

# OFFICE OF SUPERINTENDENT OF PUBLIC INSTRUCTION

## FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS (FAQ) ABOUT EARLY CHILDHOOD OUTCOMES REPORTING FOR CHILDREN IN PRESCHOOL SPECIAL EDUCATION PROGRAMS

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**OCTOBER, 2008**

This FAQ is intended to provide information and respond to questions from the field. Continued updates will be provided throughout the year as needed.

### STATE DATA COLLECTION REQUIREMENTS

#### 1. *Why is OSPI collecting outcomes data?*

The federal Office of Special Education Programs (OSEP) mandates that all states develop a process for reporting reliable performance outcomes data for all children three to five years of age who have received special education services.

Each state is required to set a performance target to maximize the outcomes for young children with disabilities, in three federally required focus areas. These areas are:

**Indicator 7:** Percentage of preschoolers with IEPs who demonstrate improved:

- ◆ Positive social-emotional skills (including social relationships)
- ◆ Acquisition and use of knowledge and skills (language and literacy)
- ◆ Use of appropriate behaviors to meet needs

States set performance targets for the State Performance Plan (SPP), based on the reported data from local districts.

#### 2. *What is OSPI's reporting timeline to OSEP?*

OSPI will report exit outcome data to OSEP on the Annual Performance Report (APR) in February 2009 and 2010. OSPI will have an opportunity to adjust the performance target level in 2009 and again for the final time in 2010 based on the data reported on the APR. If OSPI does not set an appropriate performance target level based on sufficient data, OSEP will set the target for the state.

### LEA DATA COLLECTION PROCEDURES

#### 3. *When will data be reported to OSPI? **NEW***

Starting with the 2008-2009 school year, entry and exit data will be reported to OSPI **only once a year**, on **July 15**. This is a change from previous years, when data was reported in December and in June.

#### 4. *Are preschool children required to have a student specific identification number (SSID)?*

If districts are counting preschool children for federal funding, these children must have a SSID (CSRS system) number. Therefore, it is advantageous to districts to have the children in the CSRS system. In addition, since the number is portable, it will greatly assist districts in tracking information from one district to another when a child transfers within the state. Sometimes there is a delay between the time the child is registered and the time the registrar puts registration into the CSRS system. This will cause a delay in a number assignment.

**5. *On which children will data be collected?***

Entry data:

Entry data will be collected on children with IEPs who are entering special education preschool programs for the first time during the 2008-2009 school year. These data will be reported to OSPI on July 15, 2009. If entry data **has already been** reported on the child prior to the 2008-2009 school year, additional entry data should not be reported.

Exit data:

Exit data will be reported on those children for whom entry data was collected, as long as the child received special education services for a minimum of 6 months; and the child is exiting the program (leaving the preschool program). This exit data will be reported on July 15, 2009. If a district has not served children, it is still required to report zero. A new check box, “no entry or exit data to report for the 2008-2009 school year”, has been provided on the spreadsheet for this purpose.

**6. *What data instrument will be used to collect the data?***

The *Child Outcome Summary Form* (COSF) developed by the Early Childhood Outcome Center (ECO) was adopted by Washington State. Training in the use of this instrument or “refresher” training may be arranged through the ESDs as needed, or contact the OSPI Early Childhood Program Supervisor at (360) 725-6075. Please see the section on the COSF below.

**7. *How should districts gather information about children?***

Districts may gather information in a number of ways. Examples of information sources include, but are not limited to:

- ◆ observations and reports by family members, care providers, school and other service providers;
- ◆ early intervention outcome reports;
- ◆ developmental screenings (e.g., Ages and Stages);
- ◆ curriculum-based assessments (e.g., AEPS);
- ◆ norm-referenced assessments (e.g., BDI-2);
- ◆ progress monitoring;
- ◆ classroom or other environment observations; and
- ◆ relevant information identified during assessment, planning, or IEP meetings.

**8. *How long should a child be in special education preschool services before s/he is rated the first time (at entry)?***

The *Child Outcome Summary Form* (COSF) should be used between three (minimum) to six weeks (maximum) after the development of the IEP and the student’s participation in the preschool program. This timeframe will allow the preschool staff an opportunity to get acquainted with the child and to provide special education services.

**9. *What constitutes exit from the special education preschool program?***

When a child leaves the preschool program, for any reason, this is considered exiting the program. However, for data reporting purposes exit data is collected only on the children who have reported entry data and have attended the special education preschool program for six months or more. Examples of leaving are as follows: entering kindergarten, moving out of state, moving to a new district.

**10. *When should exit data be collected for a child in special education preschool, who is older than five?***

Exit data should follow the child’s educational program, not age. For example, if a child is repeating preschool their exit data would be reported when they leave preschool to enter kindergarten or first grade, even if they are older than five.

**11. *How are data collected and reported on children whose families have moved to another district?***

The entry data from the first district can be used for reporting purposes by the second district, if the child is reenrolled within a reasonable amount of time (six weeks or less) and the first district did not submit entry data to OSPI.

**12. *How will exit data be collected on children who transfer from one district to another district?***

For the child with entry data who moves to another district, the district who is counting the child (receiving district) and from which the child is exiting the preschool program is responsible for completing the exit data. The child may enter several programs; however, the last program that the child exits will be responsible for the exit data.

One exception could be children who have entry data and transfer to a new district three or fewer weeks before the end of the program year (child has been in program for six months and is exiting the preschool program) the former program should complete the exit data. The reason for this is that in order for the receiving district to be able to make rating decisions it would need to have some time to observe the child in the program. Entry at the end of the school year may not allow for that observation time. Therefore, it would be more appropriate for the sending district to report the data, but it should be done in collaboration/coordination with the sending district so accurate information is available for making rating decisions. (If there is an SSID number this should help to facilitate the exit discussion and reporting.)

**13. *How are data collected and reported on children whose families are highly mobile and the children do not stay in program for 6 months after entry data is collected?***

Highly mobile children will make it difficult to collect data. Having a SSID number will help somewhat in that the information about the child can be shared between districts and help determine if indeed the child has or has not received six months of services. The SSID number can also assist in determining whether entry data must be taken several times with the possibility of there never being any exit data. OSEP has acknowledged there will be children the state will never be able to report on.

**14. *If a child has entry data, has been in program for at least six months, and does not return to school for twenty calendar days, should the child be considered as having exited the program?***

Yes. The child is considered as having exited the program for apportionment purposes after twenty consecutive days, and should therefore be considered as having exited the program for data collection purposes as well [WAC 392-121-108 (i)]. **Note:** Some children may not be in program long enough for the staff to gather entry/exit data.

**15. *What is the requirement for parent participation in making the rating decision?***

There is no requirement for parental involvement in making rating decisions, however OSPI strongly urges districts to collect information and input from parents prior to making a rating decision. The rating process should be a team responsibility involving family members, other individuals familiar with the child in various settings and situations, and school personnel.

Parents should be advised of the rating requirement and the process the district uses to make rating decisions. Parents should be informed that the rating will be part of the child's file which they can review at any time. A parent may choose to not participate in the rating process. However, the district is still required to report entry and exit data on all children. Parental consent is not required for the rating process. Because families are also interested in their child's progress, OSPI urges districts to share rating information with families.

## CHILD OUTCOME SUMMARY FORM (COSF)

**16. How do we know a child's true potential, what s/he could be expected to achieve?**

Each outcome rating **compares a child to a typically developing child** – not to the child's individual potential. The child's initial rating on his/her functioning in relation to typically developing children of the same age will be used to look at progress achieved during participation in the special education preschool program. The ECO Center provides a training module which can be found at [http://www.fpg.unc.edu/~ECO/pdfs/ECO\\_COSF\\_Training2-1-07.pdf](http://www.fpg.unc.edu/~ECO/pdfs/ECO_COSF_Training2-1-07.pdf)

**17. For children born prematurely, do we compare her/him to a typical child of the same chronological age, or of the same corrected age?**

Children born prematurely are compared to a typical child of the same *chronological* age. Do not adjust for prematurity.

**18. Are data collected on children who qualify in only one area such as communication disorder or orthopedically impaired?**

Yes. Children who only qualify in one area for special education services are subject to the same entry/exit reporting expectations as all other preschool children receiving special education services.

**19. Can the COSF be modified?**

No, the initial cadre of users and ECO Center staff made what they felt were necessary modifications for use by all early childhood staff in Washington. In order to gather meaningful data that will allow for comparison, the COSF must be used as is.

**20. The COSF and process seem subjective, so data may not be valid, reliable, or meaningful.**

The COSF process provides a scaffold for discussion by members of the IEP team. Discussion of the functional outcomes for each child receiving special education services will guide IEP teams in making rating decisions.

**21. The box for describing progress on the COSF form is not large enough to include all the child has learned to do since the initial rating.**

There is no requirement to enter extended examples of the child's progress towards IEP goals. The progress description box allows the child's team to acknowledge and document progress the child is making, and again assist in the discussion for determining the appropriate rating.

**22. What documentation needs to be maintained – when and where?**

A child's completed *Child Outcome Summary Form* (COSF) will remain in his/her special education file. A copy of the form must be submitted to the individual designated by the district to input data in reporting to OSPI **only once a year**, on July 15. If a district did not provide preschool services to any children during the year, it is still required to report this on the COSF spreadsheet. A new check box, "no entry or exit data to report for the 2008-2009 school year", has been provided on the spreadsheet for this purpose.

The Data Management Coordinator for the Special Education Program at OSPI has developed a spreadsheet for recording preschool district data. A link to the OSPI COSF reporting template is provided to districts at [www.k12.wa.us/SpecEd/EC.aspx](http://www.k12.wa.us/SpecEd/EC.aspx) under **COSF\_to\_OSEP\_Analytic form**. The template automatically computes the required reporting information once entry and exit data are entered. The template accepts SSID child identification numbers and facilitates tracking should children change districts. Additional information is provided by the Special Education Data Manager via monthly bulletins and CSRS trainings.

**23. Will training and technical assistance be provided to preschool personnel on the use of the COSF and data collection process?**

The OSPI Early Childhood Program Supervisor works with the ESD Early Childhood Coordinators to identify the need for trainings. Technical assistance is available via K20, e-mail and telephone from the Early Childhood Program Supervisor at OSPI. In addition, districts may request technical assistance from the ESD Early Childhood Coordinators located in the nine ESDs. For training requests or technical assistance, please contact the OSPI Early Childhood Program Supervisor at (360) 725-6075.

**ADDITIONAL RESOURCES**

[www.k12.wa.us/SpecialEd/links](http://www.k12.wa.us/SpecialEd/links)

[www.k12.wa.us/SpecialEd/present/ECE\\_Outcomes.ppt](http://www.k12.wa.us/SpecialEd/present/ECE_Outcomes.ppt)

[www.12.wa.us/SpecialEd/WACOSF](http://www.12.wa.us/SpecialEd/WACOSF) Decision Tree

The following additional resources are intended for informational purposes only.

ECO Center website [www.the-eco-center.org](http://www.the-eco-center.org)

Puget Sound ESD website [www.psesd.org/specialservices/ECOutcomes](http://www.psesd.org/specialservices/ECOutcomes)

Special thanks to the ECO Center, and Puget Sound ESD for use of their materials.

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