

MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING  
BETWEEN  
ELMIRA HEIGHTS SCHOOL DISTRICT  
AND  
EOP BIRTH TO FIVE SCHOOL READINESS PROGRAM

This agreement is between Elmira Heights School District and E.O.P. Child Development Head Start for the period of July 1, 2021 to June 30, 2022.

**I. Purpose Statement:**

The purpose of this agreement is to establish working procedures between Elmira Heights School District and EOP Birth to Five School Readiness Program in the provision of services to preschool children eligible for special education in compliance with Federal and State laws and regulations.

It is the intent of this agreement to:

- A. Define which service will be provided by each agency.
- B. Ensure that children who are eligible for preschool special education services receive a free appropriate public education, as required by law, in the least restrictive environment.
- C. Ensure that each agency cooperatively maintains communication and shares leadership responsibility at the local level to ensure that available resources are utilized in the most effective manner.
- D. Ensure that cooperative arrangements between Elmira Heights School District and EOP Birth-5 School Readiness Program are developed, implemented and preserved.

In accordance with federal regulations, the Birth to Five School Readiness Program will ensure that any child enrolled in Head Start that turns 5 on or before December 1<sup>st</sup> is transitioned to Kindergarten based on the procedures established by the school district.

**II. Program Mandates**

***Responsibility of School District***

- A. Locate and identify children birth-age 5 with disabilities through a child-find effort which includes a process for screening.
- B. Provide services to preschool children with disabilities on a mandatory basis.
- C. Provide preschool children with disabilities a free and appropriate public education including the development and implementation of an Individual Education Plan which includes all the components of an IEP, procedural safeguards and the provision of related services.
- D. Place preschool children with disabilities in the least restrictive environment with an opportunity to interact with non-disabled peers to the maximum extent appropriate.

- E. Work with appropriate community agencies to provide services to preschool children with disabilities.
- F. Submit and maintain the census and attendance data on eligible preschool children with disabilities for funding entitlement and budget preparations.

***Responsibilities of EOP Birth to Five School Readiness Program:***

- A. Recruit, enroll and serve eligible children ages birth-5. No less than 10 percent of the total number of enrollment opportunities in Early Head Start and Head Start Programs shall be available for children with disabilities who are eligible to participate.
- B. Screen all enrolled children within 45 days for potential problems in the areas of health and development.
- C. Refer children found to be at-risk to appropriate professionals for diagnostic evaluations.
- D. Work closely with other community agencies in order to provide services to children with disabilities.
- E. Assure that children with disabilities receive all services to which they are entitled according to Head Start Program Performance Standards for Children with Disabilities.

**III. Service Implementation**

- A. **CHILD FIND/SCREENING:** The EOP Birth to Five School Readiness Program will screen all children within 45 days of enrollment date. Staff will discuss with the parent or guardian results of screenings that are positive and concerns noted by providers and will give the parent or guardian information on the referral process. The school district only receives screening information upon referral to special education with parental consent.
- B. **REFERRAL FOR EVALUATION:** For preschool age children, the EOP Manager of Education & Child Development Services (Kim Doud) fills out a special education referral form. The CPSE process and request to evaluate will be sent to the parent from the Elmira Heights School District when the special education referral is received. The Family Advocate will inform the parent that they must register with the Elmira Heights School District to verify residency before the CPSE referral can be processed. In the event that the family needs transportation assistance for the evaluation, the Head Start Family Advocate accompanies the parents to the evaluation site. Elmira Heights School District invites the EOP Manager of Education & Child Development Services and other staff who work with the child and family to the CPSE meeting. CPSE team utilizes evaluations for decision-making and other assessment data with parent consent.
- C. **COMPREHENSIVE EVALUATION:** A designated evaluation team completes the evaluation. Parents and the EOP Birth to Five School Readiness Program staff are encouraged to participate in the evaluation. Social history is conducted by a social worker. The EOP Manager of Education & Child Development Services or the CPSE Chairperson may determine if other assessments or evaluations are needed. Parents may request other evaluations if they see fit. The comprehensive evaluation must be completed within 60 calendar days from the referral.

- D. IEP DEVELOPMENT: The EOP Manager of Education & Child Development Services and other appropriate staff may participate as members of the CSPE Committee. Parents are encouraged to participate by both agencies. Transportation is provided to parents if needed. The CPSE Chairperson sends the IEP to EOP Manager of Education & Child Development Services; then it is copied and distributed to staff working with a respective child. IEPs are in every classroom for Head Start staff refer to and are kept on file in a secure manner. Head Start staff assists in the monitoring of IEP goals and participates at annual and other reviews.
- E. PLACEMENT: EOP Birth to Five School Readiness Program input is given consideration regarding placement decisions. Provision of services in a Head Start classroom may be recommended by the CPSE team as the least restrictive environment, if appropriate. The ERSEA Manager is notified by the Head Start Manager of Education & Child Development Services when the District's referral is received in writing. Considerations include: Head Start eligibility, proximity to child's home, and transportation feasibility. Completion of the application and enrollment process must be in place before a child attends the EOP Birth to Five School Readiness Program. The EOP Manager of Education & Child Development Services notifies the CPSE Chairperson of the child's placement and starting date, and the IEP is amended and forwarded in a timely manner.
- F. SPECIFIC PROGRAM SERVICE DELIVERY:  
Special Education Itinerant Teachers and other related services are implemented as stated in IEPs. The EOP Manager of Education & Child Development Services, SEITs and therapists speak as needed on issues and progress. The EOP Manager of Education & Child Development Services will request program review if need arises. All staff members involved with the child plan together, teach and evaluate. Transportation – The EOP Birth to Five School Readiness Program contracts with Terps Enterprises. Transportation may be available to bus some children with special needs from the Elmira Heights School District to nearby sites, in emergency situations. In general, children will be transported by family members.
- G. HIRING/SUPERVISING: The municipality does all approval and contracting for SEIT and related services. Each agency does their respective hiring. The EOP Manager of Education & Child Development Services supervises EOP Education staff. Each SEIT and related services provider is supervised by the supervisor of the individual agency they come from. The district does not have direct supervision over these staff; however, the CPSE Chairperson may be notified or consulted with as needed.
- H. PROGRESS: Progress reports are provided by service providers quarterly and reviewed by EOP Birth to Five School Readiness Program staff. Staff also track children's progress in *Teaching Strategies Gold*, which is reviewed at Professional Team Meetings each month. SEITs and other related service providers are encouraged to attend team meetings.
- I. TRAINING: Opportunities for joint staff training and parent involvement activities are occasionally offered through EOP Birth to Five School Readiness Program.
- J. TRANSITION TO KINDERGARTEN: The school district provides Kindergarten screenings. The EOP Birth to Five School Readiness Program is involved with the School Readiness Project that assesses students' school readiness skills and shares information with LEAs. The

EOP Birth to Five School Readiness Program helps prepare parents for transition through a Transition Plan (on file for transition). The Elmira Heights schools will review all CPSE children for CSE eligibility in June.

**IV. Confidentiality**

The Elmira Heights School District and the EOP Birth to Five School Readiness Program shall follow the requirements outlined in the Family Education Right to Privacy Act.

**V. Termination/Review**

This memorandum of understanding will be reviewed and revised by the Elmira Heights School District and the EOP Birth to Five School Readiness Program on an as needed basis or at least once annually. This agreement may be terminated by any party upon thirty days written notice.

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CPSE Chairperson Signature

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Date

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Superintendent Signature

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Date

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EOP/Manager, Education & Child Development Services Signature

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Date

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EOP/Chief Program Officer Signature

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Date

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EOP Executive Director Signature

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Date