

# Garrett County Public Schools Infants and Toddlers Policy and Procedures



# Infants and Toddlers Program Policy and Procedures

## Board Policy

As lead agency for the Garrett County Infants and Toddlers Program, the Garrett County Public Schools provides early intervention services to infants and toddlers with disabilities as mandated by federal and state legislation (The Individuals with Disabilities Education Act and the Maryland State Bylaw, COMAR 13A.13.01 Maryland Infants and Toddlers Program). In doing so, the Garrett County Public Schools strive to meet high standards for infants and toddlers with disabilities to prepare them to enter school ready to learn.

The inclusive procedures are available to all staff in the “Special Education Handbook” placed in the central office, each school administrative office and media center. It is the responsibility of the central office and school based personnel of the Garrett County Public Schools to implement these procedures.

## **INTRODUCTION**

This section of the Special Education Procedural Handbook includes procedures for the Garrett County Infants and Toddlers Program which enables the system to provide free and appropriate special education services to eligible children ages birth until the beginning of the school year following the child's fourth birthday and their families. These procedures are in accordance with Part C of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), 34 CFR 303, and Education Article, Title 8, Subtitle 4, Annotated code of Maryland. It is the responsibility of the central office and school based personnel of Garrett County Public Schools to implement these procedures. This document is on file at the Maryland State Department of Education and the Garrett County Public Schools, Office of Special Education, and each Garrett County Public School.

With the annual submission of the Consolidated Local Implementation Grant (CLIG) for Federal Funds, The Garrett County Public Schools will review existing policies and procedures in light of existing or revised standards. Based upon that review, if the policies and procedures for special education and early intervention do not accurately reflect the Federal and State requirements, they will be revised. Anytime the Garrett County Public Schools revises local policies and procedures, the Garrett County Public Schools is required to submit those revisions to MSDE for review and approval.

The legal requirements found within federal or state statutes and regulations encompass the minimum actions, duties, and/or limitations by which an agency must comply. This establishes the "floor" which an agency must attain. It represents the minimum an agency must do to ensure the implementation of the legal requirements.

The IDEA and educational reform efforts within Maryland expect local agencies to look beyond the "floor" of compliance. In doing so, the Garrett County Public Schools strive for better results for all eligible children to prepare them for school. One effect of these changes is an increased accountability. With this increased accountability, Garrett County Public Schools is continuously analyzing performance and other data, and based on a self-assessment, has developed plans for continual improvement. These actions intend to improve interventions and services to enable students to exit the Infants and Toddlers Program skills to participate in their schools learning environment.

The Special Education Handbook reflects the organization of the COMAR. There are two chapters. Chapter 1 includes all standards to ensure the provision of a free appropriate public education to eligible children Birth until the beginning of the school year following their fourth birthday. Chapter 2 includes the standards for the administration of early intervention services.

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The federal and state authority references are included in the respective chapters.

The appendices include Garrett County Public Schools special education forms, Procedural Safeguards – Parental Rights Booklet as well as Parent Guide Series from MSDE

### **SPECIAL EDUCATION PURPOSE, PHILOSOPHY AND OBJECTIVES**

#### ***Purpose***

The Garrett County Public Schools is committed to the delivery of effective special education and early intervention programs and services to eligible children and students with disabilities in the least restrictive environment. All students must have available to them a free, appropriate public education (FAPE) designed to meet their unique needs and prepare them for school, employment, post-secondary education and independent living.

#### ***Philosophy***

The administration and staff of the Garrett County Public Schools believe:

- The major responsibility of the school is to develop each individual's intellectual capacity to its maximum.
- The school shares with the home, the church, and other community agencies the responsibility of each individual's education.
- The school also assists these institutions in developing an appreciation of our democratic heritage and fosters the perpetuation and improvement of this democratic heritage.
- Education is an active, continuous process which involves the acquisition of skills, knowledge, and understanding from which arise the attitudes and values of each individual.
- The intellectual development cannot be separated from the physical, social, and emotional development of each individual.
- Education develops the abilities to meet, to recognize and to solve problems in such a manner that the individual assumes responsibility for the self and for society as a whole.

The administration and staff of the Garrett County Public Schools also believe:

- A free appropriate educational program in the least restrictive environment should be provided to all eligible children and youth with disabilities.
- Programs for eligible children with disabilities should be planned and implemented as an integral part of programs for nondisabled students.
- Education should provide an equal opportunity for all students to develop as individuals according to their maximum physical, mental and social potential.
- Early intervention is a necessary part of an effective delivery system.
- That in order to provide effective educational programs and services to eligible children and youth with educational disabilities, it is essential that personnel be

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qualified and required to advance their skills by participating in ongoing staff development.

- Collaborative efforts with agencies, parents, school teams and community groups are necessary to ensure quality and consistency of services to eligible children with disabilities.
- Accountability is the foundation inherent to quality services for children with disabilities.

### ***Objectives***

In accordance with the purpose and philosophy, the Garrett County Public Schools must accomplish the following objectives:

- Provide a FAPE to students with disabilities from birth through the end of the school year the student is 21 years old who reside in the Garrett County Public School jurisdiction, including students attending non-public programs regardless of the severity of the disability, who are in need of special education and related services, in accordance with federal and state statutes, regulations, and the State Plan for Special Education
- Provide a continuous “child find” procedure designed to identify students who have a disability and are in need of special education and related services from Birth through the end of the school year the student is 21 years old
- Develop and implement an IFSP/IEP based upon assessed needs for each student who is identified as having an educational disability and who is in need of special education and related services
- Provide special education and related services in the student’s LRE
- Increase the percent of youth with IEP’s graduating from high school with a regular diploma and decrease the percent of youth with IEP’s dropping out of high school.
- Provide instruction of grade level curriculum to all students with IEP’s to meet the rigorous state standards in reading, math, and science.
- Work cooperatively with the parents of students who are identified as needing special education and related services
- Ensure that the confidentiality of information and all due process protections are maintained
- Provide for the successful transition of children with disabilities from early intervention to the school setting and from school into the adult world
- Provide for a seamless transition of children from Part C – Infants and Toddlers Program to Part B – Preschool Special Education.
- Provide ongoing staff development to enhance the instructional skills of special and general educators.
- Meet all state and federal timelines in regard to identification for special education and early intervention services.

## **CHAPTER ONE**

### **Provision of a Free Appropriate Public Education**

COMAR 13A.13.01

#### **Referral**

##### ***A. Referral to IFSP***

A child, prior to the age of 3, with a suspected developmental delay or disability who may be in need of early intervention services shall be promptly referred to the Garrett County Infants and Toddlers Program, who is identified as the Single Point of Entry and coordinates all major child find efforts consistent with State and Federal regulations. Referrals may be initiated by parents, physicians, Head Start or Early Head Start teachers, Garrett County Health Department, or any other persons who have concerns about a child's developmental progress. The Infants and Toddlers Program staff will, upon receipt of the written or verbal referral for evaluation, schedule an intake meeting as soon as possible to meet with the child and the parent/guardian to determine which evaluators are necessary for the assessment. Parental consent will be obtained to assess the child and to obtain necessary medical documentation.

Garrett County Public Schools collaborates with the Department of Social Services to ensure that all children under the age of 3 that are the subject of a substantiated case of child abuse or neglect or have been directly affected by illegal substance abuse or withdrawal symptoms resulting from prenatal drug exposure are referred for early intervention services. Garrett County Public Schools collaborates with all interagency partners to ensure that all identified children are referred to the Infants and Toddlers Program as soon as possible but no later the 7 days after being identified.

Garrett County Public Schools Infants and Toddlers Program shall obtain parental consent for a referral of a child three years or younger who directly experiences a substantial case of trauma due to exposure to violence in accordance with the Family Violence Prevention and Services Act.

Authority:	Federal:	20 USC 10401, et seq 34 CFR 303.302
	State:	13A.13.01.04A (1-4)

## **SCREENING**

Garrett County Public Schools as the local lead agency has chosen not to adopt screening procedures for children referred to the Garrett County Infants and Toddlers Program.

## **EVALUATION AND ASSESSMENT**

### ***A. Evaluation Procedures***

The Garrett County Public Schools employs the following personnel who are qualified and trained to assess children in all areas related to disabilities:

- Three school psychologists
- Four diagnostic/prescriptive teachers
- Five speech language pathologists

The Garrett County Public Schools contracts occupational and physical therapy services from School Therapy Services, Inc., who provides licensed occupational therapists to complete evaluations.

All Evaluations and assessment are conducted by the multidisciplinary team in a timely and comprehensive evaluation and will include:

- administering and evaluation instrument;
- taking the child' history, including interviewing the parent;
- identifying the child's level of functioning in each of the developmental areas identified by regulation;
- gathering information from other sources such as family members, other caregivers, medical providers, social workers, and educators to understand the full scope of the child's unique strengths and needs; and
- reviewing medical, educational, and other records.

No single procedure may be used as the sole criterion for determining a child's eligibility. Parent must provide consent prior to any evaluation or assessment being conducted. Evaluations include child's history, including interviewing the parent. All Evaluation must be conducted in the child's native language, unless clearly not feasible to do so.

Authority: Federal: 34 CFR 303.321, 303.322, 303.420  
State: 13A.13.01.05A

### ***B. Nondiscrimination***

The Garrett County Public Schools uses only testing and assessment materials and procedures used for the purposes of evaluation and placement and to assess a child's need for special

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education and related services that are selected and administered: in a manner which is not racially or culturally discriminatory.

Authority: Federal: 34 CFR 303.321 (a)(4)  
State: 13A.13.01.05B

### ***C. Written Report***

Following the evaluation, a written report will be provided to the parents of the referred child as well as being provided to the referral source. The written report will contain a statement about the child's current health status based on a review of pertinent records and medical history and describe the child's current levels of functioning in each of the developmental areas. The report will include a statement of criteria, including tests, evaluation materials, and informed clinical opinion. The report must include the name of the assessment tool used and be dated and signed by all evaluators in attendance, including their title. In addition the report must document the results of evaluations and assessments conducted by the qualified personnel and include the determination of initial eligibility and copies of all written report of evaluations and assessment are to be kept in the child's Early Intervention Record.

Authority: State: 13A.13.01.05C (1-2)

### ***D. Multidisciplinary Team Members***

The Multidisciplinary team may consist the child's parents and or guardian, other family members, the Infants and Toddlers Program staff, contracted service providers and Service Coordinator.

Authority: State: 13A.13.01.05D (1-3)

### ***E. Eligibility Determination***

The multidisciplinary team will review the findings of the evaluation and determine eligibility by comparing the evaluation results with the criteria for an infant or toddler with a disability. The Infants and Toddlers program staff shall use informed clinical opinion when conducting an evaluation and assessment of a child. Informed clinical opinion may be used as an independent basis to determine eligibility when the evaluation tools do not establish eligibility. However, it may not be used to negate the results of the evaluation instruments used to establish eligibility. A written statement will document the eligibility decision and will be filed in the child's early intervention record. The statement must include the following:

- Names and titles of all qualified personnel determining the child's eligibility
- The date of the determination and
- the basis for eligibility

A child's medical and other records may be used to establish eligibility without conduction an evaluation of the child if:





## **Individualized Family Service Plan (IFSP) Team**

### ***A. IFSP Team Members***

The Garrett County Infants and Toddlers Program ensures that the initial IFSP team meeting to evaluate the IFSP of an infant or toddlers with a disability shall be the parents or guardian of the child, the service coordinator who has worked with the family since the initial referral of the child or who has been designated by the Garrett County Infants and Toddlers Program to be responsible for the implementation of the IFSP. The team will also include individuals directly involved in conducting the evaluations and assessments in accordance with regulation, persons who would be responsible for providing services to the child and other persons or family members that the parents or guardians request to be present. An advocate or individual outside the family shall be included as a team member if the parent requests that the individual participate. The IFSP team must include two or more individuals from separate professions, one of those persons being the Service Coordinator and the parent or guardian. Arrangements will be made for individuals listed who are unable to attend a meeting. The individual's involvement can be accomplished through other means, including participation in a telephone conference call' having a knowledgeable authorized representative attend the meeting' or making pertinent records available at the meeting.

Authority: State: 13A.13.01.06A

### ***B. IFSP Team Meetings***

Garrett County Infant and Toddler Program will conduct the IFSP meeting in a setting and time convenient to the family and in the family's native language, or other mode of communication used by the family, unless it is clearly not feasible to do so. Written notification of the IFSP meeting shall be provided to the family and other participants 10 days prior to the meeting date or earlier to ensure that invited individuals will be able to attend.

Authority: State: 13A.13.01.06B

## **DEVELOPMENT AND REVIEW OF THE IFSP**

### ***A. Initial Meeting***

The initial meeting to develop the IFSP for a child evaluated for the first time and determined to be eligible is required to be conducted within 45 days of the receipt of the referral consistent with State and Federal regulations.

Authority: Federal: 34 CFR 303.310  
State: 13A.13.01.07A(1)

***B. Maryland IFSP Process***

The Garrett county Infants and Toddlers Program utilizes the Maryland On-line IFSP when developing and updating a child IFSP. The IFSP Team ensures the IFSP development in accordance with regulations at an IFSP meeting unless:

- Child or parent is unavailable to complete the screening, the initial evaluation, the initial assessment of the child and family or the initial IFSP due to exceptional family circumstances; or
- The parent has not provided consent for the screening, the initial evaluation or the initial assessment of the child despite documented, repeated attempts by Infants and Toddlers personnel to obtain parental consent.

Every attempt is made by Infant and Toddler Program staff to contact parents and all attempts are documented in the Early Intervention Record. In the event that the child or parent is unavailable or the parent has not provided consent, the service coordinator will document in the child’s Early Intervention Record the exceptional family circumstances or the repeated attempts to obtain parental consent. As soon as the documented exceptional family circumstances no longer exist or parental consent has been obtained for the initial evaluation and initial assessment of the child, the team will complete the screening, the initial evaluation, the initial assessment, the initial IFSP meeting and, if eligible, IFSP development and implementation will take place.

An interim IFSP will be developed and implemented to the extent appropriate. Signatures of the parent and other parties are required on the Maryland IFSP. The IFSP services are to be provided in the child’s natural environment, including home and community settings in which children without disabilities participate, to the maximum extent appropriate or in a setting that is most appropriate as determined by the IFSP Team, only when early intervention services cannot be achieved satisfactorily in a natural environment. Garrett County Infants and Toddlers Program is required to implement and begin services listed on the IFSP no more than 30 days after the IFSP is signed by the parent or guardian. Garrett County ITP ensures the provision of service coordination to an eligible child and the child’s family and included in the IFSP is the designation of the Service Coordinator for the eligible child and his or her family. This designation is made by determining the most appropriate member of the IFSP team that is most immediately relevant to the child’s and family’s needs or who is otherwise qualified to carry out all applicable responsibilities, and is assigned the responsibility for the implementation of the IFSP and coordination with other agencies and persons.. The IFSP team will also identify the actions to be taken to support the transition of children receiving early intervention services to preschool or other appropriate services. All IFSP’s are reviewed at 6 months, or more frequently if the team feels it necessary or if the family makes a request. The IFSP is also reviewed annually to review any current evaluations that may have been conducted and to assess other pertinent information that may be valuable in its development.

Authority: State: 13A.05.01.06E(2)

## **INDIVIUALIZED FAMILY SERVICE PLAN DOCUMENT (IFSP)**

### ***Interim IFSP***

The early intervention services for an eligible child and the child's family may commence before the completion of the evaluation and assessments if:

- It is determined that early intervention services are needed immediately by the child and the child's family;
- Parental consent is obtained; and
- An interim IFSP is developed that includes the name of the service coordinator who will be responsible for implementing the Interim IFSP; and coordinating with other agencies and persons; and
- Evaluations and assessment are still completed within the 45 days of the referral.

### ***IFSP Reviews***

A periodic review of an IFSP for a child and the child's family shall be conducted every 6 months, or more frequently if conditions warrant, or if the family requests such a review to determine the degree to which progress toward achieving the outcomes is being made and whether modification or revision of the outcomes is necessary.

This team also includes the parents or guardian of the child, the service coordinator who has worked with the family since the initial referral of the child or who has been designated by the Garrett County Infants and Toddlers Program to be responsible for the implementation of the IFSP. The team will also include individuals directly involved in conducting the evaluations and assessments in accordance with regulation, persons who would be responsible for providing services to the child and other persons or family members that the parents or guardians request to be present. An advocate or individual outside the family shall be included as a team member if the parent requests that the individual participate. The IFSP team must include two or more individuals from separate professions, one of those persons being the Service Coordinator and the parent or guardian. Arrangements will be made for individuals listed who are unable to attend a meeting. The individual's involvement can be accomplished through other means, including participation in a telephone conference call, having a knowledgeable authorized representative attend the meeting, or making pertinent records available at the meeting.

The periodic review may occur at an IFSP team meeting or by another means that is acceptable to the parents and other participants.

An IFSP team meeting shall be conducted at least annually to evaluate the IFSP for a child and the child's family and to revise the provisions of the IFSP as appropriate. During the annual

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IFSP team meeting, the results of any current evaluations conducted and other information available for the ongoing assessment of the child and family shall be used to determine what early intervention services are needed and what early intervention services will be provided.

### ***A. Content of IFSP***

The content of the IFSP must include the following:

- A statement about the present levels of physical development including:
  1. Vision,
  2. Hearing,
  3. Health status,
  4. Cognitive development,
  5. Communication development,
  6. Social or emotional development,
  7. Adaptive Development, and
  8. Physical Development
- A statement of the family's concerns, priorities and resources related to enhancing the development of the child as identified through assessment, with the concurrence of the family.
- A statement of the measurable results or outcomes that are developmental appropriate and expected to be achieved for the identified child and family including:
  1. Preliteracy,
  2. Numeracy,
  3. Language skills, and
  4. Criteria, procedures and timelines used to determine achievement results or outcomes identified in the IFSP and whether or not modification or revisions of the expected results or outcomes or early intervention services are needed to the IFSP.
- The projected date for initiation of services
- The anticipated duration of the services
- The name of the Service Coordinator from the profession most relevant to the child's or family's needs who is responsible for implementing the early intervention services identified in the IFSP, transition services, and coordination with other agencies and individuals,
- The steps and services to be taken to support a smooth transition to, Extended Option, Preschool Services or other appropriate services
- The steps to prepare the child for any changes in service delivery or service location including discussions with and training of parents as appropriate, regarding future placement as other matters related to the child's transition and to prepare the child for the changes and help the child adjust to and function in a new setting.
- Confirmation that all pertinent Child Find information regarding the child including additional information needed by the school system to ensure continuity of services

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from the Part C program has been transmitted with parental consent to Part B to aid in a seamless transition from one program to the other. This includes a copy of the most recent evaluation and assessments of the child and family and the most recent IFSP; and identification of transition services and other activities that the IFSP team determines are necessary to the transition of the child.

Authority:    Federal:      34CFR 303.209, 303.414  
                  State:        13A.13.01.08A

### ***B. EIS Providers***

The Garrett County Infants and Toddlers staff shall:

- Participate in the development of the initial IFSP within 45 days from the receipt of the referral for an eligible child and the child's family.
- Implement and conduct periodic and annual reviews of the child's IFSP
- Participate in the ongoing multidisciplinary assessment of the child and family-directed assessment of the resources, priorities and concerns of the family, as it relates to the needs of the child in the development of integrated outcomes for the IFSP.
- Provide early intervention services in accordance with the IFSP; and
- Consult with and train parents and others regarding the provision of the early intervention services being provided to the eligible child.

Authority:    Federal:      34 CFR 303.342  
                  State:        13A.13.01.08B

### ***C. IFSP Services***

The Garrett County Infants and Toddlers Program is required to address all needs of the eligible child and the needs of the family to assist appropriately in the child's development as identified by the IFSP team in one or more of the following areas

- Physical development;
- Cognitive development;
- Communication development
- Social and emotional development; and
- Adaptive development

The IFSP will also include, to the extent practicable a statement of the specific early intervention services based on peer-reviewed research that are necessary to meet the unique needs of the child and the family to achieve the results or outcomes identified, including:

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- The length, duration, frequency, intensity, and method of delivering the early intervention services
- A Statement that early interventions services are provided to the eligible child on a year-round basis in the child's or the services' natural environment to the maximum extent appropriate or a justification as to why an early intervention service will not be provided in the natural environment
- The determination of the appropriate setting for providing an early intervention service, including any justification for not providing services in the natural environment made by the IFSP team consistent with the provisions of the regulation and based on the child's outcomes identified by the IFSP team, the location of the early intervention and the agency fiscally responsible for the service.

To the extent appropriate, the IFSP will also identify any services, including medical, that the child or family needs or is receiving through other sources, but that are neither required nor funded in accordance with Part C. This will include a description of the steps the Service Coordinator or family may take to assist in securing those services if those services are not currently being provided.

The Garrett County Infants and Toddlers Program and ESI providers who have a direct role in the provision of services is responsible for making a good faith effort to assist each eligible child in achieving the outcomes listed in the IFSP. The Garrett County Infants and Toddlers Program and the ESI provider cannot be held accountable if a child does not achieve the growth projected in the child's IFSP. The Garrett County ITP shall ensure that appropriate early intervention services are based on scientifically based research and are available to infants and toddlers with disabilities and their families, including Indian infants and toddlers with disabilities and infants and toddlers who are homeless and their families.

Authority:    Federal:      34 CFR 303.346  
                  State:         13A.13.01.08C

### ***D. Audio Taping IFSP Meetings***

If a parent chooses to audio tape an IFSP meeting for their child to assist the parent in understanding the IFSP process, the parent must notify the IFSP team of their intention to audiotape and the GCPS will simultaneously audio tape the meeting. The audio tape will become a part of the Special Education record for that student.

**Notification to the IEP TEAM for GCPS**

The Garrett County ITP shall inform the PPW of potentially eligible children, two years old or older, who reside in Garrett County. The Garrett County ITP is not required to conduct and evaluation, assessment, or an Initial IFSP team meeting for the toddler referred to the PPW less than 45 days before the toddler's third birthday. With parental consent, the Garrett County ITP shall refer the toddler to the PPW less than 45 days before the toddler's third birthday.

**Transition Procedures**

1. Garrett County Public Schools Infants and Toddler Program shall ensure steps and services are identified to support a toddler's smooth transition to:
  - Preschool special education
  - The Extended IFSP option; or
  - Other appropriate services.
2. Garrett County Public Schools Infants and Toddlers Program shall:
  - Develop transition outcomes on a child's IFSP at the IFSP meeting closest to the child's second birthday, or on the child's initial IFSP, if the child is referred after the child's second birthday; and
  - Convene an IFSP team meeting for transition planning, with the approval of the parents, not less than 90 days but not more than 9 months before the toddler's third birthday, to discuss services the toddler may be eligible to receive.
3. If a toddler with a disability may be eligible for preschool special education services, Garrett County Public Schools Infants and Toddlers Program, with approval of the toddler's family will convene an IFSP team meeting with:
  - The toddler's family;
  - A representative of Garrett County Public Schools Part B Special Education; and
  - The toddler's service coordinator.
4. If Garrett County Public Schools determines that a toddler with a disability is not potentially eligible for preschool special education services, the Garrett County Public Schools, with approval from the toddler's family, shall make reasonable efforts to convene an IFSP team meeting with:
  - The toddler's family;
  - The toddler's service coordinator; and
  - Providers of other appropriate services.
5. The IFSP team meeting may occur less than 90 days before the toddler's third birthday, with clear documentation, if:
  - The toddler is unavailable;
  - The family requests a delay because of other family reasons; or
  - The toddler was referred after 33 months of age.



6. If the IFSP team meeting occurs less than 90 days before the toddler's third birthday, Garrett County Public Schools shall make reasonable attempts to conduct the IFSP team meeting as soon as possible to allow for appropriate transitioning planning.
  7. The IFSP team shall develop a transition plan as part of the child's IFSP that includes:
    - Steps for the toddler with a disability and the toddler's family to exit from the Part C program; and
    - The identification of transition services the toddler or the toddler's family needs.
  8. Garrett County Public Schools shall provide the toddler's parents with:
    - An annual notice; and
    - Information regarding community options and service delivery models if a toddler:
      - Continues to receive early intervention services in accordance with an Extended IFSP; or
      - Begins to receive preschool special education services in accordance with an IEP.
  9. If a toddler with a disability may be eligible for preschool special education services, Garrett County Public Schools will convene an IEP team meeting to determine the child's eligibility for Part B preschool special education services.
  10. The Garrett County Public Schools IEP team meeting shall:
    - Be convened in a timely manner such that eligibility is determined before the toddler's third birthday; and
    - The toddler's service coordinator or other Part C representative as a required team member, to participate in the review of existing data on the child's progress and performance on IFSP outcomes, unless the family requests, in writing, that a Part C representative not participate in the IEP team eligibility meeting.
  11. If a toddler is determined eligible for Part B preschool special education services, and parents wish for their child to receive services, the parents shall provide informed written consent to:
    - Continue early intervention services through an Extended IFSP, including an educational component; or
    - Receive preschool special education services through an IEP as a student with a disability with the IEP in effect on the student's third birthday. The child no longer receive Part C services.
- A. Extended IFSP Option
1. If the parent chooses the Extended IFSP option Garrett County Public Schools will:
    - Acknowledge the parent's choice and their child's eligibility by providing the parent prior written notice; and

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- Ensure that early intervention services identified on a toddler's IFSP includes an educational component that promotes school readiness and incorporates:
    - Preliteracy;
    - Language; and
    - Numeracy skills.
- B. Termination of Extended IFSP Option Services:
1. A parent may choose to terminate participation in early intervention services through an IFSP, at any time after the Extended IFSP Option is chosen, and choose preschool special education services through an IEP.
  2. The parent shall notify Garrett County Public Schools, in writing, of the choice to terminate early intervention services under the Extended IFSP Option.
  3. Garrett County Public Schools Infants and Toddlers Program shall notify the Garrett County Public Schools Part B Special Education of the parent's decision to request preschool special education services through an IEP.
  4. If a child's family chooses to terminate early intervention services under an Extended IFSP and initiate services through an IEP, a redetermination of the toddler's eligibility for special education services is required.
  5. Within 45 days of receiving written notification, Garrett County Public Schools shall convene an IEP meeting to develop an IEP and determine the education placement.
  6. Once a child's parent makes the choice to terminate early intervention services through an Extended IFSP and pursue services through an IEP, through written notification to Garrett County Public Schools Infants and Toddlers Program, the parent cannot continue services through an Extended IFSP beyond the date that IEP services are to begin; or the beginning of the school year following the child's fourth birthday, whichever is sooner.
  7. In order to ensure a seamless delivery of services, Garrett County Public Schools Infants and Toddlers Program will continue to provide early intervention services under an Extended IFSP until the IEP services are to begin or until the beginning of the school year following the child's fourth birthday, whichever occurs sooner.
- C. Transition Planning- Before the Beginning of the School Year Following a Toddler's Fourth Birthday.
1. The Maryland Infants and Toddlers Program, Garrett County Public Schools Infants and Toddlers Program, and public agencies shall ensure a smooth transition of a toddler from Part C EIS to preschool.
  2. Garrett County Public Schools Infants and Toddlers Program shall convene an IFSP team transition planning meeting, with approval of the child's family, to discuss any preschool special education services that the child may receive and other community options.

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3. The IFSP transition planning meeting shall occur not fewer than 90 days, or at the discretion of all parties, not more than 9 months before the toddler will no longer be eligible to receive EIS.
  4. The participants of the IFSP team meeting shall include:
    - The toddler’s service coordinator;
    - The child’s family; and
    - A representative from Garrett County Public Schools Part B Special Education
  5. The IFSP team meeting may be held less than 90 days before the beginning of the school year following the child’s fourth birthday, if there is written documentation that:
    - The child is unavailable because of illness; or
    - The family requests a delay because of other family reasons.
  6. If the IFSP transition planning meeting is held less than 90 days before the beginning of the school year following the child’s fourth birthday, reasonable attempts must be made to conduct the meeting as soon as possible to allow for appropriate transition planning.
  7. Garrett County Public Schools shall convenes an IEP team meeting for the purpose of IEP development before the beginning of the school year following the child’s fourth birthday if the parent wishes to consider preschool special education services.
- D. Preschool IEP services- If the parent chooses to receive preschool special education services through an IEP, Garrett County Public Schools shall:
- Convene an IEP team meeting for the purpose of IEP development;
  - At the request of the family, invite the toddler’s service coordinator or other representatives of Garrett County Public Schools Infants and Toddlers Program to attend the IEP meeting;
  - Develop an IEP, taking into consideration the IFSP; and
  - Consider Extended School Year services for a toddler transitioning to preschool special education services through an IEP whose third birthday falls after the end of one school year and before the beginning of the next school year; and
  - Ensure the IEP is in effect at the beginning of the school year.

## **PROCEDURAL SAFEGUARDS: GENERAL PROVISIONS**

### ***A. Procedural Safeguards***

The Garrett County Infants and Toddlers Program service coordinator shall provide a copy of the Procedural Safeguards, Parental Rights Handbook to the parents of an infant or toddler with a disability with prior written notice.

A receipt from the Procedural Safeguards document will be signed by the parent upon receipt of the document and maintained in the student's special education file at each school. Further documentation exists on the Maryland Online IEP.

Authority: Federal: 34 CFR § 303.421(b)(3)

State: 13A.13.01.10

### ***B. Procedural Safeguards Document Contents***

The contents of the Procedural Safeguards, Parental Rights Handbook include a full explanation of all of the procedural safeguards including:

- Confidentiality of personally identifiable information and early intervention record
- Parental consent and notice
- Surrogate parents
- Dispute resolution options

See Procedural Safeguards document.

Authority: Federal: 34 CFR §303.401-303.417, 34 CFR §303.420-303.422, 34 CFR §303.430-303.434 and 303.440-303.449 303.417

State: 13A.13.01.10

### ***C. Confidentiality of Information***

Garrett County Infants and Toddlers Program ensures the confidentiality of personally identifiable information of all infants and toddlers it serves. Records are kept in a secure locked file cabinet in a locked room. Information is not provided to any individual who does not have the need to know in order to provide services to the child. A release of information is signed by the parent or guardian prior to releasing information to any outside agency or individual.

Authority: Federal: 34 CFR 99, 34 CFR §303.401-303.417

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State: 13A.08.02

### ***D. Opportunity to Examine Records***

The parent of an infant or toddler with a disability shall be given the opportunity to inspect and review their child's early intervention records collected, maintained, or used by the Garrett County Public Schools. Garrett County Policy 474.21.

Authority: Federal: 34 CFR 99, 34 CFR §§303.405  
State: 13A.08.02

### ***E. Copy of Early Intervention Record***

On request, parents are provided with an initial copy of their child's early intervention record at no cost to the parents.

Authority: Federal: 34 CFR § 303.400(c)  
State: 13A.13.01.10

## **PROCEDURAL SAFEGUARDS: PRIOR WRITTEN NOTICE**

### ***A. Provision of Prior Written Notice***

The Garrett County Public Schools Infants and Toddlers Program shall provide written notice to the parent of an infant or toddler with a disability before the program proposes or refuses to initiate or change the identification, evaluation, or placement of their infant or toddler, or the provision of early intervention services to the infant or toddler with a disability and that infant's or toddler's family.

Authority: Federal: 34 CFR § 303.421  
State: 13A.13.01.11

### ***B. Content of Notice***

The notice is in sufficient detail to inform the parent of:

- A description of the action proposed or refused;
- An explanation of why the Garrett County Infants and Toddlers Program proposes or refuses to take the action;

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- The procedural safeguards;
- A description of mediation;
- How to file a State complaint;
- How to file a due process complaint.

Authority: Federal: 34 CFR § 303.431-303.434 and CFR § 303.430(d)  
State: 13A.13.01.11

### ***C. Native Language***

The notice shall be written in language that is understandable to the general public. It must be provided in the native language of the parent, unless it is clearly not feasible to do so. If the native language used by the parent is not a written language, the Garrett County Infants and Toddlers Program shall ensure that the notice is translated orally or by other means to the parent, and the parent understands the content of the notice. The Garrett County Infants and Toddlers Program shall maintain written documentation of the actions taken by the Garrett County Public Schools to meet the requirement.

Authority: Federal: 34 CFR 300.503(c)  
State: 13A.13.01.11

## **PROCEDURAL SAFEGUARDS: CONSENT**

### ***A. Informed Consent***

Consent means the parent has been fully informed of all information relevant to the activity for which consent is sought, in the parent's native language or other mode of communication. The consent also describes that activity and lists the records, if any, that will be released and to whom. The parent understands and agrees in writing to the carrying out of the activity for which their consent is sought and understands that the granting of consent is voluntary on their part and may be revoked at any time. Parents are provided information concerning informed consent at each meeting through the Procedural Safeguards, Parental Rights Handbook.

Authority: Federal: 20 USC 1414(a) (1)  
34 CFR 300.500, 300.505(b)  
State: 13A.05.01.13

### ***B. Consent for Early Intervention Procedures***

Parents must provide informed consent prior to the administration of evaluations

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and assessments and prior to the provision of early intervention services provided to the child with a disability. The service coordinator is responsible for obtaining parent consent for assessment through signatures of parent or guardian. The service coordinator is responsible for obtaining parent consent for initial provision of early intervention services through the signatures of a parent or guardian on the Individualized Family Service Plan and ensures that the initial IFSP is reviewed and approved by the parents and that signed consent is obtained for placement prior to the initial provision of early intervention services to a infant or toddler with a disability. The service coordinator also obtains parental consent if public benefits or insurance or private insurance is used. Parental consent is also obtained prior to the disclosure of personally identifiable information.

Authority: Federal: 34 CFR §303.321, 303.520, and 303.414  
State: 13A.13.01.12

### ***C. Parent Refusal of Consent***

If a parent refuses consent the IFSP team will attempt to resolve the issues and determine the student's needs. If these attempts are unsuccessful the service coordinator will ensure that the parent:

- Is fully aware of the nature of the evaluation and assessment of the child or early intervention services that would be available; and
- Understands that the child will not be able to receive the evaluation, assessment, or early intervention service unless consent is given.

The Garrett county ITP shall not use the due process hearing procedures to challenge a parent's refusal to provide any consent that is required in accordance with regulation. The parents of an infant or toddler with a disability determine whether they, their infant or toddler with a disability, or other family members will accept or decline any early intervention service at any time and may decline a service after first accepting it, without jeopardizing other early intervention services.

Authority: State: 13A.13.01.13

## **PROCEDURAL SAFEGUARDS: SURROGATE PARENTS**

### ***A. Parent Surrogates***

The rights of a student with a suspected or identified disability are protected by an appointment of a parent surrogate when a parent cannot be identified, the

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whereabouts of a parent are unknown, or the student is a ward of the state. Garrett County ITP shall consult with the public agency assigned care of the child for children who are wards of the state or placed in foster care. If a child is a ward of the State, the surrogate parent may be appointed by the judge overseeing the infant's or toddler's case instead of being appointed by GCITP, provided the surrogate parent meets the requirements of the regulations. GC Policy 345.44

Authority: State: 13A.13.01.13  
Education Article 8-412, Annotated Code of Maryland

### ***B. Surrogate Parents***

The Garrett County Public Schools has written procedures for the recruitment, training, assignment, and reimbursement, if necessary, of parent surrogates. The procedures include a method:

- For determining whether a student needs a surrogate parent; and
- For assigning a surrogate parent to the student.

Procedures identify methods used to determine that:

- No parent can be identified;
- The Garrett County Public Schools, after reasonable efforts, cannot discover the whereabouts of a parent; or
- The student is a ward of the State under the laws of the State.

The Garrett County Public Schools shall ensure that a person selected as a surrogate:

- Is not an employee of the SEA, the LEA, or any other agency involved in the education or care of the child;
- Has no personal or professional interest that conflicts with the interest of the child he or she represents; and,
- Has knowledge and skills that ensure adequate representation of the child.
- A person who otherwise qualifies to be a surrogate parent is not an employee of an agency solely because the person is paid by a public agency to be a surrogate parent.

The surrogate parent shall represent the child in all matters relating to:

- The identification, evaluation, and educational placement of the child; and
- The provision of FAPE to the child.

*Garrett County Policy 345.44*

Parent surrogate appointment is made by the GCITP no more than 30 days after it has determined that the child needs a surrogate parent. Written notification includes the name or names of an individual or individuals appropriately qualified



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to fulfill the role of a surrogate parent. The GCITP shall notify the Superintendent of Schools or the Superintendent's designee, in writing, of the surrogate parent appointment not more than 10 days after the appointment. The notification shall include the child's name, the name of the surrogate parent and any other information deemed applicable.

A child entrusted to a surrogate parent shall be represented by the surrogate parent in the early intervention services decision making process. A surrogate parent is not liable to the child entrusted to the surrogate parent or to the parent of that child for any damages that result from acts or omissions constituting ordinary negligence. The immunity does not apply to liability covered by an applicable insurance, to the extent of that coverage or to acts or omissions constituting gross, willful, or wanton negligence.

Authority:

Federal: 20 USC 1415(b)(2)  
34 CFR 300.515  
State: EA §8-412 Annotated Code of Maryland  
[13A.05.02.13E(1-2)] 13A.12.01 (7) (b-c)

## **PROCEDURAL SAFEGUARDS: DISPUTE RESOLUTION**

### ***A. Written Complaints***

The Garrett County Infants and Toddlers Program shall provide parents and other interested parties with information regarding the procedures for filing a complaint. A signed written complaint shall include:

- a statement that the Garrett County Public Schools has violated a federal or State law or regulation regarding the provision of early intervention services to a student with a disability;
- the facts on which the complaint is based; and
- the complaint alleges a violation that occurred not more than one year prior to the date the complaint is received by MDSE.

Documentation is maintained in the Procedural Safeguards, Parental Rights Handbook.

Authority: Federal: 34 CFR § 303.432-303.434

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State: 13A.05.01.15A (1-4)

### ***B. Mediation***

The Garrett County Public Schools encourages the use of mediation by requesting that parents who do not choose to participate in mediation meet with a disinterested party to consider the benefits of mediation.

A parent of an infant or toddler or the Garrett County Public Schools, may request mediation when there is a dispute about any matter related to the identification, evaluation, placement, or the provision of early intervention services to a student. The request for mediation is voluntary on the part of the parties. The request for mediation may not be used to deny or delay a parent's rights to a due process hearing. Either party has the right to be accompanied or advised by counsel. A request for mediation shall be made in writing to the other party and the office of Administrative Hearings. Documentation is maintained in the Procedural Safeguards, Parental Rights Handbook.

The Garrett County Public Schools will ensure that discussions during the mediation process remain confidential and are not used as evidence in any subsequent hearings or civil proceedings. Documentation is maintained in the Procedural Safeguards, Parental Rights Handbook.

The Garrett County Public Schools Supervisor of Special Education will ensure that any settlement reached at mediation is documented with a written mediation agreement and implemented by the Garrett County Public Schools. Documentation is maintained in the Procedural Safeguards, Parental Rights Handbook.

The Garrett County Public Schools Supervisor of Special Education will ensure that any settlement reached at mediation is documented with a written mediation agreement and implemented by the Garrett County Public Schools. Documentation is maintained in the Procedural Safeguards, Parental Rights Handbook.

Authority: Federal: 34 CFR§ 303.440-303.449, 34 CFR §§300.507-300.518

State: 13A.05.01.15B (9)

### ***C. Right to Impartial Due Process Hearing***

A parent of a student or the Garrett County Public Schools shall have the right to initiate a hearing when there is a dispute about the identification, evaluation, educational placement, or the provision of early intervention services to an infant or toddler with a disability. The due process complaint must allege a violation that

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happened not more than 2 years before the parent or the Garrett County Public Schools knew or should have known about the alleged action. Documentation is maintained in the Procedural Safeguards, Parental Rights Handbook.

Authority: Federal: 34 CFR §§303.440-303.449, m34 CFR §§300.507-300.518  
State: 13A.05.01.15C

### ***D. Initiation of Due Process Hearing***

A request to initiate a due process hearing shall be made in writing to the Garrett County Public Schools or to the parents from the Garrett County Public Schools and forwarded to the office of Administrative Hearings. When a party files a due process complaint, the Supervisor of Special Education will inform the parent of free or low cost legal and other relevant services available, provide the parent with a copy of the procedural safeguards, and inform the parent of the availability of mediation. Documentation is maintained in the Procedural Safeguards, Parental Rights Handbook.

Authority: Federal: 34 CFR §§303.440-303.449, m34 CFR §§300.507-300.518  
State: 13A.05.01.15C

### ***E. Placement During Due Process Hearing***

If a parent files a due process complaint to dispute a determination that the child does not meet the criteria for identification as a student with a disability under Part P, the Garrett County Public Schools is not required to provide the child with early intervention services after the child's third birthday during the pendency of the due process hearing.

Authority: State: 13A.13.01.14

### ***F. Decision of a Hearing Officer***

Garrett County Public Schools will comply with the decision of the impartial hearing officer within the timeline specified unless either party obtains a court order granting a stay of the decision.

Authority:  
State: 13A.05.01.15C(21)

## ***G. TRANSITION***

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Garrett County Public Schools Infants and Toddler Program shall ensure steps and services are identified to support a toddler's smooth transition to:

- Preschool special education
- The Extended IFSP option; or
- Other appropriate services.
- 

Garrett County Public Schools Infants and Toddlers Program shall:

- Develop transition outcomes on a child's IFSP at the IFSP meeting closest to the child's second birthday
- Convene an IFSP team meeting for transition planning, with the approval of the parents, not less than 90 days but not more than 9 months before the toddler's third birthday, to discuss services the toddler may be eligible to receive.
- 

If a toddler with a disability may be eligible for preschool special education services, Garrett County Public Schools Infants and Toddlers Program, with approval of the toddler's family will convene an IFSP team meeting with:

- The toddler's family;
- A representative of Garrett County Public Schools Part B Special Education; and
- The Infants and Toddler's service coordinator.

If the Garrett County Public Schools Infants and Toddlers Program determines that a toddler with a disability is not potentially eligible for preschool special education services, the Garrett County Public Schools Infants and Toddlers Program, with approval from the toddler's family, shall make reasonable efforts to convene an IFSP team meeting with:

- The toddler's family;
- The toddler's service coordinator; and
- Providers of other appropriate services.
- 

The IFSP team meeting may occur less than 90 days before the toddler's third birthday, with clear documentation, if:

- The toddler is unavailable;
- The family requests a delay because of other family reasons; or
- The toddler was referred after 33 months of age.
- 

If the IFSP team meeting occurs less than 90 days before the toddler's third birthday, Garrett County Public Schools Infants and Toddlers Program shall make reasonable attempts to conduct the IFSP team meeting as soon as possible to allow

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for appropriate transitioning planning. The IFSP team shall develop a transition plan as part of the child's IFSP that includes:

- Steps for the toddler with a disability and the toddler's family to exit from the Part C program; and
- The identification of transition services the toddler or the toddler's family needs.

Garrett County Public Schools Infants and Toddlers Program shall provide the toddler's parents with:

- An annual notice; and
- Information regarding community options and service delivery models if a toddler:
  - Continues to receive early intervention services in accordance with an Extended IFSP; or
  - Begins to receive preschool special education services in accordance with an IEP.

If a toddler with a disability may be eligible for preschool special education services, Garrett County Public Schools will convene an IEP team meeting to determine the child's eligibility for Part B preschool special education services.

The Garrett County Public Schools IEP team meeting shall:

- Be convened in a timely manner such that eligibility is determined before the toddler's third birthday; and
- The toddler's service coordinator or other Part C representative as a required team member, to participate in the review of existing data on the child's progress and performance on IFSP outcomes, unless the family requests, in writing, that a Part C representative not participate in the IEP team eligibility meeting.

If a toddler is determined eligible for Part B preschool special education services, and parents wish for their child to receive services, the parents shall provide informed written consent to:

- Continue early intervention services through an Extended IFSP, including an educational component; or
- Receive preschool special education services through an IEP as a student with a disability and no longer receive Part C services.
- 

### E. Extended IFSP Option

2. If the parent chooses the Extended IFSP option Garrett County Public Schools will:

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- Acknowledge the parent’s choice and their child’s eligibility by providing the parent prior written notice.; and
- Ensure that early intervention services identified on a toddler’s IFSP includes an educational component that promotes school readiness and incorporates:
  - Preliteracy;
  - Language; and
  - Numeracy skills.

Authority: Federal: 34 CFR 303.209, 303.414, 303.342, 303.344, 303.211  
State: 13A13.01.09

### ***H. Termination of Extended IFSP Option Services:***

- A parent may choose to terminate participation in early intervention services through an IFSP, at any time after the Extended IFSP Option is chose, and choose preschool special education services through an IEP.
- The parent shall notify Garrett County Public Schools, in writing, of the choice to terminate early intervention services under the Extended IFSP Option.
- Garrett County Public Schools Infants and Toddlers Program shall notify the Garrett County Public Schools Part B Special Education of the parent’s decision to request preschool special education services through an IEP.
- If a child’s family chooses to terminate early intervention services under an Extended IFSP and initiate services through an IEP, a redetermination of the toddler’s eligibility for special education services is required.
- Within 45 days of receiving written notification, Garrett County Public Schools shall convene an IEP meeting to develop an IEP and determine the education placement.
- Once a child’s parent makes the choice to terminate early intervention services through an Extended IFSP and pursue services through an IEP, through written notification to Garrett County Public Schools Infants and Toddlers Program, the parent cannot continue services through an Extended IFSP beyond the date that IEP services are to begin; or the beginning of the school year following the child’s fourth birthday, whichever is sooner.
- In order to ensure a seamless delivery of services, Garrett County Public Schools Infants and Toddlers Program will continue to provide early intervention services under an Extended IFSP until the IEP services are to begin or until the beginning of the school year following the child’s fourth birthday, whichever occurs sooner.

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Authority: State: 13A.13.01.09

### ***I. Transition Planning- Before the Beginning of the School Year Following a Toddler's Fourth Birthday.***

- The Maryland Infants and Toddlers Program, Garrett County Public Schools Infants and Toddlers Program, and public agencies shall ensure a smooth transition of a toddler from Part C EIS to preschool.
- Garrett County Public Schools Infants and Toddlers Program shall convene and IFSP team transition planning meeting, with approval of the child's family, to discuss any preschool special education services that the child may receive and other community options.
- The IFSP transition planning meeting shall occur not fewer than 90 days, or at the discretion of all parties, not more than 9 months before the toddler will no longer be eligible to receive EIS.
- The participants of the IFSP team meeting shall include:
  - a) The toddler's service coordinator
  - b) The child's family; and
  - c) A representative from Garrett County Public Schools Part B Special Education
- The IFSP team meeting may be held less than 90 days before the beginning of the school year following the child's fourth birthday, if there is written documentation that:
  - a) The child is unavailable because of illness; or
  - b) The family requests a delay because of other family reasons.
- If the IFSP transition planning meeting is held less than 90 days before the beginning of the school year following the child's fourth birthday, reasonable attempts must be made to conduct the meeting as soon as possible to allow for appropriate transition planning.
- Garrett County Public Schools shall convenes an IEP team meeting for the purpose of IEP development before the beginning of the school year following the child's fourth birthday if the parent wishes to consider preschool special education services.

Authority: Federal: 34 CFR 303.211, 303.243(d), 303.343(a)  
State: 13A.13.01.09E

### ***J. Preschool IEP services***

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If the parent chooses to receive preschool special education services through an IEP, Garrett County Public Schools shall:

- Convene an IEP team meeting for the purpose of IEP development;
- At the request of the family, invite the toddler’s service coordinator or other representatives of Garrett County Public Schools Infants and Toddlers Program to attend the IEP meeting;
- Develop an IEP, taking into consideration the IFSP; and
- Consider Extended School Year services for a toddler transitioning to preschool special education services through an IEP whose third birthday falls after the end of one school year and before the beginning of the next school year; and
- Ensure the IEP is in effect at the beginning of the school year.

Authority:      Federal:      34 CFR 303.323(b), 300.324  
                     State:         13A.13.01.09F



## CHAPTER TWO

### ADMINISTRATION OF SERVICES FOR INFANTS AND TODDLERS AND THEIR FAMILIES

The Garrett County Public Schools is the Local Lead Agency designated to plan and coordinate early intervention services for eligible infants and toddlers and their families who reside in Garrett County.

#### ***A. Interagency Agreement***

1. Garrett County Public Schools has entered into a formal local interagency agreement with local agencies, institutions, organizations and early intervention service providers involved in the local early intervention system. Included in the agreement are:
  - Garrett County Public Schools,
  - Garrett County Health Department,
  - Garrett County Department of Social Services,
  - Garrett County Community Action Committee which operates the Head Start programs.
2. The local interagency agreement includes:
  - Assignment of financial responsibility for early intervention services
  - Procedures for achieving timely resolution of intra-agency and interagency disputes about payments for a given service, or disputes about other matters related to the local early intervention system, including a procedure for notifying the MSDE when local resolution is not possible to make a final determination that is binding upon the agencies involved
  - A mechanism to ensure that services for a child are not delayed or denied because of any dispute between agencies regarding financial or other responsibilities
  - A description of Medical Assistance billing procedures for health related services and service coordination, including the roles of the partner agencies in the interagency agreement
  - Additional components.

#### ***B. Consolidated Local Implementation Grant ( CLIG)***

1. Garrett County Public Schools annually develops and submits a Consolidated Local Implementation Grant for early intervention services

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at the time and in the manner specified by MSDE, including assurances whereby the interagency partners agree to comply with:

- The use of funds requirements, and
- The payor of last resort requirements.

### ***C. Identification and Coordination of Resources***

1. The Garrett County Public Schools provides information related to other funding sources for early intervention services at the time and in the manner specified by MSDE.

### ***D. Public Awareness***

1. Garrett County Public Schools coordinates the development and implementation of a local public awareness program that focuses on the early identification of children who may be eligible to receive early intervention services including:
  - A description of the child find system;
  - A description on how to refer a child younger than three years old for an evaluation or early intervention services;
  - Preparation and dissemination of information to all primary referral sources; and
  - Dissemination of information to parents of toddlers with disabilities of the availability of services not fewer than 90 days prior to the toddler's third birthday.
2. The information required to be prepared and disseminated must include:
  - A description of the availability of early intervention services;
  - A description of the child find system and how to refer a child under the age of three for an evaluation or early intervention services; and
  - A central directory that includes accurate up-to-date information about public and private early intervention services, resources and experts available that provide assistance to infants and toddlers with disabilities eligible under part C and their families; and research and demonstration projects being conducted in the State relating to infants and toddlers with disabilities.

### ***E. Child Find - General***

Garrett County Public Schools has Child Find policies and procedures that can be found in Section II Age 3 to 21 of this Garrett County Special Education Handbook.

All students with disabilities, birth through the end of the school year in which they turn 21 years old, residing in the jurisdiction, including students with

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disabilities attending nonpublic schools, including students attending religiously affiliated schools, regardless of the disability, and who are in need of special education and related services are identified, located, and evaluated. This includes highly mobile students (such as migrant and homeless); and students suspected of being a student with a disability, even though they are advancing from grade to grade.

Any child referred to Child Find and has been determined to be a student with disabilities who is in need of special education services will participate in the same process as those students referred to the IEP team. A special education folder will be kept by the IEP Team Chairperson and will include:

- The names of agency, private school, nonpublic school personnel that participated in the planning and implementation of child activities;
- Description of the nature and extent of their participation;
- Screening instruments; schedules for screening; and follow-up timelines for students suspected of needing special education and related services;

All students with disabilities receiving special education services will be reported on the October Child Count for SSIS and all other evaluative information kept in the Office of Special Education.

The Garrett County Public Schools shall provide for publication, to the general public and personnel at private schools and institutions, at least annually, information about screening, referral and other services, including the address, telephone number and title of the Garrett County Public Schools contact person. Publicity utilizes one print medium and at least one other medium that covers the jurisdiction. This data is kept in the Office of Special Education and is updated annually.

Authority: Federal: 20 U.S.C. 1412(a)(3)(A) and (B), 1412(a)(10)(A)(ii)  
34 CFR 300.125, 300.220, 300.240, 300.400, 300.402  
State: State Plan III/B(3)(e)

G. Screening. Garrett County Public Schools has elected not to adopt written policies and procedures for screening.

### ***F. Comprehensive System of Personnel Development***

Garrett County Public Schools annually develops and coordinates the implementation of a local comprehensive system of personnel development plan which submitted with the Consolidated Local Implementation Grant.

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Authority: Federal: 34 CFR 303.118  
State: 13A.13.02.08H

### ***G. Personnel Standards***

Garrett County Public Schools require personnel providing early intervention services for eligible children and their families to meet appropriate professional requirements established by the MSDE.

Authority: Federal: 34 CFR 303.119  
State: 13A.13.02.08I

### ***H. Data Collection***

The Garrett county Public schools will collect and compile data from all appropriate service providers for preparation of reports required by MSDE. Garrett County Public Schools uses the statewide data system to compile the numbers of eligible children receiving early intervention services and other information required by regulation. The data will be submitted at the time and in the manner specified by MSDE.

Authority: Federal: 34 CFR 303  
State: 13A.13.02.08J

### ***I. Supervision, Monitoring, and Enforcement***

The Garrett County Public Schools will submit financial and other written reports at the time and in the manner specified by MSDE, participate in periodic desk audits and on-site-monitoring visits conducted by the MSDE, and comply with enforcement actions required by MSDE.

Authority: State: 13A.13.02.08K

### ***J. Policy for contracting and otherwise arranging for services***

In accordance with regulation, Garrett County Public Schools ensures that services are provided to all eligible infants, toddlers and their families by utilizing both service providers employed by the public schools and through contracts with outside providers. Contracts are established in accordance with federal and state requirements.

Authority: Federal: 34 CFR 303.121  
State: 13A.13.02.08L

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### ***K. Delivery of Services in a Timely Manner***

The Garrett County Public Schools ensures that services are provided to eligible children and their families in a timely manner, pending the resolution of disputes among service providers.

Authority: State: 13A.13.02.08N

### ***L. Notice of Availability of Programs***

The Garrett County Public Schools notifies parents or guardians of each hearing impaired child of the availability of the education programs offered by the Maryland School for the Deaf.

The Garrett County Public Schools notifies parents or guardians of each blind or visually impaired child, including children with multiple disabilities, of the availability of the education programs offered by the Maryland School for the Blind.

Authority: State: 13A.13.02.08O

### ***M. Local Interagency Coordinating Council***

The Garrett County Public Schools has established a local interagency coordinating council to advise and assist the local lead agency in the development and implementation of policies that constitute the local early intervention system. The Local Interagency Coordinating Council consists of representatives of various Garrett County agencies that may partner with the provision of services to infants, toddlers and their families. The council meets in conjunction with the Special Education Citizen Advisory Committee to ensure input that will enhance all programs from Birth to 21.

Authority: State: 13A.13.02.08P

### ***N. Making Up Missed Therapy Sessions***

Related services as determined by the IEP Team are provided to enable a child to benefit from special education. Related service providers will provide speech and/or language therapy, physical therapy, and occupational therapy in accordance with the student's IEP. All missed therapy sessions will be made up when possible.

Make up sessions will be conducted as close to the missed therapy session as possible. When a therapist knows in advance that a session will be missed, make up sessions can take place prior to the regularly scheduled therapy session.

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Therapists are required to make up therapy sessions missed for the following reasons:

1. Absence of therapist due to illness, meetings, or professional development activities.
2. Absence of child due to field trips, school programs, or other scheduled activities.

While an attempt will be made to make up all missed sessions, therapists are not required to make up therapy sessions missed for the following reasons:

- Student absence.
- Weather related school closings, including delayed opening or early dismissal.
- Scheduled school closings – holidays, staff development, etc.
- Unavailability of preschool child – illness, not at home or assigned location of therapy or parent cancellation.
- Statewide testing.

In the event of a vacancy or extended illness of related service provider, all attempts will be made to hire a substitute through the Garrett County Public Schools substitute procedures or through a temporary contract. If a substitute therapist cannot be secured, the existing therapists will reschedule sessions to include students from the absent therapist's caseload. This will occur only after all possible options have been exhausted in the attempt to secure a substitute.

Authority:           Federal: USDE/OSEP           Letter on Policy re: Missed IEP Services April 19, 1995  
                          State: MSDE                       Memorandum May19, 2009