

Early Childhood Special Education

Qualification Criteria

"Young Child with a Developmental Delay" means a child ages three (3) through five (5) who is experiencing developmental delays, as measured by appropriate evaluation instruments and procedures may receive this eligibility identification. The child's development is at 2 standard deviations below his/her typically learning peers in one area or 1.5 standard deviations below in two or more development areas including:

- Cognitive/adaptive behavior
- Speech/language
- Social/emotional/behavioral
- Physical
- Adaptive behavior

Implications for Instruction

Strategies appropriate to the child's learning style and physical or psychological condition are utilized to plan sequential steps in the instructional process. Individualized pre-academic, self-help, social, prevocational, motor and speech/language services are presented using specific materials, modifications or adaptations that have been identified through referral and diagnostic activities. Preschool classrooms follow the frameworks of PROJECT CONSTRUCT and are aligned with Missouri Pre-K Standards.

Service Delivery

Early Childhood Special Education (ECSE) programs are provided via itinerant services in daycares and non-sectarian preschools including area Urban League, Grace Hill and YMCA Head Start Centers. Services are also provided to eligible preschool children in St. Louis Public School sites to children who require academic support. A certified ECSE teacher or speech language pathologist provides direct or related service as determined by the IEP.

Center-based services are delivered in a classroom setting specifically designed to serve children with disabilities. The non-categorical classrooms serve children who display a wide variety of disabilities or needs. These students may or may not be integrated with preschool children without disabilities depending upon the IEP.

Currently SLPS offers self-contained or integrated services in 20 magnet, non-magnet, Head Start and Title One collaborative classroom settings including:

- Adams
- Buder
- Dunbar
- Hamilton
- Hickey
- Hodgen
- Mason
- Mullanphy
- Gateway Michael
- Nance
- Stix
- Wilkinson @ Roe

ECSE Classroom Staffing

Funding is provided for staff by DESE based upon its review of SLPS data for early childhood special education. Integrated classrooms have a maximum 12:12 ratio of disabled and non-disabled children with a certified ECE and ECSE teachers, one instructional care attendant (ICA) and one teacher assistant (TA). Self-contained classes have no more than 12 children with an ECSE teacher and ICA. Itinerant teachers including speech/language pathologists provide direct instruction to 12-30 children.

Early childhood special education also has three diagnostic teams, located at Gateway Elementary, Lexington and Hodgen Schools. The Intake Specialist receives referrals then the Diagnostic Teams evaluate/diagnose children with suspected disabilities as they transition from Part C to Part B of IDEA. Placement decisions for eligible children are made by the IEP team and services and site-based decisions are determined at that time.

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