



Preschool Least Restrictive Environment (LRE)

A Technical Assistance Manual for
Service Delivery
Utah State Office of Education



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Preface

The development of this guidance document is a continuation of a long-term strategic plan within the Utah State Office of Education, Special Education Services to support early childhood programs and extend opportunities for inclusion in preschool special education. Partners across the State of Utah participated in meetings and contributed resources, expertise and enthusiasm for this early childhood initiative.

Thanks go to the Preschool Workgroup Members who have worked diligently because of their belief that serving young children in the least restrictive environment is important. They have been committed to the development of this document as a guide written to meet the unique needs of Utah districts, families and children.

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Several additional people from schools and programs throughout Utah were involved in steps along the way; contributing ideas and examples, reviewing drafts and offering suggestions. The help and support of the community of early childhood special educators kept this project focused on the needs of children in Utah.

Many of the references and examples provided throughout this manual were shared with the Utah Task Force through State Preschool Documents: *One of Us; Access and Equity for All Young Children*, Illinois State Board of Education, 2002; and *3-4-5- Thrive: A Guide to Providing Educational Opportunities in the Least Restrictive Environment (LRE) for Iowa's Preschoolers with Disabilities*, Iowa Department of Education, Bureau of Children, Family and Community Services, 1999. We thank these states for extending their resources to Utah.

Thanks also go to Jo Shackelford and Kathy Whaley of the National Early Childhood Technical Assistance Center (NECTAC) for their guidance in the development and continual support of the Preschool LRE strategic plan, and to Catherine Benitz of Mountain Plains Regional Resource Center (MPRRC) for assistance in writing, editing and formatting the document.

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Introduction

This manual is developed first, to provide the legal foundation and the steps for understanding Least Restrictive Environment in early childhood; and second, to offer suggestions and alternatives in designing these environments that may be viewed as “out of the box” to help programs and individuals in examining service delivery systems.

The sections on **Understanding the Regulations of LRE, IEP Development**, and the **Continuum of Placement Options** will be addressed through a review of what the law says, what the law intends, strategies, and highlights of research-based practices. The section **Implementing and Reporting Placements** is included to provide accuracy and consistency in the data collection of child placements used across all programs in the state.

The manual contains sections on **Collaboration Models for Success in Inclusive Settings** and **Seeking Appropriate Learning Environments** to offer strategies and ideas for expanding opportunities in LRE and inclusion. Some suggestions will not be appropriate for every community but may offer options for consideration. Ideas for blending or braiding funding streams from a variety of sources are offered in the section **Funding Resources**, so that funding restraints don’t have to become the barrier to innovative service delivery.

This guidance document is designed for administrators and staff of community-level early childhood programs in public schools, charter schools, public and private child care centers and homes, private preschools, Head Start, Early Head Start, and parents. It may also be useful to policy makers at the local and state levels, as well as to colleges and universities preparing personnel for teaching and providing services for young children.

References are provided when these resources come from other published sources. The appendices in the latter part of the document are offered as examples. Documentation strategies that have been effective in other programs may be used or modified if they are helpful to a district or program.

Examples and suggestions are taken from a variety of resources. However, the Preschool LRE workgroup has taken care to offer strategies in this guide to meet the unique needs of children, families, and school systems in the state of Utah.

This document is not an LRE guide for children’s programs K-12. Some of the regulations are highlighted for programs for children age 3-21. Examples are intended to provide for ways the LRE might be accomplished for preschool children age 3-5 since regular education for preschoolers is not required.

Rationale

The Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) and 2004 amendments provide regulations that clarify the Least Restrictive Environment (LRE) requirements as they apply to preschool children ages three through five with disabilities. However, using the concept of the Least Restrictive Environment means more than simply placing children with disabilities in classes of children without disabilities. Developing a continuum of environments in early childhood requires an expansion of the concept of LRE in public school special education because the educational services for three-to five-year-olds without disabilities are not mandated for local school systems to provide. The challenge is that children with disabilities, including preschoolers (as stated below), will **participate in** and **progress in** the general education environment with their nondisabled peers. The inclusion of young children with disabilities in educational settings designed primarily for children without disabilities differs from inclusive practice for school-age children. It means developing and fostering environments that view them first as children and then as children with special needs. It means understanding that preschool children with disabilities and those without identified disabilities are more alike than different from one another. The regulations of LRE are the same for children with disabilities ages 3 – 21.

Regulations that guide the practice of determining educational placements and environments are provided in the federal law and further delineated in state law.

To the maximum extent appropriate, children with disabilities, including children in public or private institutions or other care facilities, are educated with children who are nondisabled. Further, special classes, separate schooling or other removal of children with disabilities from the regular educational environment occurs only if the nature or severity of the disability is such that education in regular classes with the use of supplementary aids and services cannot be achieved satisfactorily. (34 CFR §300.500)

A continuum of alternative placements must be available to meet the needs of children with disabilities. (34 CFR §300.552)

A child with a disability is not removed from education in age-appropriate regular classrooms solely because of needed modifications in the general curriculum. (34 CFR §300.552)

All states provide data and information annually to the federal government regarding the special education services provided to students, the special needs of the students, and where the special education services are provided. Services for preschool children age 3 – 5 are also provided and reviewed in comparison to services in other states. The data provided for preschool children in Utah has shown a higher rate of services provided in “early childhood-special education” settings than in previous years. These settings are defined as being primarily designed for children with disabilities. It has been the goal of the state-wide preschool program to increase the numbers of children served in “early childhood” settings or in preschool programs with an early childhood curriculum and a ratio of typically

developing preschool children. Since the year 2001, the Utah data show that there has been a steady increase in the opportunities for children to receive services in early childhood settings.

LRE is Part of the Special Education Process

The environment in which services are provided is referred to as the placement. The placement is selected or designed through a team process based on individual goals and services. The entire special education process is not presented in this manual. This guidance document will review the steps for developing services for a child's individualized needs and the resulting IEP goals, and demonstrate how this process leads to the determination of environments for providing services.

Environments for young children (age 3 through 5) may be provided in a different manner than for children who are school age (age 5 through 21). Districts and programs may need to be creative in developing or identifying other settings that meet the needs of children with disabilities while still providing opportunities for learning with typically developing preschoolers. It is important to remember that in the context of developing an IEP there needs to be a range of environments available to meet the varying and changing needs of children.

IEP Development



What the Law Says

Following evaluation of the child’s abilities and interests and determination of eligibility for special education services, the team, including parents, is ready to develop an Individual Education Program (IEP). Utah’s Special Education Rules provide specific guidance for the required notices and preparation for the IEP process. *Section III.I. Content of the IEP* outlines the requirements and the sequence of the steps for developing the IEP. These requirements may be amended following the revisions of IDEA for the re-authorization for 2004, but the Utah regulations at the time of this writing are as follows.

The IEP for each student must include the following:

1. *A statement of the student’s present levels of educational performance, including*
 - a. *How the student’s disability affects the student’s involvement and progress in the general curriculum.*
 - b. ***For a preschool student, as appropriate, how the disability affects the student’s participation in appropriate activities. Appropriate activities in this context, refers to age-relevant developmental abilities or milestones that typically developing children of the same age would be performing or would have achieved.***
2. *A statement of measurable annual goals, including benchmarks or short-term objectives, related to*
 - a. *Meeting the student’s needs that result from the student’s disability to enable the student to be involved in and progress in the general curriculum (i.e., the same curriculum as for nondisabled children); or for preschool students, as appropriate, to participate in appropriate activities.*
 - b. *Meeting each of the student’s other educational needs that result from the student’s disability.*
3. *A statement of the special education and related services and supplementary aids and services to be provided to the student, or on behalf of the student, and a statement of the*

Preschool students, as appropriate, participate in age-relevant developmental activities reflecting abilities or milestones of children in the early childhood years.

program modifications or supports for school personnel that will be provided for the student.

- a. To advance appropriately toward attaining the annual goals.*
 - b. To be involved and progress in the general curriculum in accordance with these Rules, and to participate in extracurricular and other nonacademic activities.*
 - c. To be educated and participate with other students with disabilities and nondisabled students in the activities described in the Rules.*
- 4. An explanation of the extent, if any, to which the student will not participate with nondisabled students in the regular class and in the activities described in this Rule.*
- 5. A statement of any individual modifications in the administration of state- or district-wide assessments of student achievement that are needed for the student to participate in the assessment. If the IEP team determines that the student will not participate in a particular state- or district-wide assessment of student achievement (or part of an assessment) a statement of*
 - a. Why that assessment is not appropriate for the student.*
 - b. How the student will be assessed.*
- 6. The projected date for the beginning of the services and the anticipated frequency, location, and duration of those services and modifications.*
- 7. A statement of:*
 - a. How the student's progress toward the annual goals described in this Rule will be measured.*
 - b. How the student's parents will be regularly informed, at least as often as parents are informed of their nondisabled students' progress.*
- 8. & 9. Apply to secondary transition (Not applicable to preschool services.)*
- 10. When a specific accommodation is necessary for a student to have access to his or her regular education such an*

Placement decisions must be determined according to each child's abilities and needs.

Some districts in Utah are using a curriculum-based assessment tool. Assessment items are selected based on developmental expectations of children age three through five. The materials used for assessment are collected and put in a box so every classroom will use consistent materials. Teachers may use this tool with all children in the program to measure progress and support curriculum and IEP changes throughout the school year. When children need accommodations or modifications in this process, the IEP team must address those needs so that assessment is consistent but individualized.

accommodation may be documented on a separate Section 504 accommodation plan and/or the IEP.

11. The signatures and titles of all IEP meeting participants and the date each one signed.

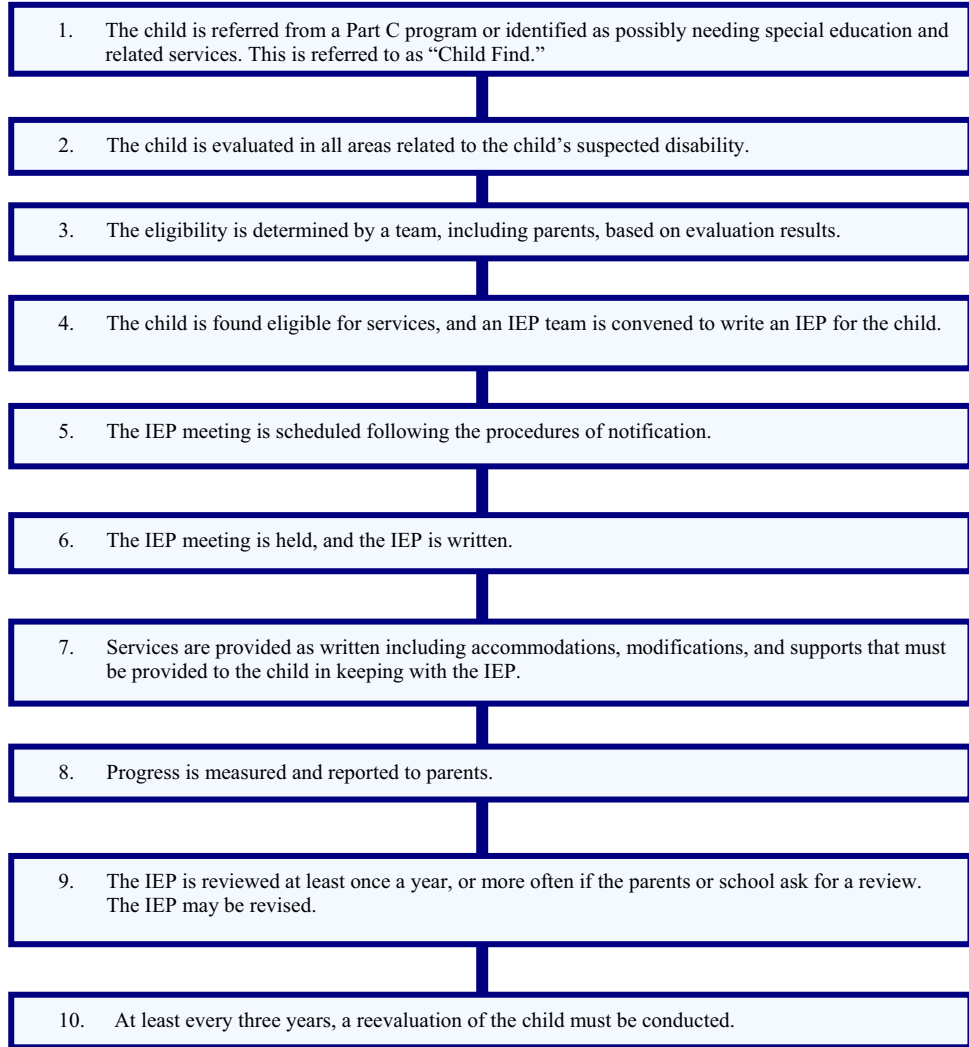
The IEP document must specify a child's present level of educational performance and set forth measurable annual goals and, for students with significant cognitive disabilities, benchmarks/short-term objectives. Further, it must describe how the IEP team will support and track the child's educational progress. The team must identify the modifications and supports needed by teachers to enable them to implement the IEP in a general education environment. Finally, the team must identify services and locations appropriate to meet the needs of the child.

The considerations for children with disabilities in the areas of testing and assessment are important and must also include the statements of needed accommodations or modifications. No statewide testing is required at this time for preschool students in the state of Utah. There may be district-wide, program-wide or curriculum-based assessment of children. When such testing is part of the program, the inclusion in testing and appropriate accommodations must be discussed and planned for those preschool children who have disabilities.

The IEP is the document that outlines the needed program for a child with disabilities. It is one step in the special education process, which includes referral, eligibility determination, program development and implementation. This document focuses on the specific part of the IEP that is the determination of Least Restrictive Environment. The following chart will help to clarify the steps of the special education and IEP development process. The bolded items in the right side box indicate the steps of LRE development that will be presented in this manual.

The IEP team is responsible for the modifications and supports needed in the IEP.

The Special Education Process Under IDEA



Content of the IEP

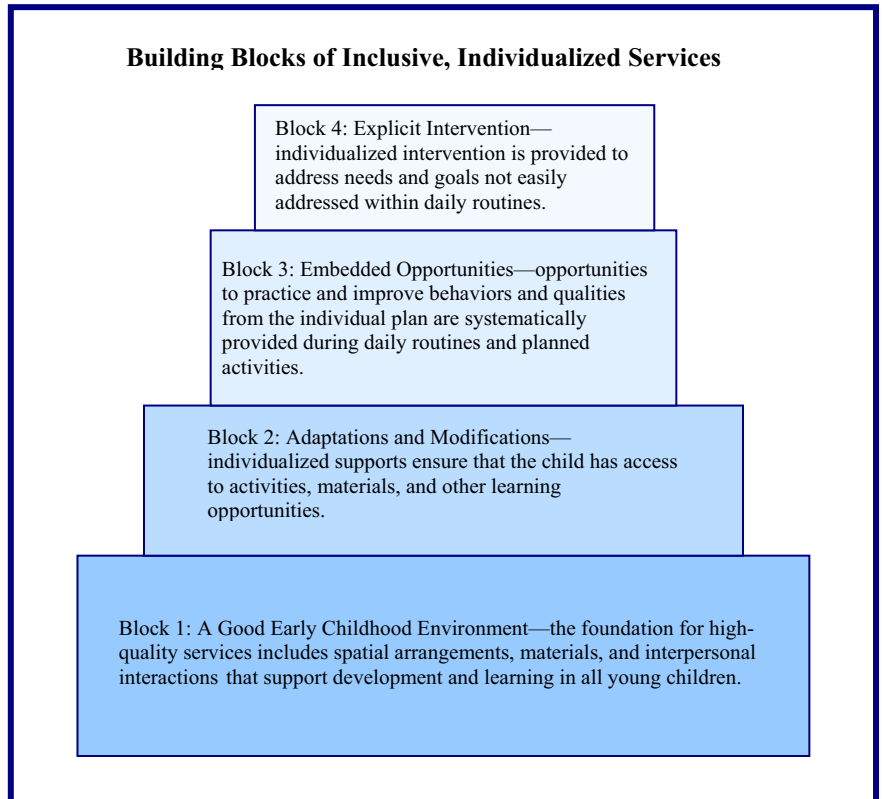
1. Current performance
2. Annual goals
3. Special education-related services
4. **Participation with nondisabled children**
5. **Placement decision**
6. Determination of ESY
7. Consideration of other factors
8. Participation in assessment
9. Dates and places of service
10. Plans for measuring and reporting progress

What the law intends

The IEP team may discuss strategies for helping the child reach the annual goals, although instructional strategies need not always be included in the IEP. The team will want to consider the ways that staff members will engage the child, support positive behavior, support accommodations, and plan for inclusion. Especially important are strategies that will work in a general education environment and enable the child to progress toward achieving age-appropriate developmental milestones. Early childhood preschool teachers are vital in linking these strategies to the classroom and identifying the supports needed for the child's active participation.

An early childhood special education professional and an early childhood teacher working together with parents can be a powerful combination for problem solving and supporting instruction.

Knowledge of the full range of abilities and milestones for three-, four-, and five-year-olds, and of a variety of assessment tools and strategies, is essential to developing sound IEPs. The early childhood teacher and the special education teacher can blend their understanding of a developmentally and age-appropriate early childhood curriculum including readiness, language development, literacy, numeracy, and social skills. Early Childhood curricula should become a basis for establishing appropriate goals as well as knowing what accommodations are necessary for the child to participate fully. The building blocks model shown on this page provides a depiction of sequencing the strategies to support children with disabilities in a classroom program.



Sandall, S., Schwartz, I., & Joseph, G. (2001). A building blocks model for effective inclusion in inclusive early childhood settings. *Young Exceptional Children, 4*(3), 3–9.

Ensuring that every preschool child with disabilities has an IEP that fulfills the intent of the law is important. IEP team members can check their own performance by sharing answers to four questions:

1. Will the IEP ensure access and progress in appropriate activities?
2. Does the IEP enable the child's meaningful participation with his/her nondisabled peers?

3. Have the right adaptations, modifications, and supports been provided to enable the child to advance appropriately toward attaining his/her annual goals?
4. Do the goals in the IEP address all areas of need?

Team collaboration throughout the IEP process and implementation of services should support the inclusion of preschool children with disabilities with nondisabled peers.

Justification Statement

The IEP team must consider a range of placement options for preschoolers with disabilities. More restrictive settings are selected only when the child cannot participate with nondisabled peers with accommodations or supplemental aides and supports. The IEP team is responsible for an explanation of the extent to which the student will not participate with nondisabled students in the regular class. The IEP team is responsible for determining and justifying the child's placement in the least restrictive environment. Placement in the least restrictive environment must include the special education instructional supports and services that are outlined in the child's IEP.

Extended School Year (ESY)

A review of the requirements for extended school year is important in IEP development in preschool services. The requirements of ESY are the same for preschool services as for school age services. The Utah Special Education Rules provide this guidance:

III.M. EXTENDED SCHOOL YEAR SERVICES (ESY)

1. *Extended school year services are special education and related services that are provided to a student with a disability: (a) beyond the normal school year of the LEA, (b) in accordance with the student's IEP, (c) at no cost to the parents of the student, and (d) meet the standards of USOE.*
2. *Each LEA shall ensure that extended school year services are available as necessary to provide FAPE, consistent with these rules.*
3. *Extended school year services must be provided **only if** a student's IEP team determines, on an individual basis through the IEP process, that the services are necessary for the provision of FAPE to the student.*
4. *In implementing ESY requirements, the LEA may **not**:*
 - a. *Limit extended school year services to particular categories of disability.*
 - b. *Unilaterally limit the type, amount, or duration of those services.*

The placement should enable the child to progress toward achieving age-appropriate and developmental milestones.

Appendix B provides a sample form used by one Utah district to assist the team in developing ESY services during the IEP process. The following list also provides ideas for teams to consider in designing an extended year program for preschool children when other classroom services are closed for summer months.

Ideas for providing ESY:

- Develop a packet of materials for home use.
- Provide teacher consultation and support for families using a home packet.
- Provide teacher support through tracking.
- Schedule a regular home visit to promote home activities.
- Continue classroom services, varying the number of days per week, to maintain skills the child has already attained.
- Provide support to community recreational programs.
- Provide special education support for regular education summer classes.
- Provide tutoring for specific goals.
- Think outside the box when creating an extended year plan!

ESY can be provided through many different options that meet the needs of the individual child.

Understanding the Regulations of LRE



Utah has established Special Education Rules based on the federal regulations found in IDEA 1997 (Individuals with Disabilities Education Act). New federal regulations from the IDEA 2004 amendments may provide additional information when they are developed. The rules for developing LRE (Least Restrictive Environment) for children who are eligible for special education services are found in Part III. R. of the Utah Special Education Rules.

What the Law Says

III.R. LEAST RESTRICTIVE ENVIRONMENT (LRE)

Each LEA shall establish policies and procedures which meet the Least Restrictive Environment (LRE) requirements under Part B of the IDEA and these Rules. The following requirements must be met for all students with disabilities, ages 3 through 21:

1. *General. Each LEA shall ensure that*
 - a. *To the maximum extent appropriate, students with disabilities, including students in public or private institutions or other care facilities, are educated with students who are not disabled.*
 - b. *Special classes, separate schooling, or other removal of students with disabilities from the regular educational environment occurs only if the nature or severity of the disability is such that education in regular classes with the use of supplementary aids and services cannot be achieved satisfactorily.*
 - c. *Each student with disabilities will participate with nondisabled students, to the maximum extent appropriate to the needs of that student, in nonacademic and extracurricular services and activities. Nonacademic and extracurricular services and activities may include meals, recess periods, counseling services, athletics, transportation, health services, recreational activities, special interest groups or clubs sponsored by the LEA, referrals to agencies that provide assistance to individuals with disabilities, and employment of students, including both employment by the LEA and assistance in making outside employment available.*
 - d. *Each LEA shall take steps to provide nonacademic and extracurricular services and activities in the manner to*

Children with disabilities are to be educated with children who are not disabled.

afford students with disabilities an equal opportunity for participation in those services and activities.

What the Law Intends

The intent of IEP requirements has always been to ensure a special educational program tailored to meet a child's specific needs in the least restrictive environment. The requirements call for thoughtful planning to enable all young children to progress toward their special education goals in the context of the LRE. These requirements apply to the services provided by public and charter schools in Utah (when the charter school extends services for preschoolers).

The law acknowledges that the general education environment of three-to five-year-olds is different from that of older children by focusing on appropriate activities to describe the general curriculum more clearly. Appropriate activities are those that reflect achievement of developmental abilities or milestones used to benchmark progress of typically developing children of the same age. Appropriate activities include the practices, curriculum, and methodology used to support children's learning and development of abilities and milestones.

Knowledge of the full range of abilities and milestones for three-, four-, and five-year-olds and of a variety of assessment tools and strategies are essential to developing sound IEPs. The assessment process determines a child's present level of educational performance and areas of need arising from his/her disability that directly affect participation in appropriate activities.

Once the child's strengths and needs are known, the IEP team, which includes parents, engages in dialogue about appropriate annual goals. Program planning focuses on the child's characteristics and variables in general education environments that can be modified to support achievement of IEP goals. Adaptations and modifications in the curriculum, instruction and environment need to be made to ensure success of the education program. The team needs to decide how to support the child in the general preschool environment or design supports within that environment based on the needs of the child.

The general education environment of three- to five-year-olds will be different from school age services —the focus is on appropriate activities in the general curriculum.

There are more features in common among young children as learners than there are differences:

- Children are active learners who seek to understand their everyday environments through actions.
- Children learn from one another and gain emotional and social competence by establishing friendships with one another.
- Children's development and learning are influenced most by the natural contexts and routines of their everyday lives.

Continuum of Placement Options

What the Law Says

Each child’s IEP forms the basis for decisions regarding the learning environments that will accommodate the child’s present levels of academic and functional performance and ability to progress in age-appropriate activities while enabling the child’s achievement of annual goals. These decisions must be determined according to each child’s abilities and needs, and not according to factors such as the type or severity of the disability, availability of special education and support services, configuration of the service delivery system, availability of space, or convenience of administration. The special education that is provided for a child with disabilities is not a “place.” Special education in early childhood is the support and services that enable a child to participate with peers and learn from developmentally and age-appropriate activities.



Special education is support and services—it is not a “place.”

The Utah Special Education Rules, section III.R, describe the Continuum of Alternative Placements for children age 3–21. There is no differentiation in the rules for preschool-age children regarding placement, although the examples of opportunities for service provision may be unique for early childhood and the methods that schools will use for reporting the placement decisions will be specific to the programs for children age 3–5.

III.R. LEAST RESTRICTIVE ENVIRONMENT (LRE)

2. Continuum of Alternative Placements:

- a. In developing the delivery system for special educational services under the least restrictive environment requirement, each LEA shall ensure that a continuum of alternative placements is available to meet the needs of students with disabilities for special education and related services.*
- b. The continuum must include instruction in regular classes, special classes, special schools, home instruction, and instruction in hospitals and institutions. Specific examples of alternative placements include: Supplementary services provided in conjunction with regular classroom placement, itinerant services, resource rooms, self-contained placement in a resource room, special day schools, residential learning centers, home-and/or hospital-based instruction, and/or other settings.*

3. *Placements. In determining the educational placement of a student with a disability, including a preschool student with a disability, each LEA shall ensure that*
 - a. *The placement decision is made by a group of persons including the student's parents, and other persons knowledgeable about the student, the meaning of the evaluation data, and the placement options.*
 - b. *The educational placement of each student with disabilities shall be individually determined at least annually and be based on the student's IEP.*
 - c. *The placement is made in conformity with the LRE provisions of these Rules and is as close as possible to the student's home.*
 - d. *Unless the IEP of a student with a disability requires some other arrangement, the student is educated in the school which that student would normally attend if nondisabled.*
 - e. *Consideration is given to any potential harmful effect on the student or the quality of services that student needs.*
 - f. *A student with a disability is not removed from education in age-appropriate regular classrooms solely because of needed modifications in the general curriculum.*

For preschool students, the general curriculum refers to participation in appropriate activities, age-relevant abilities, or milestones that typically developing children of the same age would be performing or would have achieved.

What the Law Intends

Determination of the LRE for a young child requiring special education is accomplished through identifying the child's present levels of academic and functional performance and designing services in the general education or special education environments, or both, to address the child's educational needs. The IEP team must consider options in the continuum of placement that would meet the needs of the child, **not** just options that are readily available in the school district.

Communities have resources to support families and educators in meeting the needs of young

Serena, a three-year-old who has severe hearing loss, participates in a child care program with her four-year-old brother while their parents work. Her parents, grandparents and two of the child care providers have been taking classes in using sign language to help her with daily routines and activities. Since she is comfortable in this environment and will be in this setting for extended hours, the IEP team will provide her with special services in the child care program. At least one child care teacher and her parents will meet weekly to learn the new signs, talk about ways to expand Serena's vocabulary and discuss about any other supports needed in the child care class. Serena will be able to play and communicate with her friends as the signs become part of the classroom activities for all children.

children with and without disabilities. In many instances, these resources are either already being provided or can be adapted to provide an inclusive environment beneficial to all preschool-age children. The real challenge lies in creating an appropriate match between the child's unique needs and the environments in which she or he is to grow and develop.

The IEP team determines the appropriateness of providing special education services in an inclusive setting by taking into account the characteristics of the child and the environment, the curriculum, and the specifically designed instruction needed to support the child. Those responsible for determining LRE for a three- to five-year-old with a disability need to consider that the child will benefit from a carefully designed IEP implemented where he or she can be an integral part of a group of typically developing children close to his/her own age.

The requirements do apply to services for preschoolers. *A child with a disability is not removed from education in age-appropriate regular classrooms solely because of needed modifications in the general curriculum.* It is the responsibility of the Local Education Agency (LEA) or district to identify regular early childhood settings for placements.

The requirements of Least Restrictive Environment **do** apply to preschoolers.

When determining the match, the IEP team considers how an early childhood setting designed primarily for children without disabilities can appropriately meet the individual educational needs of children with disabilities. The following six questions should be asked as the IEP team considers the continuum of placements for each child:

1. What accommodations and modifications does the child require to be successful in a general preschool education environment?
2. Why can't these accommodations and modifications be provided within the general preschool education environment?
3. What supports are needed to assist the teacher and other personnel in providing these accommodations and modifications?
4. How will providing special education services and activities in the general education environment affect this child?
5. How will providing special education services and activities in the general education environment affect other children?
6. What training for early childhood personnel is necessary to facilitate successful inclusion in the general early childhood environment?

References to support a district or program in assessing early childhood environments are found on page 30 of this manual.

Implementing and Reporting Placements



Understanding the responsibilities under IDEA for the development of placements for preschool children with disabilities through an IEP process is critical for the provision of services in a Least Restrictive Environment. There is also an important responsibility to track those services and report the placement of children. The federal Office of Special Education Programs (OSEP) requires an annual report including data on children served in each state by age, ethnicity, disability, and setting of service. Local, state and federal collection of information provides a picture of how and where services are being provided, as well as how and where supports might be needed to expand opportunities or enhance services for children. It is not the overall goal of the state or the district to provide all services for all children in inclusive environments; however, it is clearly the intent of IDEA that progress be shown in the provision of special education services with typically developing peers and in regular education programs at all age and grade levels.

The collection of data regarding services for all children is a specific requirement of the IDEA and is highlighted in this section of the 2004 amendments.

SEC. 618. PROGRAM INFORMATION.

(a) IN GENERAL- Each State that receives assistance under this part, and the Secretary of the Interior, shall provide data each year to the Secretary of Education and the public on the following:

(1)(A) The number and percentage of children with disabilities, by race, ethnicity, limited English proficiency status, gender, and disability category, who are in each of the following separate categories:

- (i) Receiving a free appropriate public education.
- (ii) Participating in regular education.
- (iii) In separate classes, separate schools or facilities, or public or private residential facilities.

Each state designs a data collection system to report these and other critical elements of special education service delivery. In Utah and in the federal data collection system there is an understanding that the way services are delivered is a unique model for preschool children. An important consideration in reporting early childhood services is that because “regular” preschool programs are not offered through public education, children may participate in more than one setting or environment for child care, preschool, and play activities or may be cared for primarily in the family home. **The intent of collecting data on the environments is to distinguish the environment or setting in which the special education or related services are provided.**

The federal Office of Special Education Programs has designated the reporting of early childhood environments. These environments are being revised and reflect new ways of reporting services for preschool children with disabilities.

Early childhood program consists of at least 50 percent nondisabled children. Early childhood programs include, but are not limited to: Head Start, kindergarten, private preschools, and preschool classes offered to an eligible pre-kindergarten population by the public school system, and group child care. Within this setting there is a formula to calculate the percentage of time the child spends in a regular early childhood program. The formula is to calculate the percentage of time the child spends in a regular early childhood program. The numerator for this calculation is the amount of time per week the child spends in a regular early childhood program. The denominator for this calculation is the total number of hours the child spends in a regular early childhood program PLUS any time the child spent receiving special education and related services outside of a regular early childhood program. The result is multiplied by 100.

Special education program includes 49 percent or more children with disabilities. Special education programs include, but are not limited to, special education and related services provided in: special education classrooms in regular school buildings, special education classrooms in child care facilities, hospital facilities on an outpatient basis, or other community-based settings, special education classrooms in trailer or portables outside regular school buildings, separate schools, and residential facilities. If the program is a special education program then a setting must be determined as: separate class, separate school, residential facility, home, or service provider location.

Consistently reporting the service settings by district and between districts in the state will support the development of a picture of services for children with special needs, in Utah that is accurate and that demonstrates progress in meeting state goals for early childhood. This report is to be submitted by December 1; it is part of the required Child Count Data report.

An understanding of the reporting system and the definitions of services that are reviewed at this time by the federal Office of Special Education will help to ensure accuracy and reporting by all personnel and programs statewide.

Further training and consultation through the Utah Office of Education – Special Education Services or the Utah Personnel Development Center will help to provide examples of strategies for describing the settings in

which children are served and ways in which those settings should be reported. For situations that are unique or don't seem to meet the setting definitions provided, consultation with the state 619 preschool coordinator will ensure that the data is provided through a consistent interpretation.

Collaboration Models for Success in Inclusive Settings



Enhancing the Continuum of Options through Collaboration

The requirements for establishing a Least Restrictive Environment or describing the settings in which children are served do not include the term *inclusion*. But the concept of inclusion supports the rights of children to participate in the settings and programs in the home and community with access to community life and education. To develop a range of appropriate settings in the community, working together in collaboration with other early childhood providers will be important. The next three sections of this manual provide some models and ideas for expanding early childhood special education services through the development of school-and community-based programs. Some of the ideas will work in some communities, and some examples will apply in other locations. What is important is that teams of early childhood educators and administrators think about and explore the range of possibilities.

The concept of early childhood inclusion is solidly supported by several different federal laws:

- IDEA, Individuals with Disabilities Education Act, 1997 and amended in 2004
- Head Start Performance Standards for the Operation of Head Start Programs
- Americans with Disabilities Act
- Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act

Federal legislation sets the precedent for inclusion and collaboration.

The value of inclusion and incentives for collaboration are embodied in these laws. Additional early childhood legislation at the state level and examples of research-based practice literature provide motivation for expanding models of service. It is the clear intent that children with disabilities be educated with other children in typical early childhood settings and that they have access to a curriculum appropriate to their age. Because school districts in Utah are responsible for providing special education services for eligible preschool children, many have sought to increase the availability of early childhood inclusive environments. Some options have been created within the school districts themselves. Other options for inclusive programs will be found in other community settings. In many districts, a blending of options and resources from different programs may be used to provide environments that meet each child's need for a Least Restrictive Environment within a range of settings.

Advantages of Developing Inclusive Early Childhood Programs

The rationale most often used to advocate inclusive programs is threefold: philosophical, legal, and educational. The philosophical viewpoint suggests that including children with disabilities in inclusive settings encourages opportunities for learning and social development to occur. The legal viewpoint is based on IDEA and ADA, which support the right of children with disabilities to be included in classes with children who are developing typically. The educational viewpoint embraces the beliefs of parents and professionals that children with disabilities experience greater developmental and learning benefits when learning in inclusive rather than segregated settings.

The advantages of expanding options in the community for early childhood settings are seen by **Local Education Agencies (LEAs)** when buildings and classrooms are already crowded. Facilities, classrooms, and playgrounds designed for young children and maintained by other child care or early childhood programs may save district capital expansion funds. The costs and responsibilities of maintaining a separate early childhood program, administration of a program, and providing materials can be reduced when good collaborations support the education of preschoolers in other settings.

Parents report advantages in opportunities to use community-based settings that also provide full child care or Head Start services. They realize that their children may need additional services and both the difficulties of transportation and lack of continuity in programs can be eliminated through a full-day program or one in which other family services are offered. Family perceptions are generally quite positive, especially over the long term, about their satisfaction with inclusive community settings.

The benefits for **children** of being included in community settings are in the developmental gains made in inclusive versus segregated settings. Many research studies point to the gains that are made when young children with both mild and severe disabilities are included in typical preschool programs. Social contacts and opportunities to make friends are also important factors in inclusive settings. Opportunities to participate in an appropriate curriculum with typically developing peers provide advantages for learning in curriculum areas such as literacy, numeracy and social skills that enhance readiness for kindergarten.

The **community** is enhanced when a model for inclusion of all children is provided for the youngest children. Communities and schools look to that model to promote a common purpose or vision that is supportive of

Support family involvement in planning, decision making, and ongoing activities.

Research highlighting early childhood inclusion can be found by accessing the National Early Childhood Technical Assistance Center's Web page on inclusion:
www.nectac.org/inclusion/research/research/asp

inclusive practices. A brief article included as Appendix C provides information about inclusion and answers several questions about the benefits of inclusion. Many programs have found this handout helpful when explaining early childhood inclusion to families, administrators, and other providers.

Expanding Settings within the District

There are several reasons that districts may establish an inclusive program within the public school. Some communities may have few or no early childhood programs. Schools may have available space that is accessible for young children, and it may be feasible to make the accommodations

necessary to make spaces both inside and outside appropriate for preschoolers. Simply placing a special education preschool program in an elementary building where there are opportunities for children to be served adjacent to kindergarten or first grade does not provide an inclusive program appropriate for young children.

District-operated programs may have benefits in expanding the opportunities for inclusion using a variety of funding options such as Head Start and Title I funds for early childhood programs. Blended funding and blended service programs for children with disabilities and nondisabled children can be explored. Curriculum can be developed consistently and congruently from early childhood through elementary grades to provide progressive skill development and a seamless system of learning tandards.

Several models of district-operated inclusive programs can be explored. The following information about models of service and collaboration will be helpful in developing a program that

Buyse, V., Bailey, D.B., Smith, T.M., & Simeonson, R.J. (1994). The relationship between child characteristics and placement in specialized versus inclusive early childhood programs. *Topics in Early Childhood Special Education*, 14, 419–435.

Assessment of age, disability severity, developmental status, functional abilities, and behavioral characteristics of 162 children found that children enrolled in inclusive programs were more mildly disabled and functioned at higher levels than counterparts in programs exclusively for children with disabilities.

Hundert, J., Mahoney, B., Mundy, T., & Vernon, M.L. (1998). A descriptive analysis of developmental and social gains of children with severe disabilities in segregated and inclusive preschools in southern Ontario. *Early Childhood Research Quarterly*, 13, 49–65.

Study found that children with severe disabilities who participate in inclusive settings appear to score higher on standardized measures of development than comparable children enrolled in traditional special education settings.

A successful district-operated early childhood program for children with and without disabilities has developed a monthly team meeting process. Time is scheduled for regular education and special education to team together to provide specialized instruction in the preschool setting. Team meetings are conducted monthly, and are a time to discuss curriculum plans and embed IEP goals into the regular preschool curriculum. This model has been effective for 15 years.

blends both funding models and needs of children served.

- District-developed reverse mainstream program
- District-operated preschool special education program using Head Start program including children without disabilities
- District early childhood program using Title I or at-risk funding grants
- District-operated preschool program using tuition funding for children without disabilities
- District early childhood program in collaboration with high school child development classes
- District-operated child care center used by students and/or staff
- Combination of services and funding models

Appendix D provides samples of policies and a budget design for a district considering the development of a tuition-based preschool model.

Reaching out to the Community

Approaching providers in other early childhood settings may seem intrusive and uncomfortable at first. An emphasis on public awareness about what is being planned and why the district is reaching out to include other

Transition teams from one early childhood special education program go into community preschools where children receive special services. The responsibility of these teams is to work through transition planning with elementary schools in the district to get children, families, and schools ready for the needs of children entering kindergarten.

early childhood providers will help to build their interest in collaborating with the district. Many community providers have been approached by families to provide preschool or day care for children with disabilities. They will welcome collaboration with the district that provides additional support to the program and training for staff. Many providers in community settings know the value of offering inclusive services for children with disabilities. Some may have a few fears at first and may need support with facility accommodations or training in order to be ready to include children with specific disabilities.

Open communication, developing trust, and sharing a concern for young children are necessary building blocks for initiating collaboration. Interagency planning teams can identify the overlaps and gaps in services provided and work together to develop a community service matrix or map that can become a basis for joint effort, collaboration, sharing of resources, and achieving common goals. Examples of issues and opportunities that can be reviewed in developing a matrix of community services include those listed below:

- Child Find
- Transition
- Evaluation
- Service planning
- Related service providers
- Family services

Examples of providers and organizations to include in a review of opportunities for inclusion and collaboration in early childhood issues include the following:

- Existing early childhood programs
- Children’s recreation and sports activities
- Early childhood training activities
- Early childhood or child care organizations/licensing agencies
- Public or private organizations interested in early childhood
- Social service agencies concerned with children and families
- Public health agencies
- Developmental disabilities service providers and advocacy agencies
- PTA and other parent organizations

Know the needs of the community. Know the resources available. Join others in learning more about activities for young children and be creative. Implementation requires attention to multiple components for ensuring that a child’s experience in an inclusive setting is successful.

Ensuring placement for children in nurturing regular education environments managed by teachers who have the supports they need; obtaining funding and handling the paperwork involved; and facilitating efficient, productive implementation of the IEP are indeed challenging tasks that take the collaborative efforts of many people.

Program Models

Collaborative relationships may take many forms depending on the extent to which providers view themselves as partners. Success is maximized when intervention is embedded within everyday routines and responsibilities of the program. A variety of models can and should be used for accomplishing inclusion and will support the concept of a continuum of placement opportunities. Each model described suggests different roles and different

The quality and character of inclusive programs have more to do with the nature of adult relationships within the program than with any other factor.

Marcus, a four-year-old child who has cerebral palsy, attends a community preschool. An aide is available to assist him with transitioning from one activity to another, but she and the teacher step back during activities so that he can interact with peers. He has a chair adapted to his needs, and uses a bean bag chair for support during circle time and other floor activities so he can sit independently and interact with the other children. He is the only child with special needs in his class but sees himself as the same as the other kids. This boosts his self-confidence and determination to keep up with the others. It has helped the other children to learn from and accept Marcus’s special needs, as they are learning to support him and assist him only when he needs it.

types of relationships among personnel, and no one model is appropriate for all children.

- An *itinerant model* is the most common. Services are provided by teachers and therapists who travel to the inclusive setting in which the child is participating and provide the IEP-related services in that setting. The itinerant provider may work with the child or with a group of children including that child. Consultation with personnel who will be responsible for implementing the intervention in that setting is an important part of itinerant service.
- A *blended model* is one in which personnel with different areas of expertise-and usually funded under different funding streams-are co-located and work together within the same setting. This blended approach can be useful for combining children from two or more separate programs within the same classroom. Personnel work together to plan and implement the daily routines and activities of the program, ensuring that the needs and goals of children with disabilities are addressed within the overall context and curriculum.
- A *team-based model* can be useful for achieving inclusion. One lead teacher works with a team that may include another teacher, therapists, and other staff members who are present in the setting for varying periods of time. The team as a whole plans for the classroom group, including strategies to address the goals of each child with an IEP. Team members may spend some time in the setting implementing individualized interventions within daily routines or in small groups.

Contracted and consulting personnel must comply with conditions and standards of the IEP and the district.

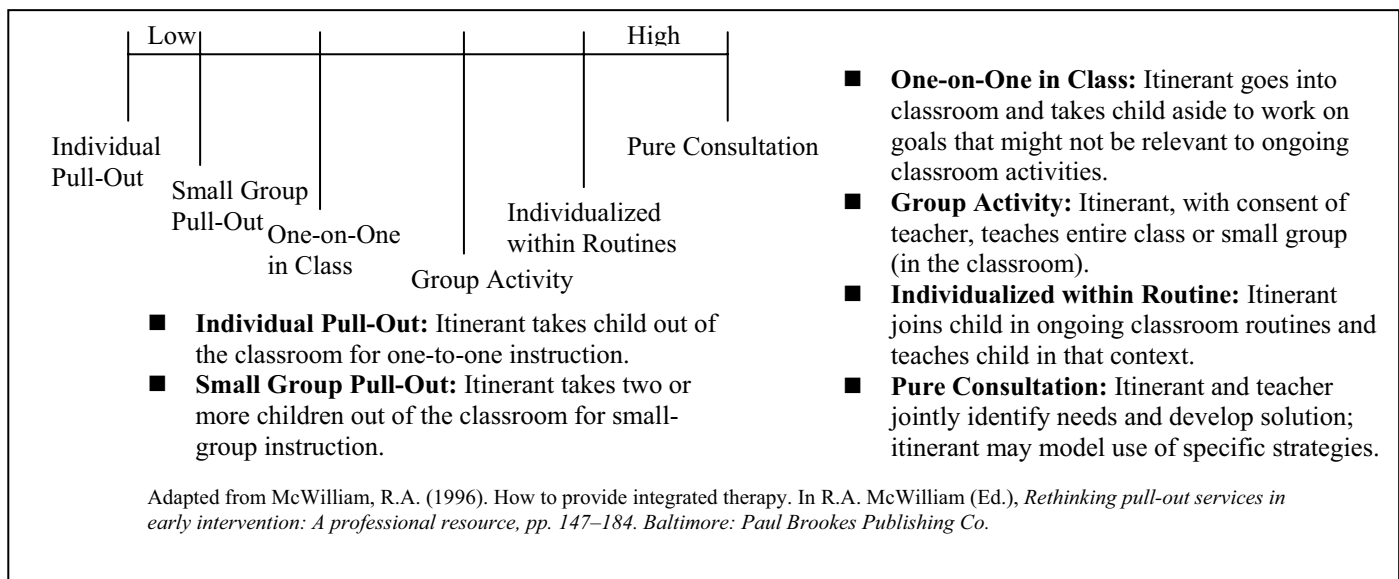
A transdisciplinary team example might consist of professionals from early childhood special education, early childhood education speech/language therapy, occupational therapy, social work, and psychology. Professionals teach one another the skills needed to accomplish the desired goals for the child with disabilities. For example, a physical therapist may train a parent or classroom teacher to implement specific interventions on a day-to-day basis. Ongoing assistance is provided by the team. Typically, the transdisciplinary team leader is the teacher who is responsible for integrating the team's recommendations into the ongoing classroom routine.

Suggestions for Successful Collaboration

Negotiation and discussion of when, where, what, and how regarding all aspects of providing services will be critical, and will need to occur regularly as staff members are developing relationships that support each other and the children in the inclusive setting.

- Do not focus only on direct service, but establish guidelines for indirect services, planning, and consultation time.
- Do not blindly accept recommendations for therapy, but ask referral sources to specify only areas of need.
- Ensure that families understand that time spent planning and consulting with their child’s teachers can be as beneficial to the child as direct service.
- Have specialists apply their expertise to classroom routines.
- Have teachers incorporate specialized interventions within their classroom routines.
- Ensure that specialists and teachers each understand their roles, responsibilities, and expectations.
- Support classroom teachers in the development of a daily schedule and lesson plans so specialists can plan how they will deliver their services.
- Ensure that interventions are functional.
- Ensure that specialists and teachers have adequate time for reciprocal consultation.
- Arrange for itinerant staff and teachers to jointly attend in-service training.

Using itinerant staff as consultants can be very effective. However, it is the responsibility of the team to plan and consider how services are delivered and how the special education or related service delivery affects inclusion. This graphic and the description by McWilliam demonstrate a continuum of low levels of inclusion to high levels of inclusion in a collaborative early childhood setting.



Building Collaborative Relationships

The building of collaborative relationships emerges as a primary key to achieving high-quality inclusive services. In any setting using any of the program models described, relationships among personnel as well as relationships with families may take many forms.

Collaboration is an ongoing process as relationships are established and nurtured over time. In collaborative consultation, all partners are givers and receivers of information, which involves taking on roles that may be new for them. All partners have important roles and bring expertise that contributes to achieving common goals for children.

Collaboration is not easy. Issues may arise because of different philosophies about intervention or inclusion. Other issues come from different ideas about how young children learn and develop. Roles and responsibilities may not be well understood.

Collaboration requires adequate time to meet, respect for one another's contributions, trust, effective communication, and participation of all team members. Time, financial, and other constraints on collaboration can be overcome only with creative ways of organizing and funding roles and services. Turf issues or differences in philosophy require time and support for joint training activities and team building. Support of administrators is critical to the effectiveness of collaboration.

When special education is provided, or itinerant staff members work with children in community settings, documentation that is meaningful to both programs is essential. Appendix E provides sample documentation that programs can use for outlining the activities that have been conducted for a child prior to the referral and through the referral process. Taking these steps with records helps care givers to understand the needs of the child, what has been tried, and what works.

The samples provided in Appendix F are used in one district to provide an outline of responsibilities in the team collaboration process. A note-taking form is included that can support the team in ongoing communication.

Interagency Agreements

Documentation of the commitments being made by all parties, including specific roles and responsibilities, is important in making collaboration effective. The interagency agreement should be beneficial to all parties involved if continuation of the agreement is expected.

An assurance that policies and procedures for handling emergencies and other safety concerns are documented and known by the staff is important.

Collaboration requires time, respect, trust, communication, and participation of all team members.

The interagency agreement provides necessary documentation.

The interagency agreement should include a plan for ensuring adequate personnel, including the hiring, training, and supervision of paraprofessionals. The agreement should document the ways in which program quality is reviewed on a periodic basis, and any requirements for licensure renewal. A tuition agreement may be developed that outlines the rate for time enrolled, the actual costs of additional expenses, who will pay the tuition, the schedule of payment, and the frequency and duration of services.

Special education services that may be provided through an agreement in a community setting may include the following:

- Itinerant special education and related services in a community preschool
- Assistive technology as required by the IEP
- Staff to consult to ensure IEP implementation of goals and objectives
- Transportation for instructional services or Least Restrictive Environment placement
- Tuition for community preschool
- Staff training to all collaborative agencies
- Compensation for regular education teacher to attend IEP meetings
- Paraprofessional support
- In-kind resources-space, supplies and materials, training, equipment
- Instructional support for private and public play groups
- Materials and/or instructional support in a library setting
- Materials and/or instructional support in a recreational setting
- Materials and/or instructional support in a church or religious setting

An example of an interagency agreement is provided in Appendix H. Items are shown in a format that can be used for discussion and then drafted according to the terms of the two parties.

An open mind and creative ideas during discussion, planning and the written development of an interagency agreement will allow everyone to explore the possibilities of new opportunities for children.

Agreements with Head Start

Head Start and Early Head Start are federally funded programs providing early childhood education and family support services. These programs are obligated to provide disability services to 10 percent of their enrolled

Head Start programs can work effectively for children with disabilities. Collaboration around referral systems, assessment, IEP development, sharing staff expertise, and regular consultation can create an array of environments that meet children's needs, are available near children's homes, include parents, and are provided with typically developing peers.

children. A statewide agreement for the collaboration of state agencies and state support for inclusive practice is in place. The districts will want to establish and review yearly the agreements for providing special education and IEP development and services at the local level for each child identified in Head Start or Early Head Start. These programs will have unique resources to offer and specific areas for consideration in an interagency agreement.

Head Start agencies have a responsibility for developing interagency agreements with school districts and other agencies within the grantee's service area for the coordination of services for children with disabilities. The agreements must address the following issues:

- Head Start participation in the public agency's Child Find plan under Part B of IDEA
- Joint training of staff and parents
- Procedures for referral for evaluations, IEP meetings, and placement decisions
- Transition
- Resource sharing
- Head Start commitment to provide the number of children receiving services under IEPs for the district child count report
- Any other items agreed to by both parties (Grantees must make efforts to update the agreements annually.)

A full range of placement options for young children may be available within a school district, especially a larger district. One Utah district has established preschool classrooms in 32 of 53 elementary schools. A combination of Head Start and community preschools is offered in both morning and afternoon settings. Each class enrolls 12–13 children without disabilities and up to five children with disabilities. A special educator and speech-language pathologist are assigned to several classrooms throughout the district to provide specialized instruction in the classroom in collaboration with teaching staff and other service providers, such as occupational therapists and vision and hearing itinerant staff.

Seeking Appropriate Learning Environments

Community Environment Possibilities

Rules and regulations provide the underpinnings of authority, but it is the IEP team's combination of caring and expertise that leads to development of placement that meet the needs of the child. It is important to know the range of services and placement alternatives available in your area. Providing special education services in a general education environment is a complex process influenced by communities, school districts, families, and the children themselves. Every IEP team must consider all of the perspectives when developing a placement which meets the criteria for a child's Least Restrictive Environment.



Early childhood services in the community might include the following opportunities:

- Head Start or Early Head Start
- Private preschool centers
- Public or private child care centers or family child care homes
- The child's home or neighborhood play group
- Recreation center or YMCA activity settings
- Public early childhood programs such as Smart Start
- School district-operated inclusive preschool programs
- Others unique to your community

Children benefit from playing and learning together.

Team members should be familiar with the philosophies that guide instructional practices at local sites, the kinds of curricula in operation, the staffing levels, the advantages and disadvantages of the physical facilities, and the program's values and attitudes regarding working with children with special needs in an inclusive setting.

The determination of placement must be made individually based on the IEP.

A review of settings in the community will be helpful in initiating discussions of placements in the continuum. The example of an interagency agreement provided in Appendix G can also be used as a format for discussing services and outlining responsibilities between the programs.

In considering **community placement alternatives**, these steps may be initiated:

- The district may want to develop a system for determining the appropriateness or adequacy of settings that can be used for the requirements of an inclusive setting.
- Provide assurance that the staff members at the setting are willing to participate in the review, and work with the special education staff and families to provide an appropriate special education program.

- Survey of the facility and observe the program.
- Participate in a dialogue with the staff.
- Discuss areas of potential interagency agreement such as cost, potential staff support, and material or equipment needs.

Assessing Potential Environments

When looking at settings in the community (or perhaps developing a new opportunity for children), the IEP team is advised to consider these factors identified by the Early Childhood Research Institute on Inclusion (ECRII):

- Is instruction modified so children with a range of abilities and needs can successfully participate?
- Are the unique qualities of individual children highlighted, respected, and celebrated?
- Is every child fully participating in the social and educational aspects of the classroom?
- Is the space arranged to provide support for learning and peer interaction?
- Are materials adapted to increase participation of all children?
- Are routine activities divided into smaller parts to reduce the number of steps needed to accomplish a task?
- Are materials and activities selected to reflect particular preferences and interests of individual children?
- Are adults and peers providing support through feedback, prompts, or hand-over-hand assistance?
- Is assistive equipment or technology provided to allow increased participation of all children?

More information about the Early Childhood Research Institute can be found at www.fpg.unc.edu/~ecrii/

Several guides to assist the team in determining appropriateness for consideration in IEP placements and describing the quality of an early childhood environment can be found in these resources:

An Administrator's Guide to Preschool Inclusion, Wolery & Odom, 2000, FPG Child Development Center, Early Childhood Research Institute on Inclusion.

Classroom Practice Inventory, An observation instrument based on the NAEYC's guidelines for developmentally appropriate practices for four- and five-year-old children

Preschool Assessment of Classroom Environment Scale—Revised, Raab & Dunst, 1997, Asheville, NC: Orlena Hawks Pucket Institute.

Early Childhood Environment Rating Scale, Harms, Clifford, & Cryer, FPG Child Development Institute, University of North Carolina, Carrboro, NC 27510.

Funding Resources



Federal and state regulations are written to ensure that every three- to five-year-old child with a disability receives his/her *free and appropriate education* in the least restrictive environment as designated in the IEP. This means that services for special education must be provided at no cost to the family. The regulations were never intended to create barriers that limit opportunities for three- to five-year-olds with disabilities to be educated with their nondisabled peers. However, when public programs are not typically funded for children during the preschool years, many people perceive that barriers exist to providing preschool education with nondisabled children.

A combination of federal funds under IDEA 2004, Part B, Section 619 and other state and local funds are used to pay for special education services for preschool children. The law permits school districts to contract or make agreements with other public or private schools and agencies to provide special education services in the least restrictive environment to three- to five-year-old children with disabilities.

The provision of child care is **not** considered part of a child’s free and appropriate public education. IEP teams will be responsible for differentiating between an IEP-driven early childhood special education service and child care.

Federal regulations state that a district does not have to pay the cost of education, including special education and related services, of a child with a disability at a private school or facility if the district made free and appropriate education available to the child and the parents instead elect to place the child in a private setting.

The following are some options that can be considered in providing funding of special education services in inclusive community settings:

- Tuition to provide appropriate services as described in the

Braiding funding sources can provide new and unique opportunities for early childhood inclusion.

Allyssa, who has Down syndrome, began attending a Montessori preschool program while receiving early intervention services. The transition plan was developed, and plans were being made for the IEP placement to be provided in the district special education program. Allyssa’s parents wanted to continue her in the Montessori preschool, where she was following routines and other children were relating positively to her. They felt that dual placement with a half day in each program would be confusing to Allyssa, and that the district program wouldn’t meet her needs. At the Montessori preschool, she would have peer models and would expand verbal communication and play skills, which were the primary goal areas in her IEP. Because there was no option in the district for an environment that would meet those goals, the district developed a payment plan to cover a portion of Allyssa’s tuition at the Montessori preschool. Monthly meetings arranged and paid for by the district ensured consistency of learning and tracked goal progress. The district provided speech therapy at the preschool weekly, to include consultations with the preschool teacher. For Allyssa, the Montessori preschool is the most appropriate, least restrictive environment.

IEP

- Cost of staff development activities specific to the needs of three- to five-year-olds requiring special education, which might include funding for substitutes or overtime
- Transportation of the children to and from inclusive settings (Families that are to be reimbursed for such transportation must be reimbursed for the actual cost.)
- Expenditures for assistive technology devices or special equipment specified in the IEP
- Special education and related service personnel to provide and offer consultation services as required by the IEP

Depending on the child's needs, funds such as Head Start, Title I, at-risk funds, and others can be used in combination with special education funds to support the child's service in a least restrictive environment. Appendix H, Full Range of Services, provides resources on settings and environments for consideration in planning and expanding opportunities for the settings in which children can be served.

Districts also have the option to develop tuition-based preschool programs in order to enroll nondisabled children from the community. This may be an appropriate option in some communities where there are few community-based early childhood programs and where a special education program has already been developed. Tuition paid by families of nondisabled children, along with funding through grants or other private sources, may provide the revenue necessary to expand opportunities for an inclusive preschool setting and a least restrictive environment.

A bibliography of resources that can be used in developing and funding inclusion options is provided in Appendix 9.

Appendices

- A. Common Terms and Definitions**
- B. Sample ESY Form**
- C. Inclusion/Mainstreaming**
- D. ESY**
 - a. Policies for Parents—Sample**
 - b. Budget—Sample**
- E. Pre-Referral Documentation**
- F. Team Collaboration**
- G. Interagency Agreement**
- H. Descriptions of Full Range of Services**
- I. Online Resources**

Appendix A

Common Terms and Definitions

Common Terms and Definitions

Many terms have different meanings across states and programs. The following, to the maximum degree possible, follow federal definitions.

Age-Appropriate Educational Activities: Early childhood development standards define what children should know and be able to do by certain age levels. The materials, equipment and activities provided for children should reflect the learning needs of the age of the children served and the expected skills for that age level.

Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) : A law that took effect in 1992 that defines “disability” and prohibits discrimination by employers, by any facility open to the general public, and by state and local public agencies that provide such services as transportation (public Law 101-336).

Caregivers: The people who spend significant amounts of time with the child, such as parents, child care providers, and teachers.

Child Find (CF): A component of IDEA that requires local school districts to actively locate children, birth to age 21, suspected to have disabilities and be eligible for special education, and who reside in their jurisdiction.

Developmental disability: A substantially limiting physical or mental impairment that affects basic life activities such as hearing, seeing, speaking, walking, caring for oneself, learning, or working.

Developmentally appropriate practice: Teaching in ways that match the way children develop and learn. According to the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC), developmentally appropriate practice provides children with opportunities to learn and practice newly acquired skills. It offers challenges just beyond the level of their present mastery and it takes place "in the context of a community where children are safe and valued, where their physical needs are met, and where they feel psychologically secure" (Bredekamp & Copple 1997, pp. 14–15).

Due process: In special education, due process refers to a process for resolving a dispute between the family and the public school district related to the identification, evaluation, educational placement, or free appropriate public education of a child with disabilities.

Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA): The federal law that provides the legal authority for early intervention and special education services for children birth to age 21. Part B outlines services for children ages three to 21. Part C outlines services for children birth to age three.

Early Intervention (EI): A collection of services provided by public and private agencies and designed by law to support eligible children and families in enhancing a child's potential for growth and development from birth to age three. In Utah, this program is called Baby Watch.

Extended School Year (ESY): The delivery of special education and related services provided during the summer vacation or other periods when school is not in session. The purpose of ESY services is to prevent a child with a disability from losing previously learned skills. The IEP team must consider the need for extended school year services annually and must describe those services specifically with goals and objectives. Not all special education students require an extended school year. Extended school year services must be individually crafted.

Family: Two or more individuals, one of whom is an adult and the other a child, who are bound to each other through birth, adoption, or guardianship. Every family is different, and families define themselves differently.

Family Education Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA): A federal law that protects the privacy and transfer of student education records.

Free and Appropriate Public Education (FAPE): An individualized education program that is designed to meet the child's unique needs and from which the child receives educational benefit. The educational services must be free of charge to the family.

Inclusion: Inclusion, as a value, supports the right of all children, regardless of abilities, to participate actively in natural settings and classroom programs within their communities and schools. Inclusion means full and successful access to health, social, educational, and other support services that promote full participation in family and community life and in education.

General curriculum (preschool): The set of activities planned and designed to support the education and development of young children in an early childhood program. The activities encourage growth and development in all areas of speech and language skills, large and small motor development, self-help skills, social and behavioral skills, general knowledge, literacy and numeracy development. The curriculum should be based on an understanding of early childhood development, individual children's interests and the culture of the children participating in the program. The development of a curriculum and supporting activities should be based on a philosophical model of learning and child development that is effective and validated.

Head Start: A federal program started in 1965 aimed at providing a comprehensive preschool program for children ages three to five from low-income families. Planned activities are designed to address individual needs and to help children attain their potential in growth and mental and physical development before starting school. Ten percent of enrollment is required to be for children with disabilities.

Health Insurance Portability Accountability Act (HIPAA): Federal regulation that outlines the confidentiality and protection of medical records.

Individualized Education Program (IEP): A written statement of a child's current level of educational performance and an individualized plan, including the goals, specific services to be received, the standards and timelines for evaluation progress, and the amount and degree to which the child will participate with typically developing peers (inclusion/Least Restrictive

Environment). It is required by the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) for all children eligible for special education.

IEP team: The IEP is made up of the child's parents, special education teacher, a general education teacher, and a representative of the LEA. Other team members may include related service providers, professionals who evaluated the child and others with knowledge about the child. The members of the team develop the initial IEP and meet subsequently to review progress and make changes in the written plan. Parents must be included as members of this team.

Individual Family Service Plan (IFSP): The written document that defines the early intervention services provided to the child (birth to age three) and family. The program is designed meet the needs of the child and the family, and is based on family-identified priorities.

Interagency agreement: A document signed by authorized representatives of at least two agencies outlining mutually agreed up on responsibilities to perform certain duties under specified conditions.

Least Restrictive Environment (LRE): To the maximum extent appropriate, students with disabilities, including students in public or private institutions or other care facilities, are educated with students who are not disabled. Special classes, separate schooling, or other removal of students with disabilities from the regular educational environment occurs only if the nature or severity of the disability is such that education in regular classes with the use of supplementary aids and services cannot be achieved satisfactorily.

Local Education Agency (LEA): A public school district or public charter school operating in accordance with statutes, regulations, and policies of the Utah State Office of Education.

Natural environment: The natural or everyday settings for the child. These are places where the child would be if he/she did not have a special developmental concern. It is where all children would be (for example, home, child care, parks, etc.).

Occupational Therapist (OT): A licensed professional who provides therapy services based on engagement in meaningful activities of daily life such as self-care skills, education, recreation, work, or social interaction.

Paraprofessional (paraeducator): A trained person who assists a certified or licensed professional as an aide.

Physical Therapist (PT): A licensed professional devoted to improving a person's physical abilities through activities that strengthen muscular control and motor coordination.

Preschool special education: An educational program that is designed to meet the unique developmental needs of an individual child with a disability who is three, four, or five years of age. It is a child-focused educational effort. Sometimes at the state level it is referred to as Section 619 of the law.

Related Services: Transportation and such developmental, corrective, and other supportive services determined by an IEP team to be required to assist a student with a disability to benefit from special education. Such services include speech-language pathology; audiology services; psychological services; physical and occupational therapy; recreation, including therapeutic recreation; early identification and assessment of disabilities in students; counseling services, including rehabilitation counseling; orientation and mobility services; interpreters; interveners; and medical services for diagnostic or evaluation purposes. The term also includes school health services, social work services in schools, and parent counseling and training.

Screening: The process of looking at a child's development to find out if there are any areas of concern. It is used to recommend children for more in-depth evaluation.

Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act: A federal law that protects the civil rights of individuals with disabilities. This law is closely intertwined with IDEA. Children with disabilities who are not eligible for special education may qualify for accommodations under Section 504.

Special education: Specially designed instruction, at no cost to the parents, to meet the unique needs of a student with a disability, including instruction conducted in the classroom, in the home, in hospitals and institutions, and in other settings; and instruction in physical education. The term includes speech-language pathology services and may include other related services, travel training, and applied technology education, if they meet the definition of special education. A major goal of special education is to teach the skills and knowledge the child needs to be as independent as possible. Special education programs focus on academics and social and emotional performance, and may also include therapy and other related services to help the child overcome difficulties in all areas of development. These services may be provided in a variety of educational settings but are required by IDEA to be delivered in the least restrictive environment.

Speech Language Pathologist (SLP): A trained therapist who provides treatment to help a person develop or improve articulation, communication skills, and oral-motor skills. Also helps children with speech errors and/or those with difficulties in language patterns.

State Education Agency (SEA): The State Board of Education or other agency responsible for state supervision of public elementary and secondary schools.

Transition: The movement from one service, location, or program to another. Young children with disabilities may transition at age three from early intervention to preschool special education services. Children may transition at age five from early childhood special education services to a public school or kindergarten program.

Appendix B

Sample ESY Form

STUDENT ELIGIBILITY FOR EXTENDED SCHOOL YEAR PROGRAM

Special Education Services

Extended School Year (ESY) services are designed to enable a student with disabilities to maintain progress on current IEP goals when data indicate that without ESY services, the student would receive little benefit from the special education program. The IEP goals to be addressed by the ESY program are determined by documentation of significant regression during instructional breaks and significant amount of time needed for the student to recover the pre-break level of functioning or documentation of a critical point in student learning.

Student's Name _____ DOB _____ Classification _____
 Address _____ City _____
 Parent/Guardian Name _____
 Home Phone _____ Work Phone _____ Emergency Phone _____
 School _____ Teacher _____ Today's Date _____

1. After a break in instruction (3 days or more) does the student regress on one or more goals? ___ Yes ___ No
2. Does the student require a significant amount of time to recover the pre-break level of functioning? ___ Yes ___ No
3. Does the student require ESY services to maintain benefit from his/her special education program? ___ Yes ___ No
4. Is the student at a critical point in learning so that foundation skills might have to be retaught if not maintained? ___ Yes ___ No

- If No was checked for all questions above, the student does not qualify for ESY services.**
- If Yes was checked for any question above, complete section a. OR b. as appropriate:**

a. The IEP team evaluated the need for ESY services proactively, by reviewing progress data on IEP goals and objectives for which regression was anticipated/suspected after breaks in instruction or represented a critical point in learning.

Complete the information below; attach additional sheets if necessary.

Goal: _____ Objective: _____

Pre-Break Summary _____ Post-Break Summary _____

Status Summary (after break): Student made progress Student made no change Student regression not significant
 Student regression significant (e.g., 8 or more weeks to recoup) Critical point in student learning

Goal: _____ Objective: _____

Pre-Break Summary _____ Post-Break Summary _____

Status Summary (after break): Student made progress Student made no change Student regression not significant
 Student regression significant (e.g., 8 or more weeks to recoup) Critical point in student learning

b. The IEP team evaluated the need for ESY retroactively, through:

Historical data Pre/post testing Observation/charting
 Other _____

Attach data to document.

EXTENDED SCHOOL YEAR PROGRAM SERVICE DELIVERY PLAN

Student _____ School _____ Today's Date _____

Attach copies of the student's current IEP including cover and signature pages with maintenance goals and objectives highlighted. Also attach a copy of the student's health care plan if he/she has one.

The student requires the following ESY services to benefit from his/her special education program:

- Special education instruction _____
- Speech/language instruction _____
- Special education transportation _____
- Other _____

Provide a brief description of the student's special needs:

Type	Amount/Duration (e.g., 10 minutes 1x weekly)	Comments
Parent Consultation		
Parent Training		
Home Learning Packet		
Home Learning Packet with Teacher Monitoring		
Related Services		
Itinerant Special Education Services		
School-Based Services		

_____ Student **does not qualify** for ESY services and will not participate.

_____ Student **does** qualify for ESY services and **will _____ will not _____ participate.**

Services listed constitute the student's proposed ESY service plan, and when signed will become the student's ESY plan.

Parent _____

Gen. Ed. Teacher _____

Speech Language Pathologist _____

Other _____

Spec. Ed. Teacher _____

LEA _____

Other _____

Other _____

Additional Goal Sheet for Determining ESY Eligibility

Special Education Services

Student _____ School _____ Today's Date _____

The IEP team evaluated the need for ESY service, proactively, by reviewing progress data on IEP goals and objectives for which regression was anticipated/suspected after breaks in instruction or represented a critical point in learning.

Complete the information below (attach additional sheets if necessary).

Goal:	Objective:
Pre-Break Summary	Post-Break Summary
Status Summary (after break): <input type="checkbox"/> Student made progress <input type="checkbox"/> Student made no change <input type="checkbox"/> Student regression not significant <input type="checkbox"/> Student regression significant (e.g., 8 or more weeks to recoup) <input type="checkbox"/> Critical point in student learning	

Goal:	Objective:
Pre-Break Summary	Post-Break Summary
Status Summary (after break): <input type="checkbox"/> Student made progress <input type="checkbox"/> Student made no change <input type="checkbox"/> Student regression not significant <input type="checkbox"/> Student regression significant (e.g., 8 or more weeks to recoup) <input type="checkbox"/> Critical point in student learning	

Goal:	Objective:
Pre-Break Summary	Post-Break Summary
Status Summary (after break): <input type="checkbox"/> Student made progress <input type="checkbox"/> Student made no change <input type="checkbox"/> Student regression not significant <input type="checkbox"/> Student regression significant (e.g., 8 or more weeks to recoup) <input type="checkbox"/> Critical point in student learning	

Goal:	Objective:
Pre-Break Summary	Post-Break Summary
Status Summary (after break): <input type="checkbox"/> Student made progress <input type="checkbox"/> Student made no change <input type="checkbox"/> Student regression not significant <input type="checkbox"/> Student regression significant (e.g., 8 or more weeks to recoup) <input type="checkbox"/> Critical point in student learning	

Appendix C

Inclusion/Mainstreaming

Inclusion/Mainstreaming

What is Inclusion?

Inclusion, as a value, supports the right of all children, regardless of their diverse abilities, to participate actively in natural settings within their communities. A natural setting is one in which the child would spend time if he or she had not had a disability. Such settings include, but are not limited to, home and family, playgroups, child care, Head Start and pre-kindergarten programs, schools, and neighborhood activities.

Why Inclusion?

Life is an integrated experience. A child with disabilities deserves to participate in normal life experiences to which he or she is entitled by virtue of being, first and foremost, a child.

Everyone benefits. We learn from each other and develop an appreciation for the differences among people.

It works. Research proves that with proper supports, children with disabilities grow both cognitively and socially.

It sticks. Preschool placement has been shown to predict subsequent placement at school age. Children from segregated preschool setting are more likely than those in integrated settings to retain their special education eligibility status and be placed in segregated classrooms when entering public schools.

It's backed by the law. The Individuals with Disabilities Education Act of 1990 (IDEA) and the Amendments to the Education of the Handicapped Act of 1986 embrace the concept that early intervention and education services are provided in natural environments where preschoolers without disabilities would participate.

What Makes Inclusion Successful?

A commitment to the philosophy of inclusion. A shared belief in the equal value of all students. Careful assessment and planning.

Collaboration. Equal partners among providers and specialist; peers involved as supports and friends; parents interacting with child care providers.

Flexibility. Teaching models altered, curricula adapted, and unique needs addressed. ALL must be willing to accept compromise and try new situations.

Leadership. A positive attitude and a supportive environment set the tone. Teachers who are encouraged by their supervisors are often the most successful initiators of change.

Peer relationships. Positive role models and the possibility of friendships.

Support. Everything necessary to meet the goals is established in the IFST or IEP: additional personnel, a peer support network, adapted curricula fluid teaching methods, physical accommodations, and needed therapies.

Transition planning. Appropriate provider training; a child familiar with his or her surroundings.

What Inclusion is NOT

It is **NOT** just putting a child with disabilities into a new group and expecting friendships to develop. Social interactions between children with disabilities and their peers without disabilities may not occur spontaneously or naturally. A systematic way of promoting social interactions and friendships must be built into the child care structure (e.g., verbalizations and prompts by staff promote social exchanges).

It is **NOT** expecting a child to do without the full array of support services he/she needs. Active involvement of appropriate support personnel is necessary for successful inclusion to occur. Placing a child in an integrated setting does not imply that therapeutic services provided by any ongoing specialist or consultant should not be provided. Their services are essential for a child to reach his or her full potential.

It is **NOT** about acting alone. A strong partnership is a “must” between the child care provider and the support personnel. Frequent dialogue and cooperation are needed in implementing and modifying the education program and the environment. The support personnel need to be a resource to the child care provider as well as to the child and family.

It is **NOT** mainstreaming. Inclusion is more than mainstreaming. Mainstreaming implies that a child from a special education class visits the regular class for specific, usually non-academic, subjects. Inclusion means that a child with disabilities is a part of a regular group or class.

Information provided by Openings—Room for Everyone: Including ALL Children in Neighborhood Child Care, August 1995, The Kennedy Center, Inc., Bridgeport, CT.

Appendix D

Establishing a Tuition-Based Program Example

a. Policies for Parents—Sample

b. Budget—Sample

School District Preschool Tuition and Volunteer Policies for Parents 2005–2006

Tuition Policy

1. Parents need to fill out tuition slip completely and send it in each month to

Sample School District
100 Sunshine Lane
Rainbow Valley, Utah 11111

Make checks payable to Sample School District.

2. **New Students**—For students who start after the first of the month, tuition will be prorated.
3. Tuition will be due the tenth of the month for that month. The year's tuition has been divided into nine equal payments. *Therefore, the same amount is due each month including November, December, and May although the children will not be attending the full month.*
4. Delinquent notices will be sent with the child each week after the tenth until the account is brought current.
5. **Late Fee**—There will be a late charge of \$5.00 if the tuition is more than 10 days past due.
6. A **two-month tuition delinquency** will result in a notice mailed to the child's home that tuition must be brought up to date before the termination date. (Under unusual circumstances, arrangements can be made for catching up as quickly as possible.) A copy of this notice will also be sent to the teacher. If the tuition is not made current or arrangements are not made to do so, that child will not be able to attend preschool any longer. A \$10.00 re-registration fee will be charged if the child returns to preschool.
7. When a child is out for illness, vacation, etc., a place is still held for him/her in the classroom. Therefore, **tuition is still required**. A child can withdraw and then reinstate at a later date if there is room in the class. There will be a re-registration fee of \$10.00 due at that time.
8. When withdrawing your child from preschool, you must notify the teacher and the tuition secretary at the preschool (555-222-3333).
9. There will be a \$10.00 charge for checks returned for insufficient funds.

A 10 percent discount is being offered this year for paying the full year's tuition.

Volunteer Policy

If a volunteer parent is unable to give the days(s) agreed upon in the volunteer contract or arrangements made with the teacher to make up volunteer days, he/she will be sent a bill for the difference in class tuition for that month.

Two-Day Preschool

1. Cost for the two-day class with one volunteer day is \$57.00 per month. Cost for the two-day class with no volunteer day is \$75.00 per month.
2. A volunteer day is worth \$18.00.

Three-Day Preschool

1. Cost for the three-day class with two volunteer days is \$65.00 per month. Cost for the three-day class with no volunteer day is \$87.00 per month.
2. Each volunteer day is worth \$12.00.

Establishing a Tuition-based Program Budget—2005–2006

Community Preschool

Description	Revenue	Budget
Preschool Tuitions		
Tuition from Special Education		
Salaries		
Preschool Teachers		
Preschool/Head Start		
Preschool Supervisors		
Fringe Benefits @ 35%		
Supplies and Materials		
Printing		
Mileage		
Totals		

Preschool Special Education

Description	Revenue	Budget
State Preschool		
Extended Year		
Federal Preschool Flowthrough		
Federal Special Education 3–21		
Building Capacity		
Retirement and Social Security		
Medicaid		
Salaries		
Licensed Special Educators		
Self-Contained Assistants		
Classroom Assistants		
Administrative		
2003 Step Increases @ 3.5%		
Fringe Benefits		
Professional Services		
Mileage		
Preschool Tuitions		
Bus Assistants		
Supplies and Materials		
Indirect Charges		
Totals		

Appendix E

Pre-referral Documentation

Pre-Referral Documentation

Name of Student: _____

Head Start Intervention Checklist

(To be used when considering and initial Special Education referral)

- _____ Preschool At-Risk Intervention Documentation
- _____ Intervention Sheets (at least one for each area of concern)
- _____ Information Sheet (complete)
- _____ Home Language Survey
 If Primary Home Language is Other Than English (PHLOTE):
 _____ IPT Results
- _____ Brigance

For Office Use Only:

Date Rec'd _____

- Information is complete
- Referral generated and a permission to evaluate form give to Head Start on _____

- Information is not complete
- Request for additional information was made on _____
Information requested: _____

- Additional information received on _____

- Permission to evaluate received on _____

District Representative Signature

Date

Preschool At-Risk Intervention Documentation

Student _____ DOB _____ Date _____

Location _____ Teacher _____

Primary language of student _____ Primary language in home _____

Parent notified of concern(s) on: _____ By: _____

Developmental area(s) of concern (mark all that apply):

- Cognitive: the ability to think, reason, and conceptualize
- Receptive Language: the ability to understand
- Expressive Language: the ability to express thoughts and ideas
- Articulation: the ability to be understood by others when speaking
- Fine Motor: the ability to control the small muscles of the body
- Gross Motor: the ability to control the large muscles of the body
- Self-Help: the ability to use skills to be independent in taking care of feeding, dressing, and personal toileting needs
- Social/Emotional: the ability to engage in meaningful social interactions
- Vision: the ability to see
- Hearing: the ability to hear

Note: There must be an intervention sheet attached for each box marked above.

Assessment Information:

Date of vision screening _____ Pass Fail (Attach information re: Action Taken)

Date of hearing screening _____ Pass Fail (Attach information re: Action Taken)

Screening or standardized assessment has (attach copies) has not been completed on this student

Health/medical concern(s) _____

Signature/Title of Referring Individual _____ Date _____

Intervention Sheet

Student: _____ Area of Concern: _____

Intervention Implemented By: _____

Date Intervention Began: _____ Date Intervention Completed: _____

This intervention was attempted because I am concerned about (be specific):

I tried to help this student by (describe plan):

Improvement made while implementing this intervention:

enough that I no longer have a concern

some, but I am still concerned because _____

very little

none

Additional Comment(s): _____

Signature/Title _____ **Date** _____

Once the interventions have been tried and have proven to be ineffective over time, contact the Head Start Disability Specialist.

1. Model the correct pronunciation of the sound through paraphrasing.

Dates attempted:

Results:

2. Ask student to imitate you as you make the sound in isolation (e.g., rrrrrr, ssssss, vvvvvv).

Can the student do this?

Dates attempted:

Results:

3. Ask student to imitate you as you say words containing the sound.

Can the student do this?

Dates attempted:

Results:

4. Make requests of the student to speak more clearly, slowly, loudly, etc.

Can the student do this?

Dates attempted:

Results:

5. Ask student to correct himself/herself when error is made.

Can the student do this?

Dates attempted:

Results:

Information Sheet

Please complete the following information. Each line must be completed. Missing information will result in the return of your packet.

Demographic Information

Student: _____

DOB: _____

Address: _____

Zip Code: _____

Phone: _____

Mother: _____ N/A

Father: _____ N/A

School Information

Site: _____

Session: A.M. P.M. All Day

Classroom #: _____

Teacher: _____

School District: Ogden Weber Other _____

Special circumstances that the district should be aware of: None

Preschool Student Home Language Survey

Student Last: _____ First: _____ Middle Initial: _____

Date of Birth: _____ Sex: Male Female

Please answer the following questions:

Language

What is the first language the student learned to speak? _____

What is the language spoken most often by the student? _____

What is the language spoken most often in your home? _____

Has the student been influenced by a language other than English? Yes No

If Yes, what language? _____

Parent Signature/Date: _____

Please list in order of age all brothers and sisters living in the home:

Name	Gender	Age	Birthdate	School Currently Attending
_____	M F	_____	_____	_____
_____	M F	_____	_____	_____
_____	M F	_____	_____	_____
_____	M F	_____	_____	_____

For School Use Only

Comments: _____

Student is PHLOTE YES NO

Referred for IPT Testing YES NO LEA's Initials _____

ENCUESTA DEL LENGUAJE MATERNO DE ESTUDIANTE EN PRESCOLAR

Estudiante: Apellido: _____ Nombre: _____
 Fecha de Nacimiento: _____ Sexo: M F

Por Favor conteste las siguientes preguntas:

Lenguaje

Cual es el primer lenguaje que el estudiante aprendió a hablar? _____

Cual es el language que más seguido habla el estudiante? _____

Cual es el lenguaje que más seguido se habla en su hogar? _____

El estudiante ha estado influenciado por un lenguaje diferente del Inglés? Si No

Si es Si, que lenguaje? _____

Firma del Padre/Fecha: _____

Por Favor, liste por orden de edad los hermanos y hermanas que viven en la casa:

Nombre	Sexo	Edad	Fecha Nacimiento	Escuela actual donde van
_____	M F	_____	_____	_____
_____	M F	_____	_____	_____
_____	M F	_____	_____	_____
_____	M F	_____	_____	_____

Sólo para uso de la escuela

Comentarios: _____

El estudiante es PHLOTE SI NO
 Turnado para prueba de IPT SI NO Iniciales de LEA _____

Appendix F

Team Collaboration

Team Collaboration

Team Members

- Consider the needs of every child at each meeting.
- Review behavior screening.
- Review ESI-R screening.
- Use the expertise of all team members.
- Establish family contact activities (who, when, and where).
- Use voice mail or e-mail to communicate pertinent information between meetings (e.g., child moves, death in family, anything that immediately affects child).
- Arrive on time and attend the entire meeting.
- Be willing to problem-solve and communicate.
- Help each other identify roles, responsibilities, and talents.
- Determine who will facilitate, record, and be time keeper.

Hold team meetings at assigned times NO MATTER WHAT!

WE ALL HAVE A LEGAL RESPONSIBILITY TO KEEP CONFIDENTIALITY.

Teacher

- Prepare the classroom for the team meeting.
- Lead discussion about who will facilitate the team meetings.
- Maintain team meeting notebook and bring to meetings.
- Get curriculum ready for the next month (not just the theme but the activities).
- Calendar items
- Problem attendance
- Updates on phone numbers, addresses, adds, drops, transfers, family concerns
- Classroom issues
- Understand the goals of ALL children.
- Be able to update team and report on disability goal progress for each child.
- Provide information behavior screening and ESI-R of children.
- Report of previous assignments.

Special Education Consultant/Speech Therapist

- Review calendar items.
- Provide updates on relevant information.
- Lead discussion on progress of IEP goals.
- Suggest ideas on ways to make accommodations, adaptations, or modifications to the curriculum.
- Report on previous assignments.

Family Service Worker

- Review calendar items.
- Provide updates on relevant information.
- Provide relevant information from home visits, child/family history.
- Discussion on resources the family have been given or needs
- Report on previous assignments.

Other specialists

- Provide input on needed information.

This form must be completed and kept in the team meeting notebook.

Team Meeting Notes

Date: _____

Team Attendance: _____

Facilitator: _____

Recorder: _____

Time Keeper: _____

Calendar items

Update on addresses, phones, transfers, additions, and drops

Classroom attendance

Report on previous assignments

Lesson plan discussion (monthly preparation)

Target goals of children with IEPs (brainstorming on strategies)

<i>Child</i>	<i>Skill Accommodation</i>	<i>Responsible Person/Assignment</i>	<i>Timeline</i>

Target goals for non-IEP children, discussion of facilities, or other

<i>Child</i>	<i>Skill Accommodation</i>	<i>Responsible Person/Assignment</i>	<i>Timeline</i>

Referrals to BART (include three documented interventions)

<i>Child</i>	<i>Person Responsible</i>	<i>Timeline</i>
	Complete in-house referral _____	_____
	Parent notification _____	_____
	Three interventions outlined _____	_____
	Follow-up on referral _____	_____

Referrals to Special Ed (include three documented interventions)

<i>Child</i>	<i>Person Responsible</i>	<i>Timeline</i>
	At-risk documentation form _____	_____
	Form signed by LEA _____	_____
	Parent notification _____	_____
	Referral to special ed _____	_____
	Follow-up on referral _____	_____

Referrals to Health, Mental Health, and/or Family Needs

<i>Child</i>	<i>Person Responsible</i>	<i>Timeline</i>
	Complete in-house referral _____	_____
	Parent notification _____	_____
	Follow-up on referral _____	_____

Appendix G

Interagency Agreement

This sample is provided only as a guide to the type of topics to be considered in the development of a Memorandum of Understanding. Memoranda may include some or all of these topics.

Memorandum of Understanding
Between
_____ **School District**
AND
_____ **Community Program (Preschool, Childcare, Head Start)**

This Agreement is between _____ School District and _____ Community Program, to be in effect from _____ (start date), and will be reviewed on _____ (review date—often annually).

I. Purpose of Interagency Agreement

The purpose of this Agreement is to establish a cooperative method of providing services to preschool children with disabilities in a free and appropriate public education, as required by law, and in the least restrictive environment.

It is the intent that each Agency assumes the responsibility to communicate with the other and shares leadership responsibilities, and by doing so ensures that available resources are utilized in the most effective manner.

II. Responsibilities of the District

The responsibility of the District is to provide services to preschool children (age 3–5) with disabilities as mandated by the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act and revisions of 1997 and 2004.

The District is responsible for providing preschool children with disabilities a free and appropriate public education (FAPE), including the development and implementation of an Individual Education Plan (IEP), and providing services in the least restrictive environment, with an opportunity to interact with nondisabled peers to the maximum extent appropriate.

III. Responsibilities of the _____ Program

The responsibility of the Program is to provide a classroom-based program inclusive of children with and without disabilities; to provide such classroom play and learning opportunities in a developmentally and age-appropriate curriculum; and to provide a curriculum that includes readiness, literacy, numeracy, and social skills development in a manner that provides positive behavioral support for all children.

It is the responsibility of the Program to provide a clean and safe classroom, center, and playground, and to meet and maintain compliance with the regulations for child care licensing for the State of Utah.

It is the responsibility of the Program to provide qualified teachers and staff/child ratio that meet the requirements of child care licensing for the State of Utah.

It is the responsibility of the Program to provide adequate activities, toys, materials and equipment both in the classroom and on the playground, and to adapt or modify such activities or items for the needs of children with disabilities, with the support of the District to adapt or modify those activities or items.

IV. Program Description

District Contact Information

District Contact Person (Administrator): Name, Address, Phone, E-mail

District Person Responsible for Implementing Agreement: Name, Address, Phone, E-mail

Program Contact Information

Program Contact Person (Administrator): Name, Address, Phone, E-mail

Program Person Responsible for Implementing Agreement: Name, Address, Phone, E-mail

Provide any other information necessary to carry out this Agreement. This may include days and hours of operation, class schedules, and best times to contact each person.

V. Implementation of Services

Areas of consideration may include the following items. These will be specific to the nature of the collaboration. In some instances, the agreement will be specific to a small group of children, and for other agreements, the District and Program will collaborate in a broad range of services. This is the part of the agreement that will require collaboration and planning. There may need to be several sections of the agreement to cover the topics, depending on the nature of the collaboration.

1. Child Find, screening, referral, Multi-Disciplinary Evaluation
2. Individual Education Plan Development; involvement of Program in this process
3. Implementation and review of Individual Education Plan to include the strategies for collaboration model used by District staff (consultation, direct service, team teaching, etc.)
4. Strategies to be used by the Program in providing services; and support to be provided by District, to include resource sharing

5. Funding issues, tuition agreements, purchase of specialized materials or equipment
6. Transportation of children, accommodations needed for child safety
7. Communication and coordination with families
8. Systems for reporting changes and coordination, with both programs to review and modify services as needs change
9. Documentation of services, data collection, exchange of information
10. Transition planning and activities to be conducted if children leave the program or prepare to enter kindergarten

VI. Confidentiality

The District and the Program agree to maintain the confidentiality of information and written records of children served through this collaborative agreement as required by the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) and Family Education Right to Privacy Act (FERPA). The District and Program agree to provide continuous training and support to staff in both programs regarding confidentiality of children with disabilities, and to assure that all records regarding these children are maintained in a confidential manner as required by law and policy.

VII. Training and Technical Assistance

Describe training and technical assistance needs of staff from both the District and Program, and how those needs will be met.

Describe any training to be conducted jointly to benefit both staff groups.

Describe how the funding for training will be provided.

VIII. Timelines for Review of Agreement

Signatures of District Personnel Date
Responsible for Implementation

Signatures of Program Personnel Date
Responsible for Implementation

Appendix H

Online Resources

**To locate many resources and publications:
See NECTAC Clearinghouse on Early
Intervention and Early Childhood Special Education
at www.nectac.org/~pdfs/pubs/financemini.pdf**

Then look at all of the different abstracts under:

Minibibliography

**Selected Resources on Financing Early Childhood
Systems to Support Inclusive Options for Young
Children with Disabilities**