

**Policy ICDA: Preschool Program**

**Status:** DRAFT

**Original Adopted Date:** 09/15/2008 | **Last Revised Date:** 10/14/2024 | **Last Reviewed Date:** 10/14/2024

**Preschool Ages Birth to 5**

**COLLABORATION WITH OTHER AGENCIES AND REFERRALS**

**Transition from IDEA Part C to Part B Preschool Programs**

Local Education Agencies (LEAs) must participate in a transition planning conference arranged by the designated lead agency for children who participated in early intervention programs. To experience a smooth and effective transition to preschool programs, LEAs must have procedures describing evaluation and transition planning. Procedures are as follows:

1. Children who are served in an early intervention program under Part C of IDEA and who are believed to be potentially eligible for Part B services will be referred to the local school district of residence by a Service Coordinator employed by the Mississippi Department of Health. Such a referral will be made at least ninety days prior to the child's third birthday. A transition planning conference will be arranged by the Mississippi Department of Health, the lead agency for implementation of Part C, in collaboration with the family and local school district personnel at least ninety days prior to the child's third birthday. Children suspected of having a disability, and who may be in need of special education and related services, must be evaluated under the requirements contained in Sections II and IV.
2. State agencies providing services for children ages birth through two under IDEA, Part C, program will adhere to the policies and procedures of that program when identifying children ages birth through two for services. Local school districts will implement Preliminary to Child Study referral procedures under IDEA, Part B for children birth through two and for preschool children. State agencies will also implement Preliminary to Child Study referral procedures for preschool children who are suspected of having a disability under IDEA, Part B. Preschool children are defined as three, four, and five year old children not yet eligible for State-funded kindergarten.

LEAs must make a free appropriate public education available to each eligible child residing in their jurisdiction no later than the child's third birthday; and have an Individualized Education Program (IEP) in effect for the child by that date. If the child's third birthday falls during the summer months, the IEP Team (along with IDEA 2004 Part C personnel who participated in planning) will determine when the local educational agency will begin providing special education services.

**Reference citation:** IDEA 2004 §612(a)(9); Federal regulations §300.111

**First Steps and Project Prints**

Children who are served in an early intervention program under Part C of IDEA and who are believed to be potentially eligible for Part B services will be referred to the local school district of residence by the Mississippi Department of Health. Such a referral will be made at least ninety days prior to the child's third birthday. Children suspected of having a disability and who may be in need of special education and related services must be evaluated under the requirements contained in Sections III and IV of the Mississippi Department of Education Policies and Procedures.

**Jackson County Civic Action Committee (Head Start)**

The Jackson County School District maintains a Cooperative Agreement with the Jackson County Civic Action Committee. As per the Cooperative Agreement, the JCCAC Head Start refers children with suspected disabilities to the Jackson County School District for diagnostic evaluations. Head Start also recruits, enrolls and serves eligible children ages 3-5 making available no less than 10 percent of enrollment opportunities in Head Start Programs available for children with disabilities who are eligible to participate. The Jackson County School District provides referrals of pre-school disabled/suspected disabled children or those in need of Head Start service to Head Start when appropriate and provides diagnostic evaluations when appropriate.

---