

West Ada Early Intervention
Early Childhood Special Education Program

PARENT MANUAL

West Ada School District #2
1303 E. Central Drive, Meridian, Idaho 83642
208.855.4500

Philosophy Statement

The West Ada Early Intervention Program believes that young children with significant developmental delays have the right to services and supports that improve their quality of life and maximize their development. The mission of the Early Intervention Program is to offer a diverse range of services for children ages 3 to 5 with developmental delays and disabilities. A comprehensive evaluation process has been designed to determine individual strengths and needs so an appropriate individualized education plan can be developed. The program will focus on developing goals that are considered vital to the child's language, cognitive, physical, emotional, and social development. A plan will be developed to provide for a smooth and successful transition to future settings, such as home, community preschool, kindergarten, and family activities.

Developmental Domains addressed in Early Intervention

Social Skills:	Abilities and characteristics that allow a child to engage in meaningful social interactions with adults, peers, and the environment or community.
Emotional Skills:	Abilities that allow a child to cope with difficulties, express emotions accurately and effectively, and support others in expression of self.
Self-Help/Adaptive Skills:	Behaviors that enable a child to become increasingly more independent in taking care of feeding, dressing, and personal toileting needs.
Cognitive:	Refers to mental development or thinking skills. These skills include both pre-academic facts or concepts (such as color, shape, size, and position) and learning skills (such as ability to solve problems, engage in learning activities, ask questions, and describe ideas).
Fine Motor:	Any small motor dexterity activity, generally with hands, such as stringing beads, using scissors, and writing skills.
Gross Motor:	Any large movement activity that involves arms, legs, trunk balance, and coordination, such as throwing, skipping, climbing and hopping.
Expressive Language:	What we do when we talk. It consists of words, phrases and gestures we use to communicate feelings, ideas and intentions of others.
Receptive Language:	What we do when we listen. How we process the information we hear. It consists of understanding directions, language concepts and questions.
Speech:	The sound pattern of language. Speech is made up of combinations of sounds that form words. Speech development is a gradual process beginning in infancy and continuing through the child's seventh or eighth year.

Important Terms and Positions

Specialists:

ECSE Teacher	Early Childhood Special Education Teacher – Public school teacher who has specialized training and experience in facilitating learning and development of young children with special education needs.
SLP	Speech/Language Pathologist – A person who is qualified to diagnose and treat speech, expressive language, and receptive language disorders and delays.
OT	Occupational Therapist – A person who provides expertise in the area of upper body development (fine motor skills) and sensory integration difficulties.
PT	Physical Therapist – A person who provides expertise in the function of joints and muscles (gross motor skills).
Psychologist	A person who specializes in the identification and intervention for children with behavioral, developmental, social, and emotional needs.

Terms:

IEP	Individualized Education Plan/Program – This is the name of document used to write the educational plan including goals and objectives for your child as well as determine appropriate placement of services being implemented.
Goals	Broad statements that respond to the needs of the child.
Objectives	Tasks or steps your child will need to complete in order to master the goals.
MDT	Multi-disciplinary Team – Members may include the people that assess (test) your child (ECSE Teacher, SLP, OT, PT, School Psychologist) and/or the school nurse, school administrator, and the parents.
LRE	Least Restrictive Environment – The environment where your child can receive education with his or her peers to the maximum extent appropriate.
IDEA	Individuals with Disabilities Education Act – The public law that authorizes the provision of services for your child and safeguards your child's special education rights.

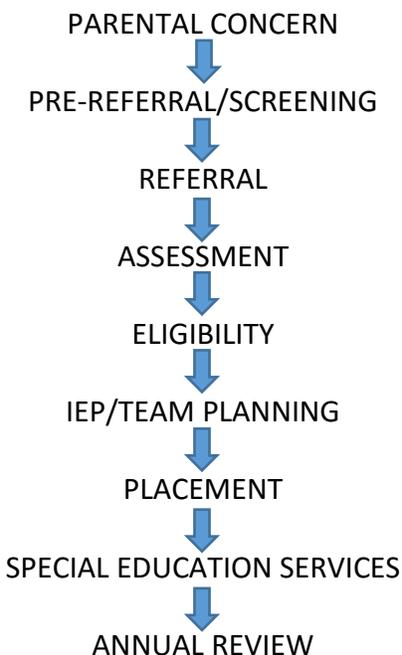
Entrance Procedures

Referral Procedure:

Inquiries and referrals to the Early Childhood Special Education Program may be made through the district's Special Services Office (phone: 208-350-5122). One of the following may apply:

1. Appointments for the district-wide Early Childhood Screening will be arranged through the Special Services Office.
2. Referrals with previous assessments, or a doctor's diagnosis may be made to the Special Services Office.
3. Referrals for children receiving prior services through Part C, Infant/Toddler Program, may be made to the Special Services Office.
4. Referrals may be made to the neighborhood Early Childhood Special Education sites for individual assessments and/or screening when a district-wide screening is not available.

Special Education Process



Screening Process:

Early Childhood Child Find Screenings are scheduled throughout the school year for any child between 3 and 5 years old whose parent(s) have concerns about language, speech, pre-academic, motor, self-help, or social development. Screening tools include the Developmental Indicators for the Assessment of Learning – 4th edition (DIAL-4), which screens communication skills, fine and gross motor skills, concept development, social skills and self-help skills. A vision and hearing screening are available as well. The results of the screening are discussed with parents at the completion of the screening. If concerns are indicated, further testing and evaluation may be set up at one of the Early Intervention sites.

Comprehensive Assessment:

An evaluation team determines what assessments are appropriate for the child's age and areas of concern. The team may include the following: Early Childhood Special Education (ECSE) Teacher, Early Childhood Teacher, School Psychologist, Speech/Language Pathologist, Occupational Therapist, Physical Therapist, Consulting Teacher, School Nurse and/or School Principal/Administrator. Parents are asked to be a part of the evaluation team by supplying information about their child and assisting with decision making.

Determination of Eligibility:

When all assessments are complete, the Multi-disciplinary Team (MDT), which includes the parents, meet to evaluate and discuss the assessment results. Eligibility for the Early Childhood Special Education (ECSE) Program and/or related services is determined using eligibility criteria established under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act of 2004 (IDEA). This federal law mandates that school districts provide services to children who have been determined to have a disability that adversely impacts their ability to access general education opportunities and are in need of specialized instruction.

IEP and Team Planning:

If your child is determined eligible for special education services, an MDT meeting is scheduled with parents and school staff to discuss your child's strengths and needs. A plan called an Individualized Education Plan (IEP) is written stating goals and objectives designed to meet your child's needs. Goals are necessary to help guide those involved in providing services to your child. Choosing goals for your child will involve the various teachers and therapists who will be working closely with you and your child during the coming year. In addition, you will be able to provide valuable insight concerning your child. Your input will help guide the development of IEP goals that will allow your child to develop and strengthen communication, motor, social, self-help, and cognitive skills necessary for school success.

Placement:

After the IEP has been written, the MDT considers the placement options. The school district provides for a continuation of services within the West Ada Early Intervention Program:

- Consultation with parents
- Consultation with community preschools/programs
- Home-based therapies for medical reasons
- District Early Intervention classroom
- District Early Intervention combined with YMCA Guided Discovery program
- Speech therapy services

Federal law mandates that children receive a free, appropriate public education (FAPE) in the least restrictive environment (LRE). Part of “least restrictive environment” is to determine how much service is necessary for your child to make satisfactory progress.

Children who qualify for a district Early Intervention classroom as their least restrictive environment will be placed in a neighborhood school setting. Considerations for the classroom location may include:

- Address of the child – the district is divided into “preschool boundaries” that do not always coincide with neighborhood schools. Boundaries are determined by population mapping, traffic patterns, length of bus rides, and safety of students.
- Daycare address – if your child needs to be picked up and/or dropped off at a daycare, the preschool boundary for that daycare is a consideration if it is within West Ada School District boundaries.
- A.M. or P.M. session – an appropriate session will be determined based on the student’s strengths and needs, as well as the dynamics of all the children in the classroom.
- Make-up of class – classroom sessions are determined so children receive the maximum instruction and intervention according to the needs of the children in the class.
- Number of students – class size is also a consideration when looking at the needs of each student.
- Severity of disability – the MDT will determine placement that is most beneficial for the individual child being considered.
- Related services – if your child’s IEP services include speech therapy, language therapy, occupational therapy, and/or physical therapy, the days and times for related services to be provided are taken into consideration.

Related Services:

Speech and language therapy are related services to special education. Children who qualify for these services will receive individual or group speech/language therapy within the Early Intervention classroom. Services are provided by a Speech/Language Pathologist (SLP) or Speech/Language Pathologist Assistant (SLPA) assigned to that elementary school. In addition, classroom teachers embed language and speech activities into their curriculum to support language and speech development for all children.

Some children qualify for speech (articulation) therapy services only. Children who only qualify for speech therapy services will receive those services in a range of environments, similar to those noted in the “Placement” section above. Depending on the intensity and type of educational speech your child requires will depend on the placement of those speech only services.

Occupational Therapy (OT) and Physical Therapy (PT) are also related services. Children attending the Early Intervention classroom, who qualify to receive OT and/or PT services, will receive those services during their classroom time. OT/PT services are provided by a licensed therapist. Weekly therapy may be implemented by a Certified Occupational Therapist Assistant (COTA) or another trained individual. Classroom teachers also incorporate fine and gross motor activities in their program to enhance motor development.

Annual Review:

The IDEA mandates that the MDT must be reconvened on a yearly basis to review and revise the child's IEP. Student performance outcomes are individually determined and based on developmental growth. IEP goals and objectives are monitored weekly, monthly, and/or annually with progress reported to parents three times per school year. If the child continues to demonstrate a need for services, he or she may be recommended to continue receiving special education services.

Children who reach six years of age prior to September 1st of the current school year and children who do not meet IDEA eligibility criteria are no longer eligible for the Early Childhood Special Education program.

Children who are kindergarten age will be transitioned to the appropriate elementary school, with special education services if needed, in the spring prior to their kindergarten year.

Procedural Safeguards:

Procedural safeguards (legal protection) are afforded to parents and children under IDEA. A full explanation of your rights is provided in the "Procedural Safeguards Statement" available from any special education teacher or from West Ada School District #2 Special Services. Parents are provided a copy of the "Procedural Safeguards Statement" when a referral for a special education evaluation is made and at every annual review thereafter.

Parent Involvement

You are your child's best advocate! Being an advocate means acting in support of the child and having his/her best interest as a goal. To be an effective advocate, know your child's rights and your rights as parents. Try to attend all meetings concerning your child. Be active, alert and interested. Learn all you can about your child's delay. Feel free to ask the Early Intervention staff for information.

To make your child's education more effective you have a responsibility to work with your school staff. The following suggestions might be helpful:

1. Develop a partnership with the school. Share with the school information about your child's abilities and behavior as well as concerns you may have about your child's education.
2. If any part of your child's education is unclear to you, ask that it be explained. Educational terms can be confusing so don't hesitate to ask.
3. Understand the plan described in your child's Individualized Education Program (IEP) before signing it. Ask yourself if what is planned is what your child needs.
4. Check your child's progress. If your child is not progressing, discuss it with the teacher.
5. Discuss with your child's teacher any problems that may occur. It is best to solve these problems directly.
6. Start a file on your child. Keep all educational records in the file plus records of meetings and phone conversations you want to remember.

General Information: Early Intervention Classroom

Program Description:

The West Ada Early Intervention classroom runs Monday through Thursday. The morning session is from 9:10 to 12:05 on Monday, Tuesday, and Thursday. Wednesday morning is a late start at 9:25 to 12:15 to allow for district-wide teacher collaboration. The afternoon session is from 1:00 to 3:55 on Monday, Tuesday, and Thursday with Wednesday being 1:05 to 3:55. The class time includes those related services agreed upon in the IEP. Three-, four- and five-year old children have short attention spans and often times poor physical stamina. Because of this and other factors, the amount of time a child spends in the classroom will be planned carefully by the MDT.

Each day may include:

Arrival

Large and Small Group Times

- Language activities
- Social activities
- Fine motor activities
- Cognitive activities

Free Choice Time

- Block play
- Housekeeping/dramatic play
- Manipulatives/puzzles
- Art activities
- Sand or water play
- Reading activities
- Computer activities

Snack

Outside Play/Gross Motor Time

Departure

Birth Certificate:

Parents must provide an office **certified copy** of their child's birth certificate as part of the registration process. The school secretary will verify the birth certificate information, make a copy of the birth certificate for school records and return the certified copy to the parent.

Immunizations and Health Record:

In order to protect students against a number of childhood diseases, Idaho law requires that all children admitted to public school be immunized. Children must have their completed record of immunizations before school registration and special education services can begin. The school nurse will determine if the minimal requirement for immunization is met.

Attendance:

Regular attendance is vital to the progress of each child. Cooperation and support are needed in keeping the child's attendance consistent. Please make every effort to send your child each day he/she is healthy. If your child is ill and unable to attend school, or will be absent for any reason, please call your child's school and busing.

Transportation:

Transportation for children who qualify to attend the Early Intervention classroom is provided by the school district. The bus ride is one of the most exciting things about getting to come to preschool. To help make it both a safe experience as well as a learning experience for your child, please note the following:

Pick up/drop off location:

- In general, students will be picked up and dropped off at curbside in front of their residence. If the residence is on a dead-end or private street, it may be necessary for the parent/guardian to walk with the child to and from a nearby corner for pick up and drop off.

Supervision at the bus stop:

- It will be necessary for a parent, guardian, or designated responsible person to supervise the student until the bus arrives. As with all bus students, the district requires the student to be at the bus stop at least five minutes before the bus is scheduled to arrive for pick up. A responsible adult should also be at the bus stop approximately five minutes before the student is scheduled to be dropped off.

Seating on the bus:

- The size, weight, and development of the students require special seating considerations. Seating options will be considered individually depending on the child's individual needs. For most students a modified lap-belt will be the first option, as it provides upper torso support, positions the child upright in the seat, and is considered safer than a regular seat belt for the young students. For students who require more safety precautions, a built-in three-point harness restraint is also available. Students will be seated near the front of the bus in order for the bus attendant and driver to provide additional supervision.

Illness:

Please do not send your child to preschool if he/she had a fever within the last 24 hours; has a contagious disease; has a sore throat; has a deep hacking cough; has severe congestion; is vomiting; has diarrhea; is in the first 2 days of a common cold; feels too unwell to participate in the usual daily routine.

If illness occurs at school, your child will be sent to the school nurse and the family will be called to pick up the child.

Medications that need to be administered at school must be in the original prescription bottles from the pharmacy and given to the school nurse.

Children's Clothing:

Be sure that your child's clothing:

- Is comfortable and washable
- Allows for self-dressing
- Is marked with the child's name
- Is appropriate for arts and crafts
- Is appropriate for outside play in a variety of weather conditions

Each child needs to have an extra change of clothing in their backpack (or stored in their cubby at school) each day in case of an accident at school. Please place clothing in a plastic bag and clearly mark with the child's name. For those still in diapers, please provide disposable diapers/pull-ups and wipes.

Snacks:

Children should be fed breakfast or lunch at home before being sent to school. A small snack will be served both morning and afternoon sessions of class. Parents may be asked to provide snack for the class approximately one time per month. If you are unable to provide a snack for the class, for whatever reason, please inform the teacher. Please be sure to notify the teacher if your child has any specific food allergies.

Discipline:

Your child's teacher takes a pro-active approach to discipline in your classroom. Listed below are some of the strategies to stop behavior problems from ever developing:

- Clear, consistent classroom rules
- Consistent expectations for daily routines and activities
- Redirecting – helping a child make appropriate choices
- Communication – helping a child communicate with his classmates to solve problems

Collaboration with the YMCA Guided Discovery Program, embedded in our Early Intervention classrooms

Some of our early intervention classrooms throughout the West Ada School District are combined with the YMCA Guided Discovery Program. The purpose of this combination classroom is to integrate typical peers with our students with special needs. This classroom contains our own early intervention students and up to 8 YMCA peers who will also benefit from a general education preschool curriculum. The YMCA teacher is trained in the Guided Discovery curriculum and co-teaches with the Early Childhood Special Education Teacher and the assistants. We are thankful to have the opportunity to combine with the YMCA for this beneficial program. For information about registering your child for one of the YMCA Guided Discovery Programs as a typical peer model, contact Maria Quintago at 208-559-3379.

Early Intervention Program Locations

Elementary Site	Address & Phone	Phone & Fax Numbers
Chaparral Elementary	1155 Deer Creek Lane Meridian, ID 83642	Phone: (208) 350-4180 Fax: (208) 350-4189
Desert Sage Elementary	9325 W. Mossywood Drive Boise, ID 83709	Phone: (208) 350-4020 Fax: (208) 350-4039
Discovery Elementary	2100 E. Leigh Field Drive Meridian, ID 83646	Phone: (208) 855-4090 Fax: (208) 855-4096
Frontier Elementary	11851 Musket Drive Boise, ID 83713	Phone: (208) 350-4190 Fax: (208) 350-4199
Hillsdale Elementary	5225 S. Stockenham Way Meridian, ID 83642	Phone: (208) 350-4432 Fax: (208) 350-4442
Meridian Elementary	1035 NW 1 st Street Meridian, ID 83642	Phone: (208) 855-4335 Fax: (208) 855-4344
Seven Oaks Elementary	1441 Sevenoaks Way Eagle, ID 83616	Phone: (208) 350-4095 Fax: (208) 350-4104
Spalding Elementary	12311 W. Braddock Drive Boise, ID 83709	Phone: (208) 350-4305 Fax: (208) 350-4314
Willow Creek Elementary	6195 N. Long Lake Way Meridian, ID 83646	Phone: (208) 350-4410 Fax: (208) 350-4419