

## Illinois State Board of Education

### Early Childhood Outcomes 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. A [Decision Tree app website](#) and app downloads for [Apple](#) and [Android](#) also available for use.
- Resources for training and information on Early Childhood Outcomes (ECO) can be found on [the ISBE Indicator 7: Early Childhood Outcomes webpage](#).

#### 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. Families should be a part of the rating determination.

##### 2) Is a meeting required when the district does the entry outcome ratings?

- 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.

##### 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. There are 45 calendar days (when school is in session) allowed to reach consensus on the summary rating, but this can be completed earlier if assessment and observation data are adequate. Early intervention reports, other assessments, family and caregiver input, and observation may be used to help determine ratings.

##### 4) Are the 0-3 programs responsible for completing exit ratings that 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/school district services to supplement entry assessment information.

**5) 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.

**6) Can the entry rating be completed and entered at the eligibility meeting if the child has not yet turned 3?**

- 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.

**7) Should entry ratings be determined if a child will be in the program less than six months?**

- Yes. All students receiving ECSE/IEP services must have entry ratings determined, regardless of how long they will be attending the program.

**8) Are child outcome ratings required for preschool-aged children who receive special education services through an Individualized Service Plan?**

- No. The Office of Special Education Programs (OSEP) requires that states provide data on all three outcomes for every child with an IEP only.

**9) Are outcome ratings required for children with an IEP for speech services only?**

- Yes. OSEP requires that states provide data on all three outcomes for every child with an IEP. 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.

**10) Is ECO information required for a child receiving home/hospital instruction?**

- Yes, if the child has an IEP.

**11)** 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.

**12)** Where should the Outcomes Summary Form be filed?

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

**13)** When do I enter the entry rating if a student participates in Early Intervention/Extended Service option?

- Enter the rating when the student enrolls in school.

**14)** If a child exits from ECSE/IEP after six months and entry and progress data have been collected, then the child is re-enrolled several months later, is a new entry rating required?

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

## **II: PROGRESS RATINGS**

**15)** When are progress ratings required?

- A progress rating is required annually for every early childhood student with an IEP between February 1 and July 31. A progress rating is also required within six months of the child exiting the program.

**16)** 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" because the child would have to make progress to remain at the same rating. 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.

**17)** 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 the requirement is to have a rating completed between February 1 and July 31.

**18)** 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.

**19)** Must there be six months between the initial entry rating and the first progress rating?

- No. A progress rating may be completed any time after the entry rating. There must be one progress rating between February 1 and July 31.

**20)** Can the progress rating for children entering in the spring 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.

**21)** Is a progress rating required when a child enrolls in early childhood special education between February 1 and July 31?

- An entry rating is required only in the year of enrollment. A progress rating is not required but may be done to capture growth while the student was receiving ECSE/IEP services.

**22)** Can a rating be completed at an annual review that takes place in the fall and then no rating be completed in the spring?

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

**23)** When is the progress rating completed for a child receiving ECSE/IEP services under an IEP and who turns 6 during the school year?

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

**24)** 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 who may see this.

**25)** My SIS dashboard shows a student without an IEP is missing a progress rating. What do I do?

- Only students with an IEP require a progress rating. The student was possibly marked in error as being eligible for Individuals with Disabilities Education Act services at some point during the year. An erroneous progress rating needs to be entered.

### **III: TRANSFER/ENROLLMENT**

**26)** Can SIS be used to determine if children who transfer into the district are already in the system?

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

**27)** What is the procedure for completing progress ratings when a child has been receiving ECSE/IEP services at another district then enrolls in a new district for only a short period of time?

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

**28)** Should progress ratings be completed if a child moves to another district or state?

- A progress rating must be entered within six months of exit.

### **IV: OTHER QUESTIONS**

**29)** The ECO Summary Form only allows specific assessment tools. What if I used a different assessment for eligibility purposes?

- Reporting the primary assessment tool is only required when reporting progress ratings. Other tools the IEP team deems appropriate may be used for eligibility purposes.

**30)** Should a speech pathologist who works with children with IEPs for speech only use the Ages and Stages Questionnaire (ASQ)?

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

**31)** 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 only can be used for children with IEPs for speech only and not for students with identified delays in any other areas.

**32)** 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.

**33)** If ratings are required only annually between February 1 and July 31, why does my Early Childhood Outcomes report state “progress rating older than 6 months”?

- This is a warning message that if the child leaves the program, an updated progress rating is needed before the child can be exited from the system since a progress rating is required within six months of exit.

**34)** Where can providers receive training for Early Childhood Outcomes?

- Early CHOICES has [an outcomes module](#) that provides training on Early Childhood Outcomes. STAR NET Region 2 has a [recorded webinar](#). There are also training videos that can be accessed through ISBE’s [Early Childhood Outcome webpage](#).

**Please direct questions to:**

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