

Local District Preschool Inclusion Self-Assessment

February 1, 2018

Adapted by the ECTA and DaSy Centers from the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services and the Department of Education’s *Policy Statement on Inclusion of Children with Disabilities in Early Childhood Programs*

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“With the support of States, leaders in LEAs, schools, early childhood programs, and family child care networks can strive toward providing high-quality early learning experiences for all young children. Leaders can adopt a culture of inclusion, set expectations for services to be provided in inclusive settings to the extent appropriate per child need, establish fair and appropriate policies, allocate existing resources in ways that facilitate increased access to inclusive early childhood programs, and prioritize workforce development. Early childhood leaders can serve as community-wide leaders for inclusion, by convening a diverse coalition of inclusion champions who can implement a culture of inclusion across the entire community.”

U.S. Departments of HHS and ED Policy Statement on the Inclusion of Children with Disabilities in Early Childhood Programs
<https://www2.ed.gov/policy/speced/guid/earlylearning/joint-statement-full-text.pdf>

This self-assessment tool provides a framework for discussion to promote partnerships among schools and early care and education providers to promote the inclusion of young children with disabilities and their families in early childhood programs. We recommend forming a cross-sector team to complete the self-assessment. As the team considers each item, reflect on your experience working together to provide services to young children and families. Once the tool is completed, decide which item(s) will be a priority for future action to improve the quality of services. Remember that all voices are important to moving a partnership forward. Early childhood programs are defined as Early Childhood Special Education, Early Intervention, Head Start, Early Headstart State Pre-Kindergarten, Child Care, Title I Preschool, and other programs.

Rating Scale: 1. Not yet 2. Planning but not implemented 3. In process and/or partially implemented 4. In place/fully implemented

	Rating	Evidence What does it look like?	Comments (e.g., Next Steps, Status, Prioritization)
1. Partnering with Families			
1a. Do your schools and early childhood programs intentionally plan and assess how they are partnering with families?			
1b. Do your schools and early childhood programs ensure all families are knowledgeable about the benefits of inclusion, understand their rights and how to navigate the systems that serve their children?			

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	Rating	Evidence What does it look like?	Comments (e.g., Next Steps, Status, Prioritization)
1. Partnering with Families <i>(continued)</i>			
1c. Do your schools and early childhood programs know how to connect families to the parent training and information centers (PTIs) and other family support programs?			
1d. Do your schools and early childhood programs provide specific resources on: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Inclusion in early childhood programs? • Individualized supports and services to support children’s unique needs? 			
1e. Do your schools and early childhood programs make the information in 1d. available and accessible to all families, including those with limited English proficiency?			
1f. Do your schools and early childhood programs include families in advocacy efforts, and public information initiatives, including inclusion forums and conferences?			
1g. Do your school and early childhood program staff have ongoing conversations with families on their children’s learning and development, screening and assessment, and the family’s perspective of their children?			
1h. Do your schools and early childhood programs build staff capacity to promote family engagement, including respecting and incorporating families’ cultures, preferences, and priorities?			
1i. Do your schools and early childhood programs ensure that administrators and all staff promote a culture of inclusion and interface with families respectfully?			
1j. Do your schools and early childhood programs provide continuous professional development to teachers and providers on forming strong goal-oriented relationships with families that are linked to their child’s development, learning, and wellness?			

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	Rating	Evidence What does it look like?	Comments (e.g., Next Steps, Status, Prioritization)
2. Adhering to Legal Provisions of Supports and Services in Inclusive Settings with Individualized Education Programs (IEPs)			
2a. Does your school district ensure technical assistance (TA) inclusive settings are meaningfully discussed for each child as the first option to consider during the IEP placement decision-making process?			
2b. Does your school district ensure staff write individual goals and outcomes so they can be met with the provision of services and supports within daily routines in inclusive settings?			
2c. Does your school district ensure early childhood teachers and providers, child development specialists, and related services providers, as appropriate, are included in IEP teams, with parental permission?			
2d. Does your school district ensure early childhood teachers understand the strategies needed to meet children's goals, and their role in helping children reach their goals?			
2e. Does your school district ensure classroom teachers and providers understand how to access specialized services and supports as needed?			
3. Assess and Improve the Quality of Inclusion in Early Childhood Programs			
3a. Do your schools and early childhood programs use environmental assessments of their early childhood programs to ensure that there are appropriate accommodations and supports for children with disabilities to be able to reach their goals?			
3b. Do your schools and early childhood programs include assessments of inclusive practices in addition to existing environmental assessments to ensure children with disabilities have access to and participate in these environments?			

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	Rating	Evidence What does it look like?	Comments (e.g., Next Steps, Status, Prioritization)
3. Assess and Improve the Quality of Inclusion in Early Childhood Programs (continued)			
3c. Do your schools and early childhood programs use environmental and programmatic assessment results to guide TA and professional development efforts?			
3d. Do your schools and early childhood programs, including school district programs, participate in the state Quality Rating and Information System (QRIS)?			
4. Review and Modify Resource Allocation			
4a. Does your school district, in collaboration with early childhood programs, use funds to provide services in inclusive programs with typically developing peers?			
4b. Does your school district, in collaboration with early childhood programs, target resources to promote the use of evidence-based and recommended practices?			
4c. Does your school district, in collaboration with early childhood programs, allocate resources to support some early childhood special educators shifting to provide itinerant and consultative services to teachers and providers?			
4d. Does your school district, in collaboration with early childhood programs, use professional development resources to expand access to training and coaching, specific to supporting all children with disabilities?			
5. Enhance Professional Development			
5a. Do schools and early childhood programs ensure staff have knowledge of the skills they need to foster the development of all children, such as: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Culturally and linguistically responsive practices? • Positive attitudes and beliefs about inclusion and disability? 			

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5. Enhance Professional Development (continued)			
5b. Do schools and early childhood programs ensure staff have a strong understanding of the principles of universal design as a framework for flexible and accessible instructional practices, materials, and environments?			
5c. Do schools and early childhood programs have the necessary infrastructure and supports in place, such as coaching and mentoring to enable continuous professional development and improvement of leaders and staff?			
5d. Do schools and early childhood programs offer opportunities to participate in professional development about inclusive practices and curricular programming to other early childhood partners?			
6. Establish an Appropriate Staffing Structure and Strengthen Staff Collaboration			
6a. Do schools and early childhood programs have staffing structures established that include staff collaboration and possible shifts in resources and systems?			
6b. Do schools and early childhood programs, where children with IEPs attend, have support from special education teachers and related service providers?			
6c. Do schools and early childhood programs ensure special education teachers and related service providers partner with classroom staff to observe, model and share strategies for helping children with disabilities on an ongoing or periodic basis?			

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	Rating	Evidence What does it look like?	Comments (e.g., Next Steps, Status, Prioritization)
6. Establish an Appropriate Staffing Structure and Strengthen Staff Collaboration (continued)			
6d. Do schools and early childhood programs have personnel designated to oversee the children's goals, coordinate and connect families to services, and help families navigate services for their children?			
7. Ensure Access to Specialized Supports			
7a. Do school districts ensure access to specialized supports to meet the diverse needs of teachers, children and families?			
7b. Do school districts ensure specialists work with early childhood staff to adapt the program's environment, activities, and instructional support to promote full participation of children with disabilities?			
7c. Do school districts ensure specialists assist programs by conducting classroom observations, developing strategies and behavior support plans to meet children's goals and connect children, families, and staff to additional support services, as needed?			
7d. Do school districts ensure that specialists and other early childhood staff collaborate and coordinate so that personnel working with the children are aware of goals, strategies, and child progress?			
8. Develop Formal Collaborations with Community Partners			
8a. Do your schools and early childhood programs have formal agreements to guide the provision of services to children with disabilities?			

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	Rating	Evidence What does it look like?	Comments (e.g., Next Steps, Status, Prioritization)
8. Develop Formal Collaborations with Community Partners (continued)			
8b. Do your schools and early childhood programs have partnerships with community organizations that provide services to children with disabilities to promote inclusion?			
8c. Do your schools and early childhood programs collaborate and coordinate with health partners, such as the medical home and other health care providers? For example, do your programs collaborate and coordinate to improve screening, evaluation, and referral processes?			
8d. Do your schools and early childhood programs have access to or provide wrap-around services providing intensive coordinated community based services designed to meet children’s social-emotional and behavioral health needs?			
8e. Do your schools and early childhood programs have formal agreements between early childhood programs, schools, and family child care networks that support alignment and coordination among the programs to help facilitate transitions from inclusive early childhood programs to inclusive elementary school settings?			
Next Steps			
Analyze the self-assessment to determine where you want to begin to focus on improvement.			
Develop a Strategic Plan of Action collaboratively with your partners to ensure intentional inclusive opportunities for children exist in your school district.			

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