



COLORADO

Department of Education

Monthly Meeting

Implementing Special Education for Preschoolers in Universal Preschool

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Exceptional Students Services Unit, Office of Special Education

October 10, 2023

Meeting Intentions



- Monthly virtual meeting - Second Tuesday of every month
- Audience: AU and LEA Special Education Directors, District level EC administrators Fiscal representatives
- Facilitated by CDE with field input in agenda planning, content and feedback loop, CDEC UPK staff invited
- Meant to be responsive, proactive, needs based & solution focused
- Meeting scope: Implementing Special Education for Preschoolers within the UPK landscape



Today's Topics



1. CDE Training Plan for Early Childhood Educators
2. Reminders on Early Childhood Settings and LRE
3. CDEC Updates



Monthly Meeting Schedule for 23-24 School Year

Second Tuesday of each month from 2 - 3 p.m.

[Zoom link \(register\)](#)

**[Submit a request of a meeting topic or question](#)
prior to each meeting date**

Remaining Dates:

Nov 14, 2023

Dec 12, 2023

Jan 9, 2024

Feb 13, 2024

Mar 12, 2024

Apr 9, 2024

May 14, 2024

Jun 11, 2024



Special Education Training and Licensing or Requirements for Early Childhood Educators

ECEA Rule Change

Preschool Providers shall complete all special education training and licensing or authorization requirements for early childhood educators established by the Department of Education prior to any placement by the administrative unit of a child with disabilities in its program. Preschool Providers that have provided services to children with disabilities in prior Colorado public preschool programs are exempt from this requirement. (CRS § 3.02(3)(a)(ii)).



Preschool Provider

Any of the following entities that are licensed through child care licensing:

- A child care center
- A school district licensed to operate as a public preschool provider
- A charter school licensed to operate as a public preschool provider
- A head start program



Special Education Training and Authorization Requirements for Early Childhood Educators

Plan organized around 5 sections:

- CDE-Verified list of providers that participated in the prior Colorado public preschool programs (Exempt)
- Procedure to add provider to the CDE list (Not Exempt)
- All programs as a condition of licensing
- LCO and CDEC training
- Optional Professional Learning Opportunities



CDE-Verified List of Providers

- All programs must meet CDE Standards for Placement of Preschoolers with IEPs in Educational Programs
- Must also meet any additional AU requirements
- Exemptions for training apply to programs that have provided services to children with disabilities in prior public preschool programs
- All personnel who hold a CDE Educator License are exempt from the minimum training requirements



Adding a Provider to the CDE-Verified List

- Provider must be identified by a sponsoring AU
- The AU must determine the provider is an appropriate educational program for preschool students to access FAPE
- Sponsored provider must meet the training and certification requirements outlined in the procedure:
 - Completion of required coursework
 - Review of needs compared against Standards and Competencies with completion of identified training
 - CDE consultation to AU and program



Providers Added by Sponsoring AU

- Must be overseen by the AU through an agreement to deliver preschool to children with IEPs
- Implementation of the training plan is expected to occur prior to children being placed in the program provided through a combination of small group or individual training
- AU completes assurances to CDE
- CDE provides consultation and technical assistance through the process
- CDE has developed resources to support development of an appropriate agreement between the provider and the AU



Every Licensed Child Care Program

- Required as a part of obtaining a child care license through the CDEC.
- Introduction to IDEA Programs (EI and Special Education) includes how to talk to families about concerns, and how to support referrals to these programs.
- This is a minimum requirement for all licensed providers, regardless of whether the program they work in serves children with IEPs.



LCO & CDEC Universal Preschool Staff

Must complete training on special education and the requirements in the state MOU:

- LCO staff responsible for administering Universal Preschool
- LCO staff working directly with families enrolling in Universal Preschool
- LCO staff who support Universal Preschool Providers
- CDEC staff who work in Universal Preschool



Optional Professional Learning

- Existing CDE professional learning opportunities is available to all CDE-Verified Preschool Programs.
- Notice of professional learning opportunities are distributed through various CDE listservs and the CDE Professional Development Search Tool.
- Professional learning content across a wide array of topics through online learning modules and available by credible organizations, which are linked from our website.



Special Education Training Requirements for Early Childhood Educators

Explore on
CDE
Website:
[Professional
Development
Handbook](#)

[Home](#) » [Child Find and Preschool Special Education](#) » [Special Education and UPK in Colorado](#)

PD Handbook for Universal Preschool

Special Education Training and Authorization Requirements for Early Childhood Educators

For the 2023-24 school year, CDE will pilot the plan contained in this handbook.

Overview

The Exceptional Children's Education Act requires that *"Preschool Providers shall complete all special education training and licensing or authorization requirements for early childhood educators established by the Department of Education prior to any placement by the administrative unit of a child with disabilities in its program. Preschool Providers that have provided services to children with disabilities in prior Colorado public preschool programs are exempt from this requirement."* (3.02(3)(a)(ii)). This manual serves as a guide for professional development to assure opportunities for appropriate educational placements for children with disabilities.

Glossary of Acronyms

AU = Special Education Administrative Unit
CDE = Colorado Department of Education
CDEC = Colorado Department of Early Childhood
ECEA = Exceptional Children's Educational Act
ESSU = Exceptional Student Services Unit at the CDE
LCO = Local Coordinating Organization
PDIS = Professional Development Information System

Definitions

Administrative Unit (AU) provides educational services to exceptional children and is responsible for the local administration of the ECEA Rules.

Preschool provider means any of the following entities that are licensed through child care licensing:

- A child care center
- A school district licensed to operate as a public preschool provider
- A charter school licensed to operate as a public preschool provider
- A head start program

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[Child Find](#)

[Preschool Special Education Services](#)

[Professional Learning](#)

[Resources](#)

[Results Matter](#)

[Special Education and UPK in Colorado](#)

[CDE Standards for Placement](#)

[PD Handbook for Universal Preschool](#)

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Early Childhood Settings and Least Restrictive Environments

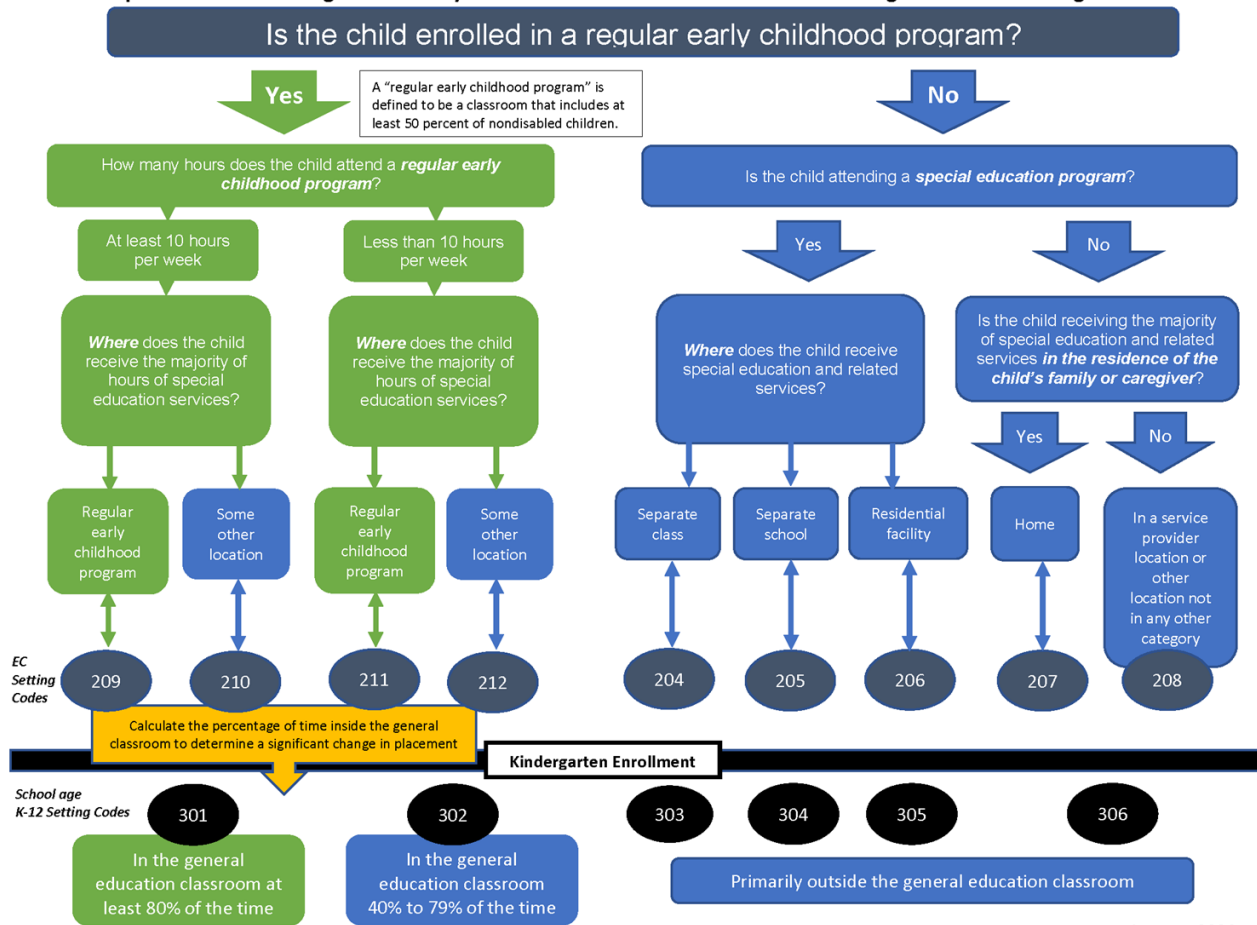
Definitions

Regular Early Childhood Classroom

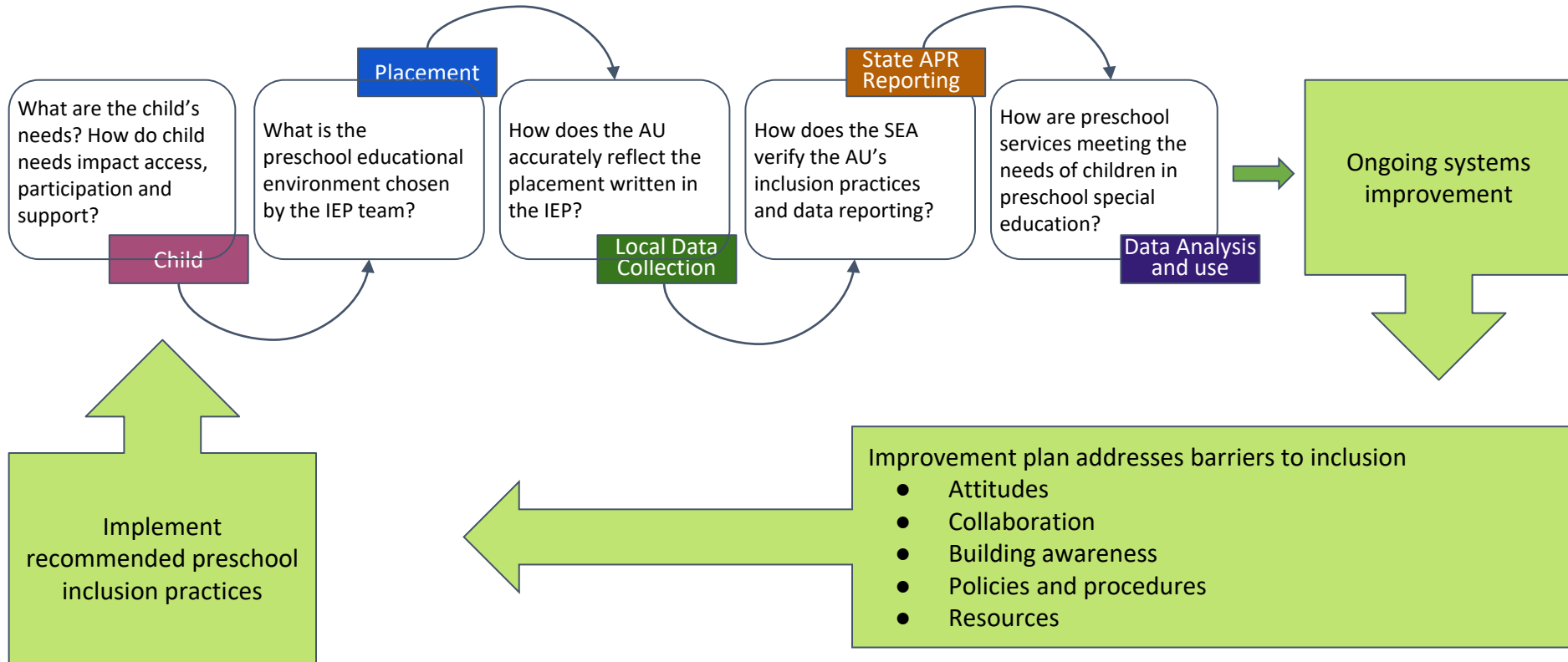
- More than 50% non-disabled peers
- More than 50% of services in the classroom
- More than 10 hours (code 209) or less than 10 hours (code 211)

December LRE data should reflect the setting of the child based on the 23-24 placement.

Comparison of LRE Setting Codes for 5 year olds in Preschool who will attend Kindergarten the Following School Year



The Relationship Between Indicator 6 and Recommended Practices in Preschool Inclusion



Performance Indicator 6

Is your AU facing barriers to provide access to peers as defined by a "regular classroom"?

- If so, what are contributing factors?
- If you are not, how have you addressed any challenges?

Questions?



CDEC Resources & Updates



Universal Preschool Updates

CDE Special Education Meeting

October 10, 2023



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Three-year-old Funding Attestation

- CDEC and CDE are working closely together to finalize the new guidance
- CDEC will host informational office hours to support school districts in completing the attestation - the meeting dates, times, and links will be included in the forthcoming clarification memo



Three-year-old Funding Question #1

If I served 50 three year olds last year, and I have 10 three year olds this year... Will I be paid for 50 three year olds (funding based on last year's number) or 10 three year olds (the number enrolled)?

- Answer: the district would be paid based on the number of three-year-olds served in SY 22-23. Since the payment is received in November, this would provide funds to serve additional three-year-olds that may enroll through the year



Three-year-old Funding Question #2

Do we receive a lump sum payment for 3s based on last year, or payment based only on enrollment?

- School districts will receive a lump sum payment for non-IEP three-year-olds based on the historical allowance
- School districts will receive payments monthly for three-year-olds with an IEP based on monthly enrollment
 - This enrollment form is being finalized with the payment vendor





Three-year-old Funding Question #3

Is there any scenario where CDEC will fund more typical 3 year olds above what we had for CPP last year?

- No. The funding is different than four-year-old funding in that it has a “ceiling” based on 2022-23 CPP utilization for this age group.



IEP Students Question

If some of our districts lists of IEPs are still incorrect, but we went ahead and enrolled the students and have been serving them while we correct the lists from CDEC through the google forms - I'm now hearing that the funding will not be retroactive so will we not receive any funding for the students we've been serving but the lists are not updated yet?

- CDEC will ensure funding for students with IEPs is accurate and paid based on the actual enrollment date. CDEC will resolve payment based on the actual start date through the payment reconciliation process.



IEP Students Clarification



- CDEC will fund three-year-olds and four-year-olds at the hours listed in their IEP.
- If their IEP lists more hours than they are awarded for Universal Preschool, [the AU may request the increase using this Google form](#)
 - We are working with the payment vendor to finalize the process for ensuring children are funded at the level their IEP states





Q&A Process

- Questions will be added to the applicable provider guidance document if not already incorporated
 - [Provider guidance](#)
- CDEC and CDE review before finalizing



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Thank you

