

Date: Fall, 2002 M E M O R A N D U M

TO: Prekindergarten Program Administrators
Prekindergarten Contact Persons
Early Childhood Special Education Coordinators
Directors of Special Education
Child and Family Connections Offices

FROM: Kay Henderson
Division Administrator
Early Childhood

SUBJECT: Dual Eligibility of Children in the Prekindergarten Program for Children at Risk of Academic Failure and Preschool Special Education

The enclosed document represents the Illinois State Board of Education's position regarding dual eligibility of children in the Prekindergarten Program for Children at Risk of Academic Failure and Preschool Special Education.

Please refer to this document when determining placement for young children who are eligible for Prekindergarten and/or Early Childhood Special Education services.

If you have questions, please contact the Early Childhood Division office at 217/524-4835.

Enclosure (1)

DUAL ELIGIBILITY OF CHILDREN IN THE PREKINDERGARTEN PROGRAM FOR CHILDREN AT RISK OF ACADEMIC FAILURE AND PRESCHOOL SPECIAL EDUCATION

In order to qualify for dual eligibility, a student must be:

Determined eligible for the Prekindergarten program, based on eligibility criteria for that program (including age eligibility) established by the district or state law, and approved by ISBE. Eligibility criteria must be nondiscriminatory and equally applied to all children who are screened for eligibility, and;

Determined eligible for special education services, including the development of an Individualized Education Plan (IEP) which specified the placement of the child in the Least Restrictive Environment (LRE). The IEP must be developed according to the procedures specified under IDEA, and include the participation of all individuals required by IDEA guidelines.

When dual eligibility has been established according to the above procedures, the child must be placed in the Prekindergarten class using nondiscriminatory, consistently applied procedures with the child not being given preferential treatment for admission. The dually eligible child must continue to receive special education services in the least

restrictive environment per the IEP during the period he/she awaits placement in the Prekindergarten classroom.

The placement of a dually eligible student in the Prekindergarten classroom shall not alter the provision of educational services to other children in the classroom. In instances where the Prekindergarten teacher and teaching assistant are the only adults in the classroom, the total number of children in the classroom may not exceed 20, When a team teaching model is utilized, the adult/child ratios are as follows:

Prekindergarten: 1 adult/10 children

Early Childhood Special Education: 1 adult/5 children

In either model, the program's approved curriculum will be adapted and modified according to each child's IEP. Any special education services indicated on the student's IEP shall be provided with special education funds, rather than through the Prekindergarten.