a][8])

§303.344. Content of an IFSP.

(a) Information about the child's status.

(1) The IFSP must include a statement of the child's present levels of physical development (including vision, hearing, and health status), cognitive development, communication development, social or emotional development, and adaptive development.

(2) The statement in paragraph (a)(1) of this section must be based on professionally acceptable objective criteria.

(b) Family information. With the concurrence of the family, the IFS must include

a statement of the family's resources, priorities, and concerns related to enhancing the development of the child.

(c) Outcomes. The IFSP must include a statement of the major outcomes expected to be achieved for the child and family, and the criteria, procedures, and timeliness used to determine—

(1) The degree to which progress toward achieving the outcomes is being made; and

(2) Whether modifications or revisions of the outcomes or services are necessary.

(d) Early intervention services.

(1) The IFSP must include a statement of the specific early intervention services necessary to meet the unique needs of the child and the family to achieve the outcomes identified in paragraph (c) of this section, including—

(i) The frequency, intensity, and method of delivering the services;

(ii) The natural environments, as described in section 303.12(b), and section 303.18 in which early intervention services will be provided, and a justification of the extent, if any, to which the services will not be provided in a natural environment;

(iii) The location of the services; and

(iv) The payment arrangements, if any.

(2) As used in paragraph (d)(1)(i) of this section—

(i) Frequency and intensity mean the number of days or sessions that a service will be provided, the length of time the service is provided during each session, and whether the service is provided on an individual or group basis; and

(ii) Method means how a service is provided.

(3) As used in paragraph (d)(1)(iii) of this section, location means the actual place or places where a service will be provided.

(e) Other services.

(1) To the extent appropriate, the IFSP must include—

(i) Medical and other services that the child needs, but that are not required under this part; and

(ii) The funding sources to be used in paying for those services or the steps that will be taken to secure those services through public or private sources.

(2) The requirement in paragraph (e)(1) of this section does not apply to routine medical services (e.g., immunizations and "well-baby" care), unless a child needs those services and the services are not otherwise available or being provided.

(f) Dates; duration of services. The IFSP must include—

(1) The projected dates for initiation of the services in paragraph (d)(1) of this section as soon as possible after the IFSP meetings described in section 303.342; and

(2) The anticipated duration of those services.

(g) Service coordinator.

(1) The IFSP must include the name of the service coordinator from the profession most immediately relevant to the child's or family's needs (or who is otherwise qualified to carry out all applicable responsibilities under this part), who will be responsible for the implementation of the IFSP and coordination with other agencies and persons.

(2) In meeting the requirements in paragraph (g)(1) of this section, the public agency may—

(i) Assign the same service coordinator who was appointed at the time that the child was initially referred for evaluation to be responsible for implementing a child's and family's IFSP; or

- (ii) Appoint a new service coordinator.
- (3) As used in paragraph (g)(1) of this section, the term profession includes “service coordination.”
- (h) Transition from Part C services.
- (1) The IFSP must include the steps to be taken to support the transition of the child, in accordance with Section 303.148, to—
- (i) Preschool services under Part B of the Act, to the extent that those services are appropriate; or
- (ii) Other services that may be available, if appropriate.
- (2) The steps required in paragraph (h)(1) of this section include—
- (i) Discussions with, and training of, parents regarding future placements and other matters related to the child’s transition;
- (ii) Procedures to prepare the child for changes in service delivery, including steps to help the child adjust to, and function in, a new setting; and
- (iii) With parental consent, the transmission of information about the child to the local educational agency, to ensure continuity of services, including evaluation and assessment information required in Section 303.322, and copies of IFSPs that have been developed and implemented in accordance with sections 303.340–303.346.

(Authority: 20 U.S.C. 1436[d])



Appendix E□

Legal Citations—Pending Law

The Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act of 2004 (IDEA 2004) is aligned closely to the No Child Left Behind Act, helping to ensure equity, accountability, and excellence in education for children with disabilities. Although regulations implementing the IDEA 2004 are being prepared, the regulations implementing the 1997 law remain in effect to the extent that they are consistent with the IDEA 2004 statute.

Part B—Assistance for Education of all Children with Disabilities

§612. State Eligibility.

(a) In General.—A State is eligible for assistance under this part for a fiscal year if the State submits a plan that provides assurances to the Secretary that the State has in effect policies and procedures to ensure that the State meets each of the following conditions:

(9) Transition from Part C to Preschool Programs.—Children participating in early intervention programs assisted under part C, and who will participate in preschool programs assisted under this part, experience a smooth and effective transition to those preschool programs in a manner consistent with section 637(a)(9). By the third birthday of such a child, an individualized education program or, if consistent with sections 614(d)(2)(B) and 636(d), an individualized family service plan, has been developed and is being implemented for the child. The local educational agency will participate in transition planning conferences arranged by the designated lead agency under section 635(a)(10).

§614. Evaluations, Eligibility Determinations, Individualized Education Programs, and Educational Placements.

(d) Individualized Education Programs.—

(C) IEP Team Attendance.—

(D) IEP Team Transition.—In the case of a child who was previously served under part C, an invitation to the initial IEP meeting shall, at the request of the parent, be sent to the part C service coordinator or other representatives of the part C system to assist with the smooth transition of services.

Part C—Infants and Toddlers with Disabilities

§636. Individualized Family Service Plan.

(d) Content of Plan.—The individualized family service plan shall be in writing and contain—

(8) the steps to be taken to support the transition of the toddler with a disability to preschool or other appropriate services.

§637. State Application and Assurances

(a) Application.—A State desiring to receive a grant under section 633 shall submit an application to the Secretary at such time and in such manner as the Secretary may reasonably require. The application shall contain—

(9) a description of the policies and procedures to be used—

(A) to ensure a smooth transition for toddlers receiving early intervention services under this part (and children receiving those services under section 635(c)) to preschool, school, other appropriate services, or exiting the program, including a description of how—

(i) the families of such toddlers and children will be included in the transition plans required by subparagraph (C); and

(ii) the lead agency designated or established under section 635(a)(10) will—

(I) notify the local educational agency for the area in which such a child resides that the child will shortly reach the age of eligibility for preschool services under part B, as determined in accordance with State law;

(II) in the case of a child who may be eligible for such preschool services, with the approval of the family of the child, convene a conference among the lead agency, the family, and the local educational agency not less than 90 days (and at the discretion of all such parties, not more

than 9 months) before the child is eligible for the preschool services, to discuss any such services that the child may receive; and

(III) in the case of a child who may not be eligible for such preschool services, with the approval of the family, make reasonable efforts to convene a conference among the lead agency, the family, and providers of other appropriate services for children who are not eligible for preschool services under part B, to discuss the appropriate services that the child may receive;

(B) to review the child's program options for the period from the child's third birthday through the remainder of the school year; and

(C) to establish a transition plan, including, as appropriate, steps to exit from the program;

(10) a description of State efforts to promote collaboration among Early Head Start programs under section 645A of the Head Start Act, early education and child care programs, and services under part C



Appendix F□

Sample Forms for Planning the Transition to Kindergarten

- Timeline of Transition from Preschool to Kindergarten
- Sample Time Frame for Transition from Preschool to Kindergarten
- Preschool to Kindergarten Transition Work Sheet
- Sample Survey of Local Educational Agency
- Evaluation Form for Kindergarten Teachers
- Evaluation Form for Parents/Guardians

Timeline of Transition from Preschool to Kindergarten

Up to 12 months before kindergarten

- Complete “Preschool to Kindergarten Transition Work Sheet” with parents.

September/October

- Review transition plan at initial parent meeting (home visit or school).
- Determine school of residence.
- Encourage parents to visit kindergarten in the fall, if possible, before the children enter the program.

December

- Review possible placement options at parent conference.
- Identify issues and concerns.
- Provide parents with district and school kindergarten enrollment procedures and the names of school contacts. (See “Sample Survey of Local Educational Agency.”)

Three months prior to annual review

- Coordinate assessments with the assessment personnel prior to evaluation.
- Assist with development of assessment plan with parent, if requested.
- Complete observation as appropriate.
- Arrange any specialized procedures necessary (health, transportation, assistive technology, etc.) with receiving district personnel.
- Offer assistance to parents to arrange school visits, attend as requested by parent.
- Work with the district coordinator of special education, or designee, to arrange district staff observation of the child in his/her preschool class.

Annual review

- Invite district staff to IEP meeting, including a kindergarten teacher and special education staff as appropriate.
- Discuss with the receiving teacher and parents to draft appropriate goals and objectives for the coming year.
- Develop IEP to include any specialized plans necessary for the child.

At end of program year

- Send cumulative file and confidential records to receiving district.
- Send copy of portfolio or transition passport to receiving teacher.

One month after transition to new placement

- Make follow-up call to the receiving teacher to ensure that the child is enrolled.
- Answer questions the receiving teacher may have.
- Make follow-up call to the parent to ask how the child is adjusting to the new school program.
- If there are concerns, offer assistance for follow-up as appropriate and requested.

Sample Time Frame for Transition from Preschool to Kindergarten

(For September Start Date)

Time	Transition activity	Person(s) responsible
November to December	Generate a list of possible students making the transition the following school year.	Preschool or SELPA administrator
December	Discuss future placement options, transition process, and timelines for entering kindergarten.	Preschool teacher and parent (<i>Parent is used here for parent, guardian, and other family members.</i>)
January	Send a list of potential students to districts of residence.	Preschool or SELPA administrator
January to February	Hold Parent Information Night regarding kindergarten enrollment and special education options.	Preschool administrator, SELPA director, district special education director, local parent group, general education administrator
February to March	Arrange for parents to visit neighborhood schools and identify possible receiving school sites. Assess the child to determine eligibility and identify strengths, needs, and modifications.	Parent, preschool teacher, district administrator, or designee Parent and identified assessment team, including special education, general education, and child care staff members
March to April	Arrange for receiving school staff to observe the child in the preschool setting and meet the family. Develop IEP meeting schedules and send notices.	Parent, preschool teacher, district staff Staff of sending and receiving agencies
April to May	Conduct a parent conference planning meeting to identify priorities and concerns. Conduct the IEP meeting. Complete the kindergarten registration.	Preschool teacher, kindergarten staff, and parent Parent, sending and receiving education staff, LEA administrator, and others as needed Parent, with assistance as requested from preschool teacher
May	Develop a written follow-up action plan to complete transition activities by the end of the school year.	Preschool, SELPA, and district administrators
June to September	Send records to the receiving district and arrange transportation and necessary environmental modifications.	Program administrators
September to December	Monitor the child's transition to the new placement and provide support as needed.	Preschool teacher
October	Evaluate the prior-year transition process and modify the process based on data.	Program administrators

Preschool to Kindergarten Transition Work Sheet

Child's name	Date	Projected transition IEP date
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Student goals are to be developed by the IEP team, including child, family members, and other agencies.

Long-Range Goals: _____

<i>Persons involved in transition planning</i>	<i>Timeline checklist</i>	<i>Date</i>	<i>Who</i>
<input type="checkbox"/> Parent/Guardian <input type="checkbox"/> Child <input type="checkbox"/> Sending special education teacher and/or service provider <input type="checkbox"/> Sending preschool teacher <input type="checkbox"/> Administrator <input type="checkbox"/> Receiving special education teacher and/or service provider <input type="checkbox"/> Receiving kindergarten teacher (regular education teacher) <input type="checkbox"/> Program specialist <input type="checkbox"/> Other agency representative(s) (specify CCS, MH, RC) <input type="checkbox"/> Other (describe) _____ _____ _____	<input type="checkbox"/> Contact the receiving LEA. <input type="checkbox"/> Assess student needs in current and future environments. <input type="checkbox"/> Remind child and parent to visit next possible program(s). <input type="checkbox"/> Receiving teacher visit(s) child. <input type="checkbox"/> Complete observation as appropriate. <input type="checkbox"/> Provide parent with district/school kindergarten enrollment procedures and names of school contacts. <input type="checkbox"/> Conduct IEP meeting. <input type="checkbox"/> Send information (i.e., cumulative file, child portfolio) to receiving program. <input type="checkbox"/> Provide support for transition in next program. <input type="checkbox"/> Other _____		

Preschool to Kindergarten Transition Work Sheet (*Continued*)

<i>Current educational services</i>	<i>Family priorities for successful transition</i>																											
Ratio of staff/child support needed in the preschool environment: _____ _____																												
Type of support provided in the preschool environment <input type="checkbox"/> Special education teacher/service provider <input type="checkbox"/> General education teacher <input type="checkbox"/> Peer <input type="checkbox"/> Self-monitoring <input type="checkbox"/> Other (describe) _____ _____																												
Percentage of time in general education preschool environment: _____ _____	<table border="1" style="width: 100%;"> <thead> <tr> <th style="background-color: #cccccc;"><i>Follow-up activities</i></th> <th style="background-color: #cccccc;"><i>Date</i></th> <th style="background-color: #cccccc;"><i>Who</i></th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td><i>Kindergarten year</i></td> <td></td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td><input type="checkbox"/> Kindergarten teachers/staff receive follow-up contact.</td> <td></td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td><input type="checkbox"/> Kindergarten teachers/staff are supported in resolving difficulties.</td> <td></td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td><input type="checkbox"/> Kindergarten teachers/staff evaluate transition support services.</td> <td></td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td><input type="checkbox"/> Parents receive follow-up contact.</td> <td></td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td><input type="checkbox"/> Parents are supported in resolving difficulties.</td> <td></td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td><input type="checkbox"/> Parents evaluate transition support services.</td> <td></td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td><input type="checkbox"/> Support, if needed, continues.</td> <td></td> <td></td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	<i>Follow-up activities</i>	<i>Date</i>	<i>Who</i>	<i>Kindergarten year</i>			<input type="checkbox"/> Kindergarten teachers/staff receive follow-up contact.			<input type="checkbox"/> Kindergarten teachers/staff are supported in resolving difficulties.			<input type="checkbox"/> Kindergarten teachers/staff evaluate transition support services.			<input type="checkbox"/> Parents receive follow-up contact.			<input type="checkbox"/> Parents are supported in resolving difficulties.			<input type="checkbox"/> Parents evaluate transition support services.			<input type="checkbox"/> Support, if needed, continues.		
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<input type="checkbox"/> Support, if needed, continues.																												
Physical/specialized health needs: _____ _____																												
Settings/programs/classrooms to consider for next year: _____ _____																												

Adapted from the Santa Barbara County Education Office *Transition Handbook* (1996).

Sample

Survey of Local Educational Agency

To the local educational agency (LEA) administrator or designee: Please complete the following survey for each elementary school in your school district and return to *[insert name and address of sending agency here]*. This information will be used to assist preschool special education staff and parents in the transition from preschool to kindergarten.

District: _____

School: _____

Address: _____

Telephone: _____

Fax: _____

Principal: _____

1. What are your district procedures for classroom visitations by parents and preschool teachers?

2. What is your district policy for parents to select teachers?

3. What are your transition activities for kindergarten at this school?

4. What information would the kindergarten teachers or school staff like to receive from preschool program staff?

5. What school forms must parents or guardians complete to enroll the child at this school? (Preschool staff may assist with them.)

6. Which district staff members should be invited to:
IEP meetings?

Special education transition meetings?

General education meetings?

Evaluation Form for Kindergarten Teachers

Dear Colleague,

We would like to get some feedback from you on the effectiveness of our process for easing the transition from preschool to kindergarten for students receiving special education services and support. Please indicate, by marking the appropriate box, whether or not you agree with the following statements. Your comments and suggestions are greatly appreciated.

Enough time was allowed to plan for a child's transition from preschool to kindergarten.

<i>Satisfaction statement</i>	<i>Agree</i>	<i>Disagree</i>	<i>Comments</i>
I was invited to participate in the process of looking at incoming students' needs and considering different accommodations and approaches to meet those needs.			
I was invited to visit preschoolers making the transition before their IEP meetings.			
The sending program adequately prepared and helped families with the transition process.			
The sending program provided meeting notifications, informational materials, and the child's records in a timely manner.			
Children who made the transition have adjusted well to the new setting.			
The transition materials provided were helpful.			
I was able to reach the sending program if I needed further information or assistance regarding a student.			
In general, the preschool-to-kindergarten transition process was very effective.			
If you would prefer, your experience with the transition process can be discussed in person or over the phone.			

Additionally, if you have continuing support needs, please contact me at _____.

Sincerely,

(Preschool staff responsible for transition follow-up)

Evaluation Form for Parents/Guardians

Dear Parent/Guardian,

It has been several months since your child made the transition from preschool to kindergarten. We would like to get some feedback from you on the effectiveness of our transition process. Please indicate, by marking the appropriate box, whether you agree with the following statements. Your comments and suggestions are greatly appreciated.

<i>Satisfaction statement</i>	<i>Agree</i>	<i>Disagree</i>	<i>Comments</i>
Enough time was allowed to plan for my child's transition from preschool to kindergarten.			
I was involved in the process of looking at my child's needs and considering different placement options to meet those needs.			
I (and my child) visited various programs before the IEP meeting.			
The sending program helped my family with the transition process.			
The receiving program offered information and support to my family.			
My child has adjusted well to the new setting.			
The transition materials provided were helpful.			
In general, the preschool to kindergarten transition process was very effective.			

If you would prefer, your experience with the transition process can be discussed in person or over the phone. Additionally, if you have continuing support needs, please contact me at _____.

Sincerely,

(Preschool staff responsible for transition follow-up)

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