

Preschools Authorized by the Charter Institute

As per each charter school's contract with the Charter School Institute, the school agrees to comply with the Board's policies and regulations as well as the requirements of federal and state law concerning preschool children with disabilities. The Charter School Institute operates as the administrative unit (AU) with the authority for delivering Special Education and Related Services to and legal compliance for preschool students with disabilities in its individual charter schools. All preschools authorized by CSI are public schools.

Private Preschools Co-located with CSI Schools

Private preschools may be located within CSI schools but are not authorized by the Charter School Institute. Child Find and Special Education and Related services are provided by the geographic school district to private preschool programs. CSI schools that share facilities with private preschools must also adhere to 12 CCR 2509-8, section [7.700](#). For guidance determining whether a preschool is public or private, please reference this resource: <https://resources.csi.state.co.us/preschool-overview/>

Early Childhood Child Find (ages 3-5) Responsibilities for Private Preschools

When a young child attends a private preschool (that co-locates with a CSI school) is suspected of not meeting typical developmental milestones or not making expected learning, the child should be referred to the district of residence or local Board of Cooperative Educational Services for a child find evaluation. Private school personnel should make every effort to provide parents with child find contacts for their district or BOCES of residence. Updated child find contacts are posted on the CDE website at <https://www.cde.state.co.us/early/childfind>

The following information pertains to preschools authorized by CSI:

Charter School Institute Special Education Preschool Procedures

Early Childhood Child Find (ages 3-5)

The child find (child identification) requirement encompasses measures to locate children who may have disabilities as well as the initial referral, evaluation, and eligibility stages of the special education process.

To locate children who may have disabilities, CSI schools with preschool programs must collaborate with the school district of residence that conduct outreach activities each spring to inform parents, teachers, health care providers, daycare and other appropriate agencies about the evaluation and

education services available both in the school district of residence and CSI school. Notices can be posted at the CSI school, included in newsletters, etc. but must indicate the date and time of the child find evaluations in the geographic district in which the school is located.

CSI schools are obligated to evaluate children currently enrolled in their school, and to work with the school district of residence, to determine appropriate referrals.

If the student is not currently enrolled in school, child find is the responsibility of the administrative unit in which the students resides.

The child find team usually consists of a nurse, a speech language pathologist, an occupational therapist, an early childhood and special education teacher, and a school psychologist. The child find screening consists of a series of short tests and professional observations in various developmental areas. If the child's performance falls within the normal range for his/her age, there is no need for concern in those areas. However, children who are unable to pass all areas assessed may have a developmental delay in those areas. Further investigation will be needed to determine if a delay does exist.

- A re-screening may be conducted in a few months to be sure that delays continue to exist.
- A comprehensive evaluation may be conducted by the child find team to determine if the student would qualify for Special Education and Related Services under IDEA Part B.

Enrollment Procedures

CSI Preschools should follow the same procedures as their K-12 program. Please see the CSI [Enrollment Toolkit](#) for guidance and sample language.

Potty Training

According to Child Care Licensing Rules, children with disabilities cannot be denied enrollment because they are not toilet trained. Head Start has a policy that prohibits toilet training as a basis for denying enrollment. But there is nothing in CPP statute that addresses potty training. Therefore, CSI preschools may want to carefully consider enrollment procedures regarding potty training. There is a potential discriminatory element when a requirement for a child to be potty trained in order to be enrolled. Evaluation and identification of a student with special needs could be delayed if potty training is required by a preschool.

As stated in 12 CCR 2509-8, section [7.701.14 \("Civil Rights"\)](#), all facilities licensed under the Child Care Licensing Act are subject to federal non-discrimination laws, including Title VI, the ADA, and Section 504. This is of course true of all CSI-authorized schools as well. As a result, decisions related to the enrollment, placement, or dismissal of a child with a disability or chronic condition must comply with these laws. The facility must provide reasonable accommodations for the child with a disability who has special needs. A lack of independent ambulation or the need for assistance in feeding, toileting, or dressing or in other areas of self-care cannot be used as sole criteria for enrollment or placement or denial of enrollment or denial of placement. Efforts must be made to accommodate the child's needs and to integrate the child with his/her peers who do not have disabilities.

Facilities must also have at least one designated diaper change area for every twenty-four (24) preschool age children. 12 CCR 2509-8, section 7.702.75.

Early Childhood Special Education and Related Services

IDEA Part B mandates that a free and appropriate public education be provided to children with disabilities ages 3-21. Under this program, preschool children who have disabilities are entitled to Special Education and Related Services in the Least Restrictive Environment.

Children who have already been identified through Part C as having a disability may enter the preschool setting with an Individualized Family Service Plan (IFSP).

- If possible, the IEP team should convene a Transfer Conference with the sending agency 90 days prior to the child beginning preschool.
- The purpose of the Transfer Conference is to identify the child's needs with input from the referring agency or current placement and parents.
- The child's eligibility for Part B services can be determined ahead of time through a comprehensive evaluation and eligibility determination. Following determination of eligibility, an IEP can be developed for that child, which can then be implemented when the child turns 3.
- If a Transfer Conference does not take place in advance, follow the CSI Special Education Transfer process when the child applies for entrance into preschool.
- Children who have already been identified through Part C as having a disability may enter the preschool setting with an IEP.
- Follow the [CSI Special Education Transfer Process](#).

Children already attending preschool who are suspected of having a disability may be in need of Special Education and Related Services.

- Implement a Problem-Solving model such as Response to Intervention (RtI) - An integrated system that provides high quality, standards-based instruction matched to a child's academic, social/emotional and/or behavioral needs.
- Implement an intervention process such as Positive Behavior Support (PBS) – A broad range of systematic and individualized strategies for achieving critical social and learning outcomes while preventing problem behaviors.
- Both RtI and PBS consist of a continuum of intervention tiers with increasing levels of support.
- A documented RtI process is now required as part of the eligibility criteria for a learning disability under IDEA.

When a preschool child has not shown adequate growth in response to interventions, a special referral may be warranted. Follow CSI's and the school's referral processes, including:

- A comprehensive evaluation
- An IEP Initial Eligibility Meeting
- Eligibility determination
- Development of an IEP if the child is found eligible under IDEA
- Application of all state and federal compliance rules and regulations as apply to school-age students

Reporting/Funding for Preschool Children

Preschool students in public schools should be reported in all applicable data collections. This includes the October Count and December Count data collections (both of are used in the determination of funding).

Preschool Special Education and Related Services are funded through a combination of federal special education funding (under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act), state special education funding (under the Exceptional Children's Education Act), and the School Finance Act.

Preschool students are eligible for funding in the Student October Count data submission only if one of the following applies:

- The preschool student receives services under an Individualized Education Program (IEP) and is three or older during the semester of the pupil enrollment count date, OR
- The preschool student is serviced under the Colorado Preschool Program (CPP) and is at least 3 years old as of October 1.
- Preschool students eligible for funding under both an IEP and CPP/ECARE must be at least 3 years old as of October 1.

Criteria for preschool students to be eligible for part- and full-time funding (and documentation required to confirm funding eligibility) is detailed in the annually published October Count Audit Guide in the "Preschool Students" section: https://www.cde.state.co.us/cdefinance/auditunit_pupilcount.

Results Matter

Results Matter, sponsored and supported by the Colorado Department of Education, is an early childhood initiative designed to provide outcome-based data that drives programming and policy decisions. In addition, it provides the means to demonstrate efficacy of services available to young children and their families in Colorado. The data obtained through Results Matter will be used to describe child progress across specific developmental and educational domains as well as progress measured against global outcomes developed by the national Early Childhood Outcome Center and the U.S. Department of Education.

The Results Matter System includes:

- **Developmentally Appropriate Assessment**
Providers who participate in the Results Matter program use assessment systems such as Teaching Strategies GOLD™ and the HighScope COR to assess learning and development in Social-Emotional, Language and Literacy, Math, Science, Creative Arts, Physical Development and Approaches to Learning. Through authentic assessment strategies such as ongoing observation, portfolio documentation and completion of developmental checklists, they identify and plan for the instructional needs of young children in their care.
- **Online Data Systems**
Child assessment results are recorded using online systems which allow immediate access to a variety of progress reports, Colorado standards reports and data exports at the child, classroom, site, program and state level. Plans are in place to link Results Matter child outcomes data with the State's K-12 data system in order to study longitudinal results for children served through Colorado's early childhood system.
- **Professional Development**
Results Matter offers workshops on observation and assessment skills as well as specific assessment systems. A downloadable video series is now available to further support providers in the field. And, to encourage the use of ePortfolios, hands-on training is now offered for those wishing to improve their use of digital media.
- **Family Outcomes**
Annual survey data provides information about how well Colorado's early childhood programs and communities are meeting the needs of families. This information is now linked to specific schools and programs in order to support continuous quality improvement efforts and community systems work.

The Colorado Department of Education has developed a series of videos to help providers better understand ways to use observation, documentation, and assessment to inform practice. You can watch the clips online or download QuickTime versions of the videos for use in educational and professional development activities.

For more information on Results Matter, go to the CDE link below:

<http://www.cde.state.co.us/resultsmatter/index.htm>