

**Interagency Agreement between
Northwest Indiana First Steps Cluster**
(11045 Broadway, Ste. F, Crown Point, IN 46307)
And
Porter County Special Education Services
(750 Ransom Rd. Valparaiso, IN 46385)

This agreement is between Northwest Indiana First Steps and Porter County Special Education Services for the period of 1 June 2009 to 31 May 2011.

TRANSITION SERVICES:

This agreement is to clarify procedures and responsibilities of the participating agencies in the transition of children with disabilities / developmental delays from First Steps early intervention program services in Porter County to services under the administration of the Porter County Special Education Services.

I. Transition of Information from Part C agencies to Part B Local Education Agencies:

- A. NWI First Steps Intake / Service Coordinator, representing the child and family enrolled in Early Intervention System for Infant and Toddlers will discuss the electronic transmission of Child Find data (child's name, date of birth, parent contact and school district information) with the parents during procedural safeguards at Intake and before the child reaches 18 months of age.

First Steps will send electronic Child Find data (child's name, date of birth, parent contact and school district information) on any child 18 months of age or older in the system to the public school of record twice a year, generally in April and October.

- B. At least six (6) months prior to the child's third birthday, the provider(s) of early intervention services shall transmit the following information to the local education agency of legal residence, after gaining a written release from the parent to send:

1. The most recent Individualized Family Service Plan (IFSP),
2. All initial evaluation reports,
3. The most recent evaluation reports from any appropriate sources

If the parent declines to give consent, the service coordinator explains continuity of services may not occur and documents parent's refusal. Therefore, no 30 month notice will be sent to the school of legal settlement.

- C. Pursuant to Part C of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), providers of early intervention services shall follow all required procedures in transmitting information regarding children who may be eligible to local education agencies.
- D. The Service Coordinator will submit Exit Reports received from the First Steps providers to the school.

II. Transition Conference:

- A. Providers of early intervention services for infants and toddlers shall convene, with the approval of the family, a transition conference between themselves, the family, Porter County Special Education Services, and any other individuals appointed by the family, at least 90 days before the child is eligible for the preschool program. The school will be sent a written notice of this meeting at the parents request. The purpose of this meeting is to:

1. Review the child's program options for the period from the third birthday through the remainder of the year,
2. Establish a transition plan / timeline using the State Transition Packet
3. Obtain parent consent for evaluations, as appropriate
4. Schedule Case Conference (IEP), if appropriate.

- B. This conference may coincide with the annual IFSP or the periodic IFSP review meetings held at least every six months, if appropriate.

- C. Porter County Special Education Services shall make every effort to attend transition conferences of which they are invited.

III. Evaluation:

- A. The Porter County Special Education Services shall be responsible for reviewing the evaluation data transmitted from agencies providing early intervention services to determine if there is sufficient data to assist in determining the eligibility of a particular child for special education and related services. The Porter county Special Education Services shall utilize this information whenever appropriate to avoid unnecessary reassessments and delays in services.
- B. The Porter County Special Education Services shall be responsible for obtaining evaluation data, if necessary, including:
 - 1. An individually administered, standardized assessment including norm-referenced or criteria-referenced instruments;
 - 2. A developmental and social history;
 - 3. A systematic observation of the child in a daily routine setting or other appropriate setting by an appropriate professional; and,
 - 4. Additional evaluation data specific to the suspected disability
- C. Providers of First Steps early intervention services for infants and toddlers and the Porter County Special Education Services shall have methods in place to ensure that the meeting to develop an appropriate transition plan will take place between 270 and 90 days prior to the child's third birthday in order to have necessary personnel available.
- D. If it is ascertained at the transition meeting or at a later time that additional evaluative data are necessary to establish eligibility for special education, the Porter County Special Education Services shall hold a separate meeting with the child's parent(s) or guardian(s). Information that shall be discussed will include:
 - 1. A description of the child's learning difficulties and the reasons additional evaluation is needed,
 - 2. A description of the evaluation process including proposed assessment techniques and what the tests or evaluation procedures will measure,
 - 3. A timetable for conduction of the education evaluation and the convening of the case conference committee meeting,
 - 4. Other factors relevant to the proposed evaluation, and
 - 5. Written notice of parent rights and procedural safeguards

IV. Case Conference Committee:

- A. The Porter County Special Education Services shall:
 - 1. Convene a case conference committee to discuss the results of the evaluation and determine eligibility for special education and related services.
 - 2. Invite appropriate Early Intervention providers, at the request of the parent, who have served the child to the case conference committee meeting.
- B. The invited providers of early intervention services shall make every effort to attend the case conference committee meetings of which they are invited.
- C. Upon establishing eligibility, the case conference committee shall:
 - 1. Develop an Individualized Education Program (IEP).
- D. The IEP, will specify the child's program on the third birthday. For children who reach age three (3) during the summer, any Extended School Year (ESY) services determined necessary at the initial case conference shall also be included.
- E. All services to an eligible child become the financial responsibility of the Porter County Special Education Services on the child's third birthday.

- F. Providers of early intervention services are responsible for coordinating the transition process for children who are not eligible for Part B preschool services

V. Duration of the Agreement:

In an effort to ensure that this agreement remains effective and current Northwest Indiana First Steps and Porter County Special Education Services will participate in an annual review of this agreement. In the event that any revisions are needed all parties involved will revise and reauthorize this agreement.

Records will be reviewed annually to ensure the percentage of children with a smooth transition by their third birthday steadily increase until reaching and maintaining 100%. The records that will be used for this review will include DOE records as well as First Steps records.

VI. Conflict Resolution:

All identified conflicts will be discussed honestly and openly with all interested parties at the local level. Should the identified issues not be resolved the issue may be brought to each involved parties supervisory level position. If a satisfactory result is still not achieved the issue will be directed to state and/or federal organization for direction.

Clara Mann
Director Northwest Indiana First Steps

Date

Diane Massa
Director Porter County Special Education Services

Date

Jillian Condon
Lead LPCC Coordinator Northwest Indiana First Steps

Date