



CALECSE

California Early Childhood
Special Education Network



Funded by the California Department of Education (CDE),
Special Education Division

**Interagency Collaboration: Developing and Sustaining Successful
Interagency Collaborations and Agreements
January 2025**



CaIECSE



California Early Childhood Special Education Network

Funded by the CDE

Implementation Leadership

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CalECSE

California Early Childhood Special Education Network
Funded by the CDE



<https://www.calesce.org>

CalECSE is a technical assistance project funded under the California Department of Education (CDE) that supports Local Educational Agencies (LEAs), Special Education Local Plan Area (SELPA)s, County Offices of Special Education (COEs), and other Agency Partners in the areas of IDEA Part C to B Transitions, Preschool Assessment Practices, and Preschool Child Find by providing technical assistance, professional learning, and demonstration of tangible practices *that have been proven successful*.

The CalECSE Network leverages collaboration amongst agencies, disseminates resources, highlights existing exemplar practices, and provides direct technical assistance to improve the capacity, knowledge, collaboration, and implementation of evidence-based practices across agencies throughout California.

The CalECSE Network is committed to improving outcomes for children and their families by eliminating and addressing barriers to successful transition for California's youngest children with disabilities.

Today's Presenters

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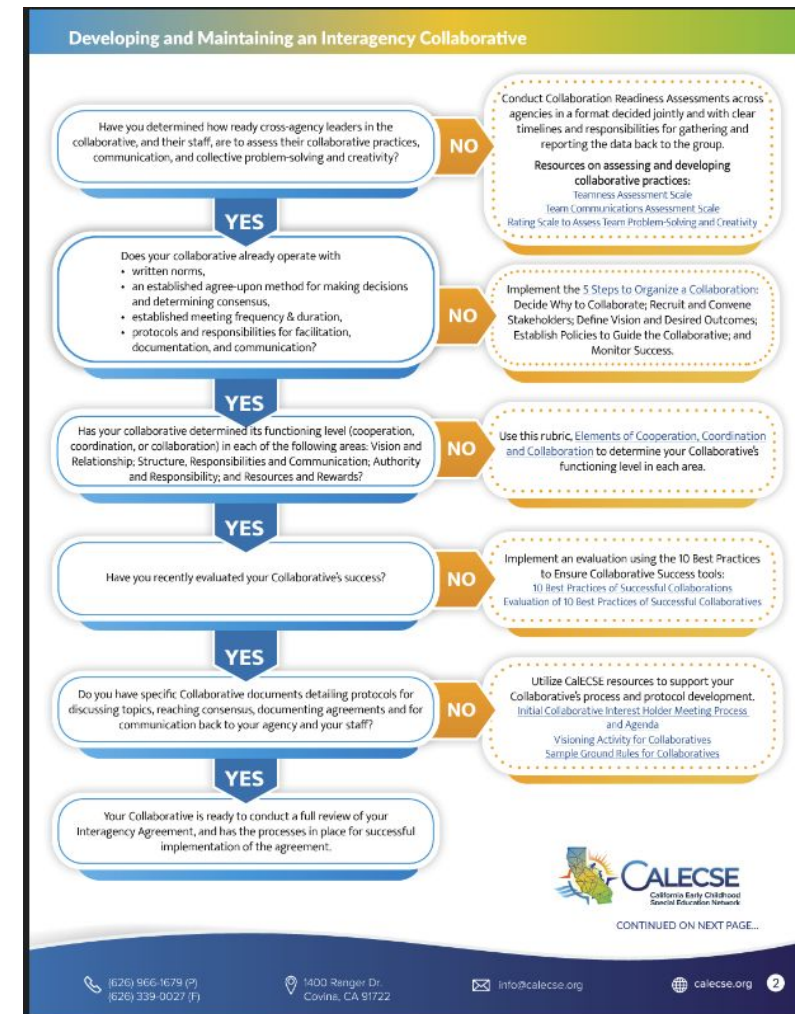
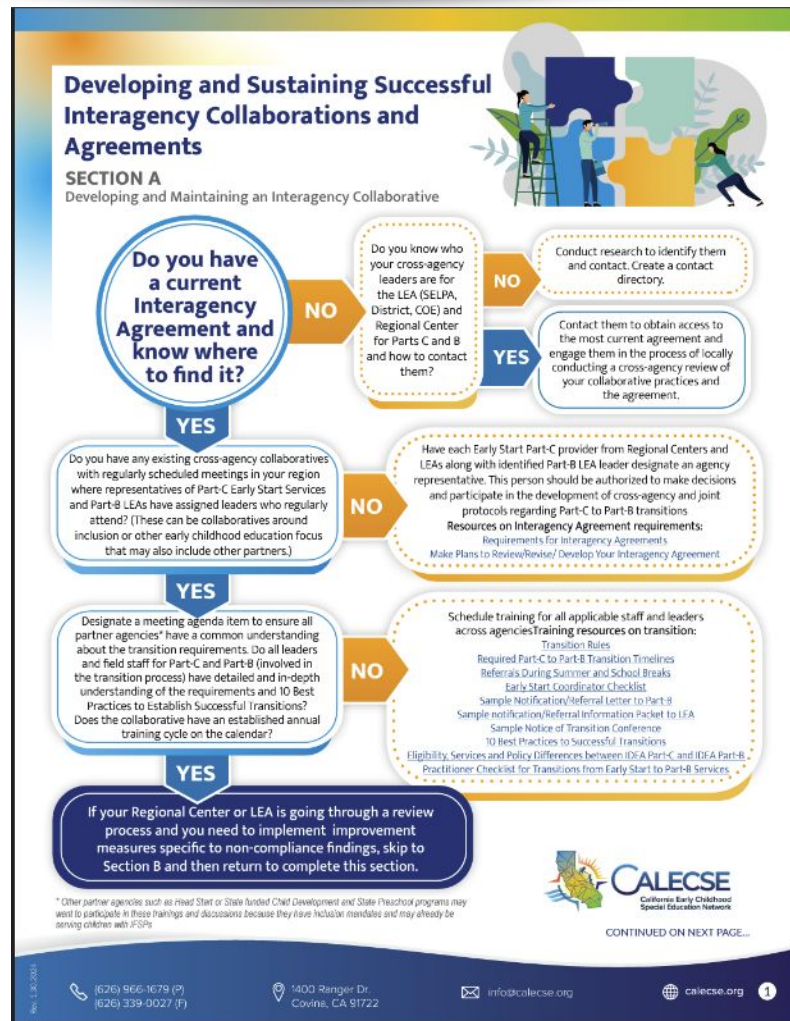


CalECSE Resources on Interagency Collaboration



- Developing and Sustaining Successful Interagency Collaborations and Agreements Process Flowchart, PDF from CalECSE. https://calecse.org/uploads/blogs/files/1736884253_Collaborative%20Flowchart%2003.pdf
- CalECSE Interagency Collaboration Training Series 2023-24: 6 consecutive sessions detailing the process <https://calecse.org/news-resources/interagency-collaboration-training-series-3>
- Back to Basics: Reviewing Regional Center and LEA Transition Timelines 2024-25: review session on timelines (Back to Basics) and flowchart with all resources <https://calecse.org/news-resources/interagency-collaboration-back-to-basics-reviewing-regional-center-lea-transition-timelines>
- Data Governance - Overview of CALPADS Reporting (video) CalECSE presentation includes elements required to complete Indicator 12 data (Early Childhood Transition) and about entering infants (for local education agencies (LEAs) that receive Infant Funding) <https://player.vimeo.com/video/1026301504>
- CalECSE Assessment Team Leadership - Part C to Part B Transition At-A-Glance, timelines and responsibilities https://calecse.org/uploads/blogs/files/1709681911_Part%20C%20to%20Part%20B%20Transition%20At-A-Glance%20-%20Assessment%20Team%20Leadership.pdf

Developing and Maintaining an Interagency Collaborative



Conducting a Regional Assessment of the Existing Interagency Agreement

SECTION B

Conducting a Regional Assessment of your Interagency Agreement and Relevant Practices for Effective Implementation of the Agreement and any Additional agreed-upon Processes and Protocols.

- ☐ 1 Schedule a series of meetings of the Collaborative, to review the Interagency Agreement (IA) and joint cross agency practices. Confirm attendees have decision-making authority for their agencies present.
- ☐ 2 Confirm all members have access to the most recent signed version of your IA and any/all written protocols and processes which have been jointly developed, approved and are being implemented. It is best to share all written protocols across agencies, when protocols for implementing the IA were not jointly developed or are implemented by a single agency.
- ☐ 3 Conduct a formal review of your IA or IA(s)* implementation processes and documents. Encourage collaborative partners to consider limitations and to challenge status quo within discussions while remaining family centric and implementing the group's consensus protocols prior to documenting agreements on each section. Reference [CALECSE Additional Resources on Interagency Collaborations and Agreements](#) and review detailed information from [OSEP Letters and FAQs](#) regarding transition requirements and other useful tools to assist your team.

**TEAMS CAN DECIDE TO COMPLETE THE TOOLS BELOW IN ANY ORDER.
IT IS RECOMMENDED TO COMPLETE THESE TOOLS BEFORE MOVING ON TO STEP 4.**

- Joint interagency review of [Designing and Implementing Effective Early Childhood Processes](#)
- Joint completion of the [Self-Assessment Worksheet for Early Childhood Transition](#)
- Joint Interagency completion of the [Early Childhood Transition Worksheet](#)

AS THE INTERAGENCY COLLABORATIVE TEAM MEETS TO COMPLETE THESE DOCUMENTS...

- ☐ 4 You may designate a small group or engage the entire Collaborative in conducting a self-audit of your IA using the [Checklist for Reviewing IDEA Part-C and Transition to Part-B Documents](#). If needed, a review of data sharing processes can be done as well, using the [DaSy Data Sharing Agreement Checklist](#).
- ☐ 5 Consolidate and prioritize findings from reviews. Assign roles and responsibilities to address the identified items. Be sure to agree on timelines for this follow up to occur.
- ☐ 6 Jointly identify the agreed upon items to be included in the revised IA. If there are items that are agreed upon, but not required in the IA, a Policy/Procedural manual could include those items. The Policy/Procedural manual is monitored by the Collaborative and can be modified based on need, without requiring the official signatures.
- ☐ 7 Dispute Resolution must be addressed within the IA. In addition, it is recommended the Collaborative have a written process for resolving issues that may arise for staff at all levels of the interagency collaboration and that periodic interagency staff training on the IA and implementation procedures includes the informal process to address conflicts as they arise and what formal process can be accesses as needed (in alignment to the IA).

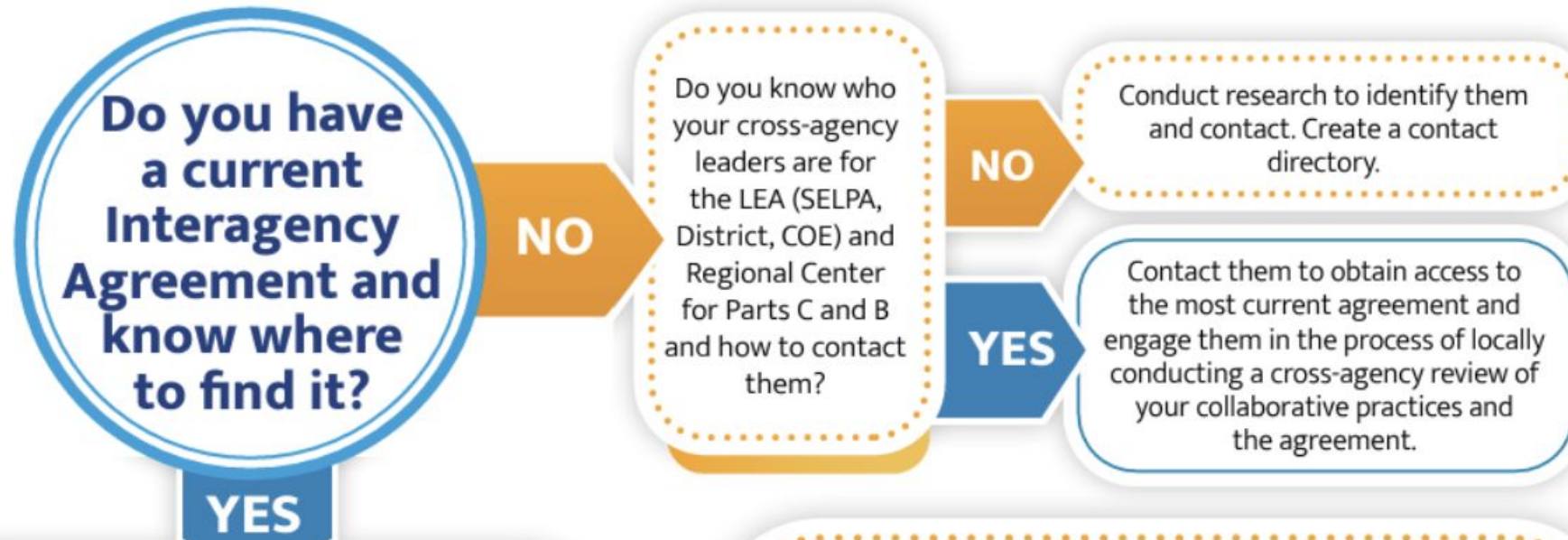
- ☐ 8 Review a [sample template and existing interagency agreements from other regions](#), and other interagency agreements that may exist in your region, comparing them to the format your region currently uses for this agreement to identify overlap and alignment. Determine which format will be used for your region, considering that the agreement is a public document and will be used for staff training purposes at a frequency and form defined by the Collaborative. If several LEAs work with a single Regional Center, discuss the feasibility of having a single agreement, maintaining stability for families who may move within the region but across LEA residency boundaries.
- ☐ 9 The Collaborative monitors and evaluates the IA being sure to establish: the template and agencies to be included in the revised agreement; assign responsibilities (who will do the drafting/typing) and timelines for drafting the revised agreement that includes agreements documented throughout the process; and timelines for reviews, feedback, and for final approval by your collaborative.
- ☐ 10 Repeat this process for any agreements which will necessitate the development of Collaborative Protocols either within or across agencies.
- ☐ 11 Conduct a joint review of the final IA and Collaborative Protocols to confirm elements of [Successful Interagency Communications](#) were clearly addressed.
- ☐ 12 Once the IA is finalized by the Collaborative:
 - Specify the period of time covered by the agreement
 - Identify the official signatories and their titles for each agency
 - Determine the signature process and timeline
 - Define communication and dissemination processes to interagency staff and other partner organizations (e.g., Head Start, Family Empowerment/Resource Centers, early childhood inclusion collaboratives)
- ☐ 13 Determine Collaborative's commitment to staff training on the IA and implementation protocols (no less than annually, is recommended). Specify if training materials will be jointly created by interagency partners (who/when), how training will be provided (in person or if virtually: asynchronous or synchronous).
- ☐ 14 Monitoring and Ongoing evaluations of the Collaborative and the Interagency Agreement. Confirm the IA or the Collaborative's protocols include:
 - How often partners will meet, who convenes, facilitates and documents meetings, and who will report out/communicate to staff and partner agencies
 - How any agreements on necessary changes to protocols or to IA language at the annual revision, will be documented and possibly "piloted" until documents are updates and new annual signatures are obtained (as applicable sine protocols do not require formal agency signatures)
- ☐ 15 Once the Collaborative begins their regular meetings, refer to the [Transition Conceptual Framework](#) to add agenda items that focus on continuous improvement of your collaborative practices.

Flowchart Section A, Page 1 - Introduction

Developing and Sustaining Successful Interagency Collaborations and Agreements

SECTION A

Developing and Maintaining an Interagency Collaborative



Flowchart Section A, Page 1 - Introduction and Linked Resources



Linked resources:

- Requirements for Interagency Agreements
<https://calecse.org/uploads/compliance/Requirements%20for%20Interagency%20Agreements%2001.pdf>
- Make Plans to Review/Revise/Develop Your Regional Interagency Agreement
<https://calecse.org/uploads/compliance/Make%20Plans%20to%20Review%2001.pdf>

**Do you have
a current
Interagency
Agreement and
know where
to find it?**

NO

YES

Do you have any existing cross-agency collaboratives with regularly scheduled meetings in your region where representatives of Part-C Early Start Services and Part-B LEAs have assigned leaders who regularly attend? (These can be collaboratives around inclusion or other early childhood education focus that may also include other partners.)

NO

Have each Early Start Part-C provider from Regional Centers and LEAs along with identified Part-B LEA leader designate an agency representative. This person should be authorized to make decisions and participate in the development of cross-agency and joint protocols regarding Part-C to Part-B transitions

Resources on Interagency Agreement requirements:

[Requirements for Interagency Agreements](#)

[Make Plans to Review/Revise/ Develop Your Interagency Agreement](#)

Resources to Identify Interagency Agreement Requirements and to Plan a Review



Requirements for Interagency Agreements

(a) Regional centers and LEAs shall develop and maintain local interagency agreements.

(b) Local interagency agreements shall include, but not be limited to, the following:

1. The responsibilities of each LEA and regional center for meeting the terms of the agreement;
2. Procedures for coordination of child find activities with local public agencies and regional centers to identify infants and toddlers who may be eligible for early intervention services;
3. Specific procedures for coordination of referrals for evaluation and assessment;
4. Procedures for the assignment of a service coordinator;
5. Interagency procedures for identifying the responsibilities of the regional center and LEA for completing the evaluation and assessment and determining eligibility within the time requirements contained in Section 52086 of these regulations, when an infant or toddler may receive services from both the regional center and LEA;
6. Procedures for the timely exchange of information between regional Centers and LEAs;
7. Mechanisms for ensuring the availability of contacts at regional centers and LEAs at all times during the year;
8. Procedures for interagency IFSP development when infants and toddlers may be eligible for early intervention services from the regional center and the LEA or other state or local programs or services;
9. Procedures to ensure the provision of services during periods of school vacations when services are required on the IFSP;
10. (Transition planning procedures which begin at least six months prior to a toddler's third birthday pursuant to Section 52112 of these regulations;
11. Procedures for resolving disputes between regional centers and LEAs;
12. Procedures for the training and assignment of surrogate parents; and Title 17, California State Regulations Page 29 of 41
13. Procedures for accepting transfers of infants or toddlers with existing IFSPs.

(c) Local interagency agreements shall be dated and signed by representatives of the regional center and LEA.

(d) Interagency agreements shall be reviewed by both parties annually, revised as necessary, dated, and signed by both parties.



Make Plans to Review/Revise/Develop Your Regional Interagency Agreement

Identify Leaders Who Will Champion Your Regional Process

- Identify key SELPA and Regional Center (RC) leaders to co-lead the review effort and define roles/responsibilities
- Establish a timeline and meeting dates
- Identify key partners from Part C and Part B (these may change depending on topics being reviewed for the agreement)
- Send invitations and be specific about topic and need for commitment through the process

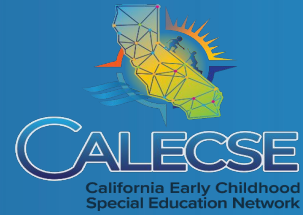
Establish a Common Purpose

Provide agencies the opportunity to identify what is working and what changes are needed to improve practices and procedures.

Establish a Process

- Start with setting norms for collaborative conversations and how collaborative agreements will be made (consensus, multi-voting, etc.)
- Review mandated timelines and current agreement sections, such as for Referrals, so everyone has the same basic understanding
- Develop a protocol for discussing each agreement section and seek consensus on the process for the revision of each section
- Identify what is working and what changes are needed to improve practices and procedures
- Document the agreements at each step/meeting
- Once all areas of the agreement have been reviewed discussed and revised as needed, based on agreements, select a format for the revised document and set responsibilities and timeline for the final draft to be ready to route for signatures
- Obtain/review/create locally developed transition materials and forms specific to the areas discussed and modified (may happen concurrent to IA document drafting/revision)
- Once signed, work across agencies to schedule and provide interagency trainings on the IA.
- Schedule an annual revision of the agreement and practices in place to assure agreements developed by the LEAs and Early Start agencies are followed
- If interagency procedures are identified to be no longer effective, revise the procedures and document them in a new/revised agreement

Flowchart Section A, Page 1 - Review of Transition Requirements



Do you have any existing cross-agency collaboratives with regularly scheduled meetings in your region where representatives of Part-C Early Start Services and Part-B LEAs have assigned leaders who regularly attend? (These can be collaboratives around inclusion or other early childhood education focus that may also include other partners.)

YES

Designate a meeting agenda item to ensure all partner agencies* have a common understanding about the transition requirements. Do all leaders and field staff for Part-C and Part-B (involved in the transition process) have detailed and in-depth understanding of the requirements and 10 Best Practices to Establish Successful Transitions? Does the collaborative have an established annual training cycle on the calendar?

NO

Schedule training for all applicable staff and leaders across agencies

Training resources on transition:

Transition Rules

Required Part-C to Part-B Transition Timelines

Referrals During Summer and School Breaks

Early Start Coordinator Checklist

Sample Notification/Referral Letter to Part-B

Sample notification/Referral Information Packet to LEA

Sample Notice of Transition Conference

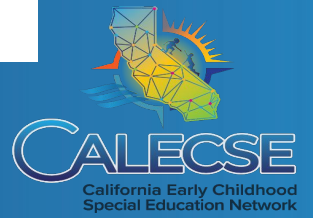
10 Best Practices to Successful Transitions

Eligibility, Services and Policy Differences between IDEA Part-C and IDEA Part-B

Practitioner Checklist for Transitions from Early Start to Part-B Services

** Other partner agencies such as Head Start or State funded Child Development and State Preschool programs may want to participate in these trainings and discussions because they have inclusion mandates and may already be serving children with IFSPs*

Flowchart Section A, Page 1 - Linked Resources on Transition Requirements



- Transition Rules for Late Referrals
<https://calecse.org/uploads/compliance/Transition%20Rules%20For%20Late%20Referrals%2001.pdf>
- Required Part C to Part B Transition Timelines
<https://calecse.org/uploads/compliance/REQUIRED%20PART%20C%20TO%20PART%20B%20TRANSITION%20TIMELIN ES%2002.pdf>
- Referrals During Summer and School Breaks
<https://calecse.org/uploads/compliance/Referrals%20During%20Summer%20and%20School%20Breaks%2001.pdf>
- Early Start Coordinator's Transition Checklist
<https://calecse.org/uploads/compliance/Early%20Start%20Coordinator's%20Transition%20Checklist%2001.pdf>
- Sample Notification/Referral Letter to Part B
<chrome-extension://efaidnbmnnnibpcajpcglclefindmkaj/https://calecse.org/uploads/compliance/Sample%20Notification%20Referral%20Letter%20to%20LEA%2002.pdf>
- Sample Notification/Referral Information Packet to Local Education Agency
<https://calecse.org/uploads/compliance/Sample%20Notification%20Referral%20Info%20Packet%20to%20LEA%2001.pdf>
- Sample Notice of Transition Conference
<https://calecse.org/uploads/compliance/Sample%20Notice%20of%20Transition%20Conference%2001.pdf>
- Ten (10) Best Practices of Successful Collaboratives
<https://calecse.org/uploads/compliance/10%20Best%20Practices%20of%20Successful%20Collaboratives%2002.pdf>
- Eligibility and Service Delivery Policies: Differences Between IDEA Part C and Part B
https://calecse.org/uploads/compliance/Eligibility_and_Service%20Delivery_Policies_Differences_between_IDEA_PtC-IDEA%20PtB.pdf
- Practitioner Checklist for Transitions from Early Start to Part B Services
https://calecse.org/uploads/blogs/files/1717091887_Collaborative%20Flowchart%2001.pdf

Resources on Rules for Late Referrals and Part C to Part B Transition Timelines



Transition Rules For Late Referrals

For a child made eligible for Early Start between 45 and 90 days prior to the 3rd birthday

The Early Start lead agency* (Part C) is required to:

- Conduct the initial evaluation and assessment
- Hold an initial IFSP meeting, and develop an IFSP, if eligible
- Develop a transition plan with the appropriate transition steps and services
- Provide notification to the LEA
- With parental consent, Early Start is required to make referral to the LEA or assist the family in initiating contact with the LEA
- Transition conference may be conducted but not required

*The Early Start lead agency could be the serving Part C LEA if the child is eligible based on a solely low incidence disability

The LEA (Part B) is required to:

- Ensure the initial evaluation under Part B is completed
- Develop an IEP by the 3rd birthday if the child is determined eligible under Part B, even if the 60-day timeline for conducting initial evaluation expires after the 3rd birthday.

For a child referred to Early start/Part C between 1 and 44 days prior to the 3rd birthday

The Early Start lead agency* (Part C) is required to:

- With parental consent, Early Start is required to make a referral to the LEA, or assist the family in initiating contact with the LEA for the area where the toddler resides.
- NOT REQUIRED:
 - Initial evaluation and assessment
 - Initial IFSP meeting, if eligible
 - Transition plan
 - A transition conference

*The Early Start lead agency could be the serving Part C LEA if the child is eligible based on a solely low incidence disability

The LEA (Part B) is required to: (same requirement as when the child is referred between 45 and 90 days prior to 3rd birthday):

- Ensure the initial evaluation under Part B is completed
- Develop an IEP by the 3rd birthday if the child is determined eligible under part B, even if the 60-day timeline for conducting initial evaluation expires after the 3rd birthday



REQUIRED PART C TO PART B TRANSITION TIMELINES

No fewer than 90 days before the 3rd birthday:

- Referral/Notification- Lead agency to LEA
 - Must include Child's name & DOB, and Parent contact information (Personally Identifiable Information - PII)
 - Parent consent is not required
 - Parent consent is required for any information shared, beyond required notification PII from Part C to B
- Transition Plan – individualized transition steps

No fewer than 90 days, but not more than 9 months before the 3rd birthday:

- Transition Planning Conference – Lead agency & LEA with family

By age 3

- Determination of Part-B eligibility
- If eligible, IEP and services in place by 3rd birthday

Resources on Referrals During School Breaks and a Checklist for Service Coordinators



Referrals During Summer and School Breaks

- LEAs MUST accept and respond to initial referrals for all children, that may occur during the summer months or extended school breaks
- Federal regulations require that LEAs respond to all initial referrals within 15 calendar days, with an assessment plan or a prior written notice that an assessment plan will not be completed, with reasons.
- The parent has 15 calendar days to respond to the assessment plan or letter
- LEAs may not defer initial assessments and IEP meetings are not suspended because of a school break [34 CFR Section 300.301(d)]

Recommendations:

- Hold transition conference early enough to allow time for LEA evaluations and IEP meeting to take place prior to the school break
- IEP Teams must consider Extended School Year (ESY) at each child's IEP meeting, including those who turn 3 during the LEA's summer break. Be proactive in sharing calendars and information with parents
- Even if the IEP team determines that ESY services are not needed or parent prefers to delay start of services until the new school year, the IEP is considered "implemented" by the 3rd birthday, as the meeting has been held, and if appropriate services have been offered.

IDEA's Regulations at Section 303.209 is titled "Transition to preschool and other programs" and has the following italicized lead-ins to its paragraphs: paragraph (a) Notification to the SEA and appropriate LEA; paragraph (c) Conference to discuss services; paragraph (d) Transition plan; paragraph (e) Transition conference and meeting to develop transition plan; paragraph (f) Applicability of transition requirements.



Early Start Coordinator's Transition Checklist*

Family-friendly practices no later than the IFSP meeting prior to the transition conference (may take place at the same time):

- Refer family to the family resource center (FRC) for family support services, with parent permission
- Emphasize that Early Start services terminate at three years of age

No later than 30 months:

- Notify the family (and others requested by the family) that a transition conference will occur no later than 90 days prior to the child's third birthday.
- Inform the family that the LEA will be invited to attend the transition conference.
- Inform families that they have the right to invite persons of their choice to the transition conference.
- Notify the LEA that a transition conference will occur no later than 90 days before the child's third birthday.
- Coordinate the transition conference location, date, and time with parents and the LEA.
- Inform the family that a notification/referral will be made to the LEA no later than 90 days before the child's third birthday.

Ninety days before the third birthday, or earlier at the discretion of all parties:

- Send a written meeting invitation to parent and LEA at least two days before the transition conference.
- Convene the transition conference.
- Document discussions and identify individual transition steps and services including:
 - family questions, concerns, priorities, and resources;
 - training to prepare families for future placements;
 - providing information about community services and resources;
 - steps and services to prepare a toddler for successful transition at age three;
 - steps to determine eligibility for LEA and continued regional center services at age three;
 - required assessments, timelines, and responsible parties;
 - possible program options at age three;
 - identification of persons responsible for convening the final IFSP review, initial IEP, and initial IPP meetings as appropriate;
 - eligible for LEA services, and IPP if the child is eligible for ongoing regional center services.
- Involve others requested by the family, such as the FRC, in the transition process.
- Send the LEA written notification/referral for the child (parent consent is not required).
- Include copies of evaluation and assessment reports, and the most recent IFSP in the referral packet, with parental consent.

By the third birthday

- Participate in the final IFSP review and initial IEP and IPP meetings, as appropriate.
- Provide referrals for community-based services, as appropriate.

At three years

- Complete the required data reports
- Close Early Start file

*This checklist may be used to monitor the Early Start service coordinator's required transition responsibilities and related activities. Transition planning may begin as early as 27 months of age with the agreement of all involved parties, and the transition conference must be held no later than 90 days before the child's third birthday. Source: California Department of Developmental Services and California Department of Education. Effective Early Childhood Transitions, A guide for Transition at Age Three: Early Start to Preschool. Sacramento: A collaborative project of California Department of Developmental Services and California Department of Education. 2013



Sample Notifications for a Referral and to Send with an Information Packet to the LEA



Sample Notification/Referral Letter to Local Education Agency

Date of Referral:

To: Contact Name: _____
LEA: _____
Address: _____
Contact Phone: _____
Re: _____
Email: _____

From: Contact Name: _____
Part C Service Agency: _____
Address: _____
Contact Phone: _____
Email: _____

This is a notification/referral for a child who resides in your school district and will soon be turning three years of age. As a child who currently receives Early Start services, he/she is potentially eligible for Part B services through the LEA at age three.

Child's Name: _____
Date of Birth: _____
Parent Name: _____

Parent Contact Information:

Address: _____
Contact Phone: _____
Email: _____

Languages Spoken by Child and Family:

Source: California Department of Developmental Services and California Department of Education, Effective Early Childhood Transitions, A guide for Transition at Age Three-Early Start to Preschool Sacramento. A collaborative project of California Department of Developmental Services and California Department of Education, 2013.

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Sample Notification/Referral Information Packet to Local Education Agency

This packet accompanies the referral for the child listed below, with parent consent*:

Date: _____

Regarding: Child's Name _____ Date of Birth _____

To (Receiving Agency): _____

Agency Contact: _____

From (Sending Agency): _____

Service Coordinator/Agency Contact: _____

Most recent Individualized Family Services Plan, including Transition Plan
State of California School Immunization records (if available)
*Parent's signed consent to Exchange Additional Identifying Information Between Agencies

The following assessments, evaluations, and progress reports were completed recently (within the past six months) and are included in this packet. Additional assessments that are in process are noted below. Please contact the service coordinator to obtain additional information.

☐ Psychological/Developmental _____
☐ Speech and Language _____
☐ Occupational Therapy _____
☐ Behavioral _____
☐ Medical _____
☐ Audiological _____
Vision/Optical _____
Nursing/Nutrition _____
Other _____

California Department of Developmental Services and California Department of Education, Effective Early Childhood Transitions, A guide for Transition at Age Three-Early Start to Preschool Sacramento. A collaborative project of California Department of Developmental Services and California Department of Education, 2013.

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Sample Notice of Transition Conference and Resources on 10 Best Practices of Collaboratives



Sample Notice of Transition Conference

Date: _____

Parent Name: _____

Address: _____

City/State/Zip: _____

Re: _____

DOB: _____

Dear Parent: _____ This is to confirm that our meeting is scheduled for:

Date: _____ Time: _____ Location: _____

The following people are invited to this meeting:

Name: _____ Agency: _____ Title: _____

Name: _____ Agency: _____ Title: _____

Name: _____ Agency: _____ Title: _____

You may invite anyone else (family member, friend, advocate, other) that you would like to be involved in the Transition Conference. If this time is no longer convenient for you, please contact me at _____ as soon as possible so that the meeting can be rescheduled.

Sincerely, Service Coordinator
Cc: LEA Representative

California Department of Developmental Services and California Department of Education
Effective Early Childhood Transitions: A guide for Transition of Age Three-Early Start to Preschool
Sacramento: A collaborative project of California Department of Developmental Services and California Department of Education, 2013



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10 Best Practices of Successful Collaboratives

A successful collaboration is a process to achieve an outcome. Simply following the steps to organize a collaborative will not necessarily result in a successful collaboration. A truly successful collaboration involves numerous qualitative characteristics that, together, constitute the "best" way to "practice" collaborative action — or best practices for successful collaboratives.

Are some factors more important and some less important? Can a collaborative succeed if it has most, but not all, of the factors? There are no simple answers to these questions. Yet the research reported in literature and the experts agree that nurturing the collaborative spirit in all participants deserves careful attention. Experts also agree that the process of collaboration and the resulting outcomes will occur if organizational leaders and staff members believe that collaboration is not only important but essential. Collaboration requires a different attitude and perspective beyond how organizations mutually plan, provide, and evaluate services. It requires powerful commitments within the system and the individuals. Further, the interpersonal, problem-solving skills required in collaboration will be skills many collaborators have not previously used in their work, so make sure to build training and support into the collaborative process.

The following quick-reference matrix shows the ten best practices for successful collaboratives

Have a Clear Purpose.	People need a reason to participate in the process. A common understanding of the issues supports the development of a clear purpose for the group.
Invite All Appropriate Interested Parties to Participate in the Collaborative.	Ensure that all members of the collaborative have an interest in the issue and come to the table in good faith, committed to full participation — which includes sticking with the effort until the issues are resolved. Encourage participants to commit to respectful conversation and accept diverse values and interests. Early on, encourage participants to acknowledge where the past has created distrust and to commit to going beyond it. Encourage participants to obtain the executive support of their agency or organization so that they can implement the group's decisions. And make sure participants agree to communication processes that ensure their accountability to the constituencies they represent.
Support the Activities and Passion of the Champions.	Collaboratives thrive when top-level leaders of the participating organizations champion achievement of the collaborative's goals by being visibly involved and encouraging collaborative practices. True champions tend to be individuals who are passionate about the collaborative's purpose and goals — people who by virtue of their own passion and commitment will not rest until the collaborative successfully achieves its goals. Look for the impassioned champions among the leaders in your collaborative, and be ready to follow their lead.
Share Leadership and Responsibility for Attaining Goals.	Recruit leaders with skills to build trust and organize. Make sure the group has at least one participant, and preferably more, with skills to facilitate joint problem solving and shared decision making.



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10 Best Practices of Successful Collaboratives

Develop Policies and Procedures in Support of the Collaborative.	Let the collaborative design the organizational structure and related policies and procedures. Embrace group processes such as consensus building, shared decision making and conflict resolution. Importantly, make sure the decision-making process is clear — agreement on the process ensures that all participants accept how the group will operate. Further, it empowers collaborators to take charge and make decisions.
Create Workable Solutions and Implement Them.	Make sure participants understand the needs, concerns, and aspirations of all other members of the group. From this understanding, groups will develop creative solutions that address the needs of many, not just a few. Mutually agreed-upon information is a powerful tool, and clear information is a keystone of success. Therefore, throughout the process, make sure that all information is equally available to all participants. Develop communication systems to support implementation of decisions made by the group, and continuously document agreements. Balance short- and long-term actions that members of the collaborative can actively support.
Ensure Adequate Resources.	Make sure you have the funding, staff time, physical space, contacts, and other necessary resources to gather information on which to base collaborative decisions and to implement work plans. Pool resources for long-term activities that are managed by the collaborative structure. Share resources among members of the collaborative, as appropriate.
Take Time.	Acknowledge that the process of collaboration does not happen overnight. Allow the process of collaboration to evolve. Be patient.
Foster a Collaborative Spirit.	On the surface, collaboration is about bringing together resources to work toward a common purpose. However, it is collaborative relationships that make collaboratives work — relationships based on openness, trust, and an understanding that complex issues require a common vision, joint activities, and a commitment to resolving the issues.
Do Something, Celebrate, Do Something Else, and Celebrate Again.	Collaboration is a process to achieve an outcome. Often, just being engaged in the process of moving closer to your goal is important progress — even if you haven't achieved your goal yet. Regularly share and celebrate that progress by acknowledging incremental successes and contributions by all interest holders and by building on your successes.

Adapted from: California Department of Developmental Services, Best Practices in Inter-Organizational Collaboration: A How-To Manual for Organizations Working to Integrate Services for Persons with ASD and Their Families. Sacramento, 2008. Pages 19-21

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Resources on Differences between Parts C and B and Transition Checklist



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**Eligibility and Service Delivery Policies:
Differences Between IDEA Part C and IDEA Part B**

This document provides a snapshot overview of IDEA Part C and IDEA Part B policies in the following areas: Eligibility Criteria, Eligibility Determination, Types of Services, Service Settings, Service Recipients, Parental Rights, and System of Payments. It is intended as a resource to support transition between these programs for children who are deaf or hard of hearing.

Topic	Part C	Part B
Eligibility Criteria	Each state must establish the criteria for eligibility. All states must include the following two categories in their eligibility criteria: 1. Is expected delay as appropriate instrument one or more of the following areas: a. Cognitive development b. Physical development c. Communication development d. Social development e. Adaptive behavior 2. Has a developmental high probability of delay Each state must establish a percentage of the state's population to establish a physical or mental condition that results in a developmental delay for infants and children with a developmental delay or biological condition such as including respiratory or lack of oxygen infection, nu	A child with a disability, under Part B of IDEA, means a child evaluated as having: 1. An intellectual disability

Eligibility Criteria
Continued

a history of abuse or neglect, and being directly affected by illegal substance abuse or withdrawal symptoms resulting from prenatal d

2. Deafness means a hearing impairment that is so severe that the child is impaired in processing linguistic information

Eligibility Determination

Evaluation in Part C is defined as the process used by qualified personnel to determine a child's initial and continuing eligibility. The process must include:

Evaluation in Part B is defined as the procedures used to determine whether a child has a disability and the nature and extent of the special education and

Types of Services

Part C services are developmental in nature and provided on an individualized, family-centered basis. Services identified in the regulations include, but are not limited to:

Part B services are educational in nature and provided on an individualized basis. They are related to a child's measurable and annual goals, including academic and

Service Recipients

In Part C, services are provided to each eligible child within the context of their family and caregivers. Services and supports that are identified in the family's Individualized Family Service Plan are based on the family's identified priorities and concerns for their child and must address the child's developmental needs.

In Part B, special education and related services are provided to each eligible student between the ages of 3 and 21. Special education and related services are determined by the child's IEP. Special education, related services, and supplementary aids and services are determined based on a child's functional and academic needs and should enable the child to be involved in and make progress in the general education curriculum or to participate in appropriate activities.

Parental Rights

Families in Part C have the same parental rights as families in Part B. In many states, Part C adopts the Part B safeguards. In all cases, families have the right of consent from referral through transition. Part C is a totally voluntary program on the part of parents.

Families in Part B have the same parental rights as families in Part C. In all cases, similar to Part C, families have the right of consent from initial evaluation to placement and provision of special education and related services to post-school transition or exit from special education.

Service Setting

Part C is to an eligible child or typical or toddler regulatory is used of service activities

Free appropriate public education, a provision in Part B, means that special education and related services:
1. Are provided at public expense under public supervision and direction, and without charge,
2. Meet the standards of the State Educational Agency (SEA),
3. Include an appropriate preschool, elementary school, or secondary school education in the State, and
4. Are provided in conformity with an IEP.

Reference:

Individuals With Disabilities Education Act, 20 U.S.C. § 1400 (2004).

Document Citation

National Center for Hearing Assessment and Management. Eligibility and Service Delivery Policies: Differences Between IDEA Part C and IDEA Part B: A Comparison Chart, 2016.

This document can be found on www.infanthearing.org/earlyintervention

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TRANSITION Checklist 2 of 3

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Technical Assistance Center

Transition from Early Intervention Services to Part B Preschool Special Education Checklist

This checklist includes practices to support the transition of toddlers from early intervention services into preschool or preschool special education services. The main focus of these practices is activities implemented in collaboration with family members and preschool program practitioners that promote positive relationships and child and family preparation and

adjustment to new settings and services. The checklist indicators can be used to develop a transition plan to ensure a child's and family's smooth transition from early intervention to preschool. The checklist rating scale can be used for a self-evaluation to determine whether the transition practices were used prior to, during, and after the transition.

Practitioner: _____ Child: _____ Date: _____

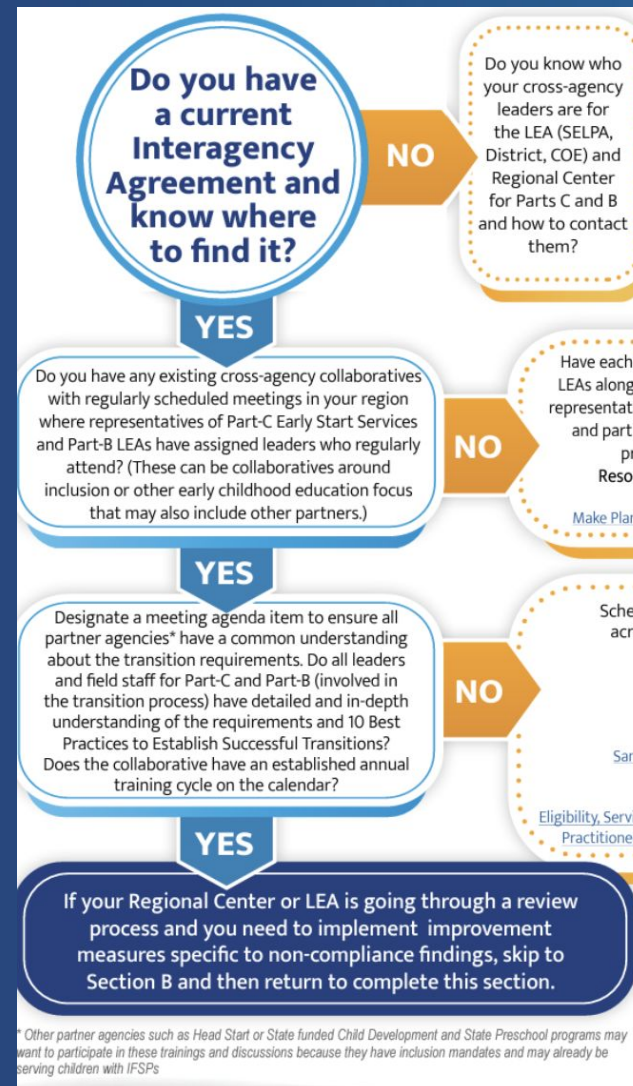
Please indicate which practice characteristics you were able to use as part of transitions for a child and family:

Seldom or never (0 - 25%) Some of the time (25 - 50%) As often as I can (50 - 75%) Most of the time (75 - 100%) Notes

1. Practitioners provide opportunities for parents/family members to discuss services and supports they think their child might need in a preschool setting or program	☐	☐	☐	☐	
2. Parents/family members share their hopes, concerns, and ask questions about future programs and services	☐	☐	☐	☐	
3. Parents/family members are provided the information they need to participate and make informed decisions about a preschool transition	☐	☐	☐	☐	
4. Practitioners from the sending and receiving programs communicate with parental permission and provide on-going support to parents/family members and their child as they adjust to new programs and settings	☐	☐	☐	☐	
5. Parents/family members and early intervention practitioners share information about the child's capabilities, preferences, interests and needs with the preschool staff with parental permission	☐	☐	☐	☐	
6. Practitioners actively involve preschool/preschool special education staff in the transition plan for the transition from early intervention to preschool	☐	☐	☐	☐	
7. Parents/family members are provided information about the legal requirements and process for eligibility for preschool and IEP development for preschool special education or other community-based preschool programs	☐	☐	☐	☐	
8. Practitioners arrange for preschool program visitation by parents/family members and their child	☐	☐	☐	☐	

This checklist is based upon the following DEC Recommended Practices: Transition 1, 2
The DEC Recommended Practices are available at <http://dec-sped.org/recommendedpractices>
Access this checklist and other products at <http://ectacenter.org/decpr>
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Flowchart Section A, Page 1 - Step-by-Step “Yes-No” Questions for Interagency Administrators



Flowchart Section A, Page 2 - Linked Resources to Determine a Collaborative's Strength and Readiness to Collaborate



Linked resources:

- Teamness Assessment Scale
<https://calecse.org/uploads/compliance/Teamness%20Assessment%20Scale%2001.pdf>
- Team Communications Assessment Scale
<https://calecse.org/uploads/compliance/Team%20Communication%20Assessment%20Scale%2002.pdf>
- Rating Scale to Assess Team Problem-Solving and Creativity
<https://calecse.org/uploads/compliance/Rating%20Scale%20to%20Assess%20Team%20Problem%20Solving-Creativity.pdf>

Sample Assessment Scales for Collaboratives



Teamness Assessment Scale

Criteria	Agree	Undecided	Disagree
1. <i>Cooperation</i> : "Team members work well together"			
2. <i>Communication</i> : "Our ability to give and receive necessary information is one of our strengths"			
3. <i>Goals</i> : "Goal setting is truly a team activity"			
4. <i>Creativity</i> : Innovation is encouraged and rewarded"			
5. <i>Conflict</i> : "Disagreements are faced up to and worked fully through"			
6. <i>Support</i> : "Praise, recognition, etc., are given enthusiastically"			
7. <i>Mutual respect</i> : "Team members show appreciation to one another and avoid sarcasm, putdowns, etc."			
8. <i>Commitment</i> : "Everyone is dedicated to furthering team goals"			
9. <i>Atmosphere</i> : "The climate is such that people are willing to put forth their best effort"			
10. <i>Cohesion</i> : "Team members see themselves as a tight-knit group"			
11. <i>Pride</i> : "People feel good about being a team member"			
12. <i>Decision</i> : "Everyone has the fullest opportunity to participate in decisions that affect the group"			
13. <i>Openness</i> : "Everyone is encouraged to say what is on her/his mind without fear of reprisal"			
14. <i>Trust</i> : "Team members feel that no one in the group will take advantage of them in any way"			
15. <i>Assessment</i> : "The team reviews its own functioning regularly on a frank and open basis"			
16. <i>Identification</i> : "I feel that I am treated as a full member of this team and feel very much a part of it"			
17. <i>Leadership</i> : "Our team leader is key to our effectiveness"			
18. <i>Feedback to Leader</i> : "The boss is very open to suggestions about improvement of his/her performance"			

Adapted from California Department of Education, Special Education Division, *Handbook on Administration of Early Childhood Special Education Programs*, Sacramento, 2000 California Department of Education



Team Communication Assessment Scale

Criteria	Agree	Undecided	Disagree
1. Team members listen to each other			
2. Team leader listens to all group members			
3. Everyone feels free to be candid with everyone else			
4. All team members "check things out" with all concerned before action is taken			
5. Consecutive feedback is given freely to group members to improve their functioning			
6. Broad participation is strongly encouraged at all group meetings			
7. No one uses a disproportionate amount of the available "air time" at group meetings			
8. People are available to secure information needed			
9. Information is shared willingly and no one hoards information.			
10. Information of interest to all members, such as information on new policies, new projects			
11. Information about one's performance is communicated regularly and candidly by the team leaders so that there are no surprises at performance review time			
12. Team members are not afraid to give the leader(s) the "bad news"			
13. Team members communicate well with other groups			

Adapted from California Department of Education, Special Education Division, *Handbook on Administration of Early Childhood Special Education Programs*, Sacramento, 2000 California Department of Education

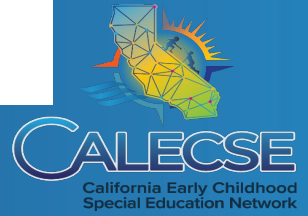


Rating Scale to Assess Team Problem Solving/Creativity

Criteria	Agree	Undecided	Disagree
1. Problems are met "head-on" rather than "swept under the rug"			
2. Problems are regarded as challenges and opportunities rather than as headaches			
3. A striving for innovation/creativity is a part of the team's way of life			
4. Broad participation is a basic tool of team problem-solving			
5. The team's climate is concerned with the big picture rather than with nitpicking new ideas			
6. Conflict/disagreements are utilized for purposes of creativity and ideation			
7. Delegation is regarded as a tool for innovation			
8. The team leader regards the team as a constructive problem-solving force			
9. As appropriate, problems are solved with the total team on a consensus basis			
10. Group members present and discuss their ideas rather than defend them			

Adapted from California Department of Education, Special Education Division, *Handbook on Administration of Early Childhood Special Education Programs*, Sacramento, 2000 California Department of Education

Flowchart Section A, Page 2 - Linked Resources to Organize Collaborative



YES

Does your collaborative already operate with

- written norms,
- an established agree-upon method for making decisions and determining consensus,
- established meeting frequency & duration,
- protocols and responsibilities for facilitation, documentation, and communication?

NO

Implement the [5 Steps to Organize a Collaboration](#):
Decide Why to Collaborate; Recruit and Convene Stakeholders; Define Vision and Desired Outcomes; Establish Policies to Guide the Collaborative; and Monitor Success.

Linked resources:

- Five (5) Steps to Organize a Collaboration

<https://calecse.org/uploads/compliance/5%20Steps%20to%20Organize%20Collaboration%2001.pdf>

Five Steps to Organize Collaboration



5 Steps to Organize Collaboration

Collaboration begins by bringing people together — perhaps a few people, perhaps many. No two collaborations will progress in exactly the same way. Some collaboratives convene and disband over a short time period. Others may continue for years. Although the steps to develop a collaborative vary, the following five-step sequence is typical of many successful collaborations.

- Step One:** Decide Why to Collaborate
- Step Two:** Recruit and Convene Interested Parties
- Step Three:** Define Vision and Desired Outcomes
- Step Four:** Establish Policies to Guide the Collaboration
- Step Five:** Monitor Success

Step One: Decide Why to Collaborate

Collaborations usually begin with one or more initiators who see collaboration as a process to achieve a solution they have in mind — whether the proposed solution is in response to a conflict or based on a desire to improve services and/or programs. Organizing a collaborative requires creativity, tenacity, focus, vision, and the capacity to negotiate and persuade (Partners in Policymaking, p. 1). The initiator reaches out to others, explains the rationale for forming a collaborative, and engages others to work together to define the purpose of the collaboration. Purpose refers to the reasons for the development of a collaborative — the result the group seeks and the specific tasks or project the group will undertake.

Getting agreement on the purpose of a proposed collaboration involves finding some overlap in how the parties define the major issues of concern. Getting parties to the table is often accomplished by emphasizing mutual gains and heightening the parties' awareness of the forces that join them.

Once this small group of initiators agrees on the purpose of the collaboration, the group often makes some preliminary decisions regarding the scope and parameters of the effort. The initiators could also discuss who else in the community should be formally included in the process as a stakeholder, which is further discussed in Step Two.

Throughout this process it is helpful for the initiators to have tolerance for ambiguity as the purpose of the collaborative is articulated and agreed to by the group.

Step Two: Recruit and Convene Stakeholders

Once the initiators agree on the purpose of the collaborative, they identify potential participants to be members of the collaborative — others interested in the problem at hand. Those participants are collaborators, and include all individuals, groups, or organizations that are directly influenced by actions others take to solve the problem. Each stakeholder has a unique appreciation of the problem. In his book, *How to Make Collaboration Work*, David Straus identifies four types of stakeholders (Straus, p. 40):

- Those with the formal power to make a decision.
- Those with the power to block a decision.
- Those affected by a decision.
- Those with relevant information or expertise.

Effective collaborations include stakeholders representing different types of expertise — system leadership, technical expertise, and day-to-day leadership — and it is useful for all three areas to be represented. One or more individuals on the team may have expertise in one of the areas, or a single individual may have expertise in more than one of the three areas.

Adapted from: California Department of Developmental Services, *Best Practices in Inter-Organizational Collaboration: A How-To Manual for Organizations Working to Integrate Services for Persons with ASD and Their Families*. Sacramento, 2008. Pages 9-18

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5 Steps to Organize Collaboration

Who to Involve

In general, the power of a collaborative comes from inclusion, not exclusion. Stakeholders should represent an appropriate cross-section of each community segment that will be affected by the collaborative's activities. "It's far more powerful to have someone inside the tent than outside. The long-term payoff is immeasurable." (Straus, p. 8). At the same time, the cross-section of members cannot be so broad or the number so great that the collaborative process is unmanageable.

When identifying potential collaborative members, initiators tend to choose people based on who they know, the connections the potential stakeholders might have, or the resources to which those potential members have access. Ray and Winer in their book, *Collaboration Handbook*, suggest other criteria may also be helpful and recommend the following as criteria for membership: persons with special relationships outside the collaboration that can affect the work of the collaborative; persons with a history of positive working relationships; and persons who have an ability to attract others to the collaborative because of their position in the community, such as famous personalities (Ray and Winer, pp. 48–49).

Initial Stakeholder Meeting

The Meeting Structure:

As you plan for the first meeting, keep the purpose in mind: to help the collaborative team get organized. Agenda planning is one of the most powerful tools for ensuring the success of a meeting in which collaborative problem solving will take place. To develop an agenda, the facilitator and/or the designated meeting organizer must understand the desired outcomes. An effective agenda:

- Clearly states desired outcomes and meeting content.
- Identifies stakeholders who are participating in the meeting.
- Clarifies the decision-making process.
- Covers the logistics of location, time, and background materials for the meeting.

In addition to agenda planning, you will want to pay attention to other basic standards for effective meetings. For example, meetings should have minutes summarizing discussions and decisions. Minutes should include specific next steps for follow through by team members (Broudy, pp.10–12). Further, plan to incorporate into the meeting a process for participants to develop ground rules for the collaborative's operation. Appendix 2 includes an example of ground rules.

The Meeting Process:

Collaborative leaders should work together to plan a meeting that is friendly, efficient, and effective. To build trust at the beginning of an effort, collaborating participants should devote energy to learning about each other.

Whether the facilitator is a member of the collaborative or has been selected from outside the collaborative to assist with group process, the facilitator's role will include encouraging everyone to participate in the meeting. In addition, the facilitator will guide collaborative participants to establish a communication process that grants permission to disagree and uses conflict resolution as a constructive means of moving forward.

Consensus building is fundamental to collaboration. However, it is only one type of decision making used by collaboratives. Other types of decision making include: decisions made by straw polling; and decisions made by delegating the responsibility to small groups, committees, or an individual (Center for Collaborative Planning, *Collaborative Decision-Making*, p. 2).

Facilitators should build consensus slowly, and collaborators should clarify a fallback decision-making process in the event that members cannot reach consensus (Straus, p. 104).

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5 Steps to Organize Collaboration

Step Three: Define Vision and Desired Outcomes

A vision articulates a broad sense of the collaborative's common purpose. It establishes the arena in which the collaborative wants to work. It is helpful to link the vision to desired outcomes.

Write a Vision Statement

Work with your collaborative team to write a vision statement. A vision is a compelling statement of what collaborative members want to create. A shared vision is responsive to participating agencies and organizations, but it transcends individual concerns and focuses on the common goals on which all members are united. A vision focuses on possibilities, not on problems.

Whether the vision exists at the outset of the collaborative's development or whether stakeholders develop a vision as they work together, creating a vision is a critical early step that establishes an effective structure to support collaboration. Successful collaborating partners have the same vision — with clearly agreed upon mission, objectives, and strategy. The vision may motivate collaborating partners to resolve conflicts and work persistently toward common goals.

The Healthcare Forum's publication *Best Practices in Collaboration to Improve Health* suggests that prior to beginning the discussion about vision, participants interview each other and ask each other questions about what motivates their involvement in the collaborative and what they want to accomplish through their involvement. Using the words and phrases from these interviews can assist in drafting the vision statement.

Agree on Desired Outcomes and Develop Action Plans

Once the vision statement has been developed and agreed to, move the collaborative team to a discussion of "desired outcomes" and the development of a specific action plan with which to guide the activities of the collaborative.

"Desired outcomes" is a declaration of the accomplishments the participants must achieve to realize the vision. Desired outcomes are concrete, attainable, and measurable. Desired outcomes answer the following questions:

- How will we know when we have achieved our vision?
- What will happen?
- What will be created?
- What will change?

To realize the vision and desired outcomes, the collaborative team must develop an action plan. A variety of formats exist for developing action plans, many of which have emerged from strategic and organizational planning literature and experiences. Appendix 4 provides an example of this action plan format.

Review your action plans regularly to guide the team's activities and to keep to them on track. Make efforts to maintain focus on the desired outcomes as collaborative initiatives can easily bog down in the difficulty of day-to-day operations and disagreements, and cause members to lose sight of goals and interest in continued participation in the collaborative.

Develop a plan for termination of the collaborative once the desired outcomes have been achieved. As the group evaluates its effectiveness, consider whether or not the benefits from the team's continued existence are sufficient to justify its continuation. If not, celebrate accomplishments and bring the team to an end.

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Five Steps to Organize Collaboration (continued)



5 Steps to Organize Collaboration

Step Four: Establish Policies to Guide the Collaboration

Concurrent with the development of action plans, several final steps regarding process are important.

Confirm Commitment of Collaborative Partner Organizations

Members of a collaborative are also members of the organization they represent in the collaborative, or their "parent" organization. Each member of the collaborative obtains approval to act on behalf of his or her parent organization. Sometimes this approval is in the form of a "letter of commitment" from the parent organization to the collaborative. These letters might include the organization's commitment to the mission of the collaboration; what the organization expects in return for its participation; how much time the organization's representative(s) may commit to the collaboration; and the authority of the representative to act for the collaboration.

Throughout the process of organizing a collaborative, members are encouraged to report regularly to their parent organization on the process and planning of the collaborative.

Form a Structure

Successful collaborations organize themselves as efficiently as possible. They develop methods to organize the way people exchange information, make decisions, and allocate resources. Two structures are popular: in one, all of the participants gather together to make the necessary decisions; in another model, one or more small groups take independent actions to further the collaborative's goals — functioning much like committees or task forces — while another group has the responsibility to coordinate information and activities among the independently operating groups, functioning like an executive or oversight committee.

Create Policies Regarding Conflict

Conflict is to be expected throughout the life of the collaboration. Conflict may be related to power struggles, low trust, vague vision, or lack of clear authority, to mention just a few sources. Addressing conflict requires that the group decide who will facilitate the process to resolve the conflict and what the process will be. Some groups use the assistance of an outside neutral party with conflict resolution or mediation skills when impartiality is essential to the process. And, since participants must continue working together during and after the conflict, they must agree to ongoing processes to promote trust and mutual understanding.

Hire/Assign Staff

Participants must decide whether or not to hire staff. Staff could be used to fulfill routine administrative functions, such as sending out notices about meeting dates, arranging for meeting rooms, and disseminating minutes. In addition, some collaboratives hire professional or facilitative staff such as consultants skilled in collaboration and group process. Most collaboratives are staffed voluntarily, although this can be difficult to sustain.

Identify Sustainable Resources

Collaborations have two types of resources: operating and project. Resources can be dollars, staff, technology, training, information, and/or contacts. Members can pool or exchange the resources they contribute. Resource exchange can have a profound effect on collaboration. Sustainability is critical to the success of collaborations. Structural and operational mechanisms are necessary to build capacity to support the effort over time. Participants must incorporate collaborative objectives into their own institutional mandates and budgets and earmark the permanent flow of adequate resources to keep joint efforts going.

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5 Steps to Organize Collaboration

Develop a Communication Plan

Clear communication holds collaboratives together and supports the members. Open communication builds mutual respect, understanding, and trust. Interpersonal communication relies on informal person-to-person interaction with an emphasis on listening. Formal and inter-organization communication relies on systems to ensure all members are informed — specifically, to identify who receives what types of communications and who is responsible to make sure two-way communication happens.

Step Five: Monitor Success

How will you know whether or not your collaboration is successful?

A collaboration must hold itself and the organizations it represents accountable for meeting goals. Successful collaborations are evaluated in at least three ways. On one level, a collaboration may be evaluated in terms of its ability to improve outcomes. On another level, evaluation strategies should include ongoing mechanisms to track and report on the implementation of collaborative action steps. This helps the team recognize whether it is implementing the action steps as planned and whether those activities are having the "desired outcomes." In addition to evaluating outcomes and action steps, a successful collaborative also evaluates itself — including the operational structure and team member relationships and involvement.

Encourage Full Participation

Throughout the evaluation process, collaborative leaders should encourage all members of the collaborative to participate. Ray and Winer identify several questions to facilitate evaluation (Ray and Winer, p. 109). At regular intervals, leaders can ask all members to discuss:

- Whether the effort is effective.
- Whether the effort is adequate.
- Whether the effort is efficient.
- What lessons they have learned.

Members of the collaborative must see the evaluation information as useful to improving and sustaining the collaborative. Based on the findings, the group may revise desired outcomes and action steps. In addition, successful collaboratives provide feedback on the results of the evaluation to all members of the collaborative and their parent organizations.

Collaborative evaluation is a newly emerging field, and the availability of evaluation tools is increasing. Appendixes 5 and 6 contain a list of questions that collaboratives can use to review the team's priorities, assess membership involvement, and evaluate the outcomes and impact of team activities.

Celebrate Progress

Successful collaboratives celebrate their progress. Celebrations offer an opportunity to acknowledge all collaborative members, to reward active members, and to thank those who may be leaving the collaborative. A collaborative need not wait to reach significant milestones to celebrate: celebrating short-term successes with publicity or awards is a useful tool to keep collaboratives vital.

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Flowchart Section A, Page 2 - Functioning Levels of a Collaborative



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YES

Has your collaborative determined its functioning level (cooperation, coordination, or collaboration) in each of the following areas: Vision and Relationship; Structure, Responsibilities and Communication; Authority and Responsibility; and Resources and Rewards?

NO

Use this rubric, [Elements of Cooperation, Coordination and Collaboration](#) to determine your Collaborative's functioning level in each area.

Linked Resources:

- Elements of Cooperation, Coordination and Collaboration
<https://calecse.org/uploads/compliance/Elements%20of%20Cooperation,%20Coordination%20and%20Collaboration%2001.pdf>

Rubric for Elements of Cooperation, Coordination and Collaboration



Elements of Cooperation, Coordination and Collaboration

Essential Elements	Cooperation	Coordination	Collaboration
Vision and Relationships	Basis for cooperation is usually between individuals but may be mandated by a third party. Organizational missions and goals are not taken into account. Interaction is on an as-needed basis, may last indefinitely.	Individual relationships are supported by the organizations they represent. Missions and goals of the individual organizations are reviewed for compatibility. Interaction is usually around one specific project or task of definable length.	Commitment of the organizations and their leaders is fully behind their representatives. Common, new mission and goals are created. One or more projects are undertaken for longer-term results.
Structure, Responsibilities, Communication	Relationships are informal; each organization functions separately. No joint planning is required. Information is conveyed as needed.	Organizations involved take on needed roles, but function relatively independent of each other. Some project-specific planning is required. Communication roles are established and definite channels are created for interaction.	New organizational structure and/or clearly defined and interrelated roles that constitute a formal division of labor are created. More comprehensive planning is required that includes developing joint strategies and measuring success in terms of impact on the needs of those served. Beyond communication roles and channels for interaction, many levels of communications are created as clear information is a keystone of success.
Authority and Accountability	Authority rests solely with individual organizations. Leadership is unilateral and control is central. All authority and accountability rests with the individual organization's needs.	Authority rests with the individual organizations, but there is coordination among participants. Some sharing of leadership and control. There is some shared risk, but most of the authority and accountability falls to the individual organizations.	Authority is determined by the collaboration to balance ownership by the individual organizations with expediency to accomplish purpose. Leadership is dispersed, and control is shared and mutual. Equal risk is shared by all organizations in the collaboration.
Resources and Rewards	Resources (staff time, dollars, and capabilities) are separate, serving the individual organization's needs.	Resources are acknowledged and can be made available to others for a specific project. Rewards are mutually acknowledged.	Resources are pooled or jointly secured for a longer-term effort that is managed by the collaborative structure. Organizations share in the products; more is accomplished jointly than could have been individually.

Adapted from: California Department of Developmental Services. Best Practices in Inter-Organizational Collaboration: A How-To Manual for Organizations Working to Integrate Services for Persons with ASD and Their Families. Sacramento, 2008. Page 47

To access the full document go to:
https://www.dds.ca.gov/wp-content/uploads/2019/03/Autism_BestPractices_20190308.pdf



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Flowchart Section A, Page 2 - Evaluating a Collaborative's Success



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YES

Have you recently evaluated your Collaborative's success?

NO

Implement an evaluation using the 10 Best Practices to Ensure Collaborative Success tools:
[10 Best Practices of Successful Collaborations](#)
[Evaluation of 10 Best Practices of Successful Collaboratives](#)

Linked Resources:

- 10 Best Practices of Successful Collaborations
<https://calecse.org/uploads/compliance/10%20Best%20Practices%20of%20Successful%20Collaboratives%2002.pdf>
- Evaluation of 10 Best Practices of Successful Collaboratives
<https://calecse.org/uploads/compliance/Evaluation%20of%2010%20Best%20Practices%20in%20Successful%20Collaboratives%2001.pdf>

Flowchart PDF available at: https://calecse.org/uploads/blogs/files/1736884253_Collaborative%20Flowchart%2003.pdf

10 Best Practices of Successful Collaboratives



10 Best Practices of Successful Collaboratives

A successful collaboration is a process to achieve an outcome. Simply following the steps to organize a collaborative will not necessarily result in a successful collaboration. A truly successful collaboration involves numerous qualitative characteristics that, together, constitute the "best" way to "practice" collaborative action — or best practices for successful collaborations.

Are some factors more important and some less important? Can a collaborative succeed if it has most, but not all, of the factors? There are no simple answers to these questions. Yet the research reported in literature and the experts agree that nurturing the collaborative spirit in all participants deserves careful attention.

Experts also agree that the process of collaboration and the resulting outcomes will occur if organizational leaders and staff members believe that collaboration is not only important but essential. Collaboration requires a different attitude and perspective beyond how organizations mutually plan, provide, and evaluate services. It requires powerful commitments within the system and the individuals. Further, the interpersonal, problem-solving skills required in collaboration will be skills many collaborators have not previously used in their work, so make sure to build training and support into the collaborative process.

The following quick-reference matrix shows the ten best practices for successful collaboratives

Have a Clear Purpose.	People need a reason to participate in the process. A common understanding of the issues supports the development of a clear purpose for the group.
Invite All Appropriate Interested Parties to Participate in the Collaborative.	Ensure that all members of the collaborative have an interest in the issue and come to the table in good faith, committed to full participation — which includes sticking with the effort until the issues are resolved. Encourage participants to commit to respectful conversation and accept diverse values and interests. Early on, encourage participants to acknowledge where the past has created distrust and to commit to going beyond it. Encourage participants to obtain the executive support of their agency or organization so that they can implement the group's decisions. And make sure participants agree to communication processes that ensure their accountability to the constituencies they represent.
Support the Activities and Passion of the Champions.	Collaboratives thrive when top-level leaders of the participating organizations champion achievement of the collaborative's goals by being visibly involved and encouraging collaborative practices. True champions tend to be individuals who are passionate about the collaborative's purpose and goals — people who by virtue of their own passion and commitment will not rest until the collaborative successfully achieves its goals. Look for the impassioned champions among the leaders in your collaborative, and be ready to follow their lead.
Share Leadership and Responsibility for Attaining Goals.	Recruit leaders with skills to build trust and organize. Make sure the group has at least one participant, and preferably more, with skills to facilitate joint problem solving and shared decision making.



10 Best Practices of Successful Collaboratives

Develop Policies and Procedures in Support of the Collaborative.	Let the collaborative design the organizational structure and related policies and procedures. Embrace group processes such as consensus building, shared decision making and conflict resolution. Importantly, make sure the decision-making process is clear — agreement on the process ensures that all participants accept how the group will operate. Further, it empowers collaborators to take charge and make decisions.
Create Workable Solutions and Implement Them.	Make sure participants understand the needs, concerns, and aspirations of all other members of the group. From this understanding, groups will develop creative solutions that address the needs of many, not just a few. Mutually agreed-upon information is a powerful tool, and clear information is a keystone of success. Therefore, throughout the process, make sure that all information is equally available to all participants. Develop communication systems to support implementation of decisions made by the group, and continuously document agreements. Balance short- and long-term actions that members of the collaborative can actively support.
Ensure Adequate Resources.	Make sure you have the funding, staff time, physical space, contacts, and other necessary resources to gather information on which to base collaborative decisions and to implement work plans. Pool resources for long-term activities that are managed by the collaborative structure. Share resources among members of the collaborative, as appropriate.
Take Time.	Acknowledge that the process of collaboration does not happen overnight. Allow the process of collaboration to evolve. Be patient.
Foster a Collaborative Spirit.	On the surface, collaboration is about bringing together resources to work toward a common purpose. However, it is collaborative relationships that make collaboratives work — relationships based on openness, trust, and an understanding that complex issues require a common vision, joint activities, and a commitment to resolving the issues.
Do Something, Celebrate, Do Something Else, and Celebrate Again.	Collaboration is a process to achieve an outcome. Often, just being engaged in the process of moving closer to your goal is important progress — even if you haven't achieved your goal yet. Regularly share and celebrate that progress by acknowledging incremental successes and contributions by all interest holders and by building on your successes.

Evaluation Scale of 10 Best Practices in Successful Collaboratives



Evaluation of 10 Best Practices in Successful Collaboratives

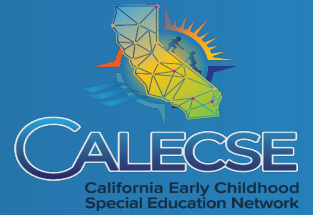
Best Practices	Statements	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
Have a Clear Purpose.	I have a clear understanding of what our collaborative is trying to accomplish.	1 ☐	2 ☐	3 ☐	4 ☐	5 ☐
	The goals for our collaborative are reasonable and attainable.	1 ☐	2 ☐	3 ☐	4 ☐	5 ☐
Invite All Appropriate Interested Parties to Participate in the Collaborative.	Our collaborative has adequate funds to achieve our goals.	1 ☐	2 ☐	3 ☐	4 ☐	5 ☐
	Our collaborative has members who are willing to give their time and effort.	1 ☐	2 ☐	3 ☐	4 ☐	5 ☐
Support the Activities and Passion of the Champions.	Our collaborative has a passionate champion.	1 ☐	2 ☐	3 ☐	4 ☐	5 ☐
	I respect our leader and am willing to follow his/her lead.	1 ☐	2 ☐	3 ☐	4 ☐	5 ☐
Share Leadership and Responsibility for Attaining Goals.	Our collaborative leaders have strong skills working with other people and organizations.	1 ☐	2 ☐	3 ☐	4 ☐	5 ☐
	Our leaders communicate well with collaborative members.	1 ☐	2 ☐	3 ☐	4 ☐	5 ☐
Develop Policies and Procedures in Support of the Collaborative.	Our collaborative has clear policies regarding decision-making.	1 ☐	2 ☐	3 ☐	4 ☐	5 ☐
	Collaborative members understand their roles and responsibilities.	1 ☐	2 ☐	3 ☐	4 ☐	5 ☐



Evaluation of 10 Best Practices in Successful Collaboratives

Create Workable Solutions and Implement Them.	I have a clear understanding of what our collaborative is trying to accomplish.	1 ☐	2 ☐	3 ☐	4 ☐	5 ☐
	The goals for our collaborative are reasonable and attainable.	1 ☐	2 ☐	3 ☐	4 ☐	5 ☐
Ensure Adequate Resources.	Our collaborative has adequate funds to achieve our goals.	1 ☐	2 ☐	3 ☐	4 ☐	5 ☐
	Our collaborative has members who are willing to give their time and effort.	1 ☐	2 ☐	3 ☐	4 ☐	5 ☐
Take Time.	Our collaborative is working at the right pace.	1 ☐	2 ☐	3 ☐	4 ☐	5 ☐
	Our collaborative keeps up with the work necessary to achieve our goals.	1 ☐	2 ☐	3 ☐	4 ☐	5 ☐
Foster a Collaborative Spirit.	Everyone who is a member of our collaborative wants the collaborative to succeed.	1 ☐	2 ☐	3 ☐	4 ☐	5 ☐
	The level of commitment among participants is high.	1 ☐	2 ☐	3 ☐	4 ☐	5 ☐
Do Something, Celebrate, Do Something	We celebrate our accomplishments regularly.	1 ☐	2 ☐	3 ☐	4 ☐	5 ☐
	We recognize the contributions of members of the collaborative on a regular basis.	1 ☐	2 ☐	3 ☐	4 ☐	5 ☐

Flowchart Section A, Page 2 - Formalizing a Collaborative



Linked Resources

- Initial Collaborative Interest Holder Meeting Process and Agenda
<https://calecse.org/uploads/compliance/Initial%20Collaborative%20Interest%20Holder%20Meeting%20Process%20and%20Agenda%2002.pdf>
- Visioning Activity for Collaboratives
<https://calecse.org/uploads/compliance/Visioning%20Activity%20for%20Collaboratives%2001.pdf>
- Sample Ground Rules for Collaboratives
<https://calecse.org/uploads/compliance/Sample%20Ground%20Rules%20for%20Collaboratives%2002.pdf>

Flowchart PDF available at: https://calecse.org/uploads/blogs/files/1736884253_Collaborative%20Flowchart%2003.pdf

Sample Initial Collaborative Meeting Agenda and Visioning Activity



Initial Collaborative Interest Holder Meeting Process and Agenda

How to Involve Interest holders in the First Meeting

Once the potential interest holder members have been identified, someone from the initiating group can contact the individual either directly — if the initiator knows the potential member — or indirectly through someone else who knows the individual. Regardless of your approach, as you plan to contact potential interest holders, you may want to prepare a list of “talking points” that summarize the information you intend to convey about involvement in the collaboration, for example:

- Why the collaboration is important
- Benefits to the participating organizations
- Commitments expected of each organization
- Date and time for first meeting and overall time commitment

The Meeting Structure

As you plan for the first meeting, keep the purpose in mind: to help the collaborative team get organized. Agenda planning is one of the most powerful tools for ensuring the success of a meeting in which collaborative problem solving will take place. To develop an agenda, the facilitator and/or the designated meeting organizer must understand the desired outcomes. An effective agenda:

- Clearly states desired outcomes and meeting content.
- Identifies interest holders who are participating in the meeting.
- Clarifies the decision-making process.
- Covers the logistics of location, time, and background materials for the meeting.

In addition to agenda planning, you will want to pay attention to other basic standards for effective meetings. For example, meetings should have minutes summarizing discussions and decisions. Minutes should include specific next steps for follow through by team members. Further, plan to incorporate into the meeting a process for participants to develop ground rules for the collaborative’s operation.

The Meeting Process

Collaborative leaders should work together to plan a meeting that is friendly, efficient, and effective. To build trust at the beginning of an effort, collaborating participants should devote energy to learning about each other.

Whether the facilitator is a member of the collaborative or has been selected from outside the collaborative to assist with group process, the facilitator’s role will include encouraging everyone to participate in the meeting. In addition, the facilitator will guide collaborative participants to establish a communication process that grants permission to disagree and uses conflict resolution as a constructive means of moving forward.

Consensus building is fundamental to collaboration. However, it is only one type of decision making used by collaboratives. Other types of decision making include: decisions made by straw polling; and decisions made by delegating the responsibility to small groups, committees, or an individual. Facilitators should build consensus slowly, and collaborators should clarify a fallback decision-making process in the event that members cannot reach consensus.



Facilitating the Meeting Process

Most collaborative processes involve face-to-face meetings, and the effectiveness of these meetings is critical to the success of the collaborative effort. The effectiveness of a meeting depends on how well “process issues” are handled — procedural concerns of running a successful meeting such as developing the agenda, deciding how to handle conflict, and ensuring that everyone has a chance to speak.

In his book, *How to Make Collaboration Work*, David Straus recommends the use of an independent facilitator — someone from outside the collaborative—to deal with these process issues (Straus, p. 107). There are a variety of ways to use facilitators; however, most agree that a facilitator acts as a neutral third party who focuses on the process to make the group powerful enough to accomplish its designated outcomes and desired results.

Members of the collaborative can also assume the role of facilitator. Often, collaborative leaders — initiators or champions — act as facilitators. This model is referred to as “facilitative leadership,” in which the leader serves mainly as the facilitator of the process (Cruikshank, p. 34). The Policy Consensus Institute has assembled a series of articles offering practical advice for leaders in their role as facilitators (Resources for Leaders and Convenors, p. 1).

Adapted from: California Department of Developmental Services, *Best Practices in Inter-Organizational Collaboration: A How-To Manual for Organizations Working to Integrate Services for Persons with ASD and Their Families*, Sacramento, 2008, pg. 32-33.

To access the full document go to:
https://www.dds.ca.gov/wp-content/uploads/2019/03/Autism_BestPractices_20190308.pdf



Visioning Activity for Collaboratives

Focus Questions:

Related to our chosen area(s) of team focus:

What is the desired reality we want the team to create in the community?

What concrete and doable procedures and/or services do we want to see in place?

How are children and families benefiting?

Visioning Process

1. Appoint a facilitator, recorder and timekeeper.
2. The recorder sets up a storyboard of two chart papers placed side-by-side on the wall, making one large chart with a heading of “Our Vision.” The focus question is written on chart paper and posted.
3. Each team member identifies three to five answers to the focus questions and uses a member to record one answer per notecard
4. Each team member posts all their notes on the chart.
5. The facilitator presents the focus question to the team and leads them in merging similar ideas into groups.
6. The recorder notes the name and title of each grouping near that grouping. These names and titles become the characteristics describing the vision we want to create.
7. Timekeeper helps the team track time.

Adapted from: California Department of Developmental Services, *Best Practices in Inter-Organizational Collaboration: A How-To Manual for Organizations Working to Integrate Services for Persons with ASD and Their Families*, Sacramento, 2008, pg. 50.

To access the full document go to:
https://www.dds.ca.gov/wp-content/uploads/2019/03/Autism_BestPractices_20190308.pdf



Sample Ground Rules for Collaboratives



Sample Ground Rules for Collaboratives

Decision Making Process

1. We will use consensus. Consensus as used here means modified consensus, adhering to the test of "can we live with it and publicly support it?" If not, what needs to be changed so that we can?
2. If we cannot achieve consensus on an item, we will (choose one or more):
 - ☐ Not include it in our plan. "When in doubt, leave it out."
 - ☐ Take a vote (by member or by agency).
 - ☐ Refer this to the respective heads of the agencies we represent for decisions, providing for them the various perspectives of this team.
 - ☐ Decide on an individual basis how best to proceed.
 - ☐ Other (specify).

Task Focus

1. We will start and end on time.
2. Stay outcome focused — use a "Parking Lot" to "park" good ideas not directly related to stated meeting outcomes...ideas that might get us off task.
3. Meeting logistics:
 - Regular meeting dates and times.
 - Meeting location.
4. Maximize our time together and between meetings.

Attendance

1. We agree to attend team meetings regularly.
2. If we missed a meeting, we will contact another member to get information about the meeting.

Interactions

1. We agree to be realistic, and respect others' right to say no.
2. We agree to share ideas and air time.
3. We agree that all ideas have value...even ones with which we disagree.
4. We agree to honor confidentiality.

Adapted from: California Department of Developmental Services, Best Practices in Inter-Organizational Collaboration, A How-To Manual for Organizations Working to Integrate Services for Persons with ASD and Their Families, Sacramento, 2008 Pg. 48-49.

To access the full document go to:
https://www.dds.ca.gov/wp-content/uploads/2019/03/Autism_BestPractices_20190308.pdf



Sample Ground Rules for Collaboratives

Communicating with Others in Our Agencies and Community

1. We agree to communicate with our respective agency decision makers regarding team recommendations.
2. We agree to communicate with our respective agency decision makers to ensure they are "in the loop," supportive, and not blocking.
3. We agree to communicate with our respective line staff for input as we develop, implement, and evaluate our efforts to make sure that any procedures or activities affecting them will be relevant.
4. We agree to communicate with families for input as we develop, implement, and evaluate our efforts to make sure that any procedures or activities affecting them will be relevant.
5. We agree to communicate with others in the community with an indirect interest in our efforts.

Orientation of New Members

1. We will identify a team member to orient each new member and to be that person's buddy during the first year on the team.
2. We will provide a notebook or file of team orientation materials.

Adapted from: California Department of Developmental Services, Best Practices in Inter-Organizational Collaboration, A How-To Manual for Organizations Working to Integrate Services for Persons with ASD and Their Families, Sacramento, 2008 Pg. 48-49.

To access the full document go to:
https://www.dds.ca.gov/wp-content/uploads/2019/03/Autism_BestPractices_20190308.pdf



Flowchart Section B, Page 3 - Conducting an Assessment of Your Regional Interagency Agreement, Steps One and Two

SECTION B

Conducting a Regional Assessment of your Interagency Agreement and Relevant Practices for Effective Implementation of the Agreement and any Additional agreed-upon Processes and Protocols.

- | | |
|--|---|
|  1 | Schedule a series of meetings of the Collaborative, to review the Interagency Agreement (IA) and joint cross agency practices. Confirm attendees have decision-making authority for their agencies present. |
|  2 | Confirm all members have access to the most recent signed version of your IA and any/all written protocols and processes which have been jointly developed, approved and are being implemented. It is best to share all written protocols across agencies, when protocols for implementing the IA were not jointly developed or are implemented by a single agency. |

Flowchart Section B, Page 3 - Conducting an Assessment of Your Regional Interagency Agreement, Step Three



3

Conduct a formal review of your IA or IA(s)* implementation processes and documents. Encourage collaborative partners to consider limitations and to challenge status quo within discussions while remaining family centric and implementing the group's consensus protocols prior to documenting agreements on each section. [Reference CalECSE Additional Resources on Interagency Collaborations and Agreements](#) and review detailed information from [OSEP Letters and FAQs](#) regarding transition requirements and other useful tools to assist your team.

Linked Resources:

- Document with links to additional resources on Interagency Collaborations and Agreements <https://calecse.org/uploads/compliance/Interagency-Collaborations-and-Agreements.html>
 - Includes:
 - Eligibility and service delivery policy differences between Part C and Part B
 - Checklist for transitions to Part B
 - Data sharing agreement checklist from the Center for Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) Early Childhood Data Systems (DaSy) Center
 - Transition Conceptual Framework from the National Early Childhood Transition Center
 - Checklist for reviewing Interagency Agreements
- Document with links to Office of Special Education Programs (OSEP) letters and frequently asked questions FAQs <https://calecse.org/news-resources/osep-letters-and-faqs-1>
 - 2023 Early Childhood Transition questions and answers
 - OSEP Response to Nix March 17, 2023
 - OSEP Response to Hutton February 9, 2011

Legal References for Administrators



Technical Assistance and Resources funded by the

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OSEP Letters and FAQs

[2023-Early-Childhood-Transition-Questions-and-Answers 01.pdf](#)

2023 Early Childhood Transition Questions And Answers. OSEP QA 24-01 U.S. Department Of Education Office Of Special Education And Rehabilitative Services.

[OSEP-Response-to-Nix-03-17-2023 01.pdf](#)

Correspondence from the U.S. Department of Education (Department), Office of Special Education Programs (OSEP) related to questions regarding the requirements under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA or Act) as they relate to children with disabilities who are transitioning from receiving early intervention services under Part C of the IDEA to being eligible for and receiving preschool services under Part B of the IDEA.

[Template ES Interagency Agreement Letter.pdf](#)

Discussion of the Office of Special Education Programs' (OSEP's) "Early Childhood Transition FAQ" and subsequent technical assistance documents released through the OSEP-funded Technical Assistance (TA) Network.

Nov 20, 2024

Flowchart Section A, Page 2 - Interagency Team Resources to Collaboratively Review The Alignment Between Practices and Agreements

**TEAMS CAN DECIDE TO COMPLETE THE TOOLS BELOW IN ANY ORDER.
IT IS RECOMMENDED TO COMPLETE THESE TOOLS BEFORE MOVING ON TO STEP 4.**

- Joint interagency review of [Designing and Implementing Effective Early Childhood Processes](#)
- Joint completion of the [Self-Assessment Worksheet for Early Childhood Transition](#)
- Joint Interagency completion of the [Early Childhood Transition Worksheet](#)

AS THE INTERAGENCY COLLABORATIVE TEAM MEETS TO COMPLETE THESE DOCUMENTS...

Linked Resources:

- Designing and Implementing Effective Early Childhood Transitions
https://calecse.org/uploads/compliance/ECTransitionPaper_NECTAC%2001.pdf
- Self-Assessment Worksheet for Early Childhood Transitions
<https://calecse.org/uploads/compliance/Early%20Childhood%20Transition%20Self-Assessment%20Form.pdf>
- Early Childhood Transition Worksheet
<https://calecse.org/uploads/compliance/Early%20Childhood%20Transition%20Worksheet%20FINAL.pdf>

Sample Fillable Rubric on Early Childhood Transition and Reference Source



March 2008

DESIGNING AND IMPLEMENTING EFFECTIVE EARLY CHILDHOOD TRANSITION PROCESSES

Developed by the
National Early Childhood Transition Initiative
a collaborative partnership of

National Early Childhood Transition Center
Regional Resource and Federal Center Network
National Early Childhood Technical Assistance Center



Early Childhood Transition Worksheet						
KEY INFRASTRUCTURE COMPONENTS						
STEPS IN TRANSITION TIMELINE	Interagency Structures, Relationships and Agreements (coordinated, effective, common vision, joint planning, communication)	Policy Alignment and Congruence (appropriate, clear, delineated, coordinated, complementary)	Personnel Development and Training Resources (collaborative, accessible, effective formats, family perspective, relevant)	Data Systems and Processes (understandable, complete, compatible, useful, valid, reliable)	Monitoring and Evaluation Strategies (sound, effective, useful, stakeholder involvement)	Content and Scope of Services (available, accessible, quality, individualized, directories for referrals)
IFSP with Steps & Services (e.g., initial discussions, content of IFSP transition plan)						
Notification to LEA (e.g., timeframe, content, data protocols, use by DOE)						
Transition Conference (e.g., invitation, attendance, timing, agenda)						
Referral to LEA (e.g., consent, definition, timing)						
Initial Evaluation (e.g., consent, tools, who)						
Eligibility Determination (e.g., criteria, who, when, reporting)						
IEP Development (e.g., invitation, attendance, timing, agenda, IEP outcomes)						
Timely IEP Services (e.g., consent for services, timeframe, inclusive settings)						
Evaluation of Transition (e.g., family satisfaction with implementation of plan; child preparation and adjustment)						

Developed by the National Early Childhood Technical Assistance Center for the Early Childhood Transition initiative, March 11, 2008

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Early Childhood Transition Self-Assessment Form



Early Childhood Transition Self-Assessment Form

Component	Evidence Statement	Response Type	Functioning Effectively	Needs Improvement	Not Yet Established
I. Content and Scope					
A. Families have access to a broad array of child developmental and educational services, supports, and/or settings to meet individual child and family needs.	Interagency agreements (IAU) memorandum of understanding (MOU) are up to date and include information about the specific linkages, resources and coordination efforts between and across services and supports for both children and families (i.e., both IDEA and other state level programs such as a home visiting program for at-risk populations).	AP	☐	☐	☐
A. Families have access to a broad array of health and medical services to promote overall well-being in order to meet individual child and family needs.	A centralized information/referral system is in place and used that includes a wide range of resources related to child health, well-being and overall development (e.g., 1-800 number or web site).	AP	☐	☐	☐
II. Interagency Structure					
A. An interagency entity (or entities) exists and has membership with the authority to influence agencies' transition policies and procedures.	The interagency group coordinates with the leadership in each respective agency.	AP	☐	☐	☐
B. A shared philosophy serves as a foundation for transition policies, procedures and the determination of responsibilities and actions.	The vision and philosophy address child and family outcomes related to their preparation for and adjustment to transition.	APWP	☐	☐	☐
	Policies and procedures are clearly stated and reflect compliance with federal and state regulations and requirements. See 34 CFR §3003.48.	APWP	☐	☐	☐
	Policies and procedures clearly delineate program-specific responsibilities as compared to interagency responsibilities.	APWP	☐	☐	☐



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Early Childhood Transition Assessment Form



Early Childhood Transition Self-Assessment Form

Component	Evidence Statement	Response Type	Functioning Effectively	Needs Improvement	Not Yet Established
B. Personnel Development and Training					
I. Content and Scope (No Related Elements)					
II. Interagency Structure (No Related Elements)					
III. Interagency Communication and Relationships (No Related Elements)					
IV. Interagency Agreements (No Related Elements)					
V. Policy Alignment and Congruence					
A. Transition requirements and timelines are aligned across agencies	Training evaluation and follow-up information demonstrates staff use referral and enrollment information to support families and children in transition.	AP	☐	☐	☐
B. Procedures for coordination of services are being implemented effectively.	Transition procedures include opportunities at different points in the transition process for families, children and providers to visit receiving agency programs.	AP	☐	☐	☐
	Parent orientation is jointly developed and provided at receiving program and agency sites.	AP	☐	☐	☐
VI. Personnel Development, Staff Training, and Resources					
A. Designated personnel or entities at state, regional and local levels share responsibility for interagency training and technical assistance.	The Part C CPSD plan includes partner input and addresses the need for an interagency and coordinated approach to identified transition issues.	AP	☐	☐	☐
B. Personnel development activities are jointly designed, implemented, and evaluated by agencies and programs involved.	Personnel development activities are provided reflecting the collaboration of Part C and Part B agencies and include other agencies as appropriate (e.g., head start, child care).	AP	☐	☐	☐
	Professional development activities teach providers to use culturally sensitive approaches to transition planning with families.	AP	☐	☐	☐
C. Parents are involved in the design, implementation and evaluation of personnel development.	Family members receive the training and support they need in order to participate effectively in designing and implementing personnel development activities.	AP	☐	☐	☐
D. A variety of personnel development strategies are used to promote the development of knowledge and skills over time.	Information on effective transition practices and legal requirements is embedded in pre-service courses, practicum experiences and curricula.	AP	☐	☐	☐
	A variety of training and TA strategies are used, including coaching and mentoring.	AP	☐	☐	☐
	Staff orientation processes include the topic of transition.	WP	☐	☐	☐



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Early Childhood Transition Self-Assessment Form

Component	Evidence Statement	Response Type	Functioning Effectively	Needs Improvement	Not Yet Established
C. Roles and Responsibilities					
I. Content and Scope (No Related Elements)					
A. Families have access to a broad array of child developmental and educational services, supports, and/or settings to meet individual child and family needs.	Staff know key information about a broad array of education agencies and developmental services within the community to which the child may transition.	WP	☐	☐	☐
B. Families have access to a broad array of health and medical services to promote overall well-being in order to meet individual child and family needs.	A centralized information/referral system is in place and used that includes a wide range of resources related to child health, well-being and overall development (e.g., 1-800 number or web site).	AP	☐	☐	☐
C. Families have access to a broad array of services to support their needs.	Families report an awareness of available parent training, information support and advocacy services and use these services if needed.	WP	☐	☐	☐
	Program staff are aware of and refer families to a variety of relevant community resources.	WP	☐	☐	☐
II. Interagency Structure					
A. An interagency entity (or entities) exists and has membership with the authority to influence agencies' transition policies and procedures.	The interagency group coordinates with the leadership in each respective agency.	AP	☐	☐	☐
	Group members report progress on actions taken.	WP	☐	☐	☐
B. A primary contact person for transition is identified within each program or agency at the state and local level (e.g., Part C, section 679, LEA).	Job descriptions and responsibilities for specific individuals include transition roles and functions.	WP	☐	☐	☐
	A designated contact person is assigned to communicate with parents, share information regarding transition and conduct home visits, when appropriate.	WP	☐	☐	☐



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Early Childhood Transition Self-Assessment Form

Component	Evidence Statement	Response Type	Functioning Effectively	Needs Improvement	Not Yet Established
D. Strategies and Practices					
STRATEGIES AND PRODUCTS					
I. Content and Scope					
A. Families have access to a broad array of child developmental and educational services, supports, and/or settings to meet individual child and family needs.	Interagency agreements (IAU) memorandum of understanding (MOU), are up to date and include information about the specific linkages, resources and coordination efforts between and across services and supports for both children and families (i.e., both IDEA and other state-level programs such as a home visiting program for at-risk populations).	AP	☐	☐	☐
II. Interagency Structure					
A. An interagency entity (or entities) exists and has membership with the authority to influence agencies' transition policies and procedures.	The interagency group coordinates with the leadership in each respective agency.	AP	☐	☐	☐
B. A shared philosophy serves as a foundation for transition policies, procedures and the determination of responsibilities and actions.	The vision and philosophy address child and family outcomes related to their preparation for and adjustment to transition.	APWP	☐	☐	☐
	Policies and procedures are clearly stated and reflect compliance with federal and state regulations and requirements. See 34 CFR §3003.48.	APWP	☐	☐	☐
	Policies and procedures clearly delineate program-specific responsibilities as compared to interagency responsibilities.	APWP	☐	☐	☐
III. Interagency Communication and Relationships					
A. Effective and ongoing mechanisms for communication between and across agencies and programs are developed.	A shared vision and principles form the basis of communication, problem solving and decision making.	AP	☐	☐	☐
	Meetings accomplish specific purposes, are attended by the most appropriate stakeholders, and result in decisions and mutually agreed upon actions.	AP	☐	☐	☐



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Flowchart Section B, Page 3 - Conducting an Assessment of Your Regional Interagency Agreement, Steps Four and Five

☐ 4	You may designate a small group or engage the entire Collaborative in conducting a self-audit of your IA using the Checklist for Reviewing IDEA Part-C and Transition to Part-B Documents . If needed, a review of data sharing processes can be done as well, using the DaSy Data Sharing Agreement Checklist .
☐ 5	Consolidate and prioritize findings from reviews. Assign roles and responsibilities to address the identified items. Be sure to agree on timelines for this follow up to occur.

Linked Resources:

- Checklist for Reviewing IDEA Part C and Transition to Part B Documents
<https://calecse.org/uploads/compliance/Checklist%20for%20Reviewing%20Interagency%20Part%20C%20and%20Transition%20to%20Part%20B%20Documents%2001.pdf>
- The Center for IDEA Early Childhood Data Systems (DaSy) Data Sharing Agreement Checklist
https://calecse.org/uploads/compliance/DaSy_Data_Sharing_Agreement_Checklist_Access%2001.pdf

Checklist for Reviewing Transition Documents



Checklist for Reviewing Interagency Part C and Transition to Part B Documents

This review of Interagency Agreement for Transition from IDEA Part C to IDEA Part B was conducted by representatives from the following agencies:

LEA - School District(s) (Part B): _____

LEA - SELPA(s) (Part B): _____

Regional Center (Part C): _____

LEA Part C: _____

Other Community-based Early Childhood or Family Support Entities: _____

IDEA Part C Early Childhood Transition Requirements	Transition Policy (Does/does not current written policies/procedures in place and specify the agency that requires them and "owns" the documents)	Transition Agreement (Which section of your most recent Agreement addresses this element?)	Issue (Does the wording in your agreement or written policies address this core issue to the transition process?)	Required Action (What action steps do you need to take to address any discrepancies identified?)
A. Child Find Activities				
The agreement must include procedures for coordinating child find activities with local public agencies and regional centers to identify infants and toddlers who may be eligible for early intervention services.				
B. Transition Planning Procedures which begin at least six months prior to a toddler's third birthday				
1) Transition Notification				
The local (Part C) agency must notify the (part B) LEA (where the toddler receiving Part C services resides) that a toddler who is receiving Part C services and who is potentially eligible for services under the Part B section 619 preschool program will shortly turn three years old and exit the Part C program. (34 CFR §303.209g)				

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These Part B requirements must be included in the early childhood transition agreement required under 34 CFR §303.209(a).

IDEA Part B Early Childhood Transition Requirements	Transition Interagency Agreement (Which section of your most recent Agreement addresses this element?)	Issue (Does the wording in your agreement or written policies address this core issue to the transition process?)	Required Action (What action steps do you need to take to address any discrepancies identified?)
In order to ensure a smooth and effective transition for children with disabilities who received Part C services and are eligible for Part B preschool services, the LEA must have policies and procedures in place to ensure that an IEP has been developed and is being implemented by the child's third birthday. 34 CFR §§300.101(a) and 300.124(a)			
Each affected LEA must participate in transition conferences arranged by the lead agency for toddlers with disabilities who may be eligible for preschool services under Part B. §300.124(c)		The Agreement must make clear that the affected LEA must participate in the conference.	
The LEA (Part B) must have policies and procedures for the coordination of evaluation and assessment, including any collaborative assessments with Part C			
At the request of the parent, an invitation to the initial IEP meeting must be sent to the Part C service coordinator, or other Part C service representative, if the child previously received Part C services. §300.32(e)		The Agreement must make clear that the affected LEA must participate in the conference.	
For all children who transition from Part C services to Part B, the IEP team must consider an IFSP that contains the IFSP content (including the natural environments statement) described in IDEA section 636(d) and its implementing regulation when developing the initial IEP. §300.32(b)		The Agreement must make clear that the IEP team must consider the IFSP when developing the initial IEP. (The IEP team does not necessarily need to consider the IFSP for future IEPs.)	
LEAs must have procedure to ensure the provision of transition services during periods of school vacations / mechanisms for ensuring the availability of contacts at all times during the year.			

Adopted for CalECSE from: Annotated Version OSEP Checklist for Reviewing Transition Documents under Section 6A.10 of the IDEA Part C Grant Application, 2011. <https://sites.ed.gov/idea/files/grants/C-Transition-Checklist.pdf>

Authorities cited:

- Sections 95009 and 95028, Government Code; Reference: Section 1456(a)(5), Title 20 United States Code; Sections 303.1, 303.174, 303.523 and 303.524, Title 34 Code of Federal Regulations.
- CCR Title 17: Public Health, Division 2: Health and Welfare Agency, Department of Developmental Services Regulations, Chapter 2: Early Intervention Services, Subchapter 4: Service Coordination, Article 2: Interagency Agreements

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Written Agreements—Mandatory Elements

The **Audit or Evaluation Exception** allows for the disclosure of PII without consent to authorized representatives of the FERPA-permitted entities (i.e., Comptroller General of U.S., U.S. Attorney General, U.S. Secretary of Education, and State or local educational authorities). PII must be used to audit or evaluate a Federal- or State-supported education program (this includes Part C and 619 preschool programs and other early childhood programs including Head Start) or to enforce or comply with Federal legal requirements that relate to those education programs (audit, evaluation, or enforcement or compliance activity).

Under this exception, written agreements **must**

- ☐ Designate an authorized representative of a FERPA-permitted entity;
- ☐ Specify what PII will be disclosed and for what purpose
 - **Note:** Under the audit or evaluation exception, the purpose of data sharing can only be to carry out an audit or evaluation of Federal- or State-supported education programs, or to enforce or to comply with Federal legal requirements that relate to those programs;
- ☐ Describe the activity to make clear that it falls within the audit or evaluation exception;
- ☐ Require an authorized representative to destroy PII upon completion of the audit or evaluation and specify the time period in which the information must be destroyed; and
- ☐ Establish policies and procedures, consistent with FERPA and other Federal, State, and local confidentiality and privacy laws, to protect PII from further disclosure and unauthorized use.

Please see [34 CFR §99.35\(a\)\(3\)](#) for more information.

Written Agreements—Best Practices

In addition to the minimum mandatory requirements there are a number of best practices that organizations should consider when entering into written agreements. (For details, see [Guidance for Reasonable Methods and Written Agreements](#) issued by the Family Policy Compliance Office.) These practices represent general suggestions and may be applied under either of the two exceptions to assist with FERPA compliance efforts.

Disclosing entities are encouraged to examine the list provided below and tailor the practices as necessary and appropriate to their specific circumstances.

- ☐ Bind individuals to the agreement.
- ☐ Agree on limitations on use of the PII, including any methodological restrictions, such as linking to other data sets.
- ☐ Specify points of contact and data custodians.
- ☐ Mention Institutional Review Board review and approval.
- ☐ State ownership of PII.
- ☐ Identify penalties for inappropriate disclosure.
- ☐ Set terms for data destruction.
- ☐ Include funding terms.
- ☐ Maintain the right to audit.
- ☐ Identify and comply with all applicable legal requirements, including maintaining the data in a secure manner by applying appropriate technical, physical, and administrative safeguards to properly protect the PII, both at rest and in transit.
- ☒ Have plans that are in accordance with any applicable State and Federal laws for responding to a data breach, including, when appropriate or required, responsibilities and procedures for notification and mitigation.
- ☐ Review and approve reported results.

Flowchart Section B, Page 3 - Conducting an Assessment of Your Regional Interagency Agreement, Steps Six and Seven



6

Jointly identify the agreed upon items to be included in the revised IA. If there are items that are agreed upon, but not required in the IA, a Policy/Procedural manual could include those items. The Policy/Procedural manual is monitored by the Collaborative and can be modified based on need, without requiring the official signatures.



7

Dispute Resolution must be addressed within the IA. In addition, it is recommended the Collaborative have a written process for resolving issues that may arise for staff at all levels of the interagency collaboration and that periodic interagency staff training on the IA and implementation procedures includes the informal process to address conflicts as they arise and what formal process can be accesses as needed (in alignment to the IA).

Flowchart Section B, Page 4 - Conducting an Assessment of Your Regional Interagency Agreement, Step Eight



8

Review [a sample template and existing interagency agreements from other regions](#), and other interagency agreements that may exist in your region, comparing them to the format your region currently uses for this agreement to identify overlap and alignment. Determine which format will be used for your region, considering that the agreement is a public document and will be used for staff training purposes at a frequency and form defined by the Collaborative. If several LEAs work with a single Regional Center, discuss the feasibility of having a single agreement, maintaining stability for families who may move within the region but across LEA residency boundaries.

Linked Resources:

Interagency Agreements to reference <https://calecse.org/news-resources/interagency-agreements-1>

- Sample template to develop an interagency agreement Reference interagency agreements:
 - 1 SELPA with more than 1 regional center
 - 1 regional center with more than one SELPA or Local Education Agencies (LEAs)
 - 1 LEA (School District, County Office of Education, or SELPA) with one regional center

Sample Interagency Agreements and Template



Interagency Agreements

[31. Template ES Interagency Agreement .doc.pdf](#)

Local Interagency Agreement California Early Start Program (Part C Of IDEA)

[35. WACSEP-SGPRC 2023-2024.pdf](#)

Interagency Agreement For Children From Birth To 36 Months Of Age For Services Under Part C Of The Individuals With Disabilities Education Act Between Whittier Area Cooperative Special Education Program And San Gabriel/Pomona Regional Center

[36. WACSEP-ELARC MOU 2023-2024.docx \(1\).pdf](#)

Interagency Agreement For Children From Birth To 36 Months Of Age For Services Under Part C Of The Individuals With Disabilities Education Act Between Whittier Area Cooperative Special Education Program And Eastern Los Angeles Regional Center.

[37. HRC MOU 2023-2024.pdf](#)

Interagency Agreement For Children From Birth To 36 Months Of Age For Services Under Part C Of The Individuals With Disabilities Education Act Between Whittier Area Cooperative Special Education Program And Harbor Regional Center.

[38. San Diego ES Interagency Agreement Final .do...](#)

Local Interagency Agreement Between San Diego Regional Center And San Diego County Special Education Local Plan Areas And Superintendent Of Schools San Diego County Office Of Education For California Early Start Program.

[39. CN 0001 2021-22 Solano SELPA, Vallejo SELPA, ...](#)

Local Interagency Agreement Between North Bay Regional Center, Solano County Special Education Local Plan Area, And Vallejo Special Education Local Plan Area.

[32. Lodi Unified IA for Early Start 2023- signed....](#)

Interagency Agreement for Children from Birth to Thirty Six (36) Months of Age Eligible for Services Under Part C of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (I.D.E.A.) Lodi Unified School District (SELPA) And Valley Mountain Regional Center (VMRC).

[33. GGRCS SMCOE MOU 202021 FINAL.pdf](#)

Interagency Agreement Between Golden Gate Regional Center And San Mateo County Special Education Local Plan Area Regarding Part C Services 2020-2021

[34. ESGV SELPA and SGPRC Agreement.pdf](#)

Interagency Agreement for Children from Birth to Thirty-Six (36) Months of Age Eligible for Services Under Part C of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) Between the Local Educational Agency (LEA) East San Gabriel Valley SELPA & San Gabriel/Pomona Regional Center 2023-2024

Flowchart Section B, Page 4 - Conducting an Assessment of Your Regional Interagency Agreement, Steps Nine and Ten



9

The Collaborative monitors and evaluates the IA being sure to establish: the template and agencies to be included in the revised agreement; assign responsibilities (who will do the drafting/typing) and timelines for drafting the revised agreement that includes agreements documented throughout the process; and timelines for reviews, feedback, and for final approval by your collaborative.



10

Repeat this process for any agreements which will necessitate the development of Collaborative Protocols either within or across agencies.

Flowchart Section B, Page 4 - Conducting an Assessment of Your Regional Interagency Agreement, Step Eleven



11

Conduct a joint review of the final IA and Collaborative Protocols to confirm elements of [Successful Interagency Communications](#) were clearly addressed.

Linked Resources:

- Elements of Successful Interagency Communications
<https://calecse.org/uploads/compliance/Successful%20Interagency%20Communications%2001.pdf>

Successful Interagency Communications

The LEA's simplifies how families contact them:

- ✓ Single/generic email or phone number where all LEA "intake/transition team" staff check for messages
- ✓ Avoid person-specific emails and phone numbers, in case of staff turn-over during the transition process

The Regional Center meets with each district:

- ✓ To learn their processes so Service Coordinators can share them with parents to support families through the transition process

The Regional Center and the Districts/SELPA's:

- ✓ Hold regularly scheduled quarterly meetings, maintaining open communications between practitioners from both agency-types, coordinating transitions for families
- ✓ Have an established protocol on who to call when issues need to be resolved
- ✓ Hold joint trainings to review and discuss operational transition process agreements, whenever possible
- ✓ Have a plan to support families in completing electronic school registration, if/as applicable

Successful Interagency Communications



Successful Interagency Communications



Additional items to
openly discuss across

Late referrals: agencies:

- ✓ Train all LEA/R.C. staff to NEVER tell parents to return to the LEA after the child's 3rd birthday, in order to avoid transition timelines
- ✓ Dedicate time to discussing how late referrals will be handled and how families will be collaboratively supported by both agencies
- ✓ LEA's need to specify enrollment requirements, if required to follow-up on a referral so R.C./Service Coordinators can support families gather and present the information to the LEA in timely manner staff

Outline and specify co-enrollment:

- ✓ Service Coordinators/LEA transition intake team have an understanding on who will assist families identify and connect with Head Start or CSPP for enrollment

Summer birthdays:

- ✓ Locally determine if LEA's will have reduced staff or alternate schedules to handle registration/enrollment, and keep families informed

Flowchart Section B, Page 4 - Conducting an Assessment of Your Regional Interagency Agreement, Steps Twelve and Thirteen



12

Once the IA is finalized by the Collaborative:

- Specify the period of time covered by the agreement
- Identify the official signatories and their titles for each agency
- Determine the signature process and timeline
- Define communication and dissemination processes to interagency staff and other partner organizations (e.g., Head Start, Family Empowerment/Resource Centers, early childhood inclusion collaboratives)



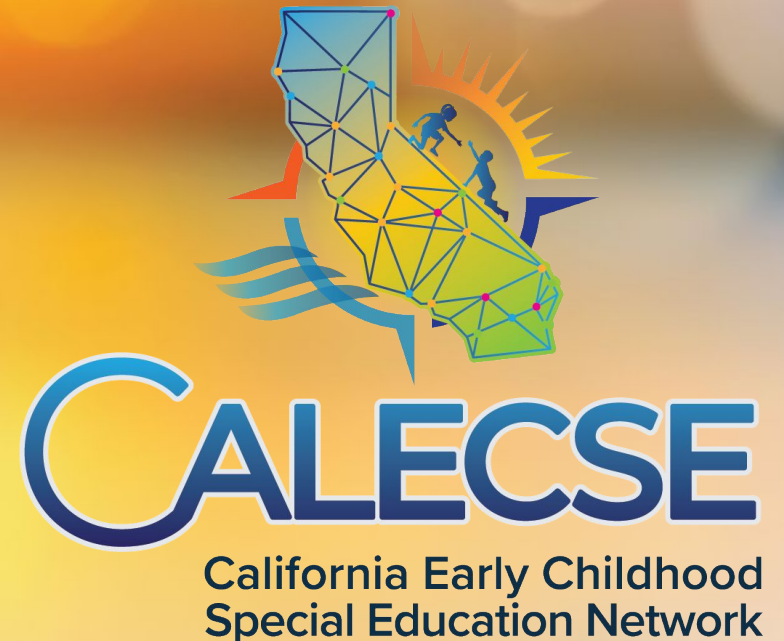
13

Determine Collaborative's commitment to staff training on the IA and implementation protocols (no less than annually, is recommended). Specify if training materials will be jointly created by interagency partners (who/when), how training will be provided (in person or if virtually: asynchronous or synchronous).

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Community of Practice for practitioners
who support children ages zero to five ?**



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