



CALIFORNIA
DEPARTMENT OF
EDUCATION

JACK O'CONNELL
STATE SUPERINTENDENT OF PUBLIC INSTRUCTION

April 3, 2009

Dear Directors of Special Education Local Plan Areas (SELPA) and Special Education Administrators of County Offices (SEACO):

**TRANSITION PRACTICES FROM PART C TO PART B OF
THE INDIVIDUALS WITH DISABILITIES EDUCATION ACT (IDEA)**

The California Department of Developmental Services (DDS), Early Start, and the California Department of Education (CDE), Special Education Division (SED), are responsible for ensuring that our State has procedures in place that result in smooth transitions from early intervention services under Part C to special education and related services under Part B of the IDEA. We understand that guidance on transition between the two distinct programs has been confusing for many in the past and hope that our new collaborative approach will prove beneficial to the community.

This is the first of annual letters that will be sent to all programs serving children birth-to-five under the IDEA clarifying transition practices and existing requirements. Additional bulletins will be sent throughout the year to explain roles and responsibilities and share evidence based practices. The purpose is to have a consistent message to the field from both Departments. It is our hope that this will be a way of clarifying current requirements, sharing changes in data collection and refining practices for the benefit of families and young children.

Based on national annual performance report findings, the Office of Special Education Programs has made improving transition outcomes a national priority. Subsequently, they contracted with the Western Regional Resource Center (WRRRC) to provide technical assistance and support to a variety of states. DDS and CDE have agreed to participate in the project to improve transition practices and outcomes in support of the state performance plans for both Departments. These activities will support data collection for Part C's indicator 8, Part B's indicator 12, and will add to the improvement activities required for the annual performance reports.

Between now and 2010, CDE and DDS will be working on the following activities:

1. A document is being developed to bridge the gaps that exist between the *Special Education Early Childhood Transition* book and the transition section of the *Early Start Service Coordinators Handbook*. This document will be available in 2009.


April 3, 2009


Page 2

2. A letter will be sent to the early childhood community, announcing the availability of the Early Start Institute Series noting those trainings that specifically address transition practices.
3. DDS is participating with CDE in their Early Childhood Special Education Field Meetings being held in northern and southern California. The focus is on the transition indicator in both Departments' annual performance reports.
4. CDE and DDS presented a workshop on a cross-agency approach to effective transitions at the Special Education Early Childhood Administrators Project symposium in February 2009.
5. Technical assistance will be provided upon request to local communities addressing transition practices with joint departmental representation.
6. Data collection systems are being adjusted to improve the validity and reliability of tracking:
 - a. DDS is working with stakeholders to improve data collection for reporting and analysis purposes.
 - b. CDE/SED will be requiring specific dates for Part B entry in California Special Education Management Information System (CASEMIS), starting with the December 2008 collection, including referral dates, parent consent dates and initial Individualized Education Program dates. CASEMIS will also include a specific report related to identification before the third birthday.
7. An interagency workgroup will develop a transition brochure for families.

DDS and CDE are looking forward to our continued collaboration in support of the quality services provided by California's Early Childhood communities. If you have any questions, please contact Meredith Cathcart, Special Education Consultant, CDE, at mcathcart@cde.ca.gov or Patric Widmann, DDS, at pat.widmann@dds.ca.gov.

Sincerely,


Anthony Monreal, Deputy Superintendent
Curriculum and Instruction Branch
California Department of Education


Julia Mullen, Deputy Director
Community Services and Supports
Division
Department of Developmental Services

DEPARTMENT OF DEVELOPMENTAL SERVICES

1600 NINTH STREET, Room 340, MS 3-24
SACRAMENTO, CA 95814
TDD 654-2054 (For the Hearing Impaired)
(916) 654-2716



TO: ALL REGIONAL CENTER EXECUTIVE DIRECTORS

**SUBJECT: TRANSITION PRACTICES FROM PART C TO PART B OF THE
INDIVIDUALS WITH DISABILITIES EDUCATION ACT (IDEA)**

The California Department of Developmental Services (DDS), Early Start, and the California Department of Education (CDE), Special Education Division (SED), are responsible for ensuring that our State has procedures in place that result in smooth transitions from early intervention services under Part C to special education and related services under Part B of the IDEA. We understand that guidance on transition between the two distinct programs has been confusing for many in the past and hope that our new collaborative approach will prove beneficial to the community.

This is the first of annual letters that will be sent to all programs serving children birth-to-five under the IDEA clarifying transition practices and existing requirements. Additional bulletins will be sent throughout the year to explain roles and responsibilities and share evidence based practices. The purpose is to have a consistent message to the field from both Departments. It is our hope that this will be a way of clarifying current requirements, sharing changes in data collection and refining practices for the benefit of families and young children.

Based on national annual performance report findings, the Office of Special Education Programs has made improving transition outcomes a national priority. Subsequently, they contracted with the Western Regional Resource Center (WRRRC) to provide technical assistance and support to a variety of states. DDS and CDE have agreed to participate in the project to improve transition practices and outcomes in support of the state performance plans for both Departments. These activities will support data collection for Part C's indicator 8, Part B's indicator 12, and will add to the improvement activities required for the annual performance reports.

Between now and 2010, CDE and DDS will be working on the following activities:

1. A document is being developed to bridge the gaps that exist between the *Special Education Early Childhood Transition* book and the transition section of the *Early Start Service Coordinators Handbook*. This document will be available by June 2009.

"Building Partnerships, Supporting Choices"

the Early Start Institute Series noting those trainings that specifically address transition practices.

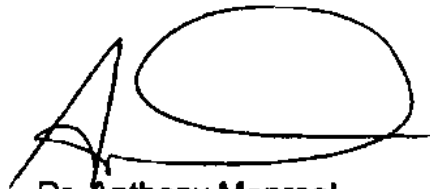
3. DDS is participating with CDE in their Early Childhood Special Education Field Meetings being held in northern and southern California. The focus is on the transition indicator in both Departments' annual performance reports.
4. CDE and DDS presented a workshop on a cross-agency approach to effective transitions at the Special Education Early Childhood Administrators Project symposium in February 2009.
5. Technical assistance will be provided upon request to local communities addressing transition practices with joint departmental representation.
6. Data collection systems are being adjusted to improve the validity and reliability of tracking:
 - a. DDS is working with stakeholders to improve data collection for reporting and analysis purposes.
 - b. CDE/SED will be requiring specific dates for Part B entry in California Special Education Management Information System (CASEMIS), starting with the December 2008 collection, including referral dates, parent consent dates and initial Individualized Education Program dates. CASEMIS will also include a specific report related to identification before the third birthday.
7. An interagency workgroup will develop a transition brochure for families.

DDS and CDE are looking forward to our continued collaboration in support of the quality services provided by California's Early Childhood communities. If you have any questions that you would like addressed, please contact Meredith Cathcart, Special Education Consultant, CDE, at mcathcart@cde.ca.gov or Patric Widmann, Assistant Chief, DDS, at pat.widmann@dds.ca.gov.

Sincerely,



Julia Mullen, Deputy Director
Community Services and Supports Division
Department of Developmental Services



Dr. Anthony Monreal,
Deputy Superintendent
Curriculum and Instruction Branch
California Department of Education