



DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

OFFICE OF THE STATE SUPERINTENDENT OF

EDUCATION

MEMORANDUM

To: Early Intervention Providers and Stakeholders
From: Elizabeth Groginsky, Assistant Superintendent of Early Learning
Office of the State Superintendent of Education (OSSE)
Date: May 25, 2018
Re: Change in the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) Part C Eligibility Criteria

The Office of the State Superintendent of Education (OSSE) recognizes how vitally important it is for children to receive interventions early. We recognize that addressing concerns as early as possible yields the best outcomes for school readiness. Many children who exhibit a 25 percent delay in one area of development have a minimal delay. Frequently, these children are able to catch up with their same-age peers given appropriate supports and interventions.

This memorandum describes the changes in the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) Part C eligibility criteria. Currently, the District of Columbia regulations state that eligibility for Part C of IDEA are for a child who demonstrates a delay of 50 percent, using appropriate diagnostic instruments and procedures, in one of the following developmental areas or the child demonstrates a delay of 25 percent in two or more of the following developmental areas:

- (1) Physical development, including vision or hearing;
- (2) Cognitive development;
- (3) Communication development;
- (4) Social or emotional development; or
- (5) Adaptive development.

The Enhanced Special Education Services Act of 2014 established **new eligibility for services for children with a developmental delay of 25 percent or more, in at least one of the aforementioned development areas beginning July 1, 2018**. Under the IDEA Part C, states that accept funds must ensure that infants and toddlers (children from birth to age three) with qualifying developmental delays are provided with early intervention services. Eligibility criteria are determined by states.

OSSE is pleased to report that Strong Start, DC's early intervention program, is fully prepared to implement this eligibility change by July 1, 2018. We have the processes in place to both find and identify infants and toddlers with developmental delays and disabilities and provide the necessary supports and services to assist the children and their families.

The [Strong Start referral processes](#) will remain the same. If you have questions about the referral process, please contact Strong Start at (202) 727-3665. If you have questions about this memo, please contact Allan Phillips, Special Assistant Part C, at Allan.Phillips@dc.gov or (202) 741-0475.

Thank you for all the work you do for DC's youngest children and their families.