

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 early childhood staff members shall work in partnership with Stark County Early Intervention Service Coordinators, Early Head Start and Head Start agencies, 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):						
<table><thead><tr><th>Date</th><th>Resolution Number</th></tr></thead><tbody><tr><td>2/27/18</td><td>02-15-18</td></tr><tr><td>4/27/21</td><td>04-16-21</td></tr></tbody></table>	Date	Resolution Number	2/27/18	02-15-18	4/27/21	04-16-21	Early Childhood Director
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2/27/18	02-15-18						
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PROCEDURE

Students with Special Needs

Prior to entering Stark DD Preschool:

- With permission of parents/guardians, Early Intervention Service Coordinators may invite the Stark DD Early Childhood Director to attend the Transition Planning Conference for children enrolled in early intervention. The conference is held approximately 90 days prior to a child's third birthday. Services that may be available to that child through Stark DD will be discussed with the parents at that time.
- For children not involved with early intervention, school districts will directly refer a child 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 sites at a time convenient to them so they have more information with which to help make the decision for their child's placement.

For children age-eligible to transition to kindergarten services:

- The teacher has informal discussions with parents of children who will be five years old the following fall and eligible for kindergarten to start the transition process.
- Beginning in February, formal Transition meetings are held with parents, teachers, the Stark DD Early Childhood Director, and the district special education representative, during which evaluation, placement options, and possible services are discussed.
- Visits to placement options for child are set up with the parents and district. Teachers are permitted to attend visits if the parent would like.
- Observations of a child, while at the 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 that they feel may 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.
- Children attend a play-based developmental skills screening. Five to ten children typically attend each screening session.

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- 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.

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 complete the Transition Skills Checklist that is used throughout the county that 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**

- Classroom staff will conduct home visits prior to the school year starting in order for the child and parents to meet the staff and begin establishing a relationship centered around the child.
- An individual Open House for each child and parents is scheduled for sometime during the week before preschool begins in order for the child and parent to visit the preschool building and classroom, bring the child's supplies, and meet with the therapists and school nurse, if applicable.
- 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 and thus 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. Procedures listed above in this document for all students are then followed.
- 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 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 over the next several days with staff from the former classroom accompanying the child, decreasing their time with the student in the new classroom.