

Preschool Special Education Guidance

ALL students age 3-5 (preschool age) are offered a free appropriate public education (FAPE) through an individualized education program (IEP) if found eligible by the case conference committee (CCC). The CCC should determine goals, services, and modifications/accommodations needed in the Least Restrictive Environment (LRE) so that the student will not only improve, but reach age appropriate Social Emotional Skills, Acquisition and Use of Knowledge and Skills, and Use of Appropriate Behaviors to Meet Needs by kindergarten as assessed through ISTAR-KR.

What works for School Age Students Works for Preschool Age Students!

Our goal as educators is to improve outcomes for all students. This can be accomplished through a system that ensures equity and access. **Equitable Access** is the guarantee that all students are provided the necessary and individualized supplementary aids and services, accommodations, modifications or supports to **meaningfully participate** in the general education curriculum. Equitable access must be accompanied by a **school wide** acceptance or belief in **shared responsibility, shared accountability** and **high expectations**. According to the Dear Colleague letter on the provision of a Free Appropriate Public Education (November 2015) and the Every Student Succeeds Act (December 2015), **improving outcomes** also requires a **strong core curriculum, high quality instruction, unbiased assessment** that guides instruction, and **collaboration** among administrators, general and special education staff, parents, and the community. **Multi-tiered systems of support** and **universal design for learning** provide the foundation necessary to reach the overall goal.



KINDERGARTEN READINESS

When the preschool aged student is **initially eligible** for special education services as well as during annual case reviews, documentation in the IEP should include discussion of the following outcomes:

- ⇒ The Student's Social Emotional Skills and what special education services, accommodations and/or modifications are needed to achieve kindergarten readiness;
- ⇒ The Student's Acquisition and Use of Knowledge and Skills and what special education services, accommodations and/or modifications are needed to achieve kindergarten readiness;
- ⇒ The Student's Use of Appropriate Behaviors to Meet Needs and what special education services, accommodations and/or modifications are needed to achieve kindergarten readiness;

High quality early childhood services play an integral role in improving these outcomes. Accurate progress monitoring of these skills can determine the appropriateness of the type of services and program the student is receiving. This data will assist in determining the possible need for a change in services, placement, and/or eligibility.

As each student reaches the age of kindergarten eligibility, a FAPE should be offered through an IEP which includes the services/accommodations/modifications needed for him/her to be successful in the appropriate LRE in kindergarten. The Office of Special Education recognizes that all parents have the right to delay kindergarten enrollment for their child. If the parents of a child with a disability elect to delay enrollment, special education services appropriate for a kindergarten aged student may be provided for one additional year at the preschool level. The provision of these services would be determined by the case conference committee.

PRESCHOOL SPECIAL EDUCATION GUIDANCE**Definitions**

Public preschool: A preschool program that is under the guidance of a local education agency (LEA).

Nonpublic preschool: A preschool program attached to and regulated by a nonpublic school including a religious school or facility providing elementary or secondary education as determined under Indiana law.

Community based preschool: A preschool program regulated by the Office of Child Development and Out of School Learning within Family and Social Services Administration (FSSA) which could be in a: child care center, child care home, child care ministry, Class I child care home, or Class II child care home.

1. The school corporation of legal settlement must convene the CCC to develop an IEP. If the CCC determines a preschool program is the appropriate placement in order to provide the special education services, the school corporation may provide those services in a variety of ways, including placement in its own preschool program, placement in a preschool program operated by another entity (community-based preschool or a non-public preschool), or “walk-in” speech/language therapy.
2. If the offer of a FAPE by the school corporation of legal settlement is rejected by a parent that has enrolled the student in a non-public preschool program, then the school corporation where the nonpublic school is located must convene the CCC and offer services under a Service Plan (SP). **NOTE: This situation (parents have enrolled their child in a nonpublic school and reject a FAPE) is the only time a SP is created.**
3. The CCC should determine goals, services, and modifications/accommodations needed in the LRE so that the student will not only improve, but reach age appropriate Social Emotional Skills, Acquisition and Use of Knowledge and Skills, and Use of Appropriate Behaviors to Meet Needs by kindergarten as assessed through ISTAR-KR.
4. If the parents elect to enroll the student in an ABA center, they are rejecting a FAPE. A service plan would not be offered since the facility does not meet the definition of a non-public school as stated in Article 7.
5. Consultation is a service provided to students **enrolled** in public schools **and** receiving direct special education services, which requires work with general education and special education teachers in matters concerning the IEP, curriculum, instructional or behavioral management techniques or materials, equipment or instructional aids. Periodic telephone conversations with a parent only for progress monitoring purposes do not meet the requirements of consultation under Article 7.

ISTAR-KR USERS

Q1. Why is the completion of the ISTAR-KR required?

A1. The ISTAR-KR is the assessment tool used to report Early Childhood Outcomes to the US Department of Education. This report includes students with IEPs who had an exit assessment completed between July 1 and June 30 of the reported school year.

Indicator 7 includes:

- A. Social and Emotional Skills
- B. Acquisition and Use of Knowledge and Skills
- C. Use of Appropriate Behaviors to Meet Their Needs.

Q2. Who enters the data points into ISTAR-KR?

A2. ALL Teachers of Record are responsible for entering the data. Discussions with parents and school staff can take place in order to accurately report the student's skills.

Q3. Which students should be assessed using ISTAR-KR?

A3. ALL students (ages 3-5) with IEP's . "Walk-in" speech students are included.

Q4. When should the ISTAR-KR be completed?

A4. When the student enters the program, annually (interim), and when the student exits the program.

Q5. When is an exit assessment completed?

A5. "Exit" is selected for they type of assessment when the student is going to kindergarten the next year, or is no longer eligible for special education services. Exit assessments should not be given for students who move, parents revoke consent, or any other reason other than the two stated above.

NOTE: Students participating in On My Way PreK will have an exit at the end of each year due to specific requirements for that program.

Q6. If a student exits because s/he is no longer eligible for special education services, what exceptionality should be selected?

A6. The exceptionality of the student that was selected while the student was eligible for special education services should also be selected for the exit assessment.