



SPREAD THE WORD: FIRST STEPS TO PRESCHOOL SPECIAL EDUCATION TRANSITIONS

The Indiana Department of Education's (IDOE's) Office of Special Education has provided this guidance within a series of important topics of special education as a requirement by the U.S. Department of Education's Office of Special Education Programs.

The Indiana Family and Social Service Administration (FSSA), Division of Disability and Rehabilitative Services, and IDOE have created a Memorandum of Understanding that will ensure that children participating in early intervention programs assisted under Part C of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) known as First Steps and those participating in preschool programs under Part B of IDEA experience a smooth and effective transition to preschool programs.

First Steps Requirements

First Steps must notify IDOE and the local educational agency (LEA) where the student receiving Part C services resides and if they are potentially eligible for Part B services prior to their third birthday. If eligible, First Steps will obtain family approval to then convene a transition conference with appropriate parties to discuss possible services.

- A. Federal law requires that LEAs are notified no less than 90 days prior to the child's third birthday. Article 7 requires the notification to occur 6 months prior to the child's third birthday.
- B. If First Steps determines that the child is eligible for services over 45 days but less than 90 days before their third birthday, First Steps may provide the transition notification to IDOE and the LEA upon determining the child's eligibility that they could receive Part B services.





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Transition Meeting

LEAs participate in transition conferences arranged by First Steps for students who may be eligible for preschool services under Part B. If the LEA is unable to attend, arrangements must be made for involvement through other means, including one of the following:

- Participation in a conference call;
- Having a knowledgeable authorized representative attend the meeting; or
- Making pertinent information available at the meeting.

Best practice includes obtaining parent signature of consent for evaluation at the time of the transition conference either agreeing to the evaluation or declining the evaluation for Part B eligibility.

Late Referral Information

If parent referral for a child is late due to initial refusal of Part B at the transition conference and later reversing their decision, the LEA should make a good faith effort to conduct the evaluation, convene a Case Conference Committee (CCC), and create and implement an Individualized Education Program (IEP) by their third birthday.

The late referral is defined as less than 45 days before their third birthday, and the CCC must convene no later than 50 instructional days after receiving written parental consent for evaluation.



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1 Prior to their third birthday, the LEA responsible for the education of students who live in the area where the student and family claim residency must:

- A. Complete its evaluation of the student,
- B. Convene the CCC to determine eligibility for special education and related services,
- C. If the student is eligible, develop an IEP taking into consideration the student's Individualized Family Service Plan (FSP) and the other general and special factors, and
- D. Implement the IEP.

Services must begin on or before the child's third birthday.

2

If the student's third birthday occurs during the summer and the CCC determines the student requires extended school year services (ESY), the student's IEP must state that services will be initiated during the summer of the student's third birthday. Otherwise, the IEP should state that services will start at the beginning of the school year.

This guidance should also be followed when an LEA has extended breaks during the school year (i.e. fall break, winter break, and spring break).

Data Codes: DOE-EV

Submission for First Steps Referral

00 = Timeline was met.

01 = Timeline missed, parents refused consent for initial evaluation or implementation of services for student transitioning from First Steps.

03 = Student withdrew from school during the evaluation process.

05 = Parent revoked consent for testing.

07 = Timeline missed, student transitioning from First Steps with third birthday during any school break and student did not require extended school year services.

08 = Timeline missed, parent refused to bring student in for evaluation.

99 = Timeline missed, other reason.

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At the request of the parent, an invitation to the initial IEP meeting must be sent to the First Steps service coordinator, or other Part C service representative, if the child previously received First Steps services.



SPREAD THE WORD: DATA EXCHANGE: SPECIAL EDUCATION (SE) PROGRAM RECORD

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Program Names: Description of student/child's special education program (least restrictive environment or placement code). This corresponds to field seven on the Legacy SE Data Layout.

- “Undefined” is program type for students in the process of an evaluation or students found ineligible for special education services.
- “Choice Voucher” is for students receiving services from a choice voucher school (students on a Choice Special Education Plan).

Special Education Setting: Corresponds to field eight (Location/Facility) on the Legacy SE Data Layout.

Code Value	Brief Description
01	Community-Based Preschool/ Headstart
02	Medical/Mental Health Placement
03	Homeschooled
04	Court-Ordered Placement
06	Out-of-State Placement
09	Private Vendor (Day/Residential Program)
10	Non-Public School (PK-13)

Addition Notes:

- Setting descriptors may only be used with appropriate program types as illustrated.
- Settings may be submitted regardless of school number.
- Location Legacy code “99” has been replaced by blank (no location code provided).
- Location Legacy code “05” has been combined with “09.”
- Location Legacy code “07” has been eliminated.
- Location Legacy code “08” has been combined with code “01.”
- Location Legacy code “10” has been redefined to include both accredited and non-accredited non-public schools in all grades (PK-13).



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EARLY CHILDHOOD CODES (AGES 3-4, 5/PK)

26



Regular Early Childhood (At Least 10 Hours)

27



Regular Early Childhood (At Least 10 Hours, Alternate Location)

28



Regular Early Childhood (Less than 10 Hours)

29



Regular Early Childhood (Less Than 10 Hours, Alternate Location)

33



Special Education Program (Separate Class)

SETTING DESCRIPTOR (LOCATION)

- **01** = Community-based Preschool/Headstart
- **02** = Medical/Mental Health Placement
- **04** = Court-Ordered Placement
- **06** = Out-of-State Placement
- **09** = Private Vendor (Day Program/Residential)
- **10** = Non-Public School (PK-13)
- Blank

- **02** = Medical/Mental Health Placement
- **04** = Court-Ordered Placement
- **06** = Out-of-State Placement
- Blank

NON-PLACEMENT CODES

- **Undefined or Choice Voucher** codes should use non-placement codes, and the Setting Descriptor (Location) be left blank for Special Education Data Exchange reporting.



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EARLY CHILDHOOD CODES (AGES 3-4, 5/PK)

34



Special Education Program (Separate School)

35



Special Education Program (Residential Facility)

36



Other Services at Provider Location

37



Other Services at Home

38



Parent Placement in Private School

SETTING DESCRIPTOR (LOCATION)

- **02** = Medical/Mental Health Placement
- **04** = Court-Ordered Placement
- **06** = Out-of-State Placement
- **09** = Private Vendor (Day Program/Residential)
- Blank

- Blank

- **01** = Community-based Preschool/Headstart
- **02** = Medical/Mental Health Placement
- **04** = Court-Ordered Placement
- Blank

- **10** = Non-Public School (PK-13)