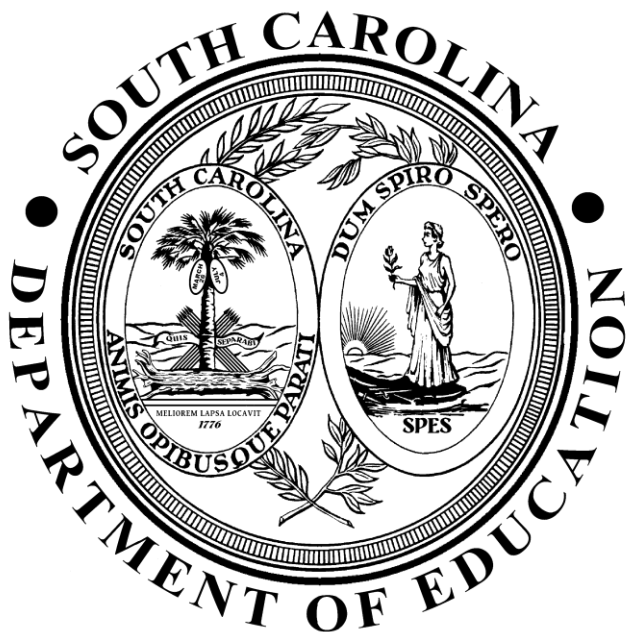


STATE OF SOUTH CAROLINA DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

MOLLY M. SPEARMAN
STATE SUPERINTENDENT OF EDUCATION



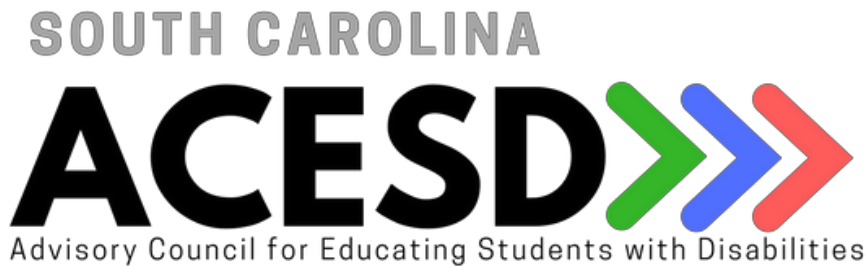
Report Summarizing Services Provided Under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) to Preschool Children with Disabilities 2018–19 School Year

Provided to the Interagency Coordinating Council, the Senate Finance Committee, the House Ways and Means Committee, the Senate Education Committee, and the House Education and Public Works

Pursuant to Act 86, Chapter 36 of Title 59 of
the Amended Code of Laws of South
Carolina, 1976

February 1, 2020

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February 1, 2020

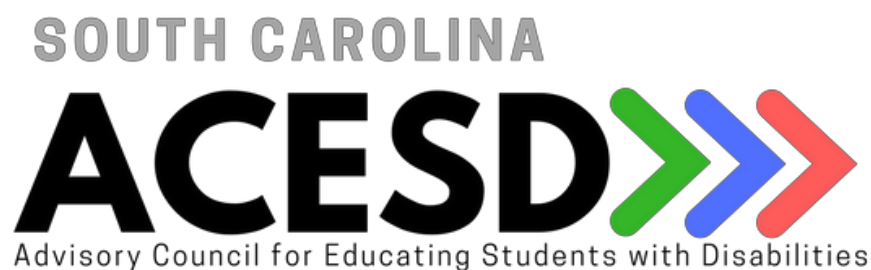
Governor Henry McMaster
President *Pro Tempore* Harvey S. Peeler
Speaker James H. Lucas
Speaker *Pro Tempore* Thomas E. Pope
Members of the General Assembly:

The preschool committee of the Advisory Council for Educating Students with Disabilities (ACESD) is pleased to present its 2020 Annual Report of services provided to children ages three through five, and corresponding recommendations. The committee is charged with the important responsibility of identifying and studying key issues in special education and early intervention and advising and assisting the South Carolina Department of Education (SCDE), Office of Special Education Services (OSES).

The 2020 Annual Report and resulting recommendations are pursuant to Act 86 of 1993, Chapter 36 of Title 59 of the Amended Code of Laws of South Carolina, 1976. The 2020 recommendations of the preschool committee of ACESD include the following:

Coordinated Professional Development. It is recommended that the SCDE (specifically its OSES with the Office of Early Learning and Literacy) continue scaling-up its provision of high-quality professional development opportunities using multiple methods including online modules, face-to-face presentations, webinars, and follow-up on-site collaborative consultations with feedback to practitioners and administrators. Professional development activities should be posted and archived on the SCDE website for future use whenever possible. It is further recommended that the SCDE pursue collaboration across early childhood sectors and agencies including early childhood education, special education, early care and education, Head Start, BabyNet, First Steps to School Readiness, and other early childhood service providers. A statewide implementation schedule for personnel in the multiple early childhood sectors should be developed based on an annual needs assessment that may include a statewide survey of practitioners and key administrators and practitioners in the multiple early care and education sectors. Professional development activities should be aligned with the evidence-based and evidence-informed recommendations, especially in the areas of:

- Behavioral guidance and social skill strategies;
- Curriculum implementation and formative assessment strategies (e.g., screenings, progress monitoring), especially with consideration of Universal Design for Learning, Early Childhood Multi-tiered System of Supports, and Response to Intervention;
- Meaningful family engagement strategies;
- South Carolina Early Learning Standards and access to the general education curriculum; and
- Augmentative and alternative communication methods, and use of assistive technology.



Procedural Guidance and Training for General Education Early Childhood Teachers and Administrators on Inclusion and Least Restrictive Environment (LRE). Because the field of early childhood education is comprised of a variety of sectors, and none of these is mandatory for families to engage in, the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) mandate of LRE becomes increasingly important and multifaceted as regulations and procedures that operate a variety of programs must align with the federal mandate. By continuing to intentionally reach out to early childhood leadership across sectors and share training resources with early childhood educators and administrators, successful inclusion, and meaningful family engagement, access to the general education curricula and early learning standards, and typically developing peers will ensure we meet our state and federal legislative mandates. These mandates are to prepare young children with disabilities for kindergarten, ensure accommodations for children entitled to them are available, and all early childhood providers are supported, empowered, and expected to do so.

Child Find Process Review/Revision. In response to the current data on the reduction in numbers of children ages three through five served in special education, it is recommended that a review of the current Child Find process be conducted to assure that all eligible children are being provided with appropriate services and that Child Find is implemented in collaboration with BabyNet. Further, it is recommended that a study be conducted in order to determine Child Find strategies utilized across local educational agencies (LEAs), including public awareness, outreach, and coordinated activities with BabyNet, Head Start and other early care and education. Within the review of Child Find processes and procedures, examination of removing children from learning environments when challenging behavior occur should take place.

Review and Revision of Policies, Procedures, and Guidance Regarding Preschool Transition and Collaboration between Parts C and B. It is recommended that a plan be developed for the increasing projected numbers of eligible children from Part C who may be eligible for Part B 619 services. The 619 Coordinator, the Parent Training Information Center, and Part C leadership, including staff at South Carolina Department of Health and Human Services, and the Transition Committee of the Interagency Coordinating Council, should work together to ensure that the number of children transitioning are communicated efficiently and that districts are prepared to serve young children and families. This plan should include examining processes for communication, transition, working with families, and supporting districts in accessing infrastructure (human and other resources) to meet the growing needs in our state.

In the 2019 Annual Report, the committee recommended a cost study be funded and completed as it has been over twenty years since a full study of adequate funding for special education services in early childhood has been conducted. Historically, the base funding has not kept

pace with the increasing costs of providing programs and services to preschool children and the drastic increase in the number of children with autism spectrum disorder and severe needs being served.

Thank you for your consideration of the thoughtful study and recommendations contained in this report.

Kelly Birmingham, South Carolina School for the Deaf and the Blind

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Background

Act 86 of 1993 requires local educational agencies (LEAs) to serve children with disabilities ages three through five. This state mandate represented a downward extension of all the requirements of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), Public Law 101–476. One of the stipulations of the state mandate is the requirement for the submission of a report to the South Carolina General Assembly by February 1 of each year that includes, but is not limited to, the following:

- South Carolina Department of Education (SCDE) initiatives related to preschool programs for children with disabilities;
- data and program information from LEAs related to activities involving the Child Find process and LEA services;
- updates of policies and procedures for preschool programs for children with disabilities;
- financial information pertaining to implementation of preschool programs for children with disabilities; and
- information collected from other state agencies providing services for preschool children with disabilities, including the Commission for the Blind; the Department of Disabilities and Special Needs; the Department of Health and Environmental Control; the Department of Mental Health; the Division of Continuum of Care for Emotionally Disturbed Children; the Office of the Governor; the School for the Deaf and the Blind; and the State Department of Social Services. Information collected includes the following:
 - each agency’s initiatives;
 - pertinent program data;
 - financial information;
 - pertinent policies and procedures related to programs for preschool children with disabilities; and
 - recommendations for improving services to these children.

The stipulations are outlined in the legislation for preschool children with disabilities, Act 86, Chapter 36 of Title 59 of the Amended Code of Laws of South Carolina, 1976.

Executive Summary

Initiatives by the South Carolina Department of Education (SCDE), Office of Special Education Services (OSES) and other state agencies to provide a comprehensive system of service for preschool children with disabilities in the 2018–19 school year are summarized in this report. The sections address the number of preschool children with disabilities in South Carolina receiving special education during the school year; who they are and where they received their services; available state and federal funds; and initiatives and services provided on behalf of preschool children with disabilities and their families by LEAs, state agencies, and Head Start programs.

Section I: Data for Programs for Preschool Children with Disabilities

According to the 2018 Child Count, 9,792 children with disabilities ages three through five received special education services in South Carolina: 2,019 three-year-olds, 3,095 four-year-olds, and 4,678 five-year-olds.

Section II: Financial Information

During the 2018–19 school year, the combined state and federal funds specifically allocated for preschool children with disabilities totaled \$27,217,595.

Section III: Policies and Procedures for Programs for Preschool Children with Disabilities

In 2014–15, State Board of Education Regulation 43–62 was revised and became effective on June 26, 2015. This regulation governs requirements for additional areas of [certification](#), including early childhood special education. In addition, the SCDE promulgated [guidance](#) approved by the South Carolina State Board of Education. (See embedded links for regulation and guidance.)

Section IV: Programs/Services for Preschool Children with Disabilities: Information on Other State Agencies and Head Start Programs

A brief overview of programs and services available to preschool children with disabilities through state agencies and Head Start Programs is provided herein.

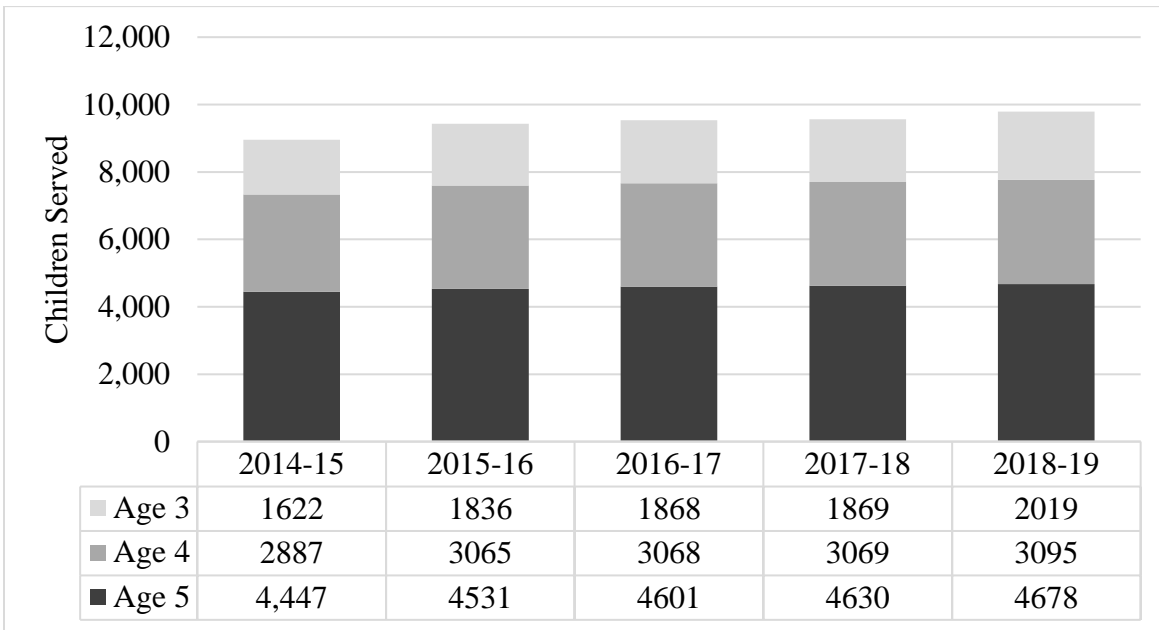
Data and Information on Preschool Programs and Services

Part B of the IDEA requires the SCDE to submit to the United States Department of Education (USED), Office of Special Education Programs (OSEP), a certified count, annually, of the number of children with disabilities receiving special education and related services through Individualized Education Programs (IEPs). Children ages three through five are included in this Child Count Report each year, based upon a child’s age as of the data collection date (defined as the fourth Tuesday in October, annually). Preschool children can begin receiving services on their third birthday, regardless of when it occurs. Therefore, the annual Child Count information does not reflect the total number of students who received services during any entire school year.

Population and Age¹

According to the 2018 Child Count, 9,792 children with disabilities ages three through five received special education services in South Carolina: 2,019 three-year-olds, 3,095 four-year-olds, and 4,678 five-year-olds. This total marks an approximate 2.34 percent increase in the overall number of students reported receiving services from the October 31, 2017, Child Count (9,568). Children with disabilities in age group three increased over eight percent; age group four increased approximately one percent; and the age group five increased approximately one percent between 2017–18 and 2018–19. Figure 1 displays the number of children by age group receiving services for the past five reporting years. Table 1 shows the trend increasing the total number of children served from 2014 through 2019 school years, with a slight decrease between 2016 and 2017 school years but still an overall increase of over 9 percent over the past five reporting years. Over the past five reporting years, three year olds have increased over 24 percent with approximately 8 percent increase between last year and this year. The four-year-old age group increased over 7 percent with the five-year-old group increasing over 5 percent in the past five reporting years. Of the preschool children served in the 2018–19 school year, 648 or 6.5 percent had limited English proficiency.

Figure 1. Comparison of Children Ages 3–5 Receiving Special Education Services 2014–18



Note. Source of data is IDEA, Part B, Section 618, Table 1 (Child Count), 2018 Child Count.

¹These data are reflective of students with disabilities, ages 3–5, special education and related services through IEPs under the coverage of the IDEA, 2004. These counts would not include children with disabilities who do not have IEPs. The designation of * indicates that the values were 10 or less. Consequently, the data have been suppressed to comply with the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) and with the SCDE’s policy on public reporting of small cell sizes. Numbers and/or percentages may not add up to statewide totals or 100 percent as a result. The child count date for the 2018–19 school year was Tuesday, October 23, 2018

Table 1*Five-Year Trend of Children Ages 3–5 Receiving Special Education Services*

	2014–15	2015–16	2016–17	2017–18	2018–19	Percent Change 2014–18
Age 3	1,622	1,836	1,873	1,869	2,019	24.48%
Age 4	2,887	3,065	3,054	3,069	3,095	7.20%
Age 5	4,447	4,531	4,704	4,630	4,678	5.19%
Total	8,956	9,432	9,631	9,568	9,792	9.33%

Note. Source of data is IDEA, Part B, Section 618, Table 1 (Child Count), 2018 Child Count.

Race/Ethnicity

Table 2 displays, by race/ethnicity, the percentage of preschool children receiving services as of the 2017 Child Count. The seven reporting categories are American Indian or Alaska Native, Asian, Black or African American, Hispanic, Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander, White, and Two or More Races.

Preschool children with disabilities are predominately white (non-Hispanic) (5,021) or African American (3,081). Preschool children with disabilities who are Hispanic/Latino (1,004) make up the third largest ethnic group with a 9 percent representation, one percent increase from the last reporting year, and an increase of approximately 200 students.

Table 2*Percentage of Children 3–5 Receiving Services in 2018 by Race/Ethnicity*

	Ages 3–5
Hawaiian or Pacific Islander	.00%
American-Indian or Alaska Native	.00%
Asian	1.0%
Two or More Races	5.0%
Hispanic/Latino	10.0%
Black or African American	31%
White	51%

Note. Source of data is IDEA, Part B, Section 618, Table 1 (Child Count), 2018 Child Count.

Primary Areas of Disability

Table 3 shows the number of children ages three, four, and five years of age receiving services by the area of primary disability on the 2018 Child Count. Children in this age range may be classified as having a developmental delay or, per South Carolina regulations, as having a disability in any of the other twelve categories listed in the table. Data have been suppressed for cells containing less than ten students for confidentiality purposes.

Children with developmental delay (38 percent) or speech-language impairment (44 percent) and autism and autism spectrum disorder (13 percent) continue to make up the greatest percentage of all children with disabilities ages three through five receiving services on the 2018 Child Count. These three primary disability categories make up 95 percent of all preschool aged students receiving special education services. Forty-four percent of children age three receiving special education services have a primary disability of developmental delay. Speech-language impairments are the second highest disability categories for three-year-olds, representing 33 percent of the group, and autism or autism spectrum disorder represents 16 percent. Of four-year-olds served in the 2018–19 school year, 41 percent had a primary disability of developmental delay or speech/language impairment comprising 82 percent of four year olds served. Fourteen percent of four-year olds had a primary diagnosis of autism or autism spectrum disorder. Five-year-olds receiving special education services for speech-language impairment, developmental delay, or autism or autism spectrum disorder in the 2018–19 school year were 51, 33, and 11 percent respectively.

Table 3

Number of Children Ages 3–5 Receiving Services by Area of Disability on 2018 Child Count

Primary Area of Disability	Age 3	Age 4	Age 5	Ages 3–5
Deaf-Blindness	*	*	*	*
Emotional Disability	*	*	*	*
Traumatic Brain Injury	*	*	*	*
Hearing Impairment	*	*	*	*
Specific Learning Disability	*	*	*	*
Intellectual Disability	*	*	23	23
Visual Impairment	12	12	24	48
Orthopedic Impairment	12	19	24	55
Multiple Disabilities	29	17	29	75
Deaf and Hard of Hearing	33	31	48	112
Other Health Impairment	49	50	95	194
Autism and Autism Spectrum Disorder	322	418	494	1,234
Developmental Delay	888	1,274	1,545	3,707
Speech or/Language Impairment	668	1,260	2,378	4,306
Grand Total	2,019	3,095	4,678	9,792

Note. Source of Data is IDEA, Part B, Section 618, Table 1 (Child Count), 2018 Child Count.

Table 4 shows the number of children ages three through five receiving services by primary disability across the last five Child Count reports. Cells containing less than ten students are suppressed for confidentiality purposes, and are denoted with an asterisk. Autism is the third largest disability category (13 percent) in South Carolina. This is a 35 percent increase from 2014. This state trend continues to mirror the national trend regarding preschool children with autism, and as a response to this growing population, the OSES has created and implemented an Autism Task Force, a Virtual Toolkit of Autism Resources, a Milo pilot study, Pyramid Model Implementation at the state level, and collaborations with South Carolina Department of Health and Human Services on funding behavior supports for students with autism and increasing the number of certified applied behavior analysis providers.

Table 4
Areas of Disability Ages 3–5, Comparison for Years 2014–18

Primary Disability	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018
Autism	913	1,026	1,035	1,143	1,234
Deaf and Hard of Hearing	93	105	133	121	112
Deaf Blindness	*	*	*	*	*
Developmental Delay	3,261	3,461	3,553	3,539	3,708
Emotional Disability	*	*	*	*	*
Intellectual Disability	41	59	32	32	23
Multiple Disabilities	61	70	74	78	75
Orthopedic Impairment	58	46	49	55	55
Other Health Impairment	130	154	186	183	194
Specific Learning Disability	19	22	11	*	*
Speech Language Impairment	4,313	4,413	4,481	4,336	4,307
Traumatic Brain Injury	*	*	*	*	*
Visual Impairment	67	55	49	41	48
Grand Total	8,956	9,432	9,631	9,568	9,792

Note. Source of data is IDEA, Part B, Section 618, Table 1 (Child Count), 2018 Child Count.

Educational Environments/Least Restrictive Environment (LRE) by Age

All LEAs must ensure that preschool children with disabilities are educated in the least restrictive environment (LRE), regardless of whether the LEA operates public preschool programs for children without disabilities. To that end, an LEA may provide services to a preschool child with a disability in a variety of settings, including a regular kindergarten class, public or private preschool program, community-based childcare facility, or in the child’s home. Any LEAs that offer a public preschool program may serve a preschool child with a disability in that program; however, LEAs that do not have a public preschool program must explore alternative methods to ensure preschool children with disabilities are placed in the LRE. Those methods include (1) providing services in preschool programs offered by other public agencies (such as Head Start or community-based childcare); (2) enrolling children in private preschool programs for children without disabilities; (3) locating classes for preschool children with

disabilities in regular elementary schools; or (4) providing home-based services. In September 2019, a memorandum was shared with LEAs to describe the continuum of service delivery environments in the early childhood sectors so that children with disabilities are supported appropriately in the LRE. This memo can be found in Appendix A. Children’s educational environments for the 2018 Child Count are shown in Table 5. Twenty-three percent of young children receiving special education services are being served in a special education class separate from the regular education setting. Twelve percent of children receiving services are in the regular classroom (early childhood program or another location) less than ten hours a week. Fifty-six percent of young children receiving special education services are served in the regular education classroom (either the early childhood program or another location) ten hours a week or more. This data has remained constant for the past two reporting years (2017–18 and 2018–19 school years).

Figure 2 also shows the decision tree for coding educational environments for preschool special education. The highest percentage of children age three (46 percent) received their services in a special education program only (separate class). This is not surprising since the majority of LEAs have not traditionally offered programs for typically developing three-year-old children in which they can receive their special education and related services through inclusive educational practices. The IDEA requirement that special education services be provided in a continuum of service delivery environments applies to preschool in the same manner it applies to school-aged students, and as a result infrastructure with non-district early childhood sectors must be built to meet this obligation.

Table 5
Educational Environments of Preschool Children with Disabilities 2018–19 by Age

Educational Environment	Age 3	Age 4	Age 5	Ages 3-5
Home	3%	1%	0%	1%
In Regular Education at least 10 hrs. per week - EC Program	8%	34%	58%	41%
In Regular Education at least 10 hrs. per week - Other Location	11%	15%	17%	15%
In Regular Education less than 10 hrs. per week - EC Program	8%	9%	8%	8%
In Regular Education less than 10 hrs. per week - Other Location	5%	5%	3%	4%
Residential Facility				
Separate Class	46%	26%	11%	23%
Separate School	1%	1%	0%	1%
Service Provider Location	17%	9%	2%	7%
Grand Total	100%	100%	100%	100%

Note. Source of data is IDEA, Part B, Section 618, Table 1 (Child Count), 2018 Child Count.

Educational Environments/Least Restrictive Environment by Disability

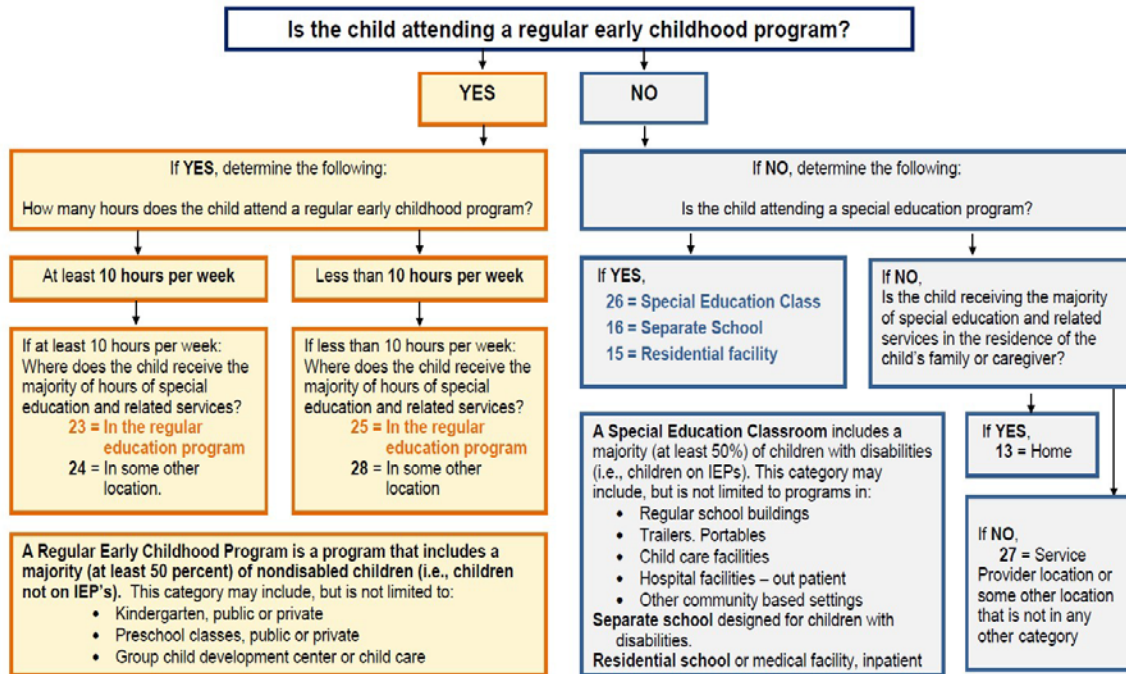
Of all preschool children receiving special education services, the three largest disability categories are speech-language impairment, developmental delay, and autism or autism spectrum disorder, representing 95 percent of preschool-aged children served in South Carolina. Children with these top three primary disabilities are served in a variety of educational environments across the state. Children with speech-language impairment are primarily served in regular education at least ten hours a week in an early childhood program (57 percent) or other location (22 percent) over 79 percent of the time. Children with autism are served in a special education class 48 percent of the time and in a regular education class (more than ten hours a week) 24 percent of the time —early childhood program (19 percent) or other location (5 percent). Thirty-six percent of children with a developmental delay receive special educational services in a separate class or school. Forty-two percent of children with a developmental delay receive at least ten hours of instruction per week in a regular education classroom (early childhood program–32 percent or other location–10 percent), while 20 percent receive less than ten hours of instruction per week in a regular education classroom (early childhood program–15 percent or other location–5 percent).

Table 6*Top Preschool Diagnoses by Educational Environment for 2018–19*

Educational Environment	Autism	Developmental Delay	Speech Language Impairment	Grand Total
Home	*	*	59	59
In Regular Education at least 10 hrs. per week - EC Program	234	1,188	2,435	3,857
In Regular Education at least 10 hrs. per week - Other Location	60	374	951	1,385
In Regular Education less than 10 hrs. per week - EC Program	205	571	22	798
In Regular Education less than 10 hrs. per week - Other Location	95	163	49	307
Separate Class	593	1,302	20	1,915
Separate School	*	35	13	48
Service Provider Location	*	16	676	692
Grand Total	1,234	3,708	4,307	9,249

Note. Source of data is IDEA, Part B, Section 618, Table 1 (Child Count), 2018 Child Count. Columns may not total as cells less than 10 are obscured to protect privacy.

Figure 2. Decision Tree for Coding Educational Environments for Preschool Special Education



LRE Initiatives

Data Collection and Reporting

To ensure valid and reliable data, OSES staff worked diligently with school and preschool staff to ensure data on preschool LREs were captured and reported appropriately. In the summer of 2010, staff in all LEAs and state-operated programs were provided with a comprehensive OSES data manual that provided the new decision tree, reporting requirements, and a question-and-answer document. These materials are used in conjunction with other face-to-face trainings, webinars, technical assistance and guidance from OSES to appropriately collect data on preschool LRE.

Continuum of Service Delivery Environments

On September 4, 2019, a [memorandum](#) from the OSES was sent to all District Special Education Directors and Early Childhood Education Coordinators communicating the federal and state requirements with respect to preschool placements for young students with disabilities. Statutory requirements for LRE do not distinguish between school-aged and preschool-aged children, and must be applied equally.

In accordance with 34 C.F.R. § 300.115 through 300.116 a preschool continuum of alternative placements must be provided by each public agency to meet the needs of children with disabilities for special education and related services. The preschool continuum must: (1) include placements listed in the definition of special education under § 300.38 (instruction in regular classes, special classes, special schools, home instruction, and instruction in hospitals and institutions); and (2) make provision for supplementary services such as a resource room or itinerant instruction to be provided in conjunction with regular class placement.

By building and offering a continuum of service delivery environments, young children with disabilities will have increased access to typically developing peers and preschool activities while also receiving appropriate special education services to meet individualized goals. Scaling up the continuum of service delivery environments in early childhood years will also support several other priorities around compliance with IDEA and high quality early childhood education such as inclusion and providing supports through a multi-tiered system of supports (MTSS). Scaling up the continuum of early childhood service delivery environments will require cross sector training and collaboration so that all students in all early childhood environments have high quality, developmentally appropriate opportunities to learn and access to intensive interventions and special education services as needed. This memo, and partnerships at the state level are serving as the foundation for cross-sector training, and policy alignment resulting in increased inclusive opportunities.

Inclusion

According to the *Policy statement on inclusion of children with disabilities in early childhood programs* (USDHHS/ED, 2015), a joint policy statement of the US Department of Health and Human Services and the Department of Education, “children with disabilities, including those with the most significant disabilities and highest needs, can make significant development and learning progress in inclusive settings” (p. 3). Furthermore, inclusion in early childhood programs can set a trajectory for inclusion across the life course. To improve the opportunity for preschool children with disabilities to attend a regular early childhood program as part of their educational environment, a number of initiatives were undertaken to prepare well-qualified staff to create appropriate environments for working with young children with disabilities in all settings.

South Carolina Partnerships for Inclusion (SCPI)

SCPI personnel developed a support framework for increasing inclusive opportunities and facilitated the organization of district-level cross-sector leadership teams. In addition, the SCPI team created tools to measure a school district’s strengths and needs related to preschool inclusion and adapted the Planning Alternative Tomorrows with Hope planning process used by the Transition Alliance of South Carolina (TASC) to support district leadership team development of targeted implementation plans. SCPI has convened leadership teams comprised of school district personnel and early childhood stakeholders (e.g., Head Start, childcare programs) representing thirty-seven school districts interested in increasing the provision of inclusive educational opportunities for young children. These teams receive state-sponsored support to design and implement plans to address the unique needs of each district, and to improve their data as related to Indicators 6 and 7 on the federally-required State Performance Plan/Annual Performance Review (SPP/APR) collected each year. Districts participating in this initiative receive technical assistance to develop cross-sector leadership teams that create and execute an implementation plan to ensure that preschool children have access to and are able to meaningfully participate in the general education curriculum alongside children without disabilities. This work will continue through 2020, recruiting additional early childhood teams and supporting all cohorts through a tiered model of support similar to TASC. For more information, please see annual reports available on the [OSES](#) preschool website.

Other Initiatives

To prepare highly qualified staff to create appropriate environments for working with young children with disabilities in all settings, OSES staff undertook the following initiatives:

- The South Carolina Centers for the Re-Education and Advancement of Teachers in Special Education personnel preparation project, funded by the OSES, expanded to include teachers who would not meet the criteria for being grandfathered under the new certification but were currently working in the field. The early childhood special education certificate is also available to employees in the district in a different position interested in serving as a preschool special education teacher.
- Champions for Young Children Symposium was offered again on August 2, 2019. The purpose of the event remains to provide a rich professional development experience around the theme, “Meaningful Family Engagement Using the Protective Factors Framework.” Professionals from multiple facets of early childhood education and parents had an opportunity to access information and network with a cross-section of professionals (e.g., mental health, Head Start, pre-K, early intervention, early childhood special education, home visitation, early childhood education). The following partners participated in the planning and presentation of the 2019 event:
 - South Carolina Child Care Inclusion Collaborative,
 - BabyNet,
 - Children’s Trust of South Carolina,
 - South Carolina Head Start Collaboration Office,
 - South Carolina Child Care Resource and Referral Network,
 - Horry County School District,
 - Family Connections of South Carolina,
 - South Carolina Department of Social Services, Division of Early Care and Education and ABC Quality,
 - South Carolina First Steps to School Readiness,
 - South Carolina Program for Infant Toddler Care,
 - South Carolina Department of Disabilities and Special Needs,
 - South Carolina Department of Education, Office of Special Education Services, and
 - South Carolina Department of Education, Office of Early Learning and Literacy.

Through partnership with other SCDE staff, South Carolina Pyramid Master Cadre, Pyramid faculty and online training modules OSES provided a number of other training opportunities to preschool special education teachers, early childhood education teachers, Head Start personnel, childcare workers, para-educators, administrators, and individuals working with young children with disabilities in regular early childhood programs and special education classrooms during the 2018–19 school year, including:

- Enhancing Social and Emotional Skills in an Early Childhood Classroom: Intro to the Pyramid Model and Tier 1 Strategies;
- Using Tier 2 Strategies from the Pyramid Model to Teach Social-Emotional Skills in an Early Childhood Classroom;

- Practice-Based Coaching;
- Culturally Responsive Practice;
- Linking Social-Emotional Development and Literacy;
- Supporting Preschool Inclusion Through Embedded Opportunities for Early Learning; and
- Classroom Strategies for Successful Preschool Inclusion.

The OSES offered an Assistive Technology Leadership Conference in March 2019, designed to provide resources, networking, and support for local assistive technology teams. The event was well attended, with large and small LEAs participating, some with a single representative, some with an entire team. Attendees received practical ideas and tools for planning, developing, and implementing a successful assistive technology program that will support children from preschool through graduation and beyond. In addition to building teams within the districts, topics also included legal aspects of implementing assistive technology, accessibility requirements, and the assistive technology process. By building local knowledge and capacity, students of all ages will benefit from assistive technology. To see more about this conference or future ones please visit the [AT Expo website](#).

The 2019, South Carolina Council on Exceptional Children, with sponsorship from the SCDE, offered the following preconference and preschool strands:

- Preconference session: Small Changes, Big Impact! Ideas, Strategies, and Resources for Linking Social Emotional, Literacy, and Language Development Opportunities for Preschoolers;
- What's Happening in Early Childhood Education?;
- Evidence-Based Teamwork Practices;
- Working with Childcare to Enhance Early Childhood Outcomes;
- Using Tier 3 Strategies from the Pyramid Model to Address Challenging Behavior in an Early Childhood Classroom ;
- Lessons from the Field: How to Make Preschool Inclusion Work!; and
- Classroom Strategies for Successful Preschool Inclusion.

The Annual South Carolina Deaf and Hard of Hearing Summit provides professional development to stakeholders who serve South Carolina's students who are deaf or hard of hearing. The mission of the South Carolina Deaf and Hard of Hearing Education Partnership is to improve the quality of education for students, birth through young adulthood, who are deaf and hard of hearing in South Carolina so that they can achieve successful outcomes. Presenters of the Summit primarily focused on resources to support students with hearing loss with a particular focus on early childhood education, with a preconference session and keynote speaker about mathematical thinking. The new Early Childhood Deaf and Hard of Hearing Virtual Library, an initiative of the Deaf and Hard of Hearing Education Partnership, was launched at the Summit this year.

As part of the OSES's efforts to decrease the reading achievement gap between children with and without disabilities, professionals from IDEA Part C and Part B 619, early childhood partners, experts in audiology, and deaf education convened a work group to identify gaps and needs across the state in screening and supporting children with hearing loss so that they may

have access to language, background knowledge, and literacy. The group determined that a virtual library of resources about early childhood deaf education would be valuable to the field and families of young children ages birth through Kindergarten. The intended audience for this library include: educators, parents, audiologists, speech language pathologists, and others who work with young children who experience hearing loss. The purpose is to provide access to resources so that appropriate screening, eligibility determination, and service delivery are achieved. This work has been well-received and will be used as a model for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing Education Partnership to expand the resources for older students. You can visit the [Early Childhood Deaf and Hard of Hearing Virtual Library](#) by clicking the link.

South Carolina is a Pyramid Partner and has begun implementing the Pyramid model of supporting social-emotional development at a state level, based upon the conceptual model of evidenced-based practices developed by the Center on the Social-Emotional Foundations of Early Learning (CSEFEL). The [Pyramid framework developed by CSEFEL](#) is used to promote the social-emotional competence of children birth to age five in the context of nurturing relationships and quality learning environments. The Pyramid framework also provides strategies to prevent and address the challenging behavior of young children, while not being limited to a single curriculum. A cross-sector leadership team, including parents, Head Start, the Department of Mental Health, the Office of the Child Care Administrator, the Office of Early Learning and Literacy, institutions of higher education, and partnerships with other task forces and initiatives including the Autism Task Force and the Infant-Early Childhood Mental Health work group collaborates to scale up evidence-based practice related to young children's social-emotional development. A master cadre of trainers and behavior specialists is being developed to actualize the vision of the state leadership team that all South Carolina early childhood practitioners, in partnership with families, will have the knowledge, skills, attitudes, and supports necessary to nurture infants and young children's social-emotional well-being within their family, culture, and community. The mission of the state leadership team is to develop, evaluate, and sustain a statewide collaborative process that utilizes the Pyramid framework. The integration of the Pyramid framework with other related promotion, prevention, intervention, and treatment efforts in the state will assure South Carolinians learn to promote social-emotional development of infants, young children, and their families beginning at birth to foster lifelong success. Goals of the implementation of the Pyramid model at the state level include:

- Build community- and state-level commitment in supporting the social-emotional well-being of all infants, young children, and families;
- Promote the social-emotional well-being of infants and young children and address challenging behavior;
- Foster and sustain statewide high fidelity use of the Pyramid framework integrated with other relevant South Carolina efforts; and
- Align policies with the Pyramid framework to build systems with capacity to support young children's social-emotional development.

Expected results from these goals and the work that they guide are:

- High quality early childhood workforce across tiers prepared to support social-emotional development and address challenging behavior;
- Reduction in preschool suspension and expulsion with increased access to high quality learning environments;

- Children having social and emotional foundations to promote their learning and development;
- Work informed by data and Pyramid framework embedded into existing data systems; and
- Families engaged as partners and supported in acquiring confidence and competence to support young children ages birth through five.

A number of state and local level efforts are in progress to ensure the Pyramid model is implemented with fidelity across early childhood environments and to facilitate this work a South Carolina Pyramid website is currently being developed and is expected to go live in 2020. A uniform calendar of trainings and supports for all early childhood sectors will be housed on this site. Additionally, individual sectors are training coaches, teachers, and administrators to implement with fidelity.

In the July 2019 Summer Leadership Institute, program leadership were trained in Tiers 1 and 2 of the Pyramid Model and also linking Language and Literacy to Social Emotional Development.

South Carolina is piloting and leading the nation in Pyramid innovations including implementation with law enforcement as a partner and utilizing Pyramid as an Early Childhood MTSS system. South Carolina is in the early exploration stages of this work that will provide comprehensive supports for social emotional development and prevent challenging behaviors. For more South Carolina Pyramid updates please see the [Pyramid](#) section of the OSES preschool website.

Parent Involvement

Parent Involvement Initiatives for Preschool Aged Students

Text 2 Read is an outreach program designed to engage new mothers and primary caregivers of young children in literacy and language development activities. *Text 2 Read* is a free mobile information service offering practical information about child development, and free or low cost language and literacy activities for young children. The service is modeled after the *Text 4 Baby* program, a national initiative that is run by the South Carolina Department of Health and Environmental Control, which has already demonstrated success impacting the health and preparedness of mothers in the target population. *Text 2 Read* is an ongoing initiative of the OSES and has been in development with early childhood partners but recently has been launched for feedback and piloting purposes. Currently, partners are in collaboration to plan for publicizing this resource to families across the state.

Parents who sign up for the service receive age-appropriate texts weekly with no or low cost activities to develop language and literacy skills, to illustrate milestones and questions for pediatricians, to direct parents to Child Find resources when appropriate, and to identify seasonal books and free or inexpensive events for young children. Texts are leveled with the children's age so that activities are age appropriate. Age groups are aligned with the Early Learning Standards for the state:

- Infants (0–6, then 6–12 months);
- Young Toddlers (8–16, then 14–21 months);
- Older Toddlers (18–27, then 25–36 months);
- Young Preschoolers (36–48 months); and
- Older Preschoolers (48–60+ months).

Text 2 Read is a data driven initiative with continuous data collection; project effectiveness will be evaluated monthly and internal research and evaluation efforts will guide the initiative. The Analyze, Design, Develop, Implement, Evaluate model will be used to conceptualize, maintain, and improve the *Text 2 Read* program as it is piloted in one part of the state. Upon evaluation and any required changes made to the program from the pilot phase, the *Text 2 Read* program would be made available statewide. The goals of the *Text 2 Read* program are to:

1. Empower all parents to include language and literacy activities in their day so that all children will arrive at school ready for kindergarten as is the goal of OSES strategic plan 2016–17;
2. Provide Tier 1 Comprehensive Core Response to Intervention services to children who might be at risk of arriving to kindergarten unprepared without these early learning opportunities through family collaboration;
3. Provide focused services that support the OSES action to meet family engagement, State Systemic Improvement Plan goals and State-identified Measurable Results (increase the number of children with disabilities reading on grade level by third grade);
4. Support Read to Succeed work and support families in preparing children for kindergarten; and
5. Support parents in monitoring child development and speak with a pediatrician or Child Find screener should a developmental delay be suspected, so that children have access to early intervention services.

Parent and Family Engagement in Social-Emotional Development

An important part of South Carolina statewide Pyramid implementation is to ensure that parents and caregivers are empowered to support children’s social-emotional development, extinguish persistently challenging behaviors, and teach desired ones using evidence-based strategies. Through master cadre development, approximately twenty-five professionals across early childhood sectors, including our Parent Training Information Center with support and consultative services by Able South Carolina to support parents with disabilities, have been trained for two days in the Positive Solutions for Families strategies for engaging families in supporting young children’s social-emotional development. These strategies are taught to families over the course of six weeks with learning activities that include, discussion, question and answer, make and take, and sharing of resources. These six-week sessions will be offered to families at program implementation sites, and more broadly as South Carolina scales up implementation.

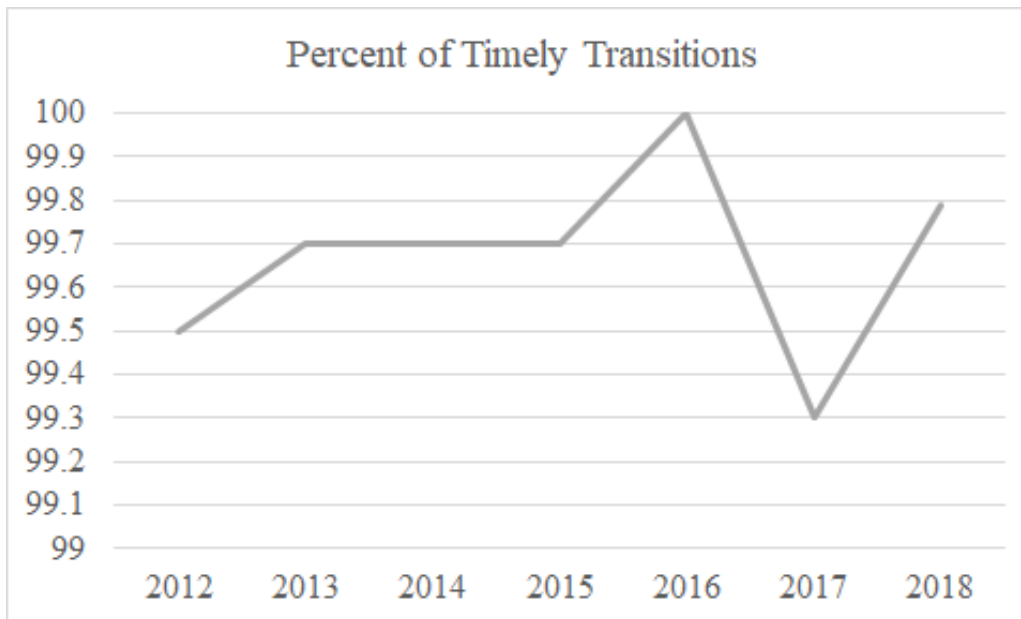
Transition

Both federal and state mandates require that LEAs develop procedures for transitioning preschoolers from an IDEA Part C early intervention program (from birth through two years of age, BabyNet at South Carolina Department of Health and Human Services) to an IDEA Part B preschool program (from three through five years of age) for children with disabilities. LEAs must participate in a transition meeting with parents and referring agencies prior to evaluation and placement of an infant/toddler into preschool special education services. For preschool children ages three through five, the IDEA mandates that children who have been served by a Part C and who are referred from Part C to Part B (educational programs for children with disabilities ages three to twenty-one), must, if eligible for Part B special education and related services, have an IEP developed and implemented by their third birthday.

The OSES and BabyNet worked to ensure that representatives from both agencies have information about areas of concern regarding this process. Members of the OSES program and data staff attend monthly BabyNet managers' meetings and regional LEA/BabyNet meetings to address this issue. After the South Carolina Department of Health and Human Services became the lead agency for birth to age three special education services, infrastructure and capacity to serve more young children has increased substantially. It is a priority of the OSES to ensure that all LEAs are prepared to offer efficient, timely, and compliant transitions despite growth in the Part C system. As previously illustrated in Table 1, there has been a 24 percent increase in the number of three year olds served in the past five years and an eight percent increase since between 2017–18 and 2018–19 school years. This trend is projected to continue, and LEAs must be supported to be prepared for transitions.

Current data show that the state continues to make progress in providing services to children transitioning from Part C to B and having IEPs developed and in effect by the third birthday. Historically, approximately 2,500 children are referred from Part C to Part B annually for transition meeting and eligibility determination for Part B. This year, due to increased capacity to service children birth to three years of age after a new lead agency and new policies and procedures implements over 4,000 children were referred for transition meetings. Since baseline data was collected in 2007, the state has made drastic improvements in the number and percentage of those eligible preschool children who have IEPs developed and implemented by the time they turn three-years-old. South Carolina's percentage on this SPP/APR Indicator 12 has remained above 97 percent since 2009.

Figure 4. Eligible Preschool Children with Developed and Implemented IEPs by Age 3



Note. Source of data is IDEA, Part B, Section 616, State Performance Plan Indicator 12, December 2019.

Because this is a child-specific entitlement through the IDEA, the OSEP requires that the state and each LEA maintain 100 percent compliance. When the state has evidence that an LEA is not meeting this requirement, the state must issue a finding of noncompliance and require the LEA to correct the noncompliance as soon as possible, but no later than one year after being notified.

The finding also requires the LEA to enter into a corrective action plan, demonstrate that each individual case has been corrected (i.e., each child), ensure that there was no denial of a basic IDEA right (or offer compensatory services if there was), and if applicable, ensure that the systemic causes of the noncompliance have been corrected. Since the beginning of this process, all LEAs with findings have corrected within the one-year required timeframe.

Transition Initiatives

The OSES is completing a suite of services to support LEAs and local early intervention agencies (LEIAs) in smooth transitions from Part C to Part B and to prepare for the anticipated increase in three-year-olds eligible for a transition meeting due to Part C increases in children served. These have included:

1. Communication of Part C Data: Due to policy changes and an increased number of children served in Part C, Part B 619 must prepare for transitions and eligibility determinations and subsequent services for an increased number of preschool students. Building this infrastructure depends on communication between Parts C and B around Part C policy and procedures under the new lead agency and the number of children transitioning. The OSES and Part C leadership are working closely together to share policies and best practices for efficient and compliant transitions so that the Parts C and B system are aligned. The OSES has utilized a Child Find Task Force comprised

of staff and state leadership from all early childhood sectors, LEAs, Part C providers, the South Carolina Academy of Pediatrics, School for the Deaf and Blind, the Department of Disability and Special Needs, Family Connections South Carolina, and other advocates and service providers in early childhood. The Child Find Task Force has four committees: Outreach, Referral, Special Populations, and Transitions from Parts C to B. The Transitions committee is currently using data with OSES staff to determine about needs that exist to build the infrastructure to prepare for an increase in the number of three year olds entitled to a transition meeting and eligibility determination so that the state will continue to meet this individual entitlement requirement.

2. Preschool Parent Guide: This parent guide is designed specifically for parents of young children (ages two through five) to alert parents to the differences between Part C and Part B of the IDEA, how service delivery will differ, what to expect during transition and eligibility determinations, and frequently asked questions. This document also has answers to frequently asked questions and provides contact information for additional supports and resources. This guide was developed in partnership with Part C and the Parent Training Initiative for South Carolina and has been reviewed by the Interagency Coordinating Council and the Preschool Committee of the ACESD. This guide is housed on the [Family Connections South Carolina](#) website.

Financial Information

During the 2018–19 school year, the combined state and federal funds specifically allocated for preschool children with disabilities totaled \$27,217,595. The state allocation for the 2018–19 school year was \$20,065,514, an increase of \$1,477,900 from the previous school year.

Federal Funds

During the 2018–19 school year, the OSES received \$7,152,081 in funds under the IDEA federal preschool grant program. This represents an increase of approximately \$152,000 from the previous year. Federal regulations allow the SCDE to retain a portion of the funds for administrative costs; however, the agency elects to flow through almost 100 percent of these funds to LEAs for the provision of direct services to preschool age children.

The IDEA allocations are calculated by means of a three-tiered formula: a base equal to the LEA's allocation for fiscal year 1997, the number of children in the age range from three to twenty-one in the LEA's public and private schools, and the number in that age range who are living in poverty. Consequently, the SCDE cannot readily determine the dollars that preschool children generate for an LEA. The LEA, however, can expend other federal funds on this population.

State Funds

The SCDE provides the following estimate regarding the amount of state funds disbursed for programs for preschool children with disabilities for the 2018–19 school year, as shown in Table 8.

Table 8

Estimated Amount of Funds Disbursed for Programs for Preschool Children with Disabilities for Past Three Years

Funding Source	Purpose	2018–19 Allocation	2017–18 Allocation	2016–17 Allocation
Education Finance Act	Four-year-old vision/hearing disabled children and five-year-old children with disabilities	\$20,065,514.29	\$18,587,614	\$18,067,757

Fiscal Monitoring

The IDEA requires that the SCDE monitor LEAs on a regular basis to ensure fiscal compliance with state and federal laws, rules, and regulations that govern the provision of special education and related services to appropriately identified children. The purpose of this monitoring is to focus federal, state, and local resources on improving results for children with disabilities and their families. The OSES is responsible for conducting IDEA fiscal monitoring activities. Annually, each district must submit a required self-assessment and other documentation. Based upon that information, a risk rubric is used to identify a district score. Up to ten districts with the lowest scores are then reviewed for a Tier Two desk audit. Based upon timely submission of that required documentation and other factors, onsite fiscal monitor (Tier Three) occurs, during which fiscal processes, policies, procedures, budgets, and expenditures are reviewed.

Policies and Procedures

South Carolina Regulatory Changes

In 2014–15, State Board of Education Regulation 43-62 was revised and became effective on June 26, 2015. This [regulation](#) governs requirements for additional areas of certification, including early childhood special education. In addition, the SCDE promulgated [guidance](#) approved by the South Carolina State Board of Education. (See embedded links for more information.)

Early Childhood Transition Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) between South Carolina Department of Health and Human Services/BabyNet and the South Carolina Department of Education (SCDE) Office of Special Education Services (OSES)

The South Carolina Department of Health and Human Services/BabyNet, under Part C of the IDEA, and the SCDE and LEAs, under Part B of the IDEA, have a statutory responsibility to ensure a smooth transition for each child and family in transitioning services. In addition, under the IDEA's Child Find provisions, both agencies must ensure the identification, location, and evaluation of each child eligible for services under Parts B and C of the IDEA, including children with disabilities attending private schools and highly mobile children with disabilities (such as migrant and homeless children).

The purpose of this agreement is to meet the requirements of 34 CFR § 303.209(a)(3)(i) of the final IDEA Part C regulations published on September 28, 2011, that the state Part C lead agency must have on file with the USED OSEP as part of its IDEA Part C application transition policies and procedures, an interagency agreement on transition with the state educational agency (SEA) that administers section 619 of the Act. The agreement calls for an annual review and renewal prior to June 30 of each calendar year, and is currently under South Carolina Department of Health and Human Services, lead agency for BabyNet.

Early Childhood Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) between Head Start State Collaboration Office and the SCDE Office of Special Education Services

Senior leadership of Head Start Grantees including the president of the Head Start Association, the Director of the ISWA Development Corporation Catawba Indian Nation Head Start, the Executive Director of East Coast Migrant Head Start Region XII and the chair of the South Carolina Association of Community Action Partnerships/South Carolina Head Start Collaboration Committee and the OSES have a state level agreement about screening, eligibility determination, and service delivery models. This [MOA](#) shapes the local level MOAs between school districts and Head Start grantees and was signed in December 2017.

The purpose of this agreement is to meet the requirements of the Head Start Act at 42 U.S. Code § 9837(b), to be so designated, a Head Start agency shall, at a minimum, do all the following to involve and serve families and communities:

(14) Establish effective procedures for timely referral of children with disabilities to the State or local agency providing services under section 619 or part C of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act ([20 U.S.C. 1419](#), 1431 et seq.), and collaboration with that agency, consistent with [section 9835\(d\)\(3\) of this title](#).

(15) Establish effective procedures for providing necessary early intervening services to children with disabilities prior to an eligibility determination by the State or local agency responsible for providing services under section 619 or part C of such Act, consistent with [section 9835\(d\)\(2\) of this title](#).

The following requirement is found in the Head Start Regulations at § 642B(a)(4) Head Start Collaboration; State Early Education and Care:

The State Director of Head Start Collaboration shall—

(C) promote partnerships between Head Start agencies, State and local governments, and the private sector to help ensure that children from low-income families, who are in Head Start programs or are preschool age, are receiving comprehensive services to prepare the children for elementary school;

(D) consult with the chief State school officer, local educational agencies, and providers of early childhood education and development, at both the State and local levels.

Under the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA), through state plans for Title I, SEAs are required to coordinate with other programs that provide services for young children, including programs administered by (i.e., under the Child Care and Development Block Grant and Head Start Act) as

well as the IDEA. The ESSA encourages SEAs to address the comprehensive needs of all young children, including children with disabilities or developmental delays, those in poverty, and those who are English-language learners, immigrants, refugees, migrant, homeless, or in foster care.

Programs/Services for Preschool Children with Disabilities Information on Other State Agencies and Head Start Programs

As mentioned previously, the SCDE is required to work with other state agencies that provide services to this same population. These organizations include:

- Office of the Governor, Continuum of Care for Emotionally Disturbed Children (COC);
- South Carolina Commission for the Blind (SCCB);
- South Carolina Department of Disabilities and Special Needs (SCDDSN);
- South Carolina Department of Health and Environmental Control's Children's Rehabilitative Services program (DHEC CRS);
- South Carolina Department of Mental Health (SCDMH);
- South Carolina Department of Social Services (SCDSS), and
- South Carolina School for the Deaf and the Blind (SCSDB).

Table 9
Contact Information for Other State Agencies

State Agency	Telephone	Website
Office of the Governor, Continuum of Care for Emotionally Disturbed Children (COC)	803-734-4500	http://coc.sc.gov/
South Carolina Commission for the Blind (SCCB)	803-898-8731 or 800-922-2222	http://www.sccb.state.sc.us/
South Carolina Department of Disabilities and Special Needs (SCDDSN)	803-898-9600 or Toll Free: 888-DSN-INFO (376-4636)	http://www.ddsn.sc.gov/
South Carolina Department of Health and Environmental Control, Division of Children and Youth with Special	803-898-DHEC (3432), Division of Children and Youth with Special Healthcare Needs 803-898-	http://www.scdhec.gov/Health/ChildTeenHealth/ServicesforChildrenwithSpecialHealthCareNeeds/
South Carolina Department of Mental Health (SCDMH)	Main Number: 803-898-8581 For Deaf Services: TTY: 864-297-5130: TTY and Voice Upstate: 866-246-0129 Midlands: 866-246-0130	http://www.state.sc.us/dmh/services.htm
South Carolina Department of Social Services (SCDSS)	803-898-7601	https://dss.sc.gov/
South Carolina School for the Deaf and the Blind (SCSDB)	Voice/TTY: 1-888-447-2732 Voice/TTY: 864-585-7711	http://www.scsdb.org

Of the state agencies contacted, four submitted forms for inclusion in this report:

- South Carolina Department of Disabilities and Special Needs;
- South Carolina Department of Education;
- South Carolina Department of Social Services; and
- South Carolina School for the Deaf and the Blind.

Agency representatives and Head Start directors were contacted and asked to provide program information on a form titled “Programs/Services to Preschool Children with Disabilities.” The form required the following:

- a brief, general description of the services provided for preschool children with disabilities (ages 3–5);
- initiatives for programs/services for preschool children with disabilities (ages three through five) carried out in the 2017–18 school year;
- specific programs/services that the agency is financially responsible for providing to preschool children with disabilities;
- the number of preschool children with disabilities served in each age group;
- the amount of funds expended for preschool children with disabilities by age group (if available); and
- where information about the program’s pertinent policies/procedures regarding programs/services for preschool children with disabilities (ages 3–5) can be obtained.

The following Head Start Programs submitted data and information for inclusion in the report:

- Beaufort/Jasper;
- Berkley Dorchester;
- East Coast Migrant; and
- Sunbelt Human Advancement Resources (SHARE).

These data and information are not included in this report as the individual data contained personally identifiable information; however, the SCDE and preschool committee appreciate this collaboration.

Conclusion

While improvements have been made over the past several years regarding the performance and outcomes of preschool children with disabilities, there is evidence that continued progress is being made and will be needed as the early childhood landscape shifts in South Carolina. As such, it is imperative that preschool programs and educators be supported to ensure that children are able to obtain the support they need from birth so that they may start preschool educational programs with the tools and supports they need. Only through these coordinated, early intervening efforts might the state see children start school ready to learn, progress from grade to grade, and be equipped with the skills, information, and supports they need for Kindergarten readiness and lifelong success.

References

- U.S. Department of Health and Human Services and U.S. Department of Education. (2015). *Policy statement on inclusion of children with disabilities in early childhood programs* p.3. Washington, DC: U.S. Government Printing Office.

Appendix A: Memorandum on Preschool LRE:



**STATE OF SOUTH CAROLINA
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION**

MOLLY M. SPEARMAN
STATE SUPERINTENDENT OF EDUCATION

MEMORANDUM

TO: District Special Education Directors
District Early Childhood Education Coordinators

FROM: Rebecca Davis, Director, Office of Special Education Services

DATE: September 4, 2019

RE: Least Restrictive Environment in Preschool and Continuum of Placements

This memorandum serves as guidance on adhering to the least restrictive environment (LRE) requirement with respect to preschool placements for young students with disabilities. As you are aware, regulations to local educational agencies (LEAs) in Part B of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) (34 C.F.R. Part 300), that provide LRE requirements apply to the placement of preschool children with disabilities. The statutory requirements for LRE do not distinguish between school-aged and preschool-aged children, and must be applied equally.

These requirements state IDEA's expectation that children with disabilities are educated in regular classes with supplementary aids and supports. Section 1412 (a)(5) of Title 20 of the United States code states that "to the maximum extent appropriate, children with disabilities, including children in public or private institutions or other care facilities, must be educated with children who are not disabled. Further, special classes, separate schooling, or other removal of children with disabilities from the regular educational environment may occur only when the nature or severity of the disability of a child is such that education in regular classes with the use of supplementary aids and services cannot be achieved satisfactorily." Supplementary aids and services means aids, services, and other supports that are provided in regular education classes, other education-related settings, and in extracurricular and nonacademic settings, to enable children with disabilities to be educated with nondisabled children to the maximum extent appropriate in accordance with 34 C.F.R. § 300.114 through 300.116.

In accordance with 34 C.F.R. § 300.115 through 300.116 a preschool continuum of alternative placements must be provided by each public agency to meet the needs of children with disabilities for special education and related services. The preschool continuum must: (1) include placements listed in the definition of special education under § 300.38 (instruction in regular classes, special classes, special schools, home instruction, and instruction in hospitals and institutions); and (2) make provision for supplementary services such as a resource room or itinerant instruction to be provided in conjunction with regular class placement.

South Carolina Department of Education (SCDE) staff have worked with Head Start, First Steps, Office of the Child Care Administrator and other state level partners to develop guidance that supports LEAs to build a preschool continuum of alternative placements for young students with disabilities. Examples and non-examples of a preschool continuum of placements, supplementary supports and resources to facilitate braided or blended funding at the district-level are provided in the attachment to this memorandum. LEAs and individual education plan (IEP) teams should carefully review this guidance and the attached resources to ensure LRE is provided for preschool students.

After reviewing the guidance, LEAs may determine, based on IEP team decisions, that there is the need to modify the existing placement options for preschool students with disabilities. For example, offering only a self-contained special education class for three year olds is not a continuum and LEAs may determine the need for itinerant special education services to serve children in local early childhood education programs. If your LEA needs to obtain additional training on preschool LRE and how to build a preschool continuum of placements for young students with disabilities, please contact Jenny May, jmay@ed.sc.gov.

We appreciate your leadership and your team's hard work in providing a preschool continuum of alternative placements to ensure our students with disabilities have access to LRE.

Attachments

Attachment A

Examples and Non-exemplars of Least Restrictive Environment in the preschool continuum of alternative placements

South Carolina Department of Education (SCDE) staff have worked with Head Start, First Steps, Office of the Child Care Administrator and other state level partners to develop guidance that supports local education agencies (LEAs) to build a preschool continuum of alternative placements for young students with disabilities, as required under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA). Examples and non-examples of a preschool continuum of placements, supplementary supports, and resources to facilitate braided or blended funding at the district-level are provided in the attachment to this memorandum. LEAs and individualized education program (IEP) teams should carefully review this guidance for ensuring the least restrictive environment (LRE) is provided for preschool students.

A student who is ineligible for a program due to age at time of enrollment or other program requirements such as financial eligibility is not automatically eligible for service in this

program using solely IEP as criterion. The student must be served in the LRE where the IEP team determines the student's needs will be met and he/she will have access to the South Carolina Early Learning Standards, general education curricula, and typically developing, age-appropriate peers. A good way to identify the LRE for a preschool-aged child is answering the question "Where would this child be served if he/she did not have a disability" and then using the IEP to determine appropriate supports and accommodations for the child to be successful in that setting.

As with Kindergarten through 12th grade, whichever source funds the general education program for young students who are the same age and eligibility, that source also funds the general early childhood education cost for the preschool student with disabilities. Excess costs for specialized materials, instruction or accommodations are paid for using IDEA funds, either those designated for preschool (619) or other IDEA funding sources.

Preschool Continuum of Alternative Placements

Examples

An LEA offers special education services to children ages three, four, and five (not yet Kindergarten eligible) in a variety of settings to meet the diverse needs of young children with disabilities. Preschool children with disabilities can access high quality early childhood educational activities in regular preschool classes, special education classes, special schools, home instruction, and instruction in hospitals. Young children with disabilities have access to needed supplementary services such as a specially designed instruction or speech services provided during part of the day in the CERDEP program through a pull-out or inclusion model. This may include direct and indirect services provided to the child as well as consultation provided to the classroom teacher and staff.

A child who is not financially eligible for a Head Start program, *may* be able to be served in this setting if the Head Start program successfully waives the financial eligibility requirement to meet its federally required program enrollment of 10% of students having an IEP. This will be considered by the Head Start program on a case by case basis for children who are not financially eligible.

Non-Exemplars

The following scenarios place the district in a legally vulnerable situation and are NOT considered a continuum.

An LEA offers a self-contained class for three-year-old students with disabilities. If parents do not want to enroll their child in this class, there are no other special education services provided for three-year-olds.

An LEA offers a half-day program for three, four and five (not yet Kindergarten eligible) students with IEPs and children without an IEP are served in a full day preschool program.

A CERDEP 4K class has a requirement that children are four years old by September 1 of the school year. This would not be an appropriate LRE for child who turns 4 in December, even if they would not begin in the CERDEP class until January. This child could be served in community-based childcare, or other age-appropriate setting until he or she is age eligible for the

CERDEP class by September 1 of that school year.

Trouble Shooting Tips

Scenario: A community based childcare setting refuses to allow the speech therapist into the setting to serve a child in their center.

Tips: The special education director or designee can call the childcare director and explain that the speech therapist has passed all requisite district security checks, and is under the general supervision of the district and parents have consented that this person work with their child to provide services. Use the Authorization for Intervention, Therapy and Extracurricular Activities (DSS Form 2930) from the Office of the Childcare Administrator to formalize the procedure: https://dss.sc.gov/resource-library/forms_brochures/files/2930.pdf

Scenario: A parent would like special education services to be provided in a private childcare center and the district pay the tuition to satisfy the federal requirement of a free appropriate public education and special education services be provided there. This is a childcare center chosen by the parents.

Tips: The district special education funds cannot support payment of the general preschool education/tuition cost as special education funds only cover the excess cost of specialized services or instruction. The district also cannot assume liability for a center that is not under its general supervision when it is a parent-selected site. Parents do have the right to place preschool students at the center or program of their preference, however similarly to K through 12th grade funding structures, the general education cost of preschool is paid for by the funding stream that would pay for it if the student did not have a disability, and IDEA funds (619 or 611) would pay for the excess cost of specialized instruction, services, or accommodations. A student can be served in an age-appropriate public setting such as CERDEP or a Title 1 preschool setting, or the team may consider a First Steps or Head Start program. Parents can be advised to research if they are eligible for a childcare voucher to offset the tuition cost of community-based child care programs. To gain information on South Carolina Vouchers click here: <http://www.scchildcare.org/departments/sc-voucher.aspx>

Resources

Legal Guidance:

http://ectacenter.org/~pdfs/topics/inclusion/research/IDEA_Provisions_Supporting_Preschool_Inclusion.pdf

<http://ectacenter.org/~pdfs/topics/inclusion/determining-lre-placements.pdf>

<https://www2.ed.gov/policy/speced/guid/idea/memosdcltrs/preschool-lre-dcl-1-10-17.pdf>

<https://www2.ed.gov/policy/speced/guid/earlylearning/joint-statement-full-text.pdf>

Research and Best Practice:

https://npdci.fpg.unc.edu/sites/npdci.fpg.unc.edu/files/resources/NPDCI-ResearchSynthesisPointsInclusivePractices-2011_0.pdf

https://npdci.fpg.unc.edu/sites/npdci.fpg.unc.edu/files/resources/NPDCI-ResearchSynthesisPoints-10-2009_0.pdf

http://ectacenter.org/~pdfs/topics/inclusion/research/STRAIN_what_we_know.pdf

<http://ectacenter.org/topics/inclusion/research/research.asp>

<http://ectacenter.org/~pdfs/topics/inclusion/local-inclusion-self-assessment.pdf>

<http://ectacenter.org/~pdfs/topics/inclusion/team-decisions-guiding-questions.pdf>

<https://elc.grads360.org/services/PDCService.svc/GetPDCDocumentFile?fileId=9652>

Funding:

http://ectacenter.org/~pdfs/topics/inclusion/preschool_inclusion_finance_toolkit_2017-07-07.pdf

<http://ectacenter.org/topics/inclusion/funding/funding.asp>

Appendix B: Agency and Head Start Data:

Reporting Period: *From: August 2018*

To: June 2019

Name of Agency: Berkeley County School District Head Start (Berkeley-Dorchester)

Name of Person Providing Information: Antoinette Jones

Title of Person Providing Information: Director

Address: 229 East Main Street

P.O. Box 608

Moncks Corner, South Carolina 29461

Telephone Number: 843-899-5048

Fax Number:

Email Address: Jonesa@bcstdschools.net

Website: <https://www.bcstdschools.net/Page/27674>

1. Provide a brief, general description of the programs/services provided by your agency for preschool children with disabilities (ages 3-5).

Berkeley-Dorchester Head Start collaborates with three Local Education Agencies (Berkeley County, Dorchester District 2, and Dorchester District 4) to ensure all identified children receive appropriate services. The agency adheres to all accommodations outlined in the child's Individual Education Plan. Our classrooms are within the Local Education Agencies settings, allowing ease of implementation of services, and assistive technology (and other supportive items) can transfer between the special education classroom and Head Start class. For example, a child with a hearing impairment requires an amplification device in her special education class to assist with communicating her wants and needs as well as assisting with meeting her academic needs. The Local Education Agency allows the device to transition with the student between classes to ensure she can engage fully in both settings.

2. Briefly outline your agency's initiatives for programs/services for preschool children with disabilities (ages 3-5) carried out in fiscal year 2015 (2014–2015 school year).

Berkeley-Dorchester Head Start provides ongoing training for instructional teams. Additional resources are provided to assist instructional teams with individualizing and ensuring their classroom is an inclusive environment for all students. A copy of an IEP Snapshot is given to all instructional teams for every child identified. The IEP Snapshot includes the child's strengths, weaknesses, special education goals, services, and accommodations. The IEP Snapshot provides the instructional team with guidance ensuring they are meeting the needs of the identified student. In addition, Berkeley-Dorchester Head Start provides each identified student's parent with advocacy assistance at each special education meeting along with mailed resources that provides education on the special education process and their parental rights.

3. Indicate specific programs/services that your agency is financially responsible for providing to preschool children with disabilities.

Thus far, each Local Education Agency has financially supported the programs and services for every child identified within Berkeley-Dorchester Head Start with a disability.

4. Number of preschool children with disabilities served in each age group.

	Total	Number served by LEA
3-year-old children	45	45
4-year-old children	42	42
5-year-old children	0	0
Total	87	87

If the above information is available by race/ethnicity, please provide a breakdown:

	American Indian or Alaskan	Asian	Black or African American	Hawaiian or Pacific Islander	Two or more races	White	Hispanic
3-year-old children	0	0	26	0	*	13	*
4-year-old children	0	0	22	0	*	14	*
5-year-old children	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Total Served	0	0	48	0	*	27	*

5. Amount of funds expended for preschool children with disabilities by age group (if available).

- a. 3-year-old children
- b. 4-year-old children
- c. 5-year-old children
- d. Total Funds Expended on children ages 3-5

*** Thus far, each Local Education Agency has financially supported the programs and services for every child identified within Berkeley-Dorchester Head Start with a disability.

6. Indicate funding sources for funds specified in Item 5

Not applicable

7. Where can information about your program's pertinent policies/procedures regarding programs/services for preschool children with disabilities (ages 3-5) be obtained?

Information regarding Berkeley-Dorchester Head Start's pertinent policies/procedures regarding programs/services for preschool children with disabilities can be obtained in our agency Service Plan.

Reporting Period: *From: 2018* *To: 2019*

Name of Agency: Beaufort-Jasper EOC Head Start

Name of Person Providing Information: Chiffon McNeil

Title of Person Providing Information: Mental Health/Disability Specialist

Address: Post Office Box 2296-1905 Duke St-Suite 250 Beaufort, South Carolina 29901-2296

Telephone Number: 843-322-2633

Fax Number: 843-255-7225

Email Address: cmcneil@thebjeoc.org

Website: www.thebjeoc.org

1. Provide a brief, general description of the programs/services provided by your agency for preschool children with disabilities (ages 3-5).

Beaufort Jasper EOC Head Start provides on-going communication with disabilities service providers in order to provide services that are collaborative and not duplicative. Beaufort Jasper EOC Head Start provides referrals to LEA or EI (Early Interventionists) providers in order to ensure that children with potential disabilities receive an evaluation and/or services should they qualify. Also, Beaufort Jasper EOC Head Start/Early Head Start refers children, who do not qualify for LEA or EI services, to private providers.

2. Briefly outline your agency's initiatives for programs/services for preschool children with disabilities (ages 3-5) carried out in fiscal year 2018 (2018–2019 school year).

As stated above, Beaufort Jasper EOC Head Start partners and coordinates on-going services through interactive meetings, ongoing classroom observations via the program's identified Mental Health Consultant (MHC), and appropriate program planning with Beaufort and Jasper County school districts to ensure children identified with a diagnosed disability receive appropriate services and intervention. Additionally, transportation and part-day services are provided for children with additional needs wherein identified children may spend a part of their educational day in a district classroom that provide specific services for children with disabilities and/or special needs.

3. Indicate specific programs/services that your agency is financially responsible for providing to preschool children with disabilities.

As stated earlier, Beaufort Jasper EOC Head Start/Early Head Start not only partners and coordinate on-going services through interactive meetings and program planning with Beaufort and Jasper County school districts, our program also ensures we budget for children that may require additional services; additional support and the need for ongoing observations through the program’s identified Mental Health Consultant. Financial planning includes securing services for the MHC, a third person for the classroom if needed, and the purchase of needed classroom materials that may support aiding the child in reaching their identified school readiness goals.

4. Number of preschool children with disabilities served in each age group.

	Total	Number served by LEA
3-year-old children	16	16
4-year-old children	31	31
5-year-old children	*	*
Total	54	54

If the above information is available by race/ethnicity, please provide a breakdown:

	American Indian or Alaskan	Asian	Black or African American	Hawaiian or Pacific Islander	Two or more races	White
3-year-old children			14		*	
4-year-old children		*	22		*	*
5-year-old children			*		*	*
Total Served		*	39		*	*

5. Amount of funds expended for preschool children with disabilities by age group (if available).

- a. 3-year-old children
- b. 4-year-old children
- c. 5-year-old children
- d. Total Funds Expended on children ages 3-5

6. **Indicate funding sources for funds specified in Item 5**
7. **Where can information about your program's pertinent policies/procedures regarding programs/services for preschool children with disabilities (ages 3-5) be obtained?**

Information regarding Beaufort Jasper EOC Head Start/Early Head Start's pertinent policies/procedures regarding programs/services for preschool aged children with disabilities (ages 3-5) can be obtained and viewed via the agency's program policies and procedures. The program policies and procedures are located at each of the program (9) nine Head Start/Early Head Start sites; in the offices each Content Area Manager and also on the agency's SharePoint server. Additionally, policies and procedures are shared with the program's Policy Council and Executive Board with properly aligned information associated with the program's policies and procedures being detailed within, in short, in the program's parent handbook.

Reporting Period: *From: 2018* *To: 2019*
Name of Agency: South Carolina Direct Services – East Coast Migrant Head Start Project
Name of Person Providing Information: Dana Rogers
Title of Person Providing Information: Head Start Administrator
Address: 706 Orleans Road – 2nd Floor, Charleston, South Carolina 29407

Telephone Number: (843) 768-5543 **Fax Number:** (843) 768-3240
Email Address: darogers@ecmhsp.org **Website:** www.ecmhsp.org

1. **Provide a brief, general description of the programs/services provided by your agency for preschool children with disabilities (ages 3-5).**

East Coast Migrant Head Start Project (ECMHSP) recruits and enrolls children suspect of having and who are diagnosed with disability. The program also has policies and procures in place for developmental screenings to ensure all children with concerns are including followed-up on including referral to the Local Education Agency (LEA). ECMHSP has a Memorandum of Understanding or Agreement, with each LEA in our service areas. The program also contracts with Aging with Flair to provide services for children who are not served by the LEA. ECMHSP is open during the summer months in South Carolina when the local service providers typically do not provide services. Each provider plays a significant role in the disability process of children enrollment in the program. The providers' offer assistance and support with the developmental screening process, evaluation to identify children with disabilities and providing services and therapies such as speech and language, developmental, and parent education.

2. Briefly outline your agency’s initiatives for programs/services for preschool children with disabilities (ages 3-5) carried out in fiscal year 2015 (2014–2015 school year).

- Health Service Advisory Committee (HSAC) meeting to discuss barriers and solutions
- Individual meeting with parents
- Individual meeting with providers
- Strict timeline for disability process

3. Indicate specific programs/services that your agency is financially responsible for providing to preschool children with disabilities.

ECMHSP is open during the summer months when many LEAs in the service area do not provide services. The program is committed to continuing services while we are open. If children do not have insurance the agency is financially responsible for all services, they receive. If a child needs any further evaluations to determine eligibility for services and subsequently services, ECMHSP pays for contracted providers. Each center in South Carolina has a specific budget for health and disability services, also with additional funds from the grantee budget.

4. Number of preschool children with disabilities served in each age group.

	Total	Number served by LEA
3-year-old children		
4-year-old children	*	*
5-year-old children	0	
Total		

If the above information is available by race/ethnicity, please provide a breakdown:

	American Indian or Alaskan	Asian	Black or African American	Hawaiian or Pacific Islander	Two or more races	White
3-year-old children						
4-year-old children						
5-year-old children						
Total Served						

5. **Amount of funds expended for preschool children with disabilities by age group (if available).**
 - a. 3-year-old children
 - b. 4-year-old children
 - c. 5-year-old children
 - d. Total Funds Expended on children ages 3-5
6. **Indicate funding sources for funds specified in Item 5**
7. **Where can information about your program's pertinent policies/procedures regarding programs/services for preschool children with disabilities (ages 3-5) be obtained?**

ECMSHP has a disability service plan that is reviewed and updated annually with input from administrative and center staff, along with parents. Each center maintains a copy of the Disability Service Plan, which outlines all policies and procedures related to programs/services. This ranges from information on policies, management, recruitment, implementation, engagement, accessibility, confidentiality, and monitoring.

Reporting Period: *From: 08/20/2018* *To: 05/31/2019*
Name of Agency: SHARE Head Start
Name of Person Providing Information: Tracie Wilson
Title of Person Providing Information: Disability/ Special Needs Specialist
Address: 254 S. Pleasantburg Drive, Greenville, South Carolina 29607

Telephone Number: 864-282-2197 **Fax Number:** 864-233-4019
Email Address: twilson@sharenc.org **Website:** SHARESC.org

1. **Provide a brief, general description of the programs/services provided by your agency for preschool children with disabilities (ages 3-5).**

Children with disabilities receive the full range of comprehensive educational, nutritional, social services, health/mental health, and disability services to encourage and stimulate intellectual and social growth. Children with disabilities also receive individualized services through the LEA in all four county service areas. SHARE Head Start teaching staff implement goals from each child's IEP onto their daily lesson plans in order to assist children with meeting their individualized goals.

2. **Briefly outline your agency's initiatives for programs/services for preschool children with disabilities (ages 3-5) carried out in fiscal year 2019 (2018-2019 school year).**

SHARE Head Start implemented the following initiatives for preschool children with disabilities: Pre-service/In-service training on IDEA, ADA and section 504 updates, SHARE Head Start policies and procedures and the Head Start performance standards. Provide large group in-service training throughout the program year, which include behavioral/social emotional techniques, strategies for working with children with

developmental delays, along with the process of referral and identification of children with disabilities. Other initiatives include participating in Child find activities, provide trainings, staffing and resources to Head Start parents of children with disabilities and children suspected of having a disability.

3. Indicate specific programs/services that your agency is financially responsible for providing to preschool children with disabilities.

Our program is financially responsible for providing comprehensive developmental and sensory screenings for all children, including dental and physical exams as needed. Share Head Start also provides disability supplies, training materials, manipulative for children with developmental, mental health, speech and motor delays. Assistive technology is provided as needed. SHARE contracts with individual contractors to provide specialized trainings, mental health observations for all classrooms to assist in the identification of children with disabilities and social/emotional concerns.

4. Number of preschool children with disabilities served in each age group.

	Total	Number served by LEA
3-year-old children	58	58
4-year-old children	69	69
5-year-old children	26	26
Total	153	153

If the above information is available by race/ethnicity, please provide a breakdown:

	American Indian or Alaskan	Asian	Black or African American	Hawaiian or Pacific Islander	Hispanic Latino	Two or more races	White
3-year-old children	0	0	28	0	*	*	24
4-year-old children	*	0	41	0	*	*	22
5-year-old children	0	0	16	0	*	*	*
Total Served	*	0	85	0	*	*	53

5. Amount of funds expended for preschool children with disabilities by age group (if available).

- a. 3-year-old children
- b. 4-year-old children
- c. 5-year-old children
- d. Total Funds Expended on children ages 3-5 = \$56, 457.00

The above amount was funded by SHARE Head Start. Funds were expended for screenings/identification of children with disabilities, disability supplies, specialized Pre-services/ In-service training and materials, resources, and contracted services. The LEA also provides services to children with Disabilities, SHARE Head Start do not have access to amount funded by the local school districts.

1. Indicate funding sources for funds specified in Item 5

SHARE Head Start provide Federal Funding for children served in Anderson, Greenville, Pickens, and Oconee counties.

2. Where can information about your program's pertinent policies/procedures regarding programs/services for preschool children with disabilities (ages 3-5) be obtained?

The information can be obtained in our Head Start Performance Standards and Head Start Policies and Procedural Guide.

Reporting Period: *From: 2018 To: 2019*
Name of Agency: South Carolina Department of Disabilities and Special Needs
Name of Person Providing Information: 02
Title of Person Providing Information: Director of Early Intervention
Address: 3440 Harden Street Extension, Columbia South Carolina 29203

Telephone Number: 803 898 9145 **Fax Number:** 803 898 2242
Email Address: jkimrey@ddsn.sc.gov **Website:** ddsn.sc.gov

- 1. Provide a brief, general description of the programs/services provided by your agency for preschool children with disabilities (ages 3-5).**
DDSN provides family training and service coordination.
- 2. Briefly outline your agency's initiatives for programs/services for preschool children with disabilities (ages 3-5) carried out in fiscal year 2015 (2014–2015 school year).**
This question pre-dates my employment at DDSN.

3. Indicate specific programs/services that your agency is financially responsible for providing to preschool children with disabilities.

Early Intervention, Case Management ID/RD Waiver, Community Services Waiver. All services require that the individual meet certain eligibility requirements. Waiver service require that a consumer have Medicaid.

4. Number of preschool children with disabilities served in each age group.

DDSN does not keep a record of children served by LEA.

	Total	Number served by LEA
3-year-old children	1105	
4-year-old children	909	
5-year-old children	763	
Total		

If the above information is available by race/ethnicity, please provide a breakdown:

	American Indian or Alaskan	Asian	Black or African American	Hawaiian or Pacific Islander	Two or more races	White
3-year-old children						
4-year-old children						
5-year-old children						
Total Served						

5. Amount of funds expended for preschool children with disabilities by age group (if available). This information is not available.

- a. 3-year-old children
- b. 4-year-old children
- c. 5-year-old children
- d. Total Funds Expended on children ages 3-5
- e.

6. Indicate funding sources for funds specified in Item 5

South Carolina Medicaid, State funds

7. Where can information about your program's pertinent policies/procedures regarding programs/services for preschool children with disabilities (ages 3-5) be obtained?

South Carolina DDSN's website: ddsn.sc.gov

Reporting Period: *From: July 2018* *To: Jun 2019*
Name of Agency: South Carolina School for the Deaf and the Blind
Name of Person Providing Information: Elaine Gentry
Title of Person Providing Information: Early Intervention Program Director
Address: 101 Executive Center Dr. Ste 120
Columbia, South Carolina 29210
Telephone Number: 803-896-9789 **Fax Number:** 803-896-8279
Email Address: egentry@scsdb.org **Website:** scsdb.org

1. **Provide a brief, general description of the programs/services provided by your agency for preschool children with disabilities (ages 3-5).**
Early Intervention services (service coordination and family training) for children with sensory impairment.
2. **Briefly outline your agency’s initiatives for programs/services for preschool children with disabilities (ages 3-5) carried out in fiscal year 2015 (2014–2015 school year).**
SCSDB’s 3-5 program was in development during this time frame. The program did not begin until 2017.
3. **Indicate specific programs/services that your agency is financially responsible for providing to preschool children with disabilities.**
4. **Number of preschool children with disabilities served in each age group.**

	Total	Number not served by LEA
3-year-old children		23
4-year-old children		*
5-year-old children		*
Total		32

If the above information is available by race/ethnicity, please provide a breakdown:

	American Indian or Alaskan	Asian	Black or African American	Hawaiian or Pacific Islander	Two or more races	White
3-year-old children			*		*hispanic	10
4-year-old children						*
5-year-old children			*			
Total Served	0	0	*	0	*	18

- 5. Amount of funds expended for preschool children with disabilities by age group (if available).**
 - a. 3-year-old children
 - b. 4-year-old children
 - c. 5-year-old children
 - d. Total Funds Expended on children ages 3–5

- 6. Indicate funding sources for funds specified in Item 5.**

- 7. Where can information about your program’s pertinent policies/procedures regarding programs/services for preschool children with disabilities (ages 3-5) be obtained?**