



Early Childhood Working Group

**Session 2: Implementing Effective Child Find
Processes in Your LEA**

November 2, 2022

Agenda

- Setting the Stage for Early Childhood Special Education in the District
- Defining and Discussing Child Find for Students Ages 3-5
- LEA Responsibilities for Child Find
- Early Childhood Developmental Screeners
- LEA Spotlights



Setting the Stage for Early Childhood Special Education in the District of Columbia

Relevant Timeline

2005

D.L. v District of Columbia case filed against the District

2011

Court ruled in favor of the plaintiffs in D.L. v District of Columbia

2016

Court imposed detailed court orders – to remain in effect until the District demonstrates consistent compliance

2022

The District continues to work towards meeting court ordered compliance metrics

OSSE monitors compliance and works with District LEAs to increase compliance rates

Relevant Court Case: D.L. v. District of Columbia

D.L. v. DC: Class action lawsuit

- In July 2005, six named plaintiffs, on behalf of themselves and others similarly situated, sued the District of Columbia government and the DC Superintendent of Public Schools. "D.L." refers to the plaintiffs in the case.
- The plaintiffs alleged that the District of Columbia violated IDEA and District law by failing to identify children ages 3-5 with disabilities, timely evaluate them, timely issue eligibility determinations, and smoothly and effectively transition them from Part C services to Part B services at age 3.
- The court agreed with the plaintiffs and issued court orders which remain in effect today.

Relevant Court Orders

The Court ordered the District to comply with specific performance metrics:

- Child Find rate of 8.5 percent for 3- to-5-year-old students
- Timely eligibility determinations
- Timely C to B transitions

OSSE issued a [Dear Colleague letter](#) at the beginning of the 2017-18 school year to clarify LEA obligations to support children ages 3-5 with disabilities.



Defining and Discussing Child Find for 3- to 5-Year- Old Students

What comes to mind when you hear 'Child Find'?



A word cloud centered around the theme of 'Child Find'. The words are arranged in a circular pattern around the central word 'identification'. The words are color-coded and vary in size, with 'identification' being the largest. The words include: 'professional development', 'preschool screeners', 'special education', 'community', 'children', 'training', 'important', 'finding children', 'compliance', 'disability', 'idea', 'development delays', 'staff pd', 'parents', 'preschool', 'dl lawsuit', and 'idea'.

professional development
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What is Child Find?

- Child Find is a requirement to **locate, identify, and evaluate** children who may require early intervention or special education services.
- The District of Columbia must engage in continuous public awareness and screening activities that help to ensure it meets its Child Find requirements.

What are Federal Child Find Regulations?

General. (1) The State must have in effect **policies and procedures** to ensure that—

- (i) All children with disabilities residing in the State, including children with disabilities who are homeless children or are wards of the State, and children with disabilities attending private schools, regardless of the severity of their disability, and who are in need of special education and related services, are identified, located, and evaluated; and
- (ii) A practical method is developed and implemented to determine which children are currently receiving needed special education and related services.

34 C.F.R. §300.111

What are Local Child Find Regulations?

3002.1 Provision of FAPE

(d) The **LEA shall ensure** that procedures are implemented to **identify, locate, and evaluate** all children with disabilities residing in the District who are in need of special education and related services, including children with disabilities attending private schools, regardless of the nature or severity of their disabilities.

5A DCMR § 3002.1(d)

What are your strengths and successes with Child Find?

expedited referral
screenings
response time outreach
slp push-in services
teacher knowledge
parent awareness

What are some barriers you have encountered with Child Find?

bilingual screening tools
school hopping stereotypes
language barriers
limited staffing covid-19 time
eight and a half percent
delay vs lack of exposure
poor attendance



LEA Responsibilities for Child Find

Child Find Policies and Procedures

The LEA must develop, implement, and adhere to written Child Find policy, outlining the continuous, ongoing efforts the LEA will undertake to meet its responsibilities. The policy must address the following:

- Points of contact responsible for overseeing or conducting LEA Child Find activities;
- LEA outreach efforts;
- Plans for communicating with parents, families, and the school community about the availability of special education services;
- Identification procedures, including the types of schoolwide screenings conducted by the LEA;
- Procedures for submitting a referral for initial evaluation;
- Parent procedural safeguards under the IDEA; and
- Procedures for collecting, maintaining, and reporting accurate data related to the number of students receiving special education and related services.

Staff Training

The LEA must train all school staff on the LEA's Child Find policy and procedures.

- New teacher orientation
- Summer staff development
- Mid-year training
- Staff handbook

Public/Parent Awareness Activities

The LEA must engage in public/parent awareness activities.

- Back to School packets
- Newsletters
- Child Find posters (Required)
- School website
- Parent/Staff socials
- Community activities
- Planning meetings with local agencies that support the community



Early Childhood Developmental Screeners

What is a Developmental Screener?

An Early Childhood Developmental Screener is a formal instrument that provides a quick snapshot of a child's developmental status and indicates whether further evaluations are needed to identify potential difficulties that might necessitate special education services.

- Screenings are designed to be brief (30 minutes or less).
- Screenings ask questions about a child's development, including language, motor, cognitive, social, and emotional development.
- Screenings are designed to identify risks or potential developmental delays; therefore, it will not capture the full range of development, skill, or capacity among children. Screenings only indicate the possible presence of developmental delay or difference and cannot definitively identify or describe the nature or extent of a disability.
- Screenings do not provide a diagnosis.



LEA Spotlights



Back to School Welcome Packet

Early Childhood Questionnaire [Preschool and Pre-K families only]

For Preschool and PreKindergarten families, please complete the “Ages and Stages Questionnaires” (ASQ)! We use these tools as part of our ongoing work to ensure every student is reaching both academic and **developmental** milestones and it helps us know a bit about your child before their year starts. You will likely want to print or review a PDF of the questionnaire on your device before submitting the answers online because some questions ask about your child’s response to very specific tasks that you might not have done with your child. Please use [this link](#) and click the option for **BOTH ASQ-3 and ASQ-SE** on the welcome screen. We ask that you complete these questionnaires by August 15th at the latest.

By the way, did you miss Early Childhood Education Night for new families earlier this year? Watch the [replay!](#)





[SUPPORT SERVICES | ewstokes.org](https://www.ewstokes.org/support-services)

SUPPORT REFERRAL

Any adult in the Stokes school community (i.e., staff member or caregiver) may refer a student for support services. Completed referral forms may be directed to the Campus Director, School Counselor, or Coordinator of Special Ed Services. The Prekindergarten Coordinator processes referrals for our prekindergarten students.

POSSIBLE INTERVENTIONS

- Response to Intervention (RTI)
- Functional Behavior Assessments (FBA)
- Behavior Intervention Plans (BIP)
- Classroom Behavior Interventions
- Teacher Consultation Sessions
- Evaluations:
 - Psychological
 - Physical Therapy
 - Occupational Therapy
 - Speech-Language
- Individualized Education Programs (IEP)
- Brief Individual Counseling Sessions
- Long-Term Individual Counseling Sessions
- Peer Counseling Sessions
- Brief Family Counseling Sessions
- Parent Skills Education Sessions
- Community Referrals
- In-Patient Hospitalization
- Alternative School Placement
- Residential Educational Treatment Center

STUDENT SUPPORT SERVICES

At the Elsie Whitlow Stokes Community Freedom Public Charter School, parents, community members, teachers, specialists, and service-providers work together to support our students academically, physically, and emotionally. Our approach is to support and understand the needs of the whole child, as well as to support our students' families.

Supports available to our scholars include:



SPECIAL EDUCATION PROGRAM

Students who are eligible for special education services receive an individual education program (IEP) that identifies their goals and objectives for the year. Approximately thirteen percent of Stokes School students have IEPs. Depending on students' needs, special education services are rendered by our learning specialists and related service providers. Most services are provided in

<https://www.ewstokes.org/support-services>

HELPING EVERY CHILD GROW: Academic, Behavioral and Developmental Supports

Support services are available to students who are not making adequate progress at school. Students who consistently display difficulties progressing or achieving in expected areas of growth and/or learning should be referred to the Student Support Team (areas of expected growth include, but are not limited to: academic, social/emotional, behavioral, cognitive, language and motor skills). The Student Support Team (SST) is composed of staff members and family members who meet to review data and determine interventions to best support the referred child. With the aim of improving students' rate of learning and their ultimate school success, team members choose appropriate strategies and interventions to be implemented for a six-week time frame. After the six-week period, the SST reconvenes, evaluates the effectiveness of the plan, and develops next steps.

Special Education Services

The Individual Disabilities Education Improvement Act (IDEIA) is a Federal law, the purpose of which is to "ensure that all children with disabilities have available to them a Free Appropriate Public Education that emphasizes special education and related services designed to meet their unique needs and prepare them for further education, employment, and independent living."

Friendship Public Charter School does not discriminate against students with disabilities and enrolls and serves all students regardless of the type or severity of disability including but not limited to students with learning disabilities, emotional disabilities, intellectual disabilities, developmental delays, autism, students who are blind, visually impaired, deaf or hard of hearing. FPCS believes all students can learn with appropriate educational services.

Friendship Public Charter School prides itself in providing multiple student supports, including but not limited to a specialized instruction from qualified special education teachers and related services including but not limited to the area of counseling, behavioral supports, speech, occupational therapy, and physical therapy. FPCS offers a continuum of settings and placements for students with special needs. The goal and mandate of federal law (IDEIA) are to educate students in the least restrictive environment that meets their academic and social emotional needs. FPCS educates students with special needs in the least restrictive environment.

The least restrictive environment is an inclusion setting where students with special needs are provided instruction that meets their individual needs in the general education classroom. The student remains with his/her general education peers but receives the necessary supports and accommodations from the special and general education teachers to be successful. If a student needs more support than can be provided in an inclusion setting, based on academic and/or social difficulty in the general education classroom, additional classroom environments may be considered. For example, the students may show more success after receiving instruction in a pull out setting, resource classroom or self-contained classroom. The least restrictive educational setting is made by a multi-disciplinary team that includes school staff and the parent. After the decision is made the special education staff regularly review each student's level of service and monitor his/her progress to ensure that the services and setting are appropriate.

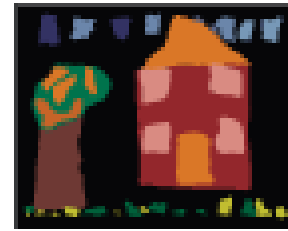
You as a parent or legal guardian can request that your child is evaluated. Procedures for making referrals, conducting evaluations, communicating with families, writing and reviewing Individualized Education Plans (IEPs), maintaining student records and reporting student progress are managed at each school by the Special Education Coordinator (SEC). If your child is found eligible for special education and related services, the District of Columbia Municipal Regulations mandate that all persons who are residents of the District are entitled to receive those services from birth through age twenty-two. The State Educational Agency provides services to ages birth to 3 years. FPCS provides services to individuals age 3 to 22.

The cornerstone of IDEIA is the requirement that parents be active participants in determining the services that will appropriately address the special education needs of their children. An effective partnership between parents and educators is necessary and requires that all people involved be fully informed about the student's special education needs and collaborate together to address the needs. Sometimes collaboration will include exploration of additional home and community-based supports that can be provided outside of the school day to assist the student. Opportunities to explore options, alternative or additional outside the learning environment are important to the overall success of the student. FPCS is committed to partnering with parents to foster a positive educational experience for their child.

What is an IEP?

If your child is found eligible for special education services, an Individualized Education Plan (IEP) will be developed with your participation and input. The IEP is a written plan of the specialized instruction and related services specifically designed and necessary to meet the unique educational needs of your child. The IEP states the classroom supports, services, and resources that FPCS will provide to each student with a disability. It contains measurable goals in academic and/or social-emotional areas based on the student's present level of educational performance. In addition, the IEP states the setting where the services will be delivered, and describes the amount of specialized instruction, related services, and supports necessary for the student to make progress on the goals.

For more information about Special Education services, please contact Ms. Rachelle Roberts, Senior Director of Student Support Services, at 202-281-1700



Friendship Public Charter School

GRADES PRE-K3 TO 12

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www.appletreeinstitute.org/student-support-services



AppleTree seeks to support the diverse needs of their student population by focusing on the holistic development of a child in the areas of academics, social-emotional, adaptive, language, and physical development. Their student support video is an example of community outreach and supports their child find efforts.



Appendix



- [Local Education Agency \(LEA\) Child Find Guidance and Model Child Find Policy](#)
- [Model Child Find Posters](#)
- [Early Childhood Developmental Screening: A Compendium of Measures for Children Ages Birth to Five](#)
- [Screening Tools for Children Birth to Age Five w/Potential for Remote Administration](#)
- [Dear Colleague Letter: IDEA Requirements Related to DL v. DC](#)

