HAZLETON AREA SCHOOL DISTRICT PRESCHOOL EARLY INTERVENTION PROGRAM

Early Intervention
Transition to School Age
Information Packet for Parents

Phone: 570-826-0850/570-454-1870

School District Contacts

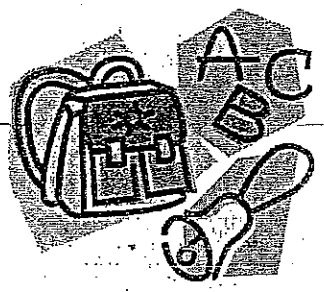
District/LEA	Address/City	Telephone Number
CRESTWOOD AREA Joseph Rasmus	281 South Mountain Blvd. Mountaintop, PA 18707	(570)474-6782 ext. 345
DALLAS AREA Andrea Dennis	PO Box 2000 Conyngham Ave Dallas, PA 18612-0038	(570) 674-2887
GREATER NANTICOKE Alicia Erwine	425 Kosciuszko St. GNAHS Nanticoke, PA 18634	(570)735-1701 (#1)
HANOVER AREA Shannon Bennett	1600 Sans Souci Parkway Hanover, Twp. PA 18706	(570)831-2301 ext. 143
HAZLETON AREA Debra Yanuzzi	1515 West 23rd St Hazleton, PA 18202	(570)459-3111 ext. 3155
LAKE LEHMAN Tina Antonello-Portee	PO Box 38 Lehman, PA 18627	(570)255-2811
Luzerne Intermediate Unit 18 Elizabeth Krokos	368 Tioga Ave Kingston, PA 18704	(570) 287-9681
NORTHWEST Mary Agnes Kratz	243 Thorne Hill Rd Shickshinny, PA 18655	(570) 542-4126 ext. 5012
PITTSTON AREA Amy Linnen	120 New St. Pittston, PA 18640	(570)654-2415 ext. 3018
TUNKHANNOCK AREA Mary Beatty	41 Philadelphia Ave Tunkhannock, PA 18657	(570)836-8266
WILKES-BARRE AREA James Geiger	730 South Main St Wilkes-Barre, PA 18711-0375	(570)826-7111 ext. 1152
WYOMING AREA Vanessa Nee	252 Memorial St Exeter, PA 18643	(570)655-2836 ext 2245
WYOMING VALLEY WEST Marya Baratta	24 Wadham Plymouth, PA 18651	(570)288-6551 Krista Roppelt Ext. 10711
BEAR CREEK COMMUNITY CHARTER SCHOOL Bridget Deeble	30 Charter School Way Bear Creek Twp, PA 18702	(570)820-4070

HASD EI Program
Service Coordinators:

Districts assigned:

Crestwood	Joleen Verbonitz	570-459-3221 ext. 23509
Dallas	Lisa Krzywicki	570-718-6943
Hanover	Krista Galella	570-824-8914
Hazleton	Debbie Shemansky	570-459-3221 ext. 23502
Lake Lehman	Lisa Krzywicki	570-718-6943
Nanticoke	Krista Galella	570-824-8914
Northwest	Krista Galella	570-824-8914
Pittston	Laurie Imbt	570-239-6154
Tunkhannock	Laurie Imbt	570-239-6154
Wilkes-Barre	Debbie Shemansky	570-459-3221 ext. 23502
Wyoming Area	Laurie Imbt	570-239-6154
Wyoming Valley West	Lisa Krzywicki	570-718-6943

SCHOOL REGISTRATION INFORMATION



School registration dates will be provided at your transition meeting. Also watch your local newspaper for more specific information regarding school registration. You may also call your local school district if you have questions.

Information needed at school registration includes your child's birth certificate, immunization record and social security number. In some district's you may also be asked to provide proof of residency.

Skills which may be assessed at school registration include speech, vision, hearing, motor skills, basic concepts and ELL screening for children who predominately speak a language other than English.

If your child is unable to go through the school registration process due to special needs, contact your school district for assistance. It is necessary for all children to be registered in order to attend school in the fall.

Most districts have orientation for parents and child. You will be notified by the district of this at registration or later by mail.

SCHOOL DISTRICT CUTOFF DATES

(MUST BE FIVE on or BEFORE THESE DATES)

Crestwood	September 1
Dallas	September 1
Greater Nanticoke	September 1
Hanover	September 1
Hazleton Area	September 1
Lake Lehman	September 1
Northwest Area	September 1
Pittston	August 31
Tunkhannock	September 1
Wilkes-Barre	September 1
Wyoming	August 31
Wyoming Valley West	September 1
Bear Creek Community Charter	August 15

michaeljung/Dollar Photo

The Transition Process From Early Intervention to School-Age Programs: Guidelines to Support Parents

Introduction to the Transition Considerations

Significant changes occur for all of us at different times in our lives. When children in preschool early intervention reach the age of 5 or 6, they will move on to a school-age program. Examples of school-age programs are public schools, charter schools, and home education programs. During this transition to a school-age program, it is important for families to have as much information as possible about the process. The Bureau of Special Education (BSE) and the Bureau of Early Intervention Services (BEIS) have developed this guide to help families learn more about transition from preschool early intervention to a school-age program.

The Transition Process

Planning for your child's transition will start the year before your child is old enough to enroll in kindergarten or first grade. At this point, your preschool early intervention program and your school district or local charter school are working together to identify children who are old enough to transition to a school-age program. They are also gathering information to share with you and preparing for upcoming transition meetings.

At an individualized education program (IEP) meeting, the preschool early intervention team will begin talking with you about your child's transition to a school-age program. With your help, a transition plan for your child will be developed. This transition

plan may include dates for upcoming meetings, activities in your local area for children who are entering a school-age program, as well as timelines for meetings and other activities.

The early intervention preschool team will hold meetings for the parents/guardians of school age eligible children. The purpose of these meetings is for parents/guardians to meet members of their local school district or charter school, discuss options for their child, and determine next steps. **By February 1**, you will receive a letter from your preschool early intervention program about this meeting. It is called the **Notice of Your Child's Transition to School Age Meeting.** This letter will have information about the school age transition meeting, options for registering your child for school-age programs, school-age evaluations, and contact information.

After you receive this letter, a preschool early intervention team member will contact you with a date, time, and location for a transition meeting with your school district or charter school. This meeting will be held by the end of February. As a parent, you are very important to the planning process. You are encouraged to attend this transition meeting and any additional planning activities even if you are not sure your child will transition to kindergarten or first grade.

Transition Meeting

At the transition meeting, you will meet school district or charter school staff. The preschool early intervention staff will talk with you about your plans for your child in the upcoming school year.

You will be asked to complete the **Intent to Register** form. The form will ask you whether or not you intend to register your child with your local school district or charter school. For some parents/guardians who are thinking about other options for their child, for example, private school or home education program, additional discussions will occur regarding these options.

If you decide to have your child go to kindergarten or first grade in your school district or charter school, you will indicate this on the **Intent to Register** form. At that time, the preschool early intervention staff will share your child's most recent preschool evaluation and IEP with your school district or charter school.

To receive school age special education services, your child must be eligible to receive special education services, and be enrolled in a local school district or charter school. The school district or charter school staff will also discuss the following options regarding your child's program. The options below will be listed in the **Notice of Options for Your Child's Transition** form that will be provided to you.

> Option 1: You and the school district or charter school can agree to adopt and implement your child's preschool early intervention IEP.
>
> Option 2: You and the school district or charter school can decide to adopt the preschool early intervention IEP with revisions.
>
> Option 3: You and the school district or charter school can decide whether a reevaluation is necessary. If so, the school district or charter school will conduct a reevaluation. If your child is eligible for school-age services, an IEP will be developed once the reevaluation report has been completed.
>
> Option 4: You and the school district or charter school can decide to waive the reevaluation and develop an IEP.

Dates for kindergarten and school registration/enrollment will be provided to you. It is important that you register your child for school. Attending the transition meeting does not mean that your child is officially registered.

If your child will be kindergarten age during the upcoming school year and you do not know if your child should move on to kindergarten, you can discuss this during the meeting. If your child is kindergarten age and your child will not be going to the school district or charter school, your child can continue to receive preschool early intervention services (as long as he/she remains eligible) during the upcoming year. While parents have the option of having their child remain in early intervention, the preschool early intervention program staff will

discuss the advantages of having your child transition to school-age programs with children of the same age.

If your child is old enough for first grade in the upcoming school year, or you have registered your child for kindergarten, preschool early intervention services will end the first day of school in your district.

IEPs for School-Age Programs

All children currently eligible for special education services in preschool early intervention and registered with the school district or charter school remain eligible for special education unless the school district, charter school, or preschool early intervention program completes a reevaluation that determines the child is no longer eligible for special education. All eligible children must have an IEP in place by the beginning of the school year. The school district or charter school will work collaboratively with parents to develop IEPs for children that are appropriate and provide educational benefit. In the event that you do not agree with the IEP, you may request mediation or a due process hearing. In the event of a disagreement, the district or charter school will continue to provide special education services described in the preschool early intervention IEP until the disagreement is resolved.

Frequently Used Terms in School-Age Programs

Least Restrictive Environment (LRE) – is an IDEA requirement indicating that children with disabilities, including children in public or private institutions or other care facilities, must be educated with children who are not disabled, to the maximum extent appropriate. Removal of children with disabilities from the general education environment occurs only when the nature and/or severity of their disabilities are such that education in general classes, with the use of supplementary aids and services, cannot be achieved satisfactorily.

Local Education Agency (LEA) – is a school district, charter school, or other educational entity responsible for providing a free, appropriate public education in accordance with Pennsylvania Department of Education statutes, regulations, and policies with or without support from other agencies.

Supplementary Aids and Services – are aids, services, and other supports provided in general education classes or other education-related settings to enable children with disabilities to be educated with nondisabled children to the maximum extent appropriate.

Types of Special Education Support – Learning Support, Life Skills Support, Emotional Support, Deaf and Hearing Impaired Support, Blind and Visually Impaired Support, Speech and Language Support, Physical Support, Autistic Support, Multiple Disabilities Support

Amount of Special Education Support – The following words and terms have the meanings listed unless the context clearly indicates otherwise:

- **Full-time**. Special education supports and services provided by special education personnel for 80 percent or more of the school day.
- **Itinerant.** Special education supports and services provided by special education personnel for 20 percent or less of the school day.
- **Supplemental.** Special education supports and services provided by special education personnel for more than 20 percent but less than 80 percent of the school day.

It is very important for parents to be involved in the transition to school-age process from the beginning. By asking questions and being involved, you are able to continue to support the growth and development of your child. The transition of your child to school-age programs is an opportunity to celebrate. Your child has developed many new skills and accomplished many outcomes in preparation for the future!

School Age Transition Timelines

SEPTEMBER/NOVEMBER

Children who are school age eligible for the upcoming school year will be identified in the early intervention data system. The classroom teacher will remind parents of their child's status in the beginning of the school year.

DECEMBER/JANUARY

Parents will have an opportunity to meet district personnel at an informational "Meet the District Night". A panel of educators and parents will be available to answer questions regarding the transition process. Information about registration and other school related issues would be addressed.

FEBRUARY

A transition meeting with the home district will be scheduled with each individual parent in February. This meeting will take place at either the assigned classroom or at the district's administration building. Options regarding school age transition will be discussed at this time. There are three outcomes that can occur at this meeting: 1) the team can agree to accept the current IEP for the next year, 2) the team can agree to do a full evaluation prior to the end of the school year, or 3) the team can agree to have the child remain an additional year in early intervention.

MARCH/APRIL

If the team agrees to evaluate, the district will begin to gather information in preparation for the evaluation report. This evaluation must be completed sixty school days form the time of signed permission. Parents can make arrangements to visit potential classrooms with district personnel.

APRIL/MAY

The MDE team will reconvene to begin the development of a school age Individual Education Plan (IEP). This is where school placement options will be decided with a signed Notice of Recommended Education Placement (NOREP).

PARENT PAGE

Getting Ready for Kindergarten

Attending kindergarten is a big step in your child's life. Although it is a very exciting time, feelings of apprehension are normal for both parent and child. Here are some tips for getting ready for kindergarten.

Learning as much as you can about the school will help make the transition easier. Important things to know are:

- The kindergarten teacher's name
- The starting date and location of kindergarten
- The date, place, and paper work required for kindergarten registration
- Immunizations required for kindergarten
- The school's yearly calendar
- The kindergarten's daily schedule
- The school district's policy on illness
- Transportation procedures
- Parent involvement opportunities
- Meal arrangements, if applicable
- Inclement weather procedures
- The principal's name

To boost your child's confidence, review self-help skills such as:

- Buttoning
- Tying shoes
- Snapping snaps
- Putting on winter wear
- Following directions
- Knowing home address and phone number

Visiting the school helps your child become familiar with his/her new environment.

Practicing school morning routines will help you and your child develop a schedule that works. Hint: Completing as many tasks as possible the night before will help ease the morning rush.

Talking to neighborhood families about their kindergarten experiences helps your family become more familiar with what to expect the first few weeks of school.

Reading books that deal with handling new experiences or children going to school helps your child learn ways to handle this new situation.

Talking with your child in a positive manner about school will help shape his/her attitude toward education.

Encouraging your child to ask questions or voice concerns about kindergarten will help establish open lines of communication both now and for the future.

Above all, be patient with your child on the first day of kindergarten. Your child needs to know you love him/her and will be supportive during this new, exciting experience.

Child Care Information Services of Lehigh County
TOT-INFO
1520 Hanover Ave. Allentown, PA 18109
610-TOT-INFO or 610- 437-6000, ext. 2319 or 1-800-528-7222
This program is made possible by the Pennsylvania Department of Public Welfare

PARENT PAGE

Back to School Transitions

"Falling" into a back to school schedule can be an exciting and challenging experience for parents and children. Parents need to create a sense of security for children by communicating changes and implementing routines for children.

Bedtime Routines: If you child has had a later bedtime during the summer, begin an earlier bedtime routine several days before the start of school.

Communicate: Children need to have a sense of security. Parents can help children feel secure by answering their questions. Children who are in before-or after-school care may have many questions regarding how they will get to school, who will pick them up and how long they will be in care. Parents need to judge how much information is important for their children to know.

Visit the Teacher and School: Visit the classroom and meet your child's teacher before school begins. Show your child his classroom, the location of bathrooms and water fountains. Have an ongoing communication with your child's teacher by attending conferences. Be a volunteer.

Label Belongings: Be sure to label your child's coat, lunch box and book bag. This will make departure from school easier for your child and the other children who have identical belongings.

Talk About Your Child's Day: Take time to find out what your child did at school. "Tell me about the field trip you took today." Who did you play with at recess and what did you do?" "Tell me about the book you are reading or the book your teacher read to you today."

Your Child Is An Individual: Your child's school experiences will be different from a friends or neighbors child. Avoid making comparisons between your child and someone else's child.

Play Time: Give your child play time after school. Children need time to unwind just as adults need relaxation time.

Positive Attitude: You are your child's most important teacher and he/she is looking to you for enthusiasm and encouragement. Talk to your child and convey positive thoughts and feelings about the upcoming school year.

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610-TOT-INFO or 610-437-6000, Ext. 2319 or 1-800-528-7222
This program is made possible by the Pennsylvania Department of Public Welfare
Edward G. Rendell– *Governor* Updated 05/01/05 Estelle B. Richman - *Secretary*

The 13 Disability Categories, Defined

IDEA provides definitions of the 13 disability categories listed above. Federal definitions guide how states define who is eligible for a free appropriate public education under IDEA. The definitions are as follows:

1. Autism...

...means a developmental disability significantly affecting verbal and nonverbal communication and social interaction, generally evident before age three, that adversely affects a child's educational performance. Other characteristics often associated with autism are engaging in repetitive activities and stereotyped movements, resistance to environmental change or change in daily routines, and unusual responses to sensory experiences. The term *autism* does not apply if the child's educational performance is adversely affected primarily because the child has an emotional disturbance, as defined in #4 below.

A child who shows the characteristics of autism after age 3 could be diagnosed as having autism if the criteria above are satisfied.

2. Deaf-Blindness...

...means concomitant [simultaneous] hearing and visual impairments, the combination of which causes such severe communication and other developmental and educational needs that they cannot be accommodated in special education programs solely for children with deafness or children with blindness.

3. Deafness...

...means a hearing impairment so severe that a child is impaired in processing linguistic information through hearing, with or without amplification, that adversely affects a child's educational performance.

4. Emotional Disturbance...

...means a condition exhibiting one or more of the following characteristics over a long period of time and to a marked degree that adversely affects a child's educational performance:

(a) An inability to learn that cannot be explained by intellectual, sensory, or health factors.

(b) An inability to build or maintain satisfactory interpersonal relationships with peers and teachers.

(c) Inappropriate types of behavior or feelings under normal circumstances.

(d) A general pervasive mood of unhappiness or depression.

(e) A tendency to develop physical symptoms or fears associated with personal or school problems.

The term includes schizophrenia. The term does not apply to children who are socially maladjusted, unless it is determined that they have an emotional disturbance.

5. Hearing Impairment...

...means an impairment in hearing, whether permanent or fluctuating, that adversely affects a child's educational performance but is not included under the definition of "deafness."

6. Intellectual Disability...

...means significantly subaverage general intellectual functioning, existing concurrently [at the same time] with deficits in adaptive behavior and manifested during the developmental period, that adversely affects a child's educational performance.

7. Multiple Disabilities...

...means concomitant [simultaneous] impairments (such as intellectual disability-blindness, intellectual disability-orthopedic impairment), the combination of which causes such severe educational needs that they cannot be accommodated in special education programs solely for one of the impairments. The term does not include deaf-blindness.

8. Orthopedic Impairment...

...means a severe orthopedic impairment that adversely affects a child's educational performance. The term includes impairments caused by a congenital anomaly, impairments caused by disease (e.g., poliomyelitis, bone tuberculosis), and impairments from other causes (e.g., cerebral palsy, amputations, and fractures or burns that cause contractures).

9. Other Health Impairment...

...means having limited strength, vitality, or alertness, including a heightened alertness to environmental stimuli, that results in limited alertness with respect to the educational environment, that—

(a) is due to chronic or acute health problems such as asthma, attention deficit disorder or attention deficit hyperactivity disorder, diabetes, epilepsy, a heart condition, hemophilia, lead poisoning, leukemia, nephritis, rheumatic fever, sickle cell anemia, and Tourette syndrome; and

(b) adversely affects a child's educational performance.

10. Specific Learning Disability...

...means a disorder in one or more of the basic psychological processes involved in understanding or in using language, spoken or written, that may manifest itself in the imperfect ability to listen, think, speak, read, write, spell, or to do mathematical calculations. The term includes such conditions as perceptual disabilities, brain injury, minimal brain dysfunction, dyslexia, and developmental aphasia. The term does not include learning problems that are primarily the result of visual, hearing, or motor disabilities; of intellectual disability; of emotional disturbance; or of environmental, cultural, or economic disadvantage.

11. Speech or Language Impairment...

...means a communication disorder such as stuttering, impaired articulation, a language impairment, or a voice impairment that adversely affects a child's educational performance.

12. Traumatic Brain Injury...

...means an acquired injury to the brain caused by an external physical force, resulting in total or partial functional disability or psychosocial impairment, or both, that adversely affects a child's educational performance. The term applies to open or closed head injuries resulting in impairments in one or more areas, such as cognition; language; memory; attention; reasoning; abstract thinking; judgment; problem-solving; sensory, perceptual, and motor abilities; psychosocial behavior; physical functions; information processing; and speech.

The term does not apply to brain injuries that are congenital or degenerative, or to brain injuries induced by birth trauma.

13. Visual Impairment Including Blindness...

...means an impairment in vision that, even with correction, adversely affects a child's educational performance. The term includes both partial sight and blindness.

How Parents Can Help Their Child Succeed In School

- Put a priority on reading and demonstrate it!
- Show your enthusiasm for education by taking an active interest in your child's schooling.
- Attend school functions.
- Have a conference with your child's teacher.
- Make a point to talk *with*(not at) your child about daily activities.
- Provide an adequate breakfast and lunch for your child.
- Talk about teachers in a positive tone in front of your child.
- Encourage your child to participate in the "extras" that school offers.
- Know what classes and assignments your child has.
- Become familiar with the late homework/make-up policies.
- Find out when / if teachers are available for extra help.
- Monitor the number of hours your child watches television, uses video games, etc.
- Help your child establish good time management techniques and check on this from time to time
- Encourage your child to learn how to learn.
- Know how your child learns best and take advantage of their strengths.
- Try to discuss the day's activities around the dinner table.

School Age Transition
Parent Survey

Dear Parents:

We are committed to improving our transition process in Early Intervention. Please answer the following questions regarding your transition to school age programming.

NAME: (Optional) DISTRICT:

1. Did you participate in the "Meet the District Night"? What information was most useful for you?

2. What information would you like to have added to the Transition Handbook?

3. Did you participate in the transition meeting arranged for you with your school district representative?

4. Did you have an opportunity to visit potential school programs and meet with school officials prior to placement?

5. Was your IEP completed before the end of the school year and within the timelines?

6. What would have made your transition experience easier?

Rate your overall experience from 1 to 10 with 10 being the best score.

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

Return to:
1515 W. 23rd Street
Hazleton, PA 18202
Phone:826-0850/454-1870