



early intervention

supporting families and child development

# Rhode Island Early Intervention Transition Workbook

*A Family Guide*







For children and families in Early Intervention (EI), transition is the process of moving from the Early Intervention program into whatever new setting or program will meet the needs and goals of each child. Some children will leave Early Intervention before they turn three; others will leave EI upon their third birthday. Either way, having a good plan makes it all easier.

This guide and workbook is a valuable resource as you and your child go through the transition process. We have included some pages you can tear out to share with your Early Intervention (EI) provider, the school district, child care providers, or other adults who may be caring for your child in the future.

Some children will be eligible for special education services, while others may not. Children leaving EI can transition into a variety of settings, which might include:

- Community early care and education programs
- Head Start or Early Head Start
- Community -based groups such as the YMCA
- Preschool located in a public school
- Staying home with a parent or caregiver

**Your Service Coordinator will help you prepare for leaving Early Intervention, provide you with resources, and work side-by-side with you so that you and your child are ready for what comes after your time in Early Intervention.**

## When does the transition process start?

When your child is 27 months old, you and your Individualized Family Service Plan (IFSP) team will discuss whether or not you think your child is “**potentially eligible**” for special education. You will talk about your child’s development and consider how their development compares with other children their own age. The “The RI Special Education Eligibility Criteria” explains what might make a child eligible for special education under RI’s special education regulations. A copy of this criteria has been included in this booklet. Your Service Coordinator will review it with you.

If the team agrees that your child is **potentially eligible**, your Service Coordinator will send basic information about your child to your local school district. According to federal guidelines, this must be sent by the end of your child’s 28th month. You may choose not to send information about your child even if the team decides they are potentially eligible for special education services. This is done by “opting out” of the notification process. “Opting out” means your child’s information will not be sent to your local school district, and your child can continue to receive the same EI services until they turn 3.

You can change your decision to “opt out” at any time. If this happens, your Service Coordinator will arrange to have your child’s information sent to the school district. Just remember that opting-out, and then later deciding you would like to proceed with notification might delay the timelines for transitioning your child by their third birthday.

If you and your IFSP team decide your child is **not potentially eligible**, no information is sent to your school district; but the transition process will still occur and focus on linking you with community resources to help support the needs of your child and family.

## What happens if the IFSP team determines my child is potentially eligible for special education services?

After notification, parents/guardians must give written permission before additional information is shared with the representative from your school district. This representative is referred to as the LEA or local education agency (representative). Examples of what may be shared include:

- Your child's Individualized Family Service Plan
- Evaluation and assessment information
- Child Outcome Summary Form
- Audiological or Ophthalmological Reports
- Other relevant information or reports

The Child Outcomes Summary (sometimes call COS), is an important document shared with the school district to paint a picture of how your child participates in everyday activities and routines. **Using prompts like those in the back of this book, can help parents/guardians and other caregivers generate ideas, because your input is so important.**

## The Transition Conference

The first meeting of the transition process is the **Transition Conference. This meeting occurs when your child is 30 months of age.** (This may vary for children entering EI after their 30<sup>th</sup> month). The purpose of this meeting is to begin planning for what you and your child will need as you prepare to leave Early Intervention.

For children who are not potentially eligible for special education, or whose families have opted out of transition to special education, the Transition Conference participants will include you and your EI team. For children whose notification has been sent to the school department, the Transition Conference participants will include you, your EI team and the LEA. Your Service Coordinator will schedule this meeting at a time that is convenient for you. This is an opportunity for the LEA to get to know your child, and you to learn more about educational opportunities for your child.

It is helpful to prepare for this meeting by writing down any questions you have, giving thought to what your child will need to be successful in future settings. If a representative from your school district is not able to attend the Transition Conference, your Service Coordinator can still proceed with the meeting, unless you prefer to reschedule.

If you choose to proceed without the LEA, your Service Coordinator will be sure to cover specific information required by IDEA (the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act). This information is included in Appendix A. Appendix A should also be covered by the EI Service Coordinator for parents/caregivers of children found eligible for Early Intervention in, during or after their 33<sup>rd</sup> month. Of course, all families are welcome to review this information.

**At the Transition Conference:**

**Families will talk about:**

- How your child functions in everyday routines, activities and settings
- What your child likes and is good at
- Things that might be challenging for your child

**\* The LEA will talk about:**

- How special education eligibility is determined
- The range of special education services available in your district
- Child and parental rights in special education

**The team will talk about:**

- The transition process and how the Child Outcomes Summary document is used to organize information about your child
- What evaluations or other information is needed to help determine your child's eligibility for special education
- Ways to support the child through transition; e.g., social stories, books about going to school/childcare riding the bus\*, toilet training, etc.
- Adding new outcomes that support the child as he/she prepares to enter a new setting
- If appropriate, connecting with other resources that will assist families after transition (e.g., home based services, Cedar Centers, out-patient therapy, community groups, parent groups, etc.)

\* Applicable for children potentially eligible for special education

**Use the space below to jot down your questions and take notes during the Transition Conference.**

The Transition Conference: My Questions and Notes

**Information on the next series of meetings is specific to  
children pursuing eligibility for special education**

## The Evaluation Team Meeting to Review the Referral

**The purpose of this meeting is for the school's team to collect and discuss all the information they have about your child.** This meeting is typically held at the school district office. Prior to this meeting, your EI team will work with you to prepare a draft of the Child Outcomes Summary (COS) form specifically used for Transition. This document will be sent electronically to the LEA so they may review it prior to the meeting.

This COS is used to document your child's present level of development and functioning using the Global Child Outcomes framework. For example:

- *How does your child demonstrate positive social emotional development (including social relationships)?*
- *How does your child acquire and use knowledge and skills, including early literacy skills?*
- *How does your child use appropriate behavior to meet their needs?*

Ask your EI provider for a copy of [A Family Guide: Child Outcomes Measurement Process](#). This booklet describes the role of the Child Outcomes during transition.

This Referral Meeting is an opportunity for you to share up to date information about your child. As new information is shared during the meeting it will be recorded by the LEA. After reviewing all the information and documentation available, the team will decide if any additional information or evaluations are needed.

**Use the space below to jot down your questions and take notes during the Referral Meeting.**

The Referral Meeting: My Questions and Notes

# The Evaluation Team Meeting to Determine Eligibility

**The purpose of this meeting is to determine if your child is eligible for special education.** Your Service Coordinator will help you prepare for this meeting and ensure that any updated information is sent (with your prior consent) to the LEA (school district representative). It may be helpful to bring copies of any other evaluations or reports from other providers, as well as your completed **Preparing for Transition Worksheets** (found later is this booklet). These worksheets will help you to begin to think about your child's skills and behaviors using the framework of the RI Early Learning and Development Standards, as well as the three Global Child Outcomes.

During this meeting, the LEA will update any new information on the Child Outcomes Summary document. There are often many people at this meeting, but it is important to remember they are all interested in making the correct decision about your child's eligibility. You and the team will again discuss your child's functioning and present levels of development using the framework of the three Global Child Outcomes. The team will then discuss how this information compares to the functioning of same age peers using the categories of age-expected, immediate foundational or foundational development. This information, along with all the other information gathered about your child will be considered in order to determine eligibility. The updated Child Outcome Summary (COS) form will be shared with you and your EI provider at the end of the meeting.

**Use the following space to jot down your questions and take notes during the Eligibility Meeting.**

The Eligibility Meeting: My Questions and Notes

## The IEP (Individualized Education Program) Meeting

**If your child is found eligible for special education, the next step is the IEP Meeting. At this meeting you will discuss your child's present level of development and develop achievable educational goals for the future.** Any new information discussed during the meeting will be added to the Child Outcome Summary form. After this, the team will consider all of this information and select an overall statement of functioning, also known as a summary statement. During the meeting, the team will consider your child's IFSP and important federal requirements, such as LRE and FAPE. To learn about these important terms, visit the glossary at the end of this booklet. Again, it is up to you to invite anyone you feel will be supportive to you in this process.

To prepare for this meeting, it will be helpful to think about what you would like to see your child doing a year from now. Many families find that it is helpful to write down their ideas prior to the meeting.

**Use the following page to jot down your ideas, questions, and take notes during the IEP Meeting.**

The IEP Meeting: My Questions and Notes

*Children who are found eligible for EI after they are 28 months old will experience an accelerated process so the planning and meetings can all take place before the child turns 3.*



## Developing Your Child's IEP

The IEP (Individualized Education Program) guides the delivery of services designed to help your child meet their educational goals. IEP goals utilize specially designed instruction to meet your child's educational goals.

The IEP team must include:

- The parent(s)/caregivers(s)
- At least one regular education and one special education teacher
- The LEA (local school district representative)
- Your child's Early Intervention provider
- Parents/caregivers can also invite other supportive adult(s) who know the child well.

At the IEP meeting, the team will consider your child's strengths and needs. The team will discuss any new information in relation to your child's functional and developmental skills and how he/she participates in everyday activities and routines using the framework of the three Child Outcome areas. You will have the opportunity to share your concerns and priorities related to your child's education. The IEP team will discuss your child's participation in appropriate activities for children aged 3-5 using the RI Early Learning and Development Standards (RIELDS) as a resource. Completing the worksheets in this booklet will help you learn more about the RIELDS and prepare you for conversations with the IEP team.

The IEP Team Meeting Process includes:

- Discuss your child's strengths and needs
- Develop annual goals
- Decide how to measure those goals and the mode and frequency for reporting
- Decide on the setting where these goals could be met
- Decide on services needed to meet these goals

During the next step, the IEP team will discuss special education and related services, accommodations, program modifications, and support needed for school personnel to best assist your child in meeting their goals. Definitions of these important terms are included in the glossary.



It will be helpful to begin thinking about your child’s strengths and needs; i.e., what he/she is good at, what is challenging and areas he/she may need support in order to participate in an educational setting. The IEP team will use this information, as well as other available evaluations and reports as the basis for developing measurable goals. The team will then discuss how progress toward these goals will be shared with you.

<b>What are some of your child’s strengths?</b> <b>List some things your child is good at.</b>	<b>What will help your child to be successful in an educational setting?</b> <b>List some areas in which your child needs help.</b>

The services your child needs will be directly related to the goals identified in the IEP. If you need assistance after your child turns three, your program’s RIPIN (Rhode Island Parent Information Network) Parent Consultant can assist you. We have also included resources at the end of this workbook.

You are on your way! Celebrate your child’s growth!



## What is the difference between Early Intervention and Special Education?

This chart outlines some of the major differences between the two systems.

	<b>Early Intervention - Part C</b>	<b>Special Education - Part B</b>
Ages Served	0-3	3-21
Individualized Plans	Individualized Family Service Plan (IFSP)	Individualized Education Program (IEP)
Plan Reviews	IFSP's are reviewed/revised at least every 6 months and more frequently as needed.	IEP's are reviewed/revised at least annually and changed more frequently if needed.
Program Focus	The family and the child	The child's educational needs
Services	Services for the child and family to meet the developmental need of the child and increase the family's capacity to meet the needs of their child.	Special education and related services needed to meet the educational needs of the child in order to enable the child to participate in the general education curriculum.
Family Involvement	Participate as a full member of the team making decisions about the individualized plan for services.  Participate in and receive services to enhance the family's confidence and competence in meeting the needs of their child and family.	Participate as a full team member making decisions about the child's Individualized plan for services.
Eligibility	Eligibility is state-defined and includes developmental delays based on state criteria as well as conditions that have a high probability of resulting in developmental delay if early intervention is not provided.	Eligibility is determined by state special education definitions of disability. A part of the determination is that the child needs the special education services to be successful in the general curriculum.
Location of Services	Natural environment to the maximum extent appropriate.  Services are provided in locations the child would typically be in if not for his or her disability. Most often, this is home, child care facility, or other community setting.	Least restrictive environment (LRE) to the maximum extent appropriate.  Students receive services and participate in the general curriculum alongside their peers without disabilities. This may be in a public school or community based preschool.
Service Coordination	Service coordination is a required service and is provided at no cost to the family.	No service coordination is required. The IEP is managed by the LEA to ensure appropriate services.
Cost	With parental consent, public or private insurance is billed for most services. There is no cost to families for EI services in RI.	Free Appropriate Public Education (FAPE); services included in the IEP are provided at no cost to the family under FAPE.
Service Provision	Services are provided year-round (12 months)	Services are provided on a school calendar year unless special circumstances require extended school year services.

Source: Beach Center on Disability (2008) Reproduced in The Early Intervention Workbook (2013)

## What are the Rhode Island Early Learning and Development Standards?

The Rhode Island Early Learning and Development Standards (RIELDS) were developed by a team of early childhood professionals and adopted by the RI Department of Education in 2013. These standards describe what we want all young children to know and be able to do. They are meant to be inclusive of all children: English language learners, children with special needs, and children who are typically developing. The RIELDS recognizes that children will meet their developmental goals at different times and in different ways. All preschool IEPs are based on these standards.

**The following worksheets are designed to help families prepare for the discussions about their child's development leading up to, and including the IEP meeting. They are organized around the three global child outcomes, functional skills, developmental domains and the RI Early Learning and Development Standards.**

You can share these worksheets with your Service Coordinator and the school district representative to aid in preparation for upcoming meetings and bring them for yourself as a reference tool.



## Preparing for Transition from Early Intervention Family Worksheet

These worksheets use the categories from the RIELDS (RI Early Learning and Development Standards) to help you think about the questions early childhood educators will be asking about your child's development.

The information you record here can have many uses including:

- Helping you remember important details at upcoming meetings
- Sending to the school district Evaluation Team before you meet so they can be familiar with your child
- Adding your own words to other transition documents your IFSP team may be preparing.

**Outcome 1: Children will demonstrate positive social-emotional development (including social relationships).** This outcome includes skills from the following RIELDS Domains: Social and Emotional Development, Social Studies, Language Development and Communication, Creative Arts and Science

**In young children, this includes some of the following functional skills:**

- Engages with/separation from parents and caregivers
- Engages with other children
- Responds to unfamiliar adults
- Adapts to changes in routines
- Demonstrates understanding of time (past, present, future) and place e.g., "We're going to the zoo tomorrow")
- Sustains engagement in play activities
- Shows pride, frustration and affection
- Shares something they are interested in
- Expresses and regulates emotions and controls their impulses
- Initiates social interactions
- Explores the details in people's faces, nature, food, pets and other things in their world.
- Tells us how they relate to family/community and (e.g., "That's my Mommy" or "That's my sister's school")
- Communicates in order to participate in social interactions

*How does your child respond to social interactions? How does your child initiate social interactions? With family? With others?*

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*Does your child have a preference to play with or alongside other children, alone or a combination of each?*

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*Has your child ever used a "tool" to do a pretend job or in play?*

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## Preparing for Transition from Early Intervention Family Worksheet

*What are some things that upset your child? What calms them?*

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*How does your child communicate in order to participate in social interactions?*

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*Does your child like to explore their environment? What is their reaction when they find something new?*

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*How does your child show that they are proud?*

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*Do you have any concerns with your child's behavior at home or any other environment?*

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*When you talk about something that has happened in the past, does your child understand it has already happen or does he think it is about to happen again? How about when you talk about something in the future?*

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*Does your child ever dance, sing or move to music?*

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*What other information would you like to share?*

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## Preparing for Transition from Early Intervention Family Worksheet

**Outcome 2: Children will acquire and use knowledge and skills, including early literacy skills.** This outcome includes skills from the following RIELDS Domains: Cognition, Language Development and Communication, Science, Mathematics and Literacy

In young children, this includes some of the following functional skills:

- Explores objects and materials
- Understands and responds to language (spoken, gestures, sign)
- Uses appropriate volume voice, takes turn talking, and communicates about a variety of things
- Listens closely to the sounds of spoken language
- Recognizes and identifies letters and makes letter-sound connections
- Engages in reading and listening to books if deaf or hard of hearing, or visually impaired
- Sorts objects and recognizes patterns
- Begins to measure and compare objects (big, little, short, long, etc.)
- Demonstrates beginning writing skills
- Uses what they learn over and over; builds upon it
- Filters out distractions to concentrate on the task at hand
- Pays attention to language whether spoken, gestured, or signed
- Shows interest in being read to or pretends to read
- Is becoming more interested in listening to and using spoken English, if a dual language learner
- Recognizes numbers and begins to count
- Recognizes shapes
- Engages in pretend play

*Does your child have a favorite toy or play activity? Tell us about it.*

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*How long does your child usually play with one toy before moving on to something else?*

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*Can you think of a time when your child was curious about how something works, the outdoors, a new food, etc.?*

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*How do you think your child learns best?*

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Photo Credit:  
www.signingtime.com

## Preparing for Transition from Early Intervention Family Worksheet

*Does your child sort toys or other objects and use them for play? (For example, all of the blue blocks in one pile, red in another?)*

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*Does your child understand and/or use the concepts of “on”, “under”, “next to” or “beside”?*

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*Does your child understand the concepts of more than, less than, bigger and smallest?*

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*Does your child like to sing (or pretend to sing) songs? Do they have a favorite book?*

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*Does your child enjoy coloring or scribbling? Tell us about it.*

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*Does your child like to play with sand, water, paints or play doh?*

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*Are there any signs (such as on stores, or streets) or symbols, that your child recognizes?*

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*How does your child let you know what he/she wants? (For example: pointing, words, gestures, etc.)*

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*Who else does your child communicate with? How well do they understand your child?*

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*Does your child follow simple directions? For example, “Bring me your shoes please.”*

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*What other information would you like to share?*

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## Preparing for Transition from Early Intervention Family Worksheet

**Outcome 3: Children will use appropriate behavior to meet their needs. This outcome includes skills from the following RIELDS Domains: Physical Health and Fine and Gross Motor**

**In young children, this includes some of the following functional skills:**

- Runs, jumps or shows other purposeful movement
- Communicates hunger, thirst, discomfort
- Communicates choices
- Uses crayons, or manipulates small items
- Assists with dressing, manipulates fasteners, chooses clothing
- Feeds self, suck/swallow, chew
- Toileting, hand washing, toothbrushing
- Use of large and small muscle control, strength, and coordination (including pre-writing skills)
- Response to unsafe situations

*Does your child like to play? If so, what are some of their favorite things to do?*

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*Is there anything your child does not like to do? If so, what?*

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*Does your child dress or undress themselves? Use the toilet? Feed themselves?*

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*Does your child understand safety? (For example, staying close to you when crossing a parking lot or street)*

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*How does your child communicate with you in order to get their needs met?*

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*How does your child physically explore their environment?*

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*What other information would you like to share?*

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## All About \_\_\_\_\_

Your child's name

**Once your child has turned three, this worksheet may help you share important details so others (teachers, early childhood programs, childcare providers, etc.) can get to know your child's personality and temperament. What would your child like everyone to know?**

**On Most Days...**

I spend my time with \_\_\_\_\_ at \_\_\_\_\_.

**My day there goes like this...**

**You will know I am happy when...**

**You will know I am sad when...**

**...and this helps me to feel better:**

**You will know I am mad when...**

**...and this is how I need your help to settle down:**

**You will know I am scared when...**

**...and this helps me to feel better:**

### **My Favorite**

**Activities are...**

**Games and toys are...**

**Foods are...**

**Here are some things I DON'T like...**

**Here are a few more things that you should know about me...**

## Rhode Island Part B Eligibility Criteria

Rhode Island's special education regulations identify specific disabilities that qualify a child for services under The Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA). The regulations establish 14 categories as a way to classify potentially eligible children. Some categories identify specific disabilities, while others are broader to include children with less specific disabilities.

The determination of whether a child's disability qualifies him/her for special education may require some type of evaluation to assess the individual needs of the child, and how that child's functioning would keep them from accessing the general curriculum.

The RI Board of Regents for elementary and secondary education has defined the following disability categories. *It is important to remember that children in these categories do not automatically qualify for special education.*

<b>Autism Spectrum Disorder</b>	A developmental disability significantly affecting verbal and nonverbal communication and social interaction that adversely affects a child's educational performance. Included in the spectrum are: <i>Autism, Pervasive Developmental Disorder Not Otherwise Specified, Rett's Disorder, Asperger's Disorder, and Childhood Disintegrative Disorder</i> . Other characteristics often associated with autism are engagement in repetitive activities and stereotyped movements, resistance to environmental change or change in daily routines, and unusual responses to sensory experiences. The term does not apply if a child's educational performance is adversely affected primarily because the child has an emotional disturbance (described below).
<b>Deaf-Blindness</b>	Co-occurring hearing and visual impairments, the combination of which causes such severe communication and other developmental and educational needs that they cannot be accommodated in special education programs solely for children with deafness <u>or</u> children with blindness.
<b>Deafness</b>	A hearing impairment that is so severe that the child is impaired in processing linguistic information through hearing, with or without amplification that adversely affects a child's educational performance.
<b>Emotional Disturbance</b>	<p>A condition exhibiting one or more of the following characteristics over a long period of time and to a marked degree that adversely affects a child's educational performance:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. An inability to learn that cannot be explained by intellectual, sensory, or health factors.</li> <li>b. An inability to build or maintain satisfactory interpersonal relationships with peers and teachers.</li> <li>c. Inappropriate types of behavior or feelings under normal circumstances.</li> <li>d. A general pervasive mood of unhappiness or depression.</li> <li>e. A tendency to develop physical symptoms or fears associated with personal or school problems.</li> </ul> <p>Emotional disturbance includes schizophrenia. The term does not apply to children who are socially maladjusted, unless it is determined that they have an emotional disturbance under paragraph (c)(4)(i) of 300.80.</p>
<b>Hearing Impairment</b>	An impairment in hearing, whether permanent or fluctuating, that adversely affects a child's educational performance but that is not included under the definition of deafness in this section.

## Rhode Island Part B Eligibility Criteria

<b><i>Intellectual Disability</i></b>	<p>A significantly sub-average general intellectual functioning, existing concurrently with deficits in adaptive behavior and manifested during the developmental period that adversely affects a child's educational performance.</p> <p>In federal language the word "Mental Retardation" has been replaced with "Intellectual Disability"</p>
<b><i>Multiple Disabilities</i></b>	Co-occurring impairments (such as mental retardation-blindness or mental retardation-orthopedic impairment), the combination of which causes such severe educational needs that they cannot be accommodated in special education programs solely for one of the impairments. The term does not include deaf-blindness.
<b><i>Orthopedic Impairment</i></b>	A severe orthopedic impairment that adversely affects a child's educational performance. The term includes impairments caused by congenital anomaly impairments caused by disease (e.g., poliomyelitis, bone tuberculosis), and impairments from other causes (e.g., cerebral palsy, amputations, and fractures or burns that cause contractures).
<b><i>Other Health Impairment</i></b>	<p>A child having limited strength, vitality or alertness, including a heightened alertness to environmental stimuli, that results in limited alertness with respect to the educational environment, that —</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Is due to chronic or acute, health problems such as asthma, attention deficit disorder or attention deficit hyperactivity disorder, diabetes, epilepsy, a heart condition, hemophilia, lead poisoning, leukemia, nephritis, rheumatic fever, sickle cell anemia, and Tourette syndrome; and</li> <li>Adversely affects a child's educational performance.</li> </ol>
<b><i>Specific Learning Disability</i></b>	Specific learning disability means a disorder in one or more of the basic psychological processes involved in understanding or in using language, spoken or written, that may manifest itself in an imperfect ability to listen, think, speak, read, write, spell, or to do mathematical calculations, including conditions such as perceptual disabilities, brain injury, minimal brain dysfunction, dyslexia, and developmental aphasia.
<b><i>Developmental Delay</i></b>	<p>Child with a disability, for children aged 3 through 8 (up to the child's ninth birthday), includes a child who shall qualify for special education and related services when the child is experiencing a developmental delay or a disability, as determined by the evaluation process; and</p> <p>A developmental delay or disability is defined as a 25 percent (25%) delay and/or score equal to or greater than two standard deviations below the mean in one of the following areas of development; or a score equal to or greater than 1.5 standard deviations below the mean in two (2) or more of the following areas: Physical development, cognitive development, communication development, social or emotional development, or adaptive development.</p>
<b><i>Speech or Language Impairment</i></b>	A communication disorder, such as stuttering, impaired articulation, a language impairment, or a voice impairment, that adversely affects a child's educational performance.
<b><i>Traumatic Brain Injury</i></b>	An acquired injury to the brain caused by an external physical force, resulting in total or partial functional disability or psychosocial impairment, or both, that adversely affects a child's educational performance. Traumatic brain injury applies to open or closed head injuries resulting in impairments in one or more areas, such as cognition; language; memory; attention; reasoning; abstract thinking; judgment; problem-solving; sensory, perceptual, and motor abilities; psychosocial behavior; physical functions; information processing; and speech. Traumatic brain injury does not apply to brain injuries that are congenital or degenerative, or to brain injuries induced by birth trauma.
<b><i>Visual Impairment Including Blindness</i></b>	Impairment in vision that, even with correction, adversely affects a child's educational performance. The term includes both partial sight and blindness.

## State and Local Resources

**Paul V. Sherlock Center on Disabilities at Rhode Island College** provides information and resources on:

- Technical Assistance and Resources for RI's Early Intervention system
- Special Education in RI
- The Educational Advocates Program for children in the care of DCYF and whose parents are not available to act on their behalf
- RI Vision Education and Services Program
- RI Services to Children and Youth with Dual Sensory Impairments
- Transition to Adulthood and Employment Support

600 Mount Pleasant Avenue

Providence, RI 02908

Tel: 401-456-8072, (TDD) 401-456-8773

TTY via RI Relay: 711 or 800-757-5555 / Spanish via RI Relay: 711 or 866-355-9214

[www.sherlockcenter.org](http://www.sherlockcenter.org)

**RI Parent Information Network (RIPIN)** provides information, support and training for families in the areas of education and healthcare.

300 Jefferson Boulevard, Suite 300

Warwick, RI 02888

Tel: 401-270-0101, or 800-464-3399

[www.ripin.org](http://www.ripin.org)

### **Rhode Island Department of Education**

Office of Student, Community, and Academic Support provides information on special education regulations

Ruth Gallucci, Education Specialist, Early Childhood Special Education

401-222-8947

255 Westminster Street

Providence, RI 02903

Rhode Island Department of Education Call Center: 401-222-8999

[www.ride.ri.gov/ri-ecse](http://www.ride.ri.gov/ri-ecse)

### **Rhode Island Executive Office of Health and Human Services**

Early Intervention's Lead Agency

3 West Road

Virks Building

Cranston, RI 02920

Info Line: 401-462-5300 (TTY) 401-462-3363

## Web Resources

**Autism Speaks**— Information on all aspects of Autism including education, support, recreation, advocacy, treatments, therapies and more. Extensive resource guide. [Autismspeaks.org](http://autismspeaks.org)

**BrightStars**- Find child care that meets your family's needs, learn how to evaluate options and pay for care; <http://www.brightstars.org/>

**Center for Parent Information and Resources** – Information on many topics including education, children with special needs, writing IEP's, IDEA and more. <http://www.parentcenterhub.org/>

**Exceptional Parent** - Information and resources for families of children with special needs. [www.eparent.com](http://www.eparent.com)

**Wright's Law** - Information about special education law, education, law, and advocacy for children with disabilities. [www.wrightslaw.com](http://www.wrightslaw.com)

**LD Online** – Information on educating children with learning disabilities and ADHD [www.ldonline.org](http://www.ldonline.org)

**National Association for the Deaf** - Information on language and communication, access to curriculum, and all facets of the schooling experience are essential for a deaf or hard of hearing child to achieve equality of opportunity and an appropriate education. <https://www.nad.org/>

## Glossary

**APE** - Adaptive Physical Education

**AT - Assistive Technology** - any item that increases a child's functioning or participation in a typical learning activity (or the selection or training for such an item); examples include: adaptive spoon, picture board, wheelchair or computer touch screen.

**Accommodations** - changes that help a student overcome or work around their disability. An example is allowing a student who has trouble writing to give his answers orally. This student is still expected to know the same material and answer the same questions as fully as the other students, but can provide answers orally.

**Eligibility** - conditions and/or information that show special education services are necessary.

**ESY - Extended School Year Services** - special education and/or related services provided when school is not typically in session.

**Evaluation** - the process used to determine eligibility or assess developmental functioning

**FAPE – Free Appropriate Public Education** – provides assurance that children with disabilities are entitled to public education, under public supervision and direction, and without charge

**IEP - Individualized Education Program** - a written education program to meet the individual special education and related service needs of a child with a disability

**IFSP - Individual Family Service Plan** - a written plan to meet the individual needs of an infant or toddler and their family.

**LAC - Local Advisory Committee** - an organized group of parents and professionals who address special education concerns and issues, sometimes referred to as **SEAC** (Special Education Advisory Committee)

**LEA - Local Educational Agency** - the local school district liaison.

**LRE - Least Restrictive Environment** - to the maximum extent appropriate, children with disabilities are educated with children without disabilities.

**Modification** - a change in what is being taught to or expected from the student. Making an assignment easier so the student is not doing the same level of work as other students is an example of a modification.

**Parent Consultant** - Employees of the RI Parent Information Network who work at EI programs to help families with support, information and family-to-family connections. The Parent Consultants are all parents to children who have been through an Early Intervention program.

**Procedural Safeguards** - rights that are guaranteed to the family and child with a disability.

**Related Services** - services that are required to assist a child with a disability to benefit from special education. Related services may include transportation, therapy and orientation and mobility services.

**SEA -State Education Agency** - In RI this refers to the RI Department of Education

**Supplementary Aids and Services** – Included 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 their general education peers to the maximum extent appropriate.



## **Appendix A**

### **Early Intervention**

#### **Requirements for a Transition Conference held without the LEA (local education agency/school district)**

There are times a Transition Conference is held without the LEA, for example if after several attempts, the parent and LEA's cannot find a common time or during the summer when transition teams are more limited. In addition, a transition conference is not required for children found eligible between 33 and 34.5 months. **When the LEA is not able to be in attendance, the Early Intervention provider is responsible to cover the following information and share supporting information, including weblinks where families can access additional information.**

- Description of Preschool Special Education (Part B) Eligibility Definitions.
- Timelines for consenting to Part B eligibility determinations.
- The availability of special education and related services.
- Timelines and process for consenting to an evaluation and conducting eligibility determinations for Part B
- RI Special Education Procedural Safeguards
- District Special Education Parent Advisory Committee Contact Information

#### **Description of Preschool Special Education (Part B) eligibility definitions**

See page 17 of this booklet, *Transition from Early Intervention: A Family Guide* for Part B eligibility definitions.

#### **Timelines for Consenting to Part B Eligibility Determinations**

When the LEA receives a child's referral to special education via the Notification and Consent form, they must contact the family within 10 days to set up an initial referral meeting. Along with this invitation, parents may be sent a referral packet including district referral forms, parent information, and questionnaires to ensure they are prepared for the upcoming meetings, and are able to play an active role in the discussion of their child's functional skills and behaviors.

Source: *Rhode Island Early Childhood Special Education: Referral, Evaluation, and Eligibility Determination*

#### **The Availability of Special Education and Related Services**

It is important to recognize that early childhood special education is not a place, or a specific program, but rather specially designed instruction. Specially designed instruction is instruction that has been adapted in content, methodology or delivery to meet the individual needs of each eligible child. Special education ensures access to the general education curriculum so that each child can meet the educational standards that apply to all children.



Related services include transportation and other supportive services needed to assist a child with a disability to benefit from special education. Some related services include: speech-language pathology, interpreting services, psychological services, physical and occupational therapy, recreation, orientation and mobility services, school health services and school nurse services, social work services in schools, and parent counseling and training.

Source: (IDEA Sec. 300.34 Related Services)

## Educational Settings and Opportunities

Children in RI can receive their specialized instruction and supporting services in various settings. Some children will receive these services in a preschool classroom, located in one or more of the district operated school buildings or some in their current early care and education setting. Other children, due to the unique nature of their disability, might receive their services in specially designed settings, while others would have their needs best met through “walk-in” services. An example of walk-in services is that a child is brought by their caregiver to a designated location, sometimes the school, for small group or one on one services, one or more times a week.

If the decision is made to provide services in the child's current childcare setting such as, public and private early care and education programs, Head Start and RI Pre-K classrooms, the primary teacher will continue their role, while the itinerant teacher(s) (early childhood special education teacher, speech/language pathologist, occupational therapist, physical therapist, etc.) will design supplemental and specialized learning opportunities to address each child's goals, based on their Individual Educational Program (IEP). Together, the educators determine how best to embed these learning opportunities throughout the school day and to monitor the child's progress to ensure their goals and needs are being met.

Source: <https://www.ride.ri.gov/InstructionAssessment/EarlyChildhoodEducation/EarlyChildhoodSpecialEducation.aspx>

To learn more, speak with your district's LEA, or visit: [https://www.ride.ri.gov/Portals/0/Uploads/Documents/Instruction-and-Assessment-World-Class-Standards/early%20childhood/ECSE/Family%20Brochure\\_English.pdf?ver=2020-08-26-175328-013](https://www.ride.ri.gov/Portals/0/Uploads/Documents/Instruction-and-Assessment-World-Class-Standards/early%20childhood/ECSE/Family%20Brochure_English.pdf?ver=2020-08-26-175328-013)



## **Timelines and Process for Consenting to an Evaluation and Conducting Eligibility Determinations for Part B (Early Childhood Special Education)**

The purpose of the Early Childhood Special Education (ECSE) evaluation is to gather relevant functional, developmental, and academic information to determine whether a child has a disability, including a developmental delay, and whether the child requires special education services. The ECSE evaluation must be sufficiently comprehensive to identify the child's special education and related service needs, whether or not they are commonly linked to a diagnosis by which the child has been classified. If found eligible, the evaluation results will also inform the development of the Individualized Education Program (IEP).

The initial evaluation to determine eligibility for special education must begin no later than 10 school days after the receipt of parental consent. Then, within 60 calendar days of receipt of parental consent to evaluate, the child must be evaluated.

If the LEA has not obtained parental consent to evaluate within fifteen (15) school days of the request to evaluate, the Evaluation Team must reconvene to consider what action the public agency will take including, (as appropriate) the requirements described.

## **RI Special Education Procedural Safeguards**

Special Education Procedural Safeguards must be provided to all parents/guardians of children being considered for, or enrolled in Special Education. These safeguards are part of the requirements of IDEA (the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act) and outline parental rights such as the right to prior written notice, parental participation in all meetings related to your child, access to your child's records, confidentiality and more.

Parents can find the RI Special Education Procedural Safeguards on the RI Department of Education website at: <https://www.ride.ri.gov/StudentsFamilies/SpecialEducation/SpecialEducationRegulations.aspx#32091107-rhode-island-special-education-procedural-safeguards-notice---revised-6-21-19>

Your EI Service Coordinator would be happy to provide you with a printed copy upon request.

## **District Special Education Parent Advisory Committee Contact Information**

IDEA requires that each state establish and maintain an advisory panel for the purpose of providing policy guidance with respect to special education and related services for children with disabilities in the State. (IDEA Sec. 300.167). In order to provide guidance and support on a district level, Special Education Advisory Committees (SEAC's), or Local Advisory Committees (LAC's) are established and organized by parents and educators on a local level. All participants have a vested interest in the education and well-being of children with special needs.

Members of these groups can answer questions about Special Education in their city/town, provide support, resources and facilitate conversations with other parents who have experienced special education services for their child.



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