

Early Childhood Special Education (ECSE) Updates

Helpful Resources When Creating a Continuum of Alternative Placements in PreK

[WAC 392-172A-01175](#) states that *special education services* mean specially designed instruction, at no cost to the parents, to meet the unique needs of students eligible for special education services, including instruction conducted in the classroom, in the home, in hospitals and institutions, in other settings, and instruction in physical education.

[WAC 392-172A-02055](#) states that each school district shall ensure that a continuum of alternative placements is available to meet the special education and related services needs of students eligible for special education services **between the ages of three and twenty-one years old.**

Special education and related services to a preschool child with a disability may include, but is not limited to, the following:

- Providing opportunities for the participation of preschool children with disabilities in preschool programs *operated by public agencies other than school districts* (such as head start or community-based child care);
- Enrolling preschool children with disabilities in private preschool programs for nondisabled preschool children;
- Locating classes for preschool children with disabilities in regular public elementary schools; and
- Providing services and instruction in the home.

If a public agency determines that placement in a private preschool program is necessary for a child with a disability to receive FAPE, the public agency must make that program available at no cost to the parent.

Additionally, [WAC 392-172A-02050](#) reminds us that The public agency responsible for providing FAPE to a preschool child with a disability must ensure that FAPE *is provided in the least restrictive environment where the child's unique needs (as described in the child's IEP) can be met, regardless of whether the local education agency operates public preschool programs for children without disabilities.* **Least restrictive environment must be determined based on each individual child's needs and should not automatically be developmental preschool.**



An Important Message from DCYF ESIT:

Access to Child Online Records Network (ACORN) Data Migration Project: Update to School District Partners

School District Partners,

We are nearing the completion of the Phase 1 data migration project and will begin data entry in our new data management system, ACORN, beginning November 1.

As part of our migration to ACORN, the ESIT Web portal will go dormant at 5 pm on October 25, and you will no longer be able to access information through this portal. We have heard from many of our school district partners in the past months about the shortfalls of the ESIT Web portal and the challenges school districts face in trying to access information and with our transition to ACORN, we have addressed some of your feedback.

Our goal is to maintain at least the same level of functionality in ACORN as we have been able to provide to our Users in the current ESIT DMS. We have worked with our vendor, the Public Consulting Group (PCG), on a solution for school district access directly in ACORN. Within the legal constraints associated with the state funding transfer, we were able to develop a solution for our school district partners, that will require and be dependent on informed written parent consent.

The ESIT web will be retired at 5 pm on October 25. A scheduled DMS black-out will last from October 26–31, 2023. During this time, we are migrating data from the ESIT DMS to ACORN. Beginning November 1, our school district partners will have access to ACORN to view child records of those children residing in their district jurisdiction, that meet the following criteria:

1. The parent/guardians have provided informed written consent for the school district to gain access to their full child and family record;
2. The child is at least 2 years and 3 months old; and
3. The IFSP Team has determined the child meets the Washington state criteria for being "potentially eligible" for Part B services.

In ACORN, you will be able to access the entire child file for those children that meet the criteria once the Family Resources Coordinator has added our school district partners as a "Transition Service Partner". Your ESIT DMS username is going to be your ACORN username and you will be directed to set up a SAW account to access ACORN. Additionally, to having full access to the records of eligible children, you will receive a monthly report that lists children who are potentially eligible for Part B. This report will list the child's name, date of birth, the parent's name, and their phone number. We will be sending the report from DCYF to those individuals listed as school district liaisons in ACORN.

ACORN training will be offered in October, and you are invited to attend these trainings to help familiarize yourself with the new platform. School District Staff may attend the live webinar trainings or take the self-guided modules via our LMS. More info on access to the self-guided modules will be available in the next two weeks. If you are interested in attending the live training sessions, please contact ESIT Training dcyf.esittraining@dcyf.wa.gov

We will be releasing a step-by-step guide to setting up your SAW and ACORN account, as well as a training document for school district staff that will explain the process FRCs follow to add school district staff to a child's file as a transition service provider. If you are not signed up to receive the GovDeliveries sent by the Early Supports for Infants and Toddlers Program, please sign up here [Washington State Department of Children, Youth & Families \(govdelivery.com\)](http://Washington State Department of Children, Youth & Families (govdelivery.com))

For questions or suggestions, please contact ESIT Data Systems and Analysis Manager, Kim Hopkins, at kim.hopkins@dcyf.wa.gov.

Reminder: ECSE Office Hours

During these office hours, districts are invited to share current barriers and successes relating to Part C to B transition, Child Find procedures, data submission, and more. While not required, participants are encouraged to send questions or topics they wish to have addressed during office hours in advance. Register [here](#).

Questions or topics can be submitted to [Ryan Guzman](#).

ECSE Inclusion Champions Resource Share

Family Resources:

- [Storybook Conversations: Hispanic & Latino/a in STEM](#)
- [Daily Routine Exploration with Your Young Child: Daily Steps](#)

Program Wide Leadership Team Resources:

- [Intro to the Pyramid Model Implementation Data System \(PIDS\)](#)
- [Pyramid Model Implementation Data System \(PIDS\) Training Videos](#)
- [Pyramid Model Consortium Training and Technical Assistance \(PIDS Office Hours, Webinars, etc.\)](#)
- Teaching Pyramid Observation Tool (TPOT) training November 29th & 30th via Zoom
 - Contact your local ESD ECSE Coordinator(s) for more information.
- Coming Soon! Early Childhood Inclusion Champions (ECSE) Portal
 - Information on PIDS, WAPM trainings, data submissions, and more.