



CALECSE

California Early Childhood
Special Education Network



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

**Leading the Early Years: New Administrator Essentials
October 27, 2026**



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Special Education Network

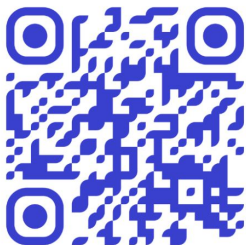


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California Early Childhood Special Education Network (CALECSE)

A CDE-funded technical assistance project supporting Local Educational Agencies (LEAs), Special Education Local Plan Areas (SELPA), county offices of education (COEs), and agency partners through:

- Professional learning
- Technical assistance
- Evidence-based resources
- Cross-agency collaboration

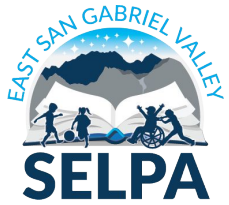
Our Mission:

Strengthen early childhood systems to improve outcomes for young children with disabilities and their families.



CALECSE
California Early Childhood
Special Education Network

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Early Childhood Special Education (ECSE): What Makes ECSE Unique?

- Building Relationships with Families
- Understanding the Referral Process and Child Find
- Part C to Part B: Working with Regional Centers
- Early Childhood Special Education Staffing and Service Delivery
- Inclusion in Early Childhood Special Education



Session Overview, continued



- Assessment Teams, Eligibility, and Assessment Models
- California Early Childhood Special Education Indicators: The Big Three
- Individualized Education Program (IEP) Considerations
- Transition to Transitional Kindergarten (TK) and Kindergarten

Building Relationships with Families

Building Relationships with Families: First Impressions

First impressions help establish a lasting partnership with families.

- Recognize families as equal partners in decision-making.
- Create consistent opportunities for family participation.
- Connect families with regional centers, family resource centers (FRCs), and family empowerment centers (FECs).
- Participate in required Part C transition conferences. Offer meeting formats that support family participation.



Family-Centered Approach

Create a welcoming, family-friendly referral and assessment process.

A centralized intake system can help families receive consistent information. When intake occurs at multiple locations, establish shared procedures and clear points of contact.

- Include family interviews and accessible communication.
- Consider the family's language, culture, priorities, and concerns.
- Clearly explain the referral, assessment, eligibility, and individualized education program (IEP) processes.
- Check understanding and provide opportunities for questions.



Understanding the Referral Process and Child Find

Understanding the Referral Process and Child Find

Building a clear, responsive referral system:

- Families may contact the district by phone or email when they have concerns about their child's development and are **seeking guidance or support**.
- Identify a district **point person** for parent referrals.
- Parents/guardians can be a critical source of information about a child's development, behavior, communication, and functioning. Make the referral process **easy to understand** and easy to access.



Understanding the Referral Process and Child Find: Screening



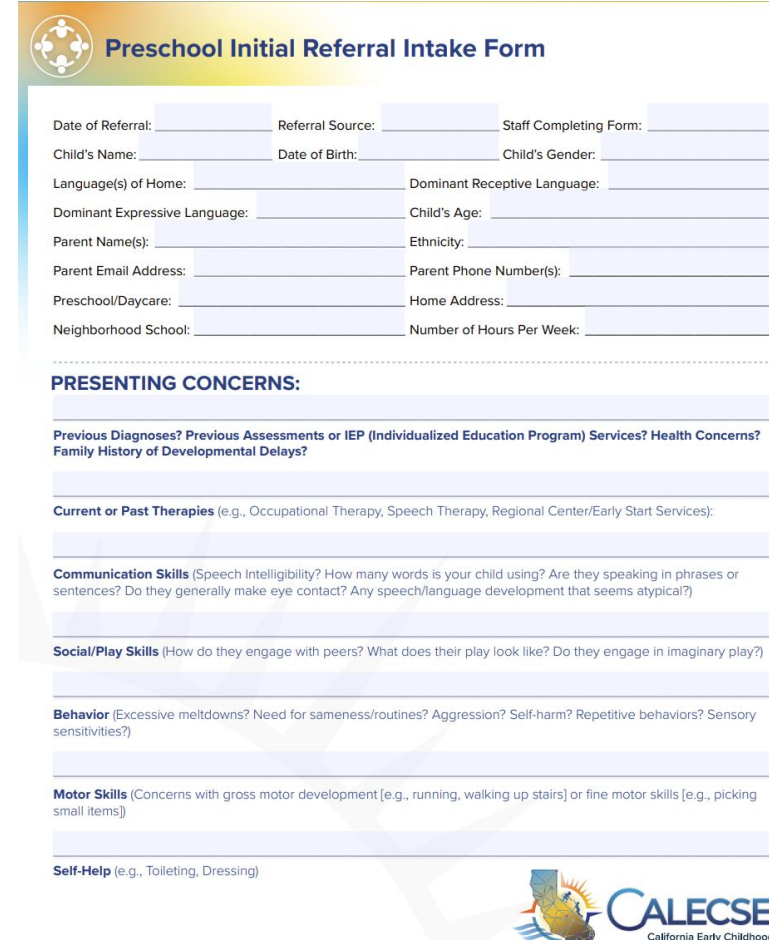
A clear, responsive ECSE referral system:

- Identify a district contact for families and community partners.
- Explain how families can request an assessment, including how to submit a written request.
- Help families document concerns when they initially contact the district by phone or in person.
- Provide understandable information in the family's preferred language and communication format.
- Use parent and guardian input to understand the child's development and functioning.

Sample Intake Form

A sample intake form that can help determine all areas of suspected disability can be accessed on the CalECSE website:

https://www.calecse.org/uploads/blogs/files/1755552364_PreSchool%20Initial%20Referral%20Intake%20Form.pdf



Preschool Initial Referral Intake Form

Date of Referral: _____ Referral Source: _____ Staff Completing Form: _____

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

Language(s) of Home: _____ Dominant Receptive Language: _____

Dominant Expressive Language: _____ Child's Age: _____

Parent Name(s): _____ Ethnicity: _____

Parent Email Address: _____ Parent Phone Number(s): _____

Preschool/Daycare: _____ Home Address: _____

Neighborhood School: _____ Number of Hours Per Week: _____

PRESENTING CONCERNS:

Previous Diagnoses? Previous Assessments or IEP (Individualized Education Program) Services? Health Concerns? Family History of Developmental Delays?

Current or Past Therapies (e.g., Occupational Therapy, Speech Therapy, Regional Center/Early Start Services):

Communication Skills (Speech Intelligibility? How many words is your child using? Are they speaking in phrases or sentences? Do they generally make eye contact? Any speech/language development that seems atypical?)

Social/Play Skills (How do they engage with peers? What does their play look like? Do they engage in imaginary play?)

Behavior (Excessive meltdowns? Need for sameness/routines? Aggression? Self-harm? Repetitive behaviors? Sensory sensitivities?)

Motor Skills (Concerns with gross motor development [e.g., running, walking up stairs] or fine motor skills [e.g., picking small items])

Self-Help (e.g., Toileting, Dressing)



Understanding the Referral Process and Child Find: Regional Center



Regional Center Relationships

- Establish an LEA contact for regional center service coordinators.
- Develop procedures for timely notification, referrals, and communication.
- Review relevant regional center assessments, the individualized family service plan (IFSP), and information from other providers.
- Obtain consent for information sharing when required.

Child Find

- How do we reach children who are not enrolled in district preschool?
- How do we partner with California State Preschool Program (CSPP) providers, Head Start, private preschools, child care providers, pediatricians, and community organizations?

CALECSE has developed a video on Interagency Collaboration:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=gH5oQFkIXcA&t=107s>

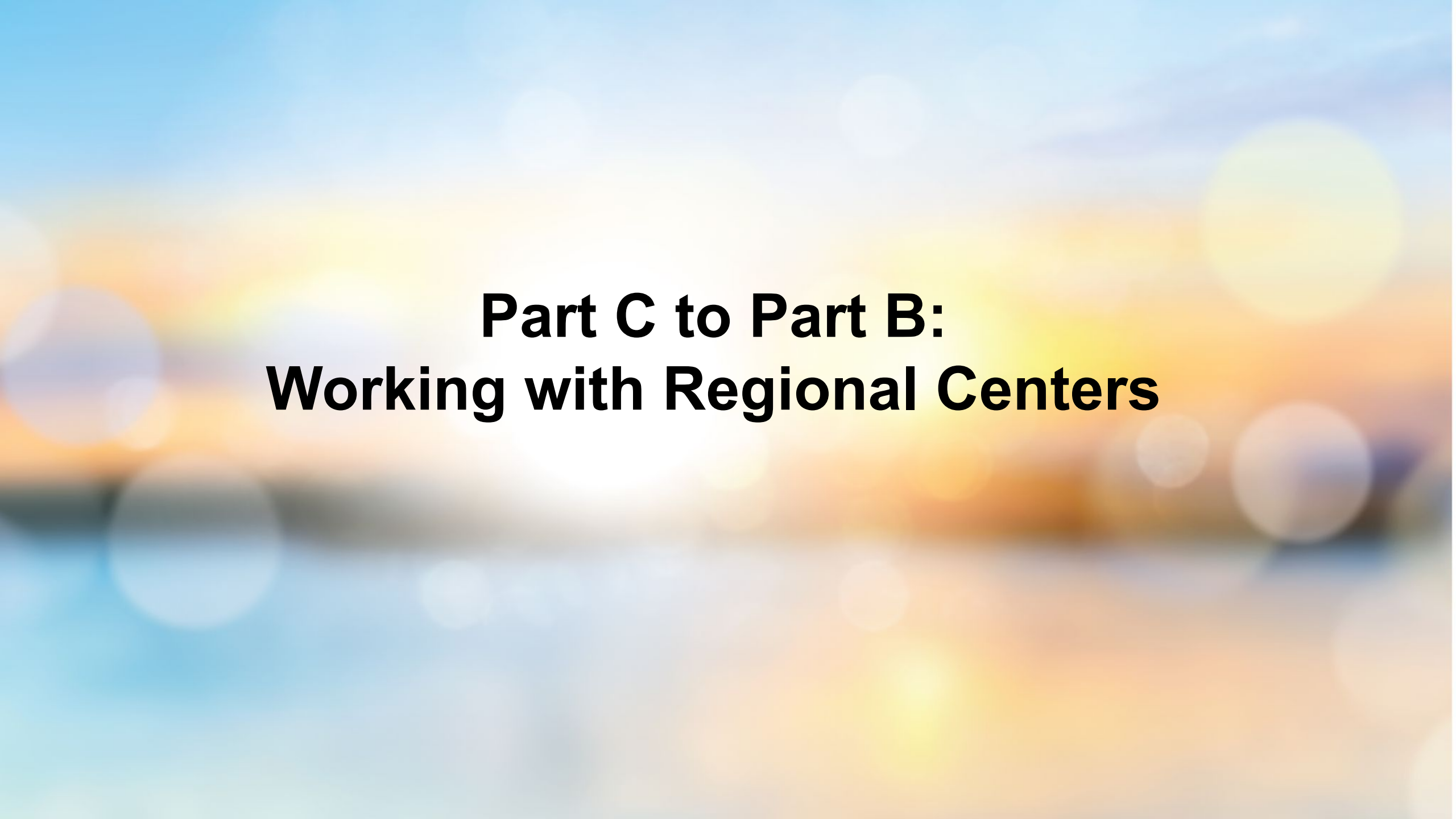


Child Find Requirements

- Identify, locate, and assess children suspected of having disabilities who may need special education and related services.
- Each Special Education Local Plan Area (SELPA) must establish written policies and procedures for a continuous child find system.
- Policies must address identification, screening, referral, assessment, planning, implementation, review, and triennial assessment.
- Provide written information to parents about their rights and procedures for initiating an assessment referral.
- Follow applicable procedural safeguards and confidentiality requirements.

Source: California *Education Code* Section 56301, Identification and Referral.

https://leginfo.legislature.ca.gov/faces/codes_displaySection.xhtml?sectionNum=56301.&lawCode=EDC



Part C to Part B: Working with Regional Centers

Part C to B: Working with Regional Centers



Effective partnerships with regional centers support timely transitions.

- Clarify agency roles and responsibilities.
- Maintain interagency agreements among districts, SELPAs, and regional centers.
- Establish procedures for notification, referral, assessment, and transition planning.
- Coordinate services and communication with families.

Sources:

California Early Childhood Special Education Network. *Part C to Part B Transition Timeline Resource*.

https://docs.google.com/document/d/16QN6_KjBHmYPdsDYVmW0l4tcuwoYTcb5Ds9mACue5Fk/edit?usp=sharing

California Early Childhood Special Education Network. *Transition Basics for Administrators*.

https://drive.google.com/file/d/1IMqr1zinTC_Um8yFV81unlr9d8iaNV4P/view?usp=sharing

Source: U.S. Department of Education, Office of Special Education Programs. 2023. "2023 Early Childhood Transition Questions and Answers."

<https://sites.ed.gov/idea/idea-files/2023-early-childhood-transition-questions-and-answers/>

Part C to B: Working with Regional Centers and Shifting From IFSP to IEPs



IFSP to IEP shift—in focus and legal framework:

- Part C addresses the child's developmental needs and, with family agreement, family priorities related to supporting the child's development.
- Part B addresses the child's need for special education and related services to receive a free appropriate public education.
- Part C services occur in natural environments to the maximum extent appropriate.
- Part B placement follows least restrictive environment (LRE) requirements.
- Providers and service settings may change based on the child's needs and the IEP.
- Transition requires coordinated planning over time.

Part C to Part B Transition: Shared Responsibilities (1 of 2)



Part C and Part B agencies have specific responsibilities to support a timely transition from early intervention to preschool special education services.

- The transition process begins with the Part C early intervention services provider.
- For children potentially eligible for Part B, the Part C lead agency provides required notification to the state educational agency and LEA. A transition conference requires family approval.
- The LEA must participate in the transition conference.
- The LEA is responsible for meeting its Part B child find, evaluation, eligibility, and IEP requirements.

Sources:

U.S. Department of Education. *IDEA Regulations: 34 CFR § 303.209, Transition to Preschool and Other Programs*. <https://sites.ed.gov/idea/regs/c/c/303.209>

U.S. Department of Education. *IDEA Regulations: 34 CFR § 300.124, Transition of Children From the Part C Program to Preschool Programs*.
<https://sites.ed.gov/idea/regs/b/b/300.124>

U.S. Department of Education. *Code of Federal Regulations, Title 34, Section 300.101(b), Free Appropriate Public Education*.
<https://sites.ed.gov/idea/regs/b/b/300.101>

Part C to Part B Transition: Shared Responsibilities (2 of 2)



- For a child transitioning from Part C who is found eligible for Part B, the LEA must ensure that an **IEP is developed and implemented by the child's third birthday**.
- The LEA's Part B responsibilities remain in effect even if the transition conference does not occur.
- Follow applicable consent requirements.
- Apply the specific requirements for late Part C referrals.
- If the child's third birthday occurs during the summer, the IEP team determines when services begin.

Sources:

U.S. Department of Education. *IDEA Regulations: 34 CFR § 303.209, Transition to Preschool and Other Programs*. <https://sites.ed.gov/idea/regs/c/c/303.209>

U.S. Department of Education. *IDEA Regulations: 34 CFR § 300.124, Transition of Children From the Part C Program to Preschool Programs*.
<https://sites.ed.gov/idea/regs/b/b/300.124>

U.S. Department of Education. *Code of Federal Regulations*, Title 34, Section 300.101(b), Free Appropriate Public Education.
<https://sites.ed.gov/idea/regs/b/b/300.101>

At Least 90 Days Before the Third Birthday

- Provide required Part C notification to the state educational agency and LEA.
- With family approval, Part C to hold the transition conference at least 90 days before the third birthday and, by agreement of all parties, up to nine months before that birthday.

Following Referral

- Part B to obtain informed parental consent before conducting the initial evaluation.
- Part B to follow California assessment and IEP timelines.
- Coordinate with the family and Part C providers.

By the Third Birthday

- For children covered by the standard transition requirements, determine eligibility and develop and implement the IEP if the child is eligible.
- Apply the specific requirements for late referrals.
- For summer birthdays, the IEP team determines the service start date.

Source:

U.S. Department of Education. *IDEA Regulations: 34 CFR § 303.209, Transition to Preschool and Other Programs.* <https://sites.ed.gov/idea/regs/c/c/303.209>

Late Part C Referrals: 45–90 Days

Children made eligible for Early Start (Part C) between 45–90 days prior to third birthday

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

- ✓ Conduct initial evaluation and assessment for Part C
- ✓ Hold initial IFSP meeting, and develop IFSP, if eligible
- ✓ Develop a transition plan with the appropriate steps and services
- ✓ Provide notification to the Part B LEA
- ✓ With parental consent, make a referral to the LEA (or assist the family to make contact with the LEA)
- ✓ Transition conference may be conducted but is not required.

✓ The LEA (Part B) is required to:

- ✓ Ensure the initial evaluation under Part B is completed by the third birthday
- ✓ Develop an IEP by the third birthday if the child is determined eligible under part B even if:
 - The 60-day timeline for conducting an initial evaluation expires after the third birthday
 - Part C provided notification and parental assistance to contact the LEA. There was no formal referral to Part B, yet child met Part C eligibility and has an IFSP.

Source:

U.S. Department of Education. *IDEA Regulations: 34 CFR § 303.209, Transition to Preschool and Other Programs*. <https://sites.ed.gov/idea/regs/c/c/303.209>

Late Referrals, Fewer Than 45 Days



Children Referred to Part C Fewer Than 45 Days Before the Third Birthday

✓ The Early Start (Part C) Lead Agency is required to:

- ✓ With parental consent, make a referral to the LEA, or assist the family in initiating contact with the the LEA in the area where the toddler resides.

Not required to:

- Conduct initial evaluation and assessment for Part C eligibility
- Hold an initial IFSP meeting
- Develop a transition plan
- Hold a transition conference

✓ The LEA (Part B) is required to:

- ✓ Ensure the initial evaluation under Part B is completed by the third birthday
- ✓ Develop an IEP by the third birthday if the child is determined eligible under part B even if the 60-day timeline for conducting an initial evaluation expires after the third birthday
- ✓ Develop an IEP even if the child does not have an IFSP yet. (Part C provided the LEA notification to Part B and parental assistance to contact the LEA.)

Source:

U.S. Department of Education. *IDEA Regulations: 34 CFR § 303.209, Transition to Preschool and Other Programs.* <https://sites.ed.gov/idea/regs/c/c/303.209>

Administrator Timeline Questions

Key questions for LEA administrators:

- How do we coordinate with the regional center or LEA providing Part C services?
- How are notifications and referrals transmitted and tracked?
- How do agencies identify and resolve missed timelines?
- Who maintains current agency contact information?
- How do we plan for summer birthdays and school breaks?
- How do we document applicable late-referral requirements?



Referral, Assessment, and Case Coordination

- What happens when the LEA receives a referral?
- Who helps families complete necessary documentation?
- How do we ensure enrollment procedures do not delay child find or assessment?
- How does the team identify all suspected areas of disability?
- Who coordinates assessors and communicates with the family?
- Who tracks evaluation, IEP, and service implementation timelines?



Early Childhood Special Education Staffing and Service Delivery

Early Childhood Special Education Staffing and Service Delivery



Different models require different staffing structures:

Model	Staffing Considerations
Self-contained ECSE	Teacher and instructional assistants based on student needs and program requirements
Inclusive preschool	ECSE and general education teachers collaborate, with support staff assigned according to program requirements and child needs.
Push-in services	Specialists provide services within the child's classroom
Co-teaching	ECSE and general education educators share responsibility for instruction
Itinerant ECSE	Staff travel across classrooms and sites to provide individualized support
Community-based inclusion	ECSE staff collaborate with CSPP, Head Start, or community providers

Ratios and Caseloads

- **Adult-to-child ratios:** Identify requirements applicable to the program, setting, children's ages, and licensing status.
- **Staffing based on child needs:** Consider the support children need to participate safely and meaningfully.
- **Preschool speech-language caseloads:** *Education Code* Section 56441.7(a) limits caseloads to 40 for specialists serving exclusively children ages three through five.
- **Workload considerations:** Account for assessment, direct services, consultation, collaboration, travel, and IEP participation when assigning staff.



Source: California *Education Code* Section 56441.7(a), Preschool Speech and Language Specialist Caseloads.

https://leginfo.legislature.ca.gov/faces/codes_displaySection.xhtml?sectionNum=56441.7.&lawCode=EDC

Inclusion in Early Childhood Special Education

Three Models for Preschool Inclusion

Model One

Partnerships
with CSPP or
Head Start

Model Two

LEA-operated
inclusive
preschool
program
(free or
fee-based)

Model Three

Special
education
services in
community
early childhood
settings

CalECSE has created a video a exemplar inclusive programs:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=X1G6FAfkQ7w&t=5s>

Model One: Partnerships with CSPP and Head Start



- Partner with early learning programs to expand inclusive placement options.
- CSPP contractors must reserve 5 percent of funded enrollment for children with disabilities.
- Follow current CSPP requirements for age eligibility, admission priorities, family documentation, and funding.
- Head Start has separate enrollment and program requirements.
- Coordinate IEP services with the early learning program and family.
- Obtain consent for information sharing when required.

Model Two: LEA-Operated Inclusive Preschool Programs



- **Quality programming:** Led by a **credentialed teacher** and designed as a high-quality preschool experience for the community.
- **Inclusive model:** Intentionally enrolls children with IEPs alongside community peers without IEPs.
- **Community tuition:** LEA may charge a fee for community peers.
- **Balanced enrollment:** A regular early childhood program includes at least 50 percent children without IEPs.
- **Licensing:** District-operated educational preschool programs may be exempt from community child care licensing requirements; confirm the specific program structure and applicable requirements.
- **Specialized Academic Instruction (SAI):** Services are individualized based on student needs and IEP goals.
- **SAI minutes:** Determined by the child's individual IEP goals and needs, not simply by the preschool program model.

Model Three: Services in Community Early Childhood Settings



- **Services where children already learn:** Provide special education supports within private preschool and child care environments.
- **Access to natural peer interactions:** Children with IEPs participate alongside same-age peers in familiar community settings.
- **Push-in service model:** ECSE teachers and related service providers support children within classroom routines and activities.
- **Embedded instruction:** Incorporate IEP goals and specialized instruction into everyday preschool experiences.
- **Collaboration with providers:** Build strong partnerships with private preschool teachers, directors, and staff.
- **Individualized placement:** Consider community settings through the IEP process, including the supports and services necessary for FAPE.
- **Individualized services:** Service delivery, frequency, and supports are based on each child's IEP.
- **Build provider capacity:** Offer professional learning and coaching so community programs can better support children with disabilities.

Assessment Teams, Eligibility, and Assessment Models

Assessment Process



- **Different referral pathway:** Referrals typically come directly from parents, regional centers, or community partners—not through a traditional Student Study Team (SST) process.
- **Designated point person:** Identify someone responsible for receiving referrals, coordinating timelines, and connecting families with the assessment team.
- **Multidisciplinary collaboration:** Best practices is to have school psychologists, ECSE teachers, SLPs, occupational therapists (OTs), and other specialists coordinate assessment activities.
- **Family-centered assessment:** Parent interviews and input are essential to understanding the child's development and functioning.
- **Natural observation:** Assessors observe children during play and familiar routines whenever possible (at a child care, in the community, or at home).
- **Flexible scheduling:** Assessors often coordinate directly with families rather than pulling children from an established classroom.

Assessment: Eligibility and Developmental Considerations



- Use developmentally appropriate tools and assess all suspected areas of disability.
- Gather information from families, observations, play-based assessment, developmental history, relevant providers, and standardized measures when appropriate.
- Use multiple sources of information. No single measure determines eligibility.
- Update present levels and proposed goals when new information becomes available.
- Established medical disability (EMD) is an eligibility category for children ages three through five when the statutory criteria are met.

Source: California *Education Code* Section 56441.11, Preschool Special Education Eligibility.

https://leginfo.legislature.ca.gov/faces/codes_displaySection.xhtml?sectionNum=56441.11.&lawCode=EDC

Designing the Assessment System



- **Assessment settings:** Select locations appropriate to the child and assessment purpose.
- **Coordinated assessment:** Schedule team activities and family interviews to reduce duplication.
- **Diagnostic preschool:** A preschool-like assessment setting may provide opportunities to observe play, communication, and peer interaction.
- **Staff assignments:** Include time for assessment, collaboration, report writing, and IEP meetings.



California Early Childhood Special Education Indicators: The Big Three

Indicator 6: Preschool Least Restrictive Environment



Includes children with IEPs ages three through five, excluding five-year-olds enrolled in kindergarten or TK.

- **6a:** Children attending a regular early childhood program and receiving most special education and related services in that program.
- **6b:** Children attending a separate special education class, separate school, or residential facility.
- **6c:** Children receiving special education and related services in the home.
- Four-year-olds in TK are included in the preschool reporting population.

Indicator 7: Preschool Outcomes



The Desired Results Developmental Profile (DRDP) documents children's learning and development through observations during everyday activities.

- Fall observation period: August–December
- Spring observation period: January–May
- Follow current requirements for children receiving special education services as of November 1 and April 1.
- Requirements include eligible children in preschool, TK, and kindergarten.
- If a child turns six at any point during the school year, July 1–June 30, the DRDP is not required for either assessment period.
- Coordinate with CSPP teachers when both programs serve the child. Follow each program's assessment and reporting requirements.

Source: Desired Results Access Project. "DRDP (2025) Technical Assistance Guide." <https://www.draccess.org/DRDP2025TAG.html>

Indicator 7 Outcome Areas

Measures outcomes for preschool children with IEPs in three areas:

- **7a:** Positive social-emotional skills, including social relationships
- **7b:** Acquisition and use of knowledge and skills, including early language, communication, and literacy
- **7c:** Use of appropriate behaviors to meet their needs

For each outcome, reporting includes children's increased rate of growth and functioning within age expectations.



Indicator 12: Early Childhood Transition



Indicator 12: A compliance indicator that measures the percent of children referred by the infant program (IDEA Part C) prior to age three, who are found eligible for school-age special education services (IDEA Part B), and who have an IEP developed and implemented **by their third birthday**.

- Indicator 12 utilizes data from the California Longitudinal Pupil Achievement Data System (CALPADS) End-of-Year (EOY) Quarter 4 submission as well as a data file from the California Department of Developmental Services (DDS). This indicator is reported by the reporting LEA.
- Compliance indicator targets is set at 100 percent for Indicator 12 based on the requirements of IDEA.
- Infants receiving some or all Part C services through the LEA are also required to participate in the transition process, including a transition assessment. If eligible for Part B services, an IEP must be developed and in place by the child's third birthday.

IEP Considerations

- **Individualized settings:** Part B services may occur in public preschool, community programs, other appropriate settings, or the home, based on the IEP.
- **Coordinated transition:** At the parent's request, invite the Part C service coordinator or another Part C representative to the initial IEP meeting.
- **Educational needs:** Develop the IEP around the child's educational needs, with meaningful family participation.



Functional and developmental skills:

- Develop goals that support the child's participation and learning, including communication, play, social connection, self-help, and adaptive skills.
- Address goals within meaningful routines and developmentally appropriate activities.
- Individualize goals based on assessment information and family priorities.



Least Restrictive Environment



- Educate children with disabilities alongside children without disabilities to the maximum extent appropriate.
- Consider supplementary aids and services that support participation in inclusive settings.
- Consider CSPP, Head Start, district preschool, and community early childhood programs through the individualized placement process.
- IEP service minutes should reflect the amount of specialized instruction or support needed to address the student's individual goals—not simply the amount of time the student spends in the preschool program.

Source: U.S. Department of Education. 2017. "Updated Dear Colleague Letter on Preschool Least Restrictive Environments."

<https://sites.ed.gov/idea/idea-files/updated-dear-colleague-letter-on-preschool-least-restrictive-environments/>

Transportation as a Related Service in Preschool



Under IDEA, transportation is a related service when necessary for a child with a disability to benefit from special education.

Key legal requirements:

- Transportation must be considered based on the individual child's needs, including the ability to access their special education program.
- Transportation may include travel to and from school, between schools, and specialized equipment or accommodations.
- When transportation is necessary to provide a free appropriate public education (FAPE), it must be included in the child's IEP and provided at no cost to the family.
- Transportation is not automatically required for every preschooler receiving special education services.
- The IEP team determines whether transportation is necessary based on the child's individual needs and educational placement.

Sources: CDE. *Special Education Transportation Guidelines*. <https://www.cde.ca.gov/sp/se/trnsprtgdlns.asp>

U.S. Department of Education. *34 CFR § 300.34, Related Services* <https://sites.ed.gov/idea/regs/b/a/300.34>

Determining Transportation Needs During the Preschool IEP Meeting



1. Can the child access their educational program without specialized transportation?

- Consider the child's age, developmental abilities, disability-related needs, and safety.
- Consider mobility, medical needs, communication, and behavioral support needs.

2. Does the educational placement create transportation needs?

- Is the child attending their neighborhood school or a preschool program at another location?
- Does the child need transportation between sites to receive IEP services?
- Would the child be unable to access the required special education program without transportation?

3. What transportation supports are necessary?

- Regular school bus or specialized transportation?
- Adapted seating, wheelchair accessibility, or other equipment?
- Adult assistance, supervision, or medical support?
- Transportation for extended school year (ESY) services, if necessary?

4. What must the IEP team document?

- Whether transportation is required as a related service.
- The individual needs supporting the determination.
- The type of transportation and necessary accommodations.
- When, where, and how transportation will be provided.

Extended School Year Services for Preschool Children



- **Individualized determination:** The IEP team determines ESY eligibility based on each child's unique needs.
- **Regression and recoupment:** Consider whether interruption of educational services may result in significant regression and limited ability to regain previously acquired skills.
- **Other considerations:** A lack of clear evidence of regression and recoupment difficulties cannot, by itself, justify denying ESY when the IEP team determines services are necessary.
- **IEP documentation:** When ESY is necessary, the IEP must identify the services to be provided.
- **Program duration:** California regulations specify a minimum of 20 instructional days for an ESY program, with the child's individualized services and duration determined through the IEP process.

Sources: California Education Code Section 56345(b)(3), Individualized Education Program.

https://leginfo.legislature.ca.gov/faces/codes_displaySection.xhtml?sectionNum=56345.&lawCode=EDC; California Code of Regulations, Title 5, Section 3043, Extended School Year. <https://www.law.cornell.edu/regulations/california/5-CCR-3043>; Code of Federal Regulations, Title 34, Section 300.106, Extended School Year Services. <https://sites.ed.gov/idea/regs/b/b/300.106>

Transition to Transitional Kindergarten and Kindergarten

Assessment and Reevaluation



- *Education Code* Section 56445 requires an appropriate reassessment before transition from preschool to kindergarten or first grade, as applicable.
- Determine whether the child continues to need special education and related services.
- Review existing information and identify additional assessment data needed for the individual child.
- Plan required assessment and IEP activities before the transition.
- Coordinate TK transitions with applicable assessment requirements and reevaluation timelines.

Enrollment and Parent Choice



- Compulsory education generally begins at age six. TK and kindergarten attendance are generally voluntary before that age.
- Voluntary attendance does not remove the LEA's responsibility to make FAPE available to an eligible child.
- Discuss family preferences through the IEP process.
- Consider the child's needs, age-appropriate settings, and LRE.

Sources:

California Department of Education. "Kindergarten in California." <https://www.cde.ca.gov/ci/gs/em/kinderinfo.asp>

California *Education Code* Section 48200, Compulsory Education. https://leginfo.legislature.ca.gov/faces/codes_displaySection.xhtml?sectionNum=48200.&lawCode=EDC

Coordinated Transition Process

- **Establish clear procedures:** Develop district guidelines for transition assessments, timelines, and communication. CalECSE has a timeline to support planning available on its website:

[https://www.calecse.org/uploads/blogs/files/1743011595_Timeline%20of%20Preschool%20to%20Transitional%20Kindergarten%20\(TK\)%20or%20Kindergarten%20\(K\)%20Transition%20Planning%2002.pdf](https://www.calecse.org/uploads/blogs/files/1743011595_Timeline%20of%20Preschool%20to%20Transitional%20Kindergarten%20(TK)%20or%20Kindergarten%20(K)%20Transition%20Planning%2002.pdf)



Timeline of Preschool to Transitional Kindergarten (TK) or Kindergarten (K) Transition Planning

Month	Activity	Person(s) Responsible
August to September	1. Create a spreadsheet with children who are age eligible for TK and K for the following school year and begin gathering information (e.g., residence school, eligibility categories).	Preschool Administrator
October	1. Discuss with parents/guardians transition process and timelines for registering for TK or K.	Case Manager
	2. If concerns are anticipated with transition or placement, refer to preschool administrator or call an Individualized Education Program (IEP) team meeting to discuss.	Case Manager
November to December	1. Review records and discuss students to determine if: a. TK age-eligible students will be assessed now or after their TK year? b. Transition/Records Review or Full Reevaluation assessment will be needed for each student?	Case Managers, Preschool Administrators, Parent/Guardians, and Receiving Team Administrators/Case Managers
January	1. Schedule transition IEP meetings, including receiving team and general education TK/K teacher 2. Inform parent/guardian of TK and K informational evenings/events and TK and K registration information	Preschool Administrator/Case Managers Case Manager
January, February, March, and April	1. Send Written Notice of Proposed Action to parent/guardian indicating if team recommends Records Review/Transition Assessment or Full Reevaluations.	Preschool Administrator/Case Managers
	2. Send Assessment Plans within 60 days of scheduled Transition IEP meetings.	Case Managers or Designated IEP Team Member
	3. Gather Information from Parents on Child's Strengths and Needs	Designated IEP Team Members
	4. Conduct Assessments	Designated IEP Team Members

Coordinated Transition Process, continued



- **Designate transition coordinators:** Identify a preschool contact and a receiving elementary contact.
- **Start early and communicate often:** Maintain regular communication among families, preschool teams, and receiving school teams.
- **Track transitions centrally:** Use a shared system to monitor children, assessment needs, timelines, and follow-up.
- **Make decisions case-by-case:** Ensure transition planning reflects each child's individual needs while meeting legal requirements and timelines.



ECSE is unique because the work sits at the intersection of early learning, special education, family partnership, inclusion, and interagency collaboration.

Questions



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