

Bureau of Special Education (BSE) Topic Brief: Supporting Kindergarten Transitions for Children with IEPs

June 2026

Introduction

The transition from preschool to kindergarten is a critical milestone in a child's educational trajectory. For preschoolers with Individualized Education Programs (IEPs), intentional, proactive planning is essential. Strong, meaningful collaboration between families and local education agencies (LEAs) during this period supports positive outcomes and promotes long-term student success.

Special Education Considerations for Kindergarten Transition

A Planning and Placement Team (PPT) meeting should be scheduled for every preschool child with an IEP before the start of kindergarten. The LEA should:

- Convene a PPT meeting prior to kindergarten to review and revise the IEP even if the family is considering opting out (see next section).
- Ensure the IEP addresses present levels of performance, kindergarten aligned goals, LRE determination, special education and related services, and supplementary aids and services.
- Discuss and document any transition supports needed for a successful entry into kindergarten.

When a Family Choose to Opt-Out of Kindergarten (C.G.S. § 10-184)

A family may opt-out of kindergarten at age 5 or 6 by appearing in person and signing the district's opt-out form. If a family whose child is receiving preschool special education services choose to opt-out, the LEA should:

- Inform the family that once they exercise the optout option, the child is no longer a public school student and is not entitled to special education or related services.
- Inform families that they may later enroll their child in public school; upon enrollment, a PPT meeting should be held to review and revise the IEP as needed.

Important Note: Retention is typically a general education decision, not a PPT decision.

Parental Rights & Procedural Safeguards

- Families who disagree with the IEP, placement, or transition recommendations may exercise their procedural safeguards, including requesting mediation or initiating a Due Process Hearing.
- Parentally placed private school children do not have an individual right to receive some or all of the special education and related services that the child would receive if enrolled in a public school (IDEA, 34 C.F.R. § 300.137).