

Stark County Board of Developmental Disabilities

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PRESCHOOL TRANSITIONS

POLICY

It is the intent of the Stark County Board of Developmental Disabilities to provide preschool students, both those with developmental delays and typically developing peers, with smooth transitions into the Stark DD preschool program when first enrolling; within the Stark DD preschool program when changing classrooms; and into the next setting, whether another preschool program or a kindergarten placement.

Stark DD preschool staff members shall work in partnership with Stark County Early Intervention Service Coordinators and Providers, local school district representatives, and parents in providing all necessary information, transition meetings, tours, and support to assure a smooth transition for each preschool aged child.

Historical Resolution Information		Reviewer(s):
Date	Resolution Number	Director of Early Childhood
1/22/19	01-03-19	
5/24/22	05-26-22	
4/22/25	04-28-25	

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PROCEDURES

Students with Special Needs

Prior to entering Stark DD Preschool:

- Early Intervention Service Coordinators may invite the Stark DD Early Childhood Director to attend Transition Planning Conferences for children enrolled in early intervention. Preschool services that may be available to that child through Stark DD will be discussed with the parents at that time.
- Once a school district is officially involved with a child, if Stark DD preschool is being considered as a preschool option, school districts will refer a child to Stark DD Preschool for possible enrollment and may invite the Stark DD Early Childhood Director to attend an IEP/placement meeting.
- Parents will have an opportunity to tour the Stark DD preschool center at a time convenient to them so they have more information with which to help make the decision for their child's placement. Tours may be arranged by the parents, early intervention staff or the parents by contacting the Stark DD Early Childhood Director.
- For children whose IEP teams end up deciding Stark DD preschool is the least restrictive environment for a child, the district will send the Stark DD Early Childhood Director the child's ETR and IEP which will complete the referral for services.

For children age-eligible to transition to kindergarten services:

- Each year to start the transition process. during fall Parent/Teacher conferences, the teacher has informal discussions with parents of children who will be 5 years old for the following school year and thus eligible for kindergarten
- Beginning in February, formal Transition meetings are held with parents, teachers, the Stark DD Early Childhood Director, and district special education representative during which evaluation, placement options, and possible kindergarten services are discussed.
- Visits to placement options for the child are set up with the parents and the district. Teachers are permitted and encouraged to attend visits if the parent would like.
- Observations of the child, while at Stark DD preschool, may be planned with district staff so they have a better idea of the needs and strengths of the child they are getting the next year.
- Depending upon the child, on occasion a school district may have a child spend Fridays of the second semester of preschool in a kindergarten classroom in the district they feel will be a good fit for the child. This is so everything will not be brand new for the child the following fall.

Typically Developing Peers

Prior to entering Stark DD Preschool:

- Parents complete an application to attend the Stark DD Preschool program.

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- Children attend a play based developmental skills screening. Five to ten children typically attend each screening session.
- Parents are given a tour of the Stark DD preschool while their child is participating in another room with the staff and an overview of the typical peer program is presented to the group.
- If the screening team has concerns about the age appropriate development of any of the peer applicants, parents will be encouraged to contact their local school district and request an evaluation just to make sure the children are developmentally on target.

When ready to transition to kindergarten:

- Notices are sent home directing parents to watch for kindergarten registration activities within their home districts from about January on of their last year in preschool.
- Teachers discuss options for placement with parents during parent conferences in March and offer support/guidance.
- Classroom staff completes the Stark County Transition Skills Checklist, which is used throughout the county, which allows the receiving teacher to know a little about each child prior to entering their kindergarten classroom.

For All Students Attending Stark DD Preschool – Special Needs and Typical

- Prior to the start of the school year, Classroom staff will conduct home visits with new students in order for the child and parents to meet the staff and begin establishing a relationship centered around the child.
- The week before school starts, a 1-1 Open House is scheduled for each child and their parents. These Open Houses offer the child and parent to visit the preschool building and classroom, and bring in supplies such as diapers, extra clothing, medicine, etc. In addition, therapists and the nurse also have the opportunity to meet the child and parents. This allows staff to be more prepared to meet the needs of the child equipment and adapted materials-wise on the first day of school. A school bus will also be available during the open house in order to give the child and parents the opportunity to sit on the bus and ride around the parking lot prior to that first day of school.
- Half of the students are scheduled to attend the first day of school with the other half of students attending the second day of school. This allows the students to adjust initially to the preschool environment with fewer students which means less visual and auditory stimulation.
- Fire Drills and Tornado Drills are held each of the first two days with only half of the students present so that these often upsetting activities may be handled with only a few students at a time.

For All Students Who Change Classrooms within the Stark DD Preschool

- Parents receive a letter with the name of their child's teacher prior to school starting. We then follow all other beginning of the year procedures as previously listed.
- If the school year has already begun and the need arises to change a child's classroom, the parents are called by the Early Childhood Director and the reasons for needing the

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classroom change are discussed. An offer is made to meet in person with the parents to discuss the change further.

- If the change is okayed by the parent, a plan is arranged between the old and new classroom staff members for the child to spend graduated time within the new classroom with staff from the former classroom, decreasing their time with the student in the new classroom.