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SPECIAL EDUCATION FIELD ADVISORY

FROM:

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SUBJECT: Initial Individual Evaluations of Children Transitioning from Early Intervention Programs to Preschool Special Education Services

The timely and appropriate evaluation of a child transitioning from an early intervention program (EIP) to preschool special education services is essential to ensure a smooth transition. School districts are responsible for arranging for the initial evaluations of children suspected of having a disability who are transitioning from an EIP to determine the child's eligibility for preschool special education services and, if deemed eligible, the special education programs and services needed by the child.

Once parental consent has been received, the initial evaluation for preschool special education eligibility determinations must be completed within 60 calendar days. This ensures that preschool children with disabilities receive their preschool special education programs by their third birthdays in accordance with State law timelines for eligibility for services.

The evaluation must be conducted by a New York State Education Department (NYSED) approved Multidisciplinary Evaluation (MDE) program selected by the parent(s). With written consent of the parent(s), the EIP Service Coordinator is responsible to submit any previously conducted evaluation reports and progress reports/updates that are available on the child to the school district. Existing evaluation information previously obtained by the EIP, as appropriate, must be reviewed by the Committee on Preschool Special Education (CPSE) and other qualified professionals to determine what additional tests or assessments may be needed to determine the child's eligibility for special education, to assess the child's present levels of performance and to develop recommendations to address the student's unique needs. However, it is not the responsibility of the EIP to complete new testing to determine if a referral to the CPSE should be made or to assist the CPSE in making an eligibility determination. School districts should not request or expect the EIP to conduct new tests or assessments of the child for this purpose.

The key participants in the transition process from the EIP to a preschool special education program are the child's parents, the Early Intervention (EI) Service Coordinator and EI Official, the CPSE and the approved evaluator selected by the parents. These individuals collaborate to facilitate the transition process by reviewing the child's progress in the EIP and determining the child's eligibility for preschool special education services.

Early Childhood Direction Centers serve as an important technical assistance resource for families and school personnel through this process. For information on ECDCs in your region of the State, see <http://www.p12.nysed.gov/specialed/techassist/ecdc/home.html>. Additional information on the evaluation of preschool students with disabilities can be found at <http://www.p12.nysed.gov/specialed/publications/preschool/guide/indeval.htm>.

Questions regarding this memorandum may be directed to the Office of Special Education's Preschool Policy Unit at 518-473-6108 or to the Special Education Quality Assurance Office in your region:

Central Regional Office	(315) 428-4556
Eastern Regional Office	(518) 486-6366
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