

**Key Elements of Early Transition:
A Guide for Planning, Implementing, and Evaluating Smooth and Effective Transitions
for Children and their Families from Local Early Childhood Intervention Programs to
Local Preschool Programs for Children with Disabilities**

The purpose of this document is to provide guidance in the building of relationships between local Early Childhood Intervention programs and Local Educational Agencies as they work together to develop, maintain, evaluate, and refine their collaborative systems for the smooth transition of children and their families who leave Early Childhood Intervention services and enter public school services. As feedback is consistently elicited and reviewed, the systems and programs that facilitate early transition continuously improve to meet the individual needs of the children, families, and staff.

This document provides a checklist of the key elements of early transition for children who leave Early Childhood Intervention (ECI) services and enter the public school Preschool Program for Children with Disabilities (PPCD). The key elements of early transition are color-coded with blue and the symbol [R] indicating required elements and green with the symbol [S] indicating suggested elements.

The elements are listed in chronological order and each is accompanied by its corresponding reference(s) in the Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act (IDEA) 2004, the Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) for IDEA 2004, the Texas Administrative Code (TAC), ECI Policy, the TEA/DARS-ECI Early Transition Memorandum of Understanding (MOU), the State Performance Plan (SPP), and/or the Office of Special Education Programs (OSEP) Texas Monitoring Report. Websites for accessing the references are listed at the end of the document as are the acronyms that are used in the document.

Key Elements	
<input type="checkbox"/>	1. The Local Educational Agency (LEA) and the local Early Childhood Intervention (ECI) program have developed a collaborative child find system. [R]
<input type="checkbox"/>	2. The LEA child find contact person is aware that "notice"(i.e., personally identifiable information) will be sent to the appropriate LEA for each child in the local ECI program prior to that child's second birthday. [R] The LEA and local ECI program have a system in place for the transfer and confirmation of receipt of identifying information regarding children who will transition out of ECI services. [S] Note: "Notice" includes the following information: child's name, date of birth, parent's or guardian's name, address, telephone listing, and date of enrollment in ECI. Parent consent is not required for notice to be sent. [R]
<input type="checkbox"/>	3. The LEA child find contact person has a system in place to maintain confidentiality of personally identifiable information as it is received, maintained, used and as appropriate, destroyed. [R]
<input type="checkbox"/>	4. The LEA child find contact person is aware that ECI will send notification of children who are determined eligible for ECI after their second birthdays within 5 working days of the determination of their eligibility. [R]
<input type="checkbox"/>	5. LEA staff has a system in place that ensures their participation in transition conferences between LEA staff, ECI staff, and ECI families that occur from 9 months to 4 months (120 days) prior to the child's 3 rd birthday. [R] Note: Transition conferences are initiated by the local ECI program service coordinator with parental consent. [R]
<input type="checkbox"/>	6. LEA staff is aware that a Department of Assistive and Rehabilitative Services (DARS) Division for Blind Services Specialist will be involved in the transition process for children with a visual impairment (VI). [R]
<input type="checkbox"/>	7. LEA staff is aware that children enrolled in the Regional Day School Program for the Deaf (RDSPD) will have the required transition conferences between 9 and 4 months prior to the child's 3 rd birthday and referral at least 90 days prior to the child's 3 rd birthday. [R]
<input type="checkbox"/>	8. LEA staff documents the date of the transition conference, participants, and the steps to determine the child's Part B eligibility. [S] The local ECI program staff documents who is invited to attend the transition conference, the date of the conference with the LEA, notes of the discussion that occurred during the conference, and the contents of the transition plan. [S] Each program shares documentation with the other. [S]
<input type="checkbox"/>	9. The LEA representative and the ECI service coordinator collaboratively follow up with the family as appropriate after the transition conference. [S]
<input type="checkbox"/>	10. The LEA receives referral for special education (made with written parental consent) at least 90 days before the child's 3 rd birthday. [R]
<input type="checkbox"/>	11. The LEA receives child information (e.g., most recent IFSP, child assessment information, etc.) sent by the ECI service coordinator with parent consent. [R]

<input type="checkbox"/>	12. The LEA collaborates with the local ECI program to develop guidelines to be followed when a child is referred close to his/her third birthday in order to ensure that an IEP is in place upon the child's third birthday if he/she is determined eligible for services. [S]
<input type="checkbox"/>	13. The LEA has procedures in place which meet the timeline requirements for evaluation and the initial ARD committee meeting for children referred during the summer. The ARD committee decides when services begin for these children on an individual basis (i.e., immediately with Extended School Year [ESY] services or when school begins). [R]
<input type="checkbox"/>	14. The written report for the full and individual initial evaluation (FIIE) is completed not later than 60 calendar days after the parent or guardian's written consent is received. [R] Note: Child is placed and services begin upon the child's 3 rd birthday regardless of completion of the FIIE. [R]
<input type="checkbox"/>	15. Initial ARD committee meeting is held within 30 calendar days following completion of the written FIIE report or sooner if the date of the child's 3 rd birthday is eminent. [R]
<input type="checkbox"/>	16. Upon parent request, the ECI service coordinator or other ECI representative is invited to attend the initial ARD committee meeting. Other ARD committee members as required by federal law also attend (i.e., the child's parents, a general education teacher, a special education teacher, a representative of the LEA, and someone who can interpret the instructional implications of the evaluation results. [R]
<input type="checkbox"/>	17. A general education teacher attends initial ARD committee meetings for children transitioning out of ECI and into Part B PPCD services. [R] The general education teacher who attends the initial ARD for a child transitioning from ECI to PPCD is knowledgeable about child development for a preschool-aged child and familiar with the typical routines, schedule, environment, curriculum, and appropriate activities for preschool children. [S]
<input type="checkbox"/>	18. The membership of the ARD committee is appropriate to address the needs of the child. Members of the ARD Committee will consist of the parents of the child, one regular education teacher of the child, one special education teacher or special education provider of the child, a representative of the public agency, an individual who can interpret the instructional implications of the evaluation and when appropriate the child with a disability. [R]
<input type="checkbox"/>	19. The ARD committee decides if a child has a disability and educational need, and therefore is eligible for special education services. If the child is found to be eligible for special education, the ARD committee develops the IEP. [R]
<input type="checkbox"/>	20. The LEA uses results from ECI child assessments to help determine eligibility for special education services. [S] Note: Parent consent is required to share child assessment information. [R]
<input type="checkbox"/>	21. At the initial ARD committee meeting the IFSP is considered as the IEP is developed. [S]
<input type="checkbox"/>	22. As it considers the child's IEP, the ARD committee members discuss and decides if the child will benefit from ESY services based on regression/recoupment information from the ECI service providers, the child's family, and formal and/or informal evaluations provided by the LEA or the parents. [R]
<input type="checkbox"/>	23. The LEA and consenting parents consider temporary placement of children on a case-by-case basis to ensure immediate access to services while the evaluation is being completed. Interim IEPs are developed which contain the conditions and timelines for each temporary placement. Within 30 school days the ARD committee develops the finalized IEP and makes the final placement decision based on evaluation data. [R]
<input type="checkbox"/>	24. The ARD committee determines placement based on the least restrictive environment (LRE) in which a child's IEP goals can be achieved. [R]
<input type="checkbox"/>	25. The LEA has a continuum of placement options for children from 3-5 years of age who are eligible for Part B PPCD services. [R]
<input type="checkbox"/>	26. LEA staff is aware of options for parents of 3- and 4-year-old children to place their children in private school or other community-based settings and assists families in accessing these options when appropriate. [R]
<input type="checkbox"/>	27. Children who are referred by ECI prior to age 3 and who are found eligible for Part B PPCD services have IEPs developed and implemented by their 3 rd birthdays. The LEA makes services available to eligible children on their third birthday. [R]
<input type="checkbox"/>	28. The LEA provides a copy of the evaluation report, the documentation of determination of eligibility, and the IEP to the parent at no cost. [R]
<input type="checkbox"/>	29. The LEA suggests appropriate resources and/or services within the community for families whose children do and do not qualify for special education services. [S]
<input type="checkbox"/>	30. The LEA collaborates with the local ECI program to develop a system for gathering data from families regarding the transition process (e.g., satisfaction survey, questionnaire, interview focused on evaluating the transition process, etc.). [S]
<input type="checkbox"/>	31. The LEA and the local ECI program have a system for gathering data from staff regarding the transition process (e.g., satisfaction survey, questionnaire, interview focused on evaluating the transition process, etc.). [S]
<input type="checkbox"/>	32. The LEA has a process for sharing information gathered from evaluation of the transition process with the local ECI program staff. [S]

<input type="checkbox"/>	33. The LEA and the local ECI program work together to respond to the evaluation data regarding transition by making appropriate changes. [S]
<input type="checkbox"/>	34. LEA staff is informed and implements the federal requirement that children who have participated in ECI services and who are determined eligible for Part B preschool services experience a smooth and effective transition. [R]
<input type="checkbox"/>	35. The LEA and the local ECI program have developed a collaborative written agreement for the transition process from ECI to the LEA. [S]

Acronyms

AI	Auditory Impairment	LEA	Local Educational Agency
ARD	Admission, Review, & Dismissal	LRE	Least Restrictive Environment
CFR	Code of Federal Regulations (Federal Regulations for IDEA)	MOU	Memorandum of Understanding
DARS	Department of Assistive and Rehabilitative Services	OSEP	Office of Special Education Programs
ECI	Early Childhood Intervention	PPCD	Preschool Program for Children with Disabilities
EIS	Early Intervention Specialist	RDSPD	Regional Day School Program for the Deaf
ESY	Extended School Year	SC	Service Coordinator
FAPE	Free Appropriate Public Education	SEA	State Educational Agency
FIE	Full and Individual Evaluation	SPP	State Performance Plan
FIIE	Full and Individual Initial Evaluation	TAC	Texas Administrative Code (Commissioner's Rules and State Board of Education Rules)
IDEA	Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (2004) Part B contains mandates for students with disabilities age 3 through 21 years Part C contains mandates for infants and toddlers from birth through age 2	TEA	Texas Education Agency
IEP	Individualized Education Program	TEC	Texas Education Code (State Law)
IFSP	Individualized Family Service Plan	USC	United States Code (Federal Law)
		VI	Visual Impairment

Definitions of the above terms are in the State level TEA/DARS-ECI Early Transition Memorandum of Understanding (pages 34-38) available at the following website: <http://www.tea.state.tx.us/special.ed/mou/etmou.html>

Resources

IDEA Part B	http://www.tea.state.tx.us/special.ed/rules/cfr.html
IDEA Part C	http://www.access.gpo.gov/uscode/title20/chapter33_subchapteriii_.html
The State Board of Education (SBOE) Rules for Special Education	http://www.tea.state.tx.us/special.ed/rules/sboe.html
The Commissioner's Rules Concerning Special Education Services	http://www.tea.state.tx.us/special.ed/rules/comm.html
Texas Education Code	http://tlo2.tlc.state.tx.us/statutes/ed.toc.htm
TEA/DARS-ECI Early Transition MOU	http://www.tea.state.tx.us/special.ed/mou/etmou.html
DARS-ECI/TEA AI/VI MOU	http://www.tea.state.tx.us/special.ed/mou/pdf/aivimou.pdf
DARS-ECI/TEA AI/VI MOU: "Frequently Asked Questions"	http://www.tea.state.tx.us/special.ed/mou/pdf/aivifaq.pdf
"Legal Framework for the Child-Centered Special Education Process"	http://framework.esc18.net/
TEA Guidance for Private School Placement	http://www.tea.state.tx.us/special.ed/private/
ECI State Policy Manual	http://www.dars.state.tx.us/ecis/providers/policymanual.shtml
<i>Beyond ECI</i> available on ECI's website at:	http://www.dars.state.tx.us/ecis/publications/EngTransition.pdf (English version) http://www.dars.state.tx.us/ecis/publications/SpanishTransition.pdf (Spanish version)
<i>Beyond ECI</i> available on TEA's website at:	http://www.tea.state.tx.us/special.ed/resources/e-beyondeci.pdf (English version) http://www.tea.state.tx.us/special.ed/resources/s-beyondeci.pdf (Spanish version)