



OK Early Ed

OKLAHOMA STATE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION

SPECIAL EDUCATION

**PRESCHOOL
TRANSITION FOR
FAMILIES**

WHAT ARE PRESCHOOL SPECIAL EDUCATION SERVICES?

Preschool special education services are those provided by local education agencies (LEAs) to students ages three through five. These services are referred to in the Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act (IDEA) in Section 619.

School districts (LEAs) are responsible for providing services to children (ages 3 through 21) with special needs who have been determined eligible under the IDEA.

WHAT TO EXPECT:

Preschool transition simply refers to when a student transitions from an early intervention program such as SoonerStart, child care center, or home based care to the LEA (or school district).

If a preschool student, who is referred from SoonerStart, is potentially eligible for Part B services (school age services for students from ages 3 through 21), SoonerStart will send a notice to the school district and hold a transition planning conference (TPC) before the child's third birthday.

If the child is determined eligible for Special Education Services, an Individualized Education Program (IEP) must be developed and implemented for the child by his/her third birthday.

If a preschool student is self-referred (for families that have not received SoonerStart services), the child will be considered under Child Find and the school district will proceed with the eligibility determination process.

WHAT IS CHILD FIND?

The school district is responsible for establishing and implementing an ongoing Child Find system to locate, identify, and evaluate students suspected of having a disability. This system applies to students, birth through 21 years, who may need special education regardless of the severity of the disability. The Child Find system includes all students within the school district's geographic boundaries.

The Three Components of the Child Find system:

- **Locating** students who may have disabilities involves working with other agencies, and informing the general public of available special education services and the special education referral process.

A school district may publish an announcement in a newspaper or website, provide brochures to families at a school event, or place flyers in a healthcare facility.

- **Identifying** students who may have disabilities could include screenings or Coordinated Early Intervening Services (CEIS). These services are provided to students who need additional academic and/or behavioral supports to succeed in the school environment.

These supports include general education interventions, accommodations, and/or strategies. Some examples are: a school district may provide behavioral interventions to a non-disabled student who receives a certain number of disciplinary referrals or funding after-school tutoring for non-disabled students who score below "basic" on statewide assessments.

- **Evaluating** students who may have disabilities is achieved through a comprehensive evaluation. This comprehensive evaluation is completed to determine whether a student is eligible for special education services under the IDEA.

“Comprehensive” means that the evaluation must identify all of the student’s special education needs (whether or not commonly linked to the disability category being considered for the student). Eligibility requirements for school district services are different than those for SoonerStart.

WHAT HAPPENS WHEN A CHILD QUALIFIES FOR SPECIAL EDUCATION SERVICES?

If a child is eligible for special education services, a team will meet to develop an Individualized Education Program (IEP) for the child. The IEP team, which must include parents/guardians, will develop measurable annual goals for the child to address his/her identified needs and enable the child to progress in age-appropriate educational activities.

The IEP team will determine the services that are needed, the place in which the student will receive services, and the duration of services.

RESOURCES

- Visit the Oklahoma State Department of Education Office of Special Education (OSDE-SES) webpage at <https://sde.ok.gov/special-education> for more information on school age (Part B) and SoonerStart (Part C) services as well as other special education topics
- [Oklahoma Special Education Handbook](#)
- [Special Education Policies](#)
- [Special Education Process Guide](#)
- Child Development Resources
 - [Early Childhood Resources](#)
 - [Social-Emotional Development Guide](#)
 - [CDC Development Milestone Resource](#)

WHAT SERVICES AND RESOURCES MAY BE AVAILABLE FOR CHILDREN AGES THREE TO FIVE?

- Developmentally Delayed Preschool Classroom
- Speech-Language Pathology Services
- Occupational Therapy Services
- Physical Therapy Services
- Public Preschool
- Head Start
- Private Preschool
- Child Care Center
- Health Department Play Groups
- Native American Services
- Community Recreation Groups
- Others as determined by the IEP team

