

COUNTY OF MILWAUKEE
Inter-Office Communication

Date: April 15, 2019

To: Theodore Lipscomb, Chairman - Milwaukee County Board of Supervisors

From: Mary Jo Meyers, Director, Department of Health and Human Services

Subject: **An informational report from the Director, Department of Health and Human Services, in response to File No. 18-104 seeking information on county programs that coordinate with preschool programming**

In February 2018, the Milwaukee County Board of Supervisors adopted File No. 18-104 supporting increased federal investments in early childhood education. The resolution stated, *“that the Director of the Department of Health and Human Services shall provide a report to the Milwaukee County Board of Supervisors on current county run programs that coordinate with pre-school programs and options to improve coordination between the county and pre-schools as soon as practicable.”* This report provides policymakers with the requested information.

The DHHS Disabilities Services Division (DSD) operates the Birth to 3 Program which is authorized under Part C of the federal Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA). Birth to 3 supports children with developmental delays or disabilities under the age of three and their families. The program is a federal entitlement which utilizes state, federal, and local funds to enhance the development of children with developmental disabilities, minimizes the need for special education and decreases rates of institutionalization.

The program assists children in transitioning to preschool and serves an average of 1,484 children per month. Counties are responsible for administering the program based on state and federal guidelines.

For 2019, DSD executed contracts with four agencies to provide Birth to 3 services to families to enhance their child’s development. These services may include the following:

- Screening & Evaluation
- Related Health Services
- Family Education Development & Education Services
- Communication Services
- Occupational & Physical Therapy

The program must adhere to rigorous federal indicators determined by the Office of Special Education Program (OSEP). The indicator most closely aligned with efforts to coordinate with preschool programming is Indicator 8 which reflects a performance target of 100%. This indicator tracks the percent of all children exiting Birth to 3 who received timely transition planning to support the child's transition to preschool and other appropriate community services by their third birthday including:

- The Individualized Family Service Plan (IFSP) with transition steps and services
- Notification to LEA (local education agency), if potentially eligible for Part B
- Transition planning conference, if potentially eligible for Part B

This coordination of services is important to determining eligibility for IDEA – Part B Section 619 – Preschool Program. This program offers special education and related services for preschool children, ages 3 to 5, with disabilities.

Indicator 8, the federal target as well as the State and Milwaukee County results can be found in the table below. The federal target is 100% for transition to preschool and Milwaukee County averaged 99 percent on all sections of Indicator 8.

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Monitoring Priorities & Indicators	Federal Target	State Results	Milwaukee County Results
8A. Percent of toddlers with disabilities exiting Part C with timely transition planning for whom the lead agency has developed an IFSP with transition steps and services at least 90 days and at the discretion of all parties, not more than nine months, prior to the toddler's third birthday	100%	99.83%	99.70%
8B. Percent of all toddlers with disabilities exiting Part C with timely transition planning for whom the lead agency has notified (consistent with any opt-out policy adopted by the state) the State Education Agency (SEA) and LEA where the toddler resides at least 90 days prior to the toddler's third birthday for toddlers potentially eligible for Part B preschool services	100%	98.46%	99.09%
8C. Percent of all toddlers with disabilities exiting Part C with timely transition planning for whom the lead agency has conducted the transition conference held with the approval of the family at least 90 days, and at the discretion of all parties, not more than nine months prior to the toddler's third birthday for toddlers potentially eligible for Part B preschool services	100%	99.57%	98.98%

To improve the overall program, DSD plans to work closely with the school districts to develop a more thorough understanding of the program. In addition, staff will continue to reinforce with parents how important it is for their child to be prepared for the transition to preschool. The goal would be to effectively transition all children and families by working collaboratively with our families, providers and preschools.

If you have any questions or need further clarification, please let me know.

Thank you.



Mary Jo Meyers, Director
Department of Health and Human Services

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