

Illinois State Board of Education (ISBE)

Early Childhood Outcomes (ECO) System Frequently Asked Questions and Answers

- The ECO Decision Tree must be used when determining entry and exit ratings for all children receiving Early Childhood Special Education (ECSE)/Individualized Education Program (IEP) services.
https://www.isbe.net/Documents/early_childhood_decision_tree.pdf
 - ECO Decision Tree app can be found at <http://ec-ecotool.com/>
- Resources for training and information on ECO can be found at <https://www.isbe.net/Pages/Early-Childhood-Outcomes-System.aspx>

I: ENTRY RATINGS

- 1) How should families be involved in the ECO process?
 - Family involvement is crucial to determination of accurate entry and progress ratings. Information and resources for involving families are located on the ECO Center webpage at <http://ectacenter.org/eco/pages/families.asp>
- 2) When the district does the entry outcome ratings, are we required to hold a meeting?
 - ECO ratings must be determined in the three outcome areas upon entry and annually thereafter. The rating process is a team process involving 2 or more individuals who know or have information on the child. Therefore, yes, there should be a meeting at every entry and at every annual progress rating.
- 3) How soon after a child is enrolled in ECSE/IEP services should ECO entry data be compiled?
 - In order to capture the most progress, data should be compiled as close to entry as possible. Although there are 45 calendar days (when school is in session) allowed to reach consensus on the summary rating, this can be completed earlier if assessment and observation data are adequate.
- 4) Should staff wait until the child is in programming for 45 days before coming to consensus?

- Although there are 45 calendar days (when school is in session) allowed to reach consensus on the summary rating, this can be completed earlier if assessment and observation data are adequate. This includes early intervention reports, other assessments, family and caregiver input and observation.
- 5) Are the 0-3 programs responsible for completing exit ratings which may be used (or considered) as 3-5 entry ratings?**
- Children receiving services through Part C (early Intervention) will receive exit ratings as they approach the third birthday. Exit information from Part C can be used as one source of entry information to Part B services to supplement entry assessment information.
- 6) Are summer months counted in the 45 day entry rating timeline?**
- If the initial IEP is written 45 days prior to the end of the school year, the team should determine an entry rating by the end of the school year.
- 7) Can the entry rating be completed at the eligibility meeting if the child has not yet turned three but will be receiving special education services at age 3 (usually two to three weeks after the eligibility meeting)? Can this rating be dated the eligibility meeting date and entered in at that time or should it be entered once the child is enrolled, using the eligibility meeting date?**
- An error message will appear if the date of the ECO ratings is earlier than the child's third birthday. The rating can be determined at the eligibility meeting, but should not be entered until the third birthday.
- 8) If a child will be in the program less than 6 months, should entry ratings be determined?**
- Yes. All students receiving ECSE/IEP services must have entry ratings determined, regardless of how long they will be attending the program.
- 9) Are child outcome ratings required for preschool aged children who receive special education services through an Individualized Service Plan (ISP)?**
- No. The Office of Special Education Programs (OSEP) requires that states provide data on all three outcomes for every child with an IEP.

10)What about children with an IEP for speech services only? Are all three outcome areas assessed even though they only attend for speech services?

- Yes. OSEP requires that states provide data on all three outcomes for every child. Data are required for all outcomes even if there are no concerns about a child's development or if the child only has delays in one or two outcome areas. This includes children receiving only a single service such as speech therapy.

11)Is ECO information required for children receiving home/hospital instruction?

- Yes, if the children have an IEP.

12)When children are referred or identified and found eligible mid spring before their kindergarten year, should entry and progress ratings be done or just the entry?

- There must be an entry rating. A progress rating is not required but may be done to capture growth while the student was receiving ECSE/IEP services.

13)If a student was found eligible and the entry rating was determined at the eligibility meeting, but the student never begins attending school, does the rating get entered?

- If the student does not enroll and begin school, the entry rating does not need to be entered.

14)Do not enter the entry rating until the student begins school. Will the Outcomes Summary Form be housed with the IEP in the child's temporary file?

- Yes. A paper copy should be placed in the child's temporary file.

II: PROGRESS RATINGS

15)If a child's rating is the same from entry to progress or from progress to progress, can the answer to the "made progress" question be "yes?"

- If a child has demonstrated growth of skills in the specific outcome area but remained at the same rating, the answer to the question of "made

progress” would be “yes.” Even if a child has a degenerative disease but did make some type of growth in a specific outcome area the answer would be also “yes.” If the child has lost skills the answer would be “no.” Only in rare circumstances will a child show no progress. See [this document](#) for possible and impossible rating combinations.

16) Can more than one progress rating be entered each year?

- Yes, you may enter progress ratings at any time in the Student Information System (SIS), but must have a rating completed between February 1 and July 31.

17) Under what circumstances would progress ratings be required for a child leaving ECSE/IEP services?

- A progress rating must be completed within the last six months of enrollment in ECSE/IEP services.

18) Does there need to be 6 months between the initial entry rating and the first progress rating?

- No, you can do a progress rating any time after the entry rating. There must be one progress rating between February 1 and July 31.

19) For the children entering in the spring, can the progress rating be done at their annual review the following school year?

- Progress ratings may be completed anytime between February 1 and July 31 of the following year. The rating determination could be completed at the annual review or not, however, determination of the rating must be a team process.

20) Can a rating be completed at an annual review that takes place in the fall and not complete another rating in the spring?

- No, a progress rating must be completed between February 1 and July 31.

21) For children receiving ECSE/IEP services under an IEP and who turn six during the school year, are the progress ratings determined once they turn six, or at the end of the school year?

- The progress ratings should be completed as close as possible, and not later than, the sixth birthday.

22) My student vendor system automatically marks the “made progress” question to “no.” What do I do?

- Review what the answer to the question should be and change the box to the correct answer. Discuss with the data entry person they may see this.

23)When the district does the progress outcome rating, is a meeting required?

- ECO ratings must be determined in the three outcome areas upon entry and annually thereafter. The rating process is a team process involving two or more individuals who know or have information on the child. Therefore, yes, there should be a meeting at every entry and at every progress rating annually, but does not need to be an annual review.

III: TRANSFER/ENROLLMENT

24)For children who transfer into the district, can SIS be used to determine if they are already in the system?

- Yes. Log into SIS and click on Search SID (Student ID).

25)What is the procedure for completing progress ratings when a child has been receiving ECSE/IEP services at another district, the family moves into our district, and then leaves our district with less than 6 months in our program?

- Rate the child as accurately as you can with the information you have and information from the previous district if it is available.

26)If a child moves to another district, should progress ratings be completed?

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- A progress rating is not necessary if a child moves to another district with less than 6 months in the current district. If a child has been receiving special education services for more than 6 months, progress ratings are required. Forward records (with parent consent) to the new school district,

which would then be responsible for the completion of future progress ratings at the appropriate times.

27) If a child moves out of state, should progress ratings be completed?

- A progress rating is not necessary if a child moves to another state with less than 6 months in the current district. If a child has been receiving special education services for more than 6 months, progress ratings are required.

28) If a child exits from ECSE/IEP after 6 months and entry and progress data have been collected, then the child is re-enrolled several months later, would the original entry data be counted as the entry date, or would new entry and progress assessments need to be conducted?

- Original entry data could be used, however; new entry and progress information would be more accurate and useful in determining child progress and for program improvement purposes.

29) When a child's enrollment is exited from SIS, does this automatically exit the child from ECO or do we do this separately?

- Exiting a student's enrollment in SIS and providing progress ratings in ECO are two separate actions. SIS will not allow you to exit the student if a progress rating is more than six months old.

IV: OTHER QUESTIONS

30) The ECO Summary Form only allows one assessment option even though it is possible to have different assessments for entry and progress. Should this be addressed?

- Reporting the primary assessment tool is only required when reporting progress ratings, therefore the primary assessment used to determine the progress ratings should be chosen.

31) Should a speech pathologist that works with children with IEPs for speech only use the ASQ?

- The speech pathologist must use ASQ for progress ratings if no other approved assessment is being used.

32)What if a district uses an assessment not on the primary assessment list? What can be used for primary assessment?

- An assessment tool from the list of primary assessments must be used as a primary source of information for progress ratings, however, knowledge about a child can be supplemented with information from other assessments. The ASQ can only be used for children with IEPs for speech only, and not for students with identified delays in any other areas.

33)I am receiving an error code in SIS when I try to upload my outcome data. Why is this?

- Impossible combinations trigger an error message. These combinations can be found using this [document](#). Additional errors you may see include that an entry rating must take place prior to a progress rating, and a progress rating must have occurred within six months of exiting a student.

34)I would like to make sure my staff is trained in early childhood outcomes. Where can I find information on this?

- Regional STAR NETs offer trainings on early childhood outcomes. There are also training videos that can be accessed through ISBE's [early childhood outcome webpage](#).

Please direct questions to:

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