

## **Reassessment Prior to Transition to Kindergarten Instructions**

These guidelines will address the procedures for reassessing children served with Special Education preschool services who are transitioning to kindergarten. Early intervention programs are designed to promote substantial gains in children, therefore, a reassessment prior to entering kindergarten must be conducted to assess the child's continuing need for Special Education services.

Ed Code 56445 (a) states: "Prior to transitioning an individual with exceptional needs from a preschool program to kindergarten, or first grade as the case may be, an appropriate reassessment of the individual shall be conducted pursuant to (Section 56320) to determine if the individual is in need of Special Education services."

Section 56320 states "The pupil is assessed in all areas of suspected disability, including, if appropriate, health and development, vision, including low vision, hearing, motor abilities, language function, general intelligence, academic performance, communicative status, self-help, orientation and mobility skills, career and vocational abilities and interests, and social and emotional status."

Section 56320 also states that:

- assessors must be qualified, trained and knowledgeable,
- the assessment materials must not be racially, culturally, or sexually discriminatory,
- assessment must be provided in the pupil's native language or mode of communication,
- the language and form of the assessment must be selected to yield the most accurate information
- assessments must be valid and reliable,
- assessments must be tailored to assess specific areas of need and not merely a general intelligence quotient,
- assessments administered to students with impairments in the area of sensory, manual or speaking skills must accurately assess what they purport to assess, and not the impairment.

In addition, Section 56320 states "No single measure of assessment is used as the sole criterion for determining whether a pupil is an individual with exceptional needs or determining an appropriate educational program for the pupil."

Section 56344 (a) states: "An IEP required as a result of an assessment of a pupil shall be developed within a total time not to exceed 60 days."

**Is this a review or a triennial?** It will be a **triennial reevaluation**; at which the following triennial evaluation questions will be addressed:

- *Whether the pupil continues to have a disability*
- *The present levels of performance and educational needs of the pupil.*
- *Whether the pupil continues to need Special Education and related services.*

- *Whether any additions or modifications to the Special Education and related services are needed to enable the pupil to meet the measurable annual goals set out in the IEP of the pupil, and to participate, as appropriate, in the general education curriculum.*

**How does this work?** Between 3-6 months prior to a student transitioning out of Special Education preschool services, the members of the IEP team shall review the student's record to determine if *any new* assessment needs to be conducted to be able to determine if the student continues to need Special Education services (review) or to answer the triennial review questions (triennial reevaluation). Within 15 days of determining what is needed, an Assessment Plan will be developed, and given to the parent, noting the areas of assessment. Be sure that the assessment covers all areas of disability.

**Does it have to be a “full” assessment?** Assessment should be conducted to get the most pertinent data to answer the Triennial Reevaluation questions, in all areas of suspected disability. For example, a student with a speech and language impairment would be assessed in the area of speech or language function in which there are deficits, or the child with mental retardation would be assessed in the developmental areas of language, motor, self-help, or any other areas of delay.

**Does a psychologist have to be part of the assessment team?** Assessment must be conducted by qualified individuals. Ed Code 56320 (b)(3) states: “Individually administered tests of intellectual or emotional functioning shall be administered by a credentialed school psychologist.” A psychologist would only be part of the assessment team if the professional skills of a psychologist were needed, for example, in areas of general intelligence or social/emotional functioning. If these are not areas of disability or *suspected disability*, then a psychologist may not be part of the team.

**Does the assessment have to be “formal” or standardized?** The assessment must be sufficient to produce the data needed to answer the questions above. This data may be produced by observation, record review, parent interview, teacher data, progress reports, review and summary of other recent assessments, or other assessment and screening tools.

**What if there is a recent assessment report in the file?** If there is a recent assessment report, (within one year) that covers all areas of suspected disability, and can address all the questions above, then *new* assessment does not need to be conducted. However, an Assessment Plan will still be developed, and as part of the assessment, you will summarize that report, and add findings from classroom, progress reports, etc. Professionals who are qualified to conduct assessment in the particular areas will be responsible for reviewing the existing reports and developing the summary. If there is a recent assessment report in one area, but another area requires new assessment, then conduct new assessment in the area of need.

**Is an IEP meeting needed?** Yes, you have 60 days from receipt of the signed plan to conduct the assessment and hold an IEP team meeting. An Assessment Report must be developed, and presented at the meeting. Check “Triennial” as the reason for the meeting. As part of a triennial reevaluation, you must address eligibility as part of the meeting, develop new present levels and set a new triennial review date (three years from the date of the meeting.)

**What is required in the Assessment Report?** There are specific requirements from Ed Code Section 56327 for this report. To ensure inclusion of all of the required elements, use the SELPA **Preschool Transition to Kindergarten Assessment Report** (*See Report Forms Section.*)

**Who is responsible for the Assessment Report?** The law does not specify that any one discipline is responsible for the Report, therefore, districts and schools can decide who is responsible for pulling together the **Transition to Kindergarten Assessment Report**.

**What if the parent does not respond to the Assessment Plan?** If the district can demonstrate that it has taken reasonable measures to obtain parent permission (two attempts in writing, one by phone) then the assessment can be conducted without parent permission.

**What if parents refuse to give consent for reassessment?** If parents refuse permission, then the district may pursue Due Process procedures to obtain parent permission, however, the district does not violate its legal obligations if it declines to pursue assessment.

There is a sample letter which may be given to parents explaining the process of reassessment prior to entering kindergarten, as well as a checklist for making decisions about reassessment.

Special education preschool teachers should have a copy of the Ventura County SELPA **Preschool to Kindergarten Transition Assessment** which serves as a tool for assessing pre-academic, communication, and social-emotional development which can be summarized on the **Preschool to Kindergarten Transition Assessment Teacher Summary**. This assessment can be used as a source of data for the **Preschool to Kindergarten Transition Assessment Report**.