

# Early Childhood Special Education

## Regional Meeting Communique



<p><b>Purpose:</b> To create a place where Early Childhood Special Education Specialist can hear the successes and challenges happening in field, a place to collaborate with other agencies and districts to celebrate those successes and problem solve through those challenges, and a place to work together to improve outcomes for preschool children with disabilities.</p>	<p><b>Core Team:</b> <b>ECSE Specialists:</b> Lenka Studnicka North Erika Argueta West/Elizabeth Hamilton East Tami Phillips South Li Wallman Central</p>	<p><b>Group Norms:</b> Respect presenters and participants by turning off cameras and microphones during presentations. Use chat box for introductions including name and program and for questions to be addressed at end of session. Actively engage in session, questions and feedback are helpful to specialists and other participants.</p>
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**Location:** Zoom Platform

### **Objective for this Meeting:**

- Reimagine Child Find in Part B and Part C
- Listening to Part B and Part C expectations for in by three transitions
- Reflect on local teams sharing success stories for in by three transitions
- Gather resources to support local teams to have smooth in by three transitions

### **Title or Links of Handouts:**

- Link to school's postings about strengths and challenges for in by three transitions:  
<https://exceptionalstudent.padlet.org/essearlychildhood/d16aizs5q1t494s6>
- Link to resource Padlet  
<https://exceptionalstudent.padlet.org/essearlychildhood/b1c31ui2wbxdxe63>
- Link to Raising Special Kids Consultations, Training, and Supporting Parents Transitions to Preschool  
<https://raisingspecialkids.org/individual-consultation/>  
<https://raisingspecialkids.org/events/>  
<https://www.parentcenterhub.org/transitionpreschool/>

**What we did:** During this two-hour meeting we met with school districts that are nearby one another and service coordinators that are in that region of the state as well. We started the presentation by discussion how young children are identified for early intervention and early childhood special education in Arizona. In Arizona there are two ways young children with suspected developmental delays and

disabilities are located, identified, and evaluated if there is a need. One-way children are identified is through the Child Find/Referral Processes and the second is through preschool transition.

We then talked about Preschool In by Three Transitions. We know that by “Preschool Transition” we mean the transfer of a child from early intervention services to preschool services (if they are determined eligible). In practice, it involves a child, their family, early intervention service providers and the state agencies involved to make sure the process runs smoothly. In 2019, Arizona Department of Education and Arizona Early Intervention Program participated in a monitoring by the Office of Special Education Programs. At that time, OSEP found issues with both agencies' policy and procedures for Indicator 12, In by Three, that could be interfering with smooth transitions between early intervention and preschool services for our children. AzEIP and ADE were given corrective action with specific findings. We then reviewed In By Three Transition Data over the past 6 years and went to breakout rooms to talk about strengths and challenges for in by three transitions.

Part C shared expectations for a smooth transition from their perspective. This included complete, accurate, and timely PEA notifications to school districts. Another important piece of the PEA notification process is communicating any changes during the process. We then took a five minute break. Part B then shared expectations for a smooth transition from their perspective. This included the PEA has a process to ensure and document that a district representative attends all AZEIP Transition Conferences, the PEA will conduct a full and individual initial evaluation of the child, transitioning from Part C by the child's 3rd birthday and if a child is found eligible the PEA will develop an Individual Education Plan (IEP) and implement a Free and Appropriate Public Education (FAPE) by the child's 3rd birthday. The last piece was discussing the Public Education Agency (PEA) will have policy and procedures in place with a well-documented tracking system to:

1. \*Refer children birth – 2y9m to Early Intervention (AzEIP)
2. \*Receive PEA notifications of children transitioning from AzEIP services

Lastly, we covered what smooth transitions would look like and listened to local a service coordinator and school district representative talk about how they meet the expectations and requirements of In By Three transitions.

**What we learned:** We learned that service coordinators and school districts have committed to begin transition activities earlier.

We learned from the teams that shared that building relationships between AzEIP Service Coordinators contributed to improved transition activities.

**What we accomplished:** At the end we accomplished having school districts and service coordinators share one thing they will do to strengthen relationships to ensure smooth transition processes this year.

**Questions to Consider:**

- Does our program have policy and procedures in place to ensure smooth transitions for children referred from AZEIP?
- If a PEA, does our program have a system for referring children birth to 2y9m?

**Next Meeting:** Week of December 6-10, 2021