



Illinois State Board of Education

Gery J. Chico, Chairman

Dr. Christopher Koch, State Superintendent

# Early Childhood Outcomes System

---

## Frequently Asked Questions

April 2014

**Illinois State Board of Education (ISBE)  
Early Childhood Outcomes System  
Frequently Asked Questions and Answers**

- **The ECO Decision Tree must be used when determining entry and exit ratings for all children receiving ECSE services.**  
[http://www.isbe.net/sis/pdf/early\\_childhood\\_decision\\_tree.pdf](http://www.isbe.net/sis/pdf/early_childhood_decision_tree.pdf)
- **Resources for training and information on Early Childhood Outcomes can be found at:** [http://www.isbe.net/earlychi/html/ec\\_speced\\_outcomes.htm](http://www.isbe.net/earlychi/html/ec_speced_outcomes.htm) or <http://projects.fpg.unc.edu/~eco/index.cfm>

**I: ENTRY RATINGS**

**Q1.** How should families be involved in the early childhood outcomes (ECO) process?

**A.** *Family involvement is crucial to determination of accurate entry and progress ratings. Information and resources for involving families is located on the ECO Center webpage at <http://ectacenter.org/eco/pages/families.asp>*

**Q2.** When the district does the entry or progress outcome ratings are we required to hold a meeting?

**A.** *ECO ratings must be determined in the three outcomes areas upon entry and annually thereafter. The rating process is a team process involving 2 or more individuals who know or have information on the child. Therefore, yes, there should be a meeting at every entry and at every progress rating annually.*

**Q3.** How soon after a child is enrolled in early childhood special education (ECSE) services should ECO entry data be compiled?

**A.** *In order to capture the most progress, data should be compiled as close to entry as possible. Although there are 45 calendar days (when school is in session) allowed to reach consensus on the summary rating, this can be completed earlier if assessment and observation data are adequate.*

**Q4.** Should staff wait until the child is in programming for 45 days before coming to consensus?

**A.** *Although there are 45 calendar days (when school is in session) allowed to reach consensus on the summary rating, this can be completed earlier if assessment and observation data are adequate. This includes early intervention reports, other assessments, family and caregiver input and observation.*

**Q5.** Are summer months counted in the timelines?

**A.** *No. Do not count summer months when school is not in session. However, if the initial Individual Education Program (IEP) is written 45 days prior to the end of the school year, district should determine an entry rating by the end of the school year.*

**Q6.** If a child will be in the program less than 6 months, should entry ratings be determined?

**A.** *Yes. All students receiving ECSE services must have entry ratings determined.*

- Q7.** Are child outcome ratings required for preschool-aged children who receive special education services through an Individualized Service Plan (ISP)?
- A.** *No. Child outcome data is only required for children with an IEP. Outcome ratings are not completed on students served through an ISP.*
- Q8.** What about children with an IEP for speech services only? Are all three outcome areas assessed even though they only attend for speech services?
- A.** *Yes. The Office of Special Education Programs (OSEP) requires that states provide data on all three outcomes for every child. Data are required for all outcomes even if there are no concerns about a child's development, or if the child only has delays in one or two outcome areas. This includes children receiving only a single service such as speech therapy.*
- Q9.** Is ECO information required for children receiving home/hospital instruction?
- A.** *Yes, if the children have an IEP.*
- Q10.** Are the 0-3 programs responsible for completing exit ratings which may be used (or considered) as 3-5 entry ratings?
- A.** *Children receiving services through Part C (Early Intervention) will receive exit ratings as they approach the third birthday. Exit information from Part C can be used as one source of entry information to Part B services to supplement entry assessment information.*
- Q11.** Can the entry rating be performed at the eligibility meeting if the child has not yet turned three but will be receiving special education services at age 3 (usually two to three weeks after the eligibility meeting)? Can this rating be dated the eligibility meeting date and entered in at that time or should it be entered once the child is enrolled, using the eligibility meeting date?
- A.** *An error message will appear if the date of the ECO ratings is earlier than the child's third birthday.*
- Q12.** Will the Outcomes Summary Form be housed with the IEP in the child's temporary file?
- A.** *Yes. A paper copy should be placed in the child's temporary file.*
- Q13.** When children are referred or identified and found eligible mid spring before their kindergarten year, should entry and progress ratings be done or just the entry?
- A.** *There must be an entry rating. A progress rating may be done to capture growth while the student was receiving ECSE services.*

## **II: PROGRESS RATINGS**

- Q14.** Can more than one progress rating be entered each year?
- A.** *Yes, you may enter progress ratings at any time in the Student Information System (SIS).*
- Q15.** Under what circumstances would progress ratings be required for a child leaving ECSE services?
- A.** *A progress rating must be completed within the last six months of enrollment in*

*ECSE services.*

- Q16.** Does there need to be 6 months between the initial entry rating and the first progress rating?
- A.** *No, you can do a progress rating anytime after the entry rating. There must be one progress rating between February 1 and July 31.*
- Q17.** For the children entering in the spring, can the progress rating be done at their annual review the following school year?
- A.** *Progress ratings may be completed anytime between February 1 and July 31 of the following year. The rating determination could be completed at the annual review or not, however, determination of the rating must be a team process.*
- Q18.** If a child going to Kindergarten is on an annual rating in the fall, during the last school year before Kindergarten staff would have to do the fall rating and then another one between February and July?
- A.** *You do not need to do a progress rating at the child's annual review unless you choose to. You must do a progress rating for the child in this example between February 1 and July 31.*
- Q19.** For children receiving ECSE services under an IEP and who turn six during the school year, are the progress ratings determined once they turn six, or at the end of the school year?
- A.** *The progress ratings should be completed as close as possible to the sixth birthday.*
- Q20.** If a child's rating is the same from entry to progress or from progress to progress, can the answer to the "made progress" question be "yes?"
- A.** *If a child has demonstrated growth of skills in the specific outcome area but remained at the same rating, the answer to the question of "made progress" would be "yes." If a child has a degenerative disease but did make some type of growth in a specific outcome area the answer would be also be "yes." If the child has lost skills the answer would be "no."*

### **III: TRANSFER/ENROLLMENT**

- Q21.** For children who transfer into the district, can SIS be used to determine if they are already in the system?
- A.** *Yes. Log into SIS and click on Search SID (Student ID).*
- Q22.** What is the procedure for completing progress ratings when a child has been receiving ECSE services at another district, the family moves into our district and then leaves our district with less than 6 months in our program?
- A.** *Rate the child as accurately as you can with the information you have and information from the previous district if it is available.*
- Q23.** If a child moves to another district should progress ratings be completed?
- A.** *A progress rating is not necessary if a child moves to another district with less than 6 months in the current district. If a child has been receiving special education services for more than 6 months, progress ratings are*

*required. Forward records (with parent consent) to the new school district, which would then be responsible for the completion of future progress ratings at the appropriate times.*

**Q24.** If a child moves out of state should progress ratings be completed?

**A.** *A progress rating is not necessary if a child moves to another state with less than 6 months in the current district. If a child has been receiving special education services for more than 6 months, progress ratings are required.*

**Q25.** If a child exits from ECSE after 6 months and entry and progress data have been collected, then the child is re-enrolled several months later, would the original entry data be counted as the entry data or would new entry and progress assessments need to be conducted?

**A.** *Original entry data could be used however; new entry and progress information would be more accurate and useful in determining child progress and for program improvement purposes.*

**Q26.** When a child's enrollment is exited from SIS, does this automatically exit the child from ECO or do we do this separately?

**A.** *Exiting a student's enrollment in SIS and providing progress ratings in ECO are two separate actions.*

#### **IV: OTHER REPORTING QUESTIONS**

**Q27.** The Early Childhood Outcomes Summary Form only allows one assessment option even though it is possible to have different assessments for entry and progress. Should this be addressed?

**A.** *Reporting the primary assessment tool is only required when reporting progress ratings, therefore the primary assessment used to determine the progress ratings should be chosen.*

**Q28.** What replaces the ECO code "IEP for Speech Only" students?

**A.** *All preschool aged students with IEPs, including IEPs for speech only (also known as itinerant/walk-in), must be assessed using one of the primary assessments listed on the outcomes form. During 2013-2014 school year, one of the following assessment tools must be used: Assessment and Evaluation Programming System(AEPS), Carolina Curriculum for Infants and Toddlers/Preschoolers with Special Needs, High Scope Child Observation Record, Creative Curriculum Assessment, Hawaii Early Learning Profile(HELP), Individual Growth and Development Indicators (IGDI), Transdisciplinary Play-Based Assessment (TPBA), Work Sampling System, IEP for Speech Only, Teaching Strategies Gold, Early Learning Scales (ELS), or Ages and Stages Questionnaire (ASQ).*

*Beginning with the 2014-2015 school year, Code 9 (IEP for Speech Only) will be retired. All students, including those with IEPs for speech only (itinerant or walk-in,) must be assessed using one of the primary assessments listed on the outcomes form: AEPS, Carolina Curriculum for Infants and Toddlers/Preschoolers with Special Needs, High Scope Child Observation*

*Record, HELP, TPBA, Work Sampling System, Teaching Strategies Gold, ELS, or ASQ.*

**Q29.** Should a speech pathologist that works with children with IEPs for speech only use the ASQ?

**A.** *The speech pathologist must use ASQ for progress ratings if no other approved assessment is being used.*

**Q30.** What if a district uses the Unique Learning Systems for severe self-contained students? What can be used for primary assessment? Could the Ages and Stages Questionnaire be used with this population?

**A.** *The Unique Learning Systems is not on the list of primary assessments, however, knowledge about a child can be supplemented with information from Unique. Districts are required to use one of the primary assessments referenced in Q28. The ASQ can only be used for children with IEPs for speech only, and not for students with identified delays in any other areas.*

**Please direct questions to:**

**Pamela Reising Rechner**  
**Early Childhood Education**  
**217.524.4835**  
[preising@isbe.net](mailto:preising@isbe.net)

**Sharonda Brown**  
**Early Childhood Education**  
**217.524.4835**  
[sbrown@isbe.net](mailto:sbrown@isbe.net)