

MAINE DEPARTMENT
OF EDUCATION

Early Childhood Special Education in SAUs: Creating Opportunities that Positively Affect Child Development

August 13, 2025

Presented by: Early Childhood Special Education Team



Early Childhood Education for Children Ages 3-5

What we hope for all children:

- Access to high-quality learning opportunities no matter where they live
- Participation in activities that support development
- Engagement that results in learning

Across the nation, childcare varies in:

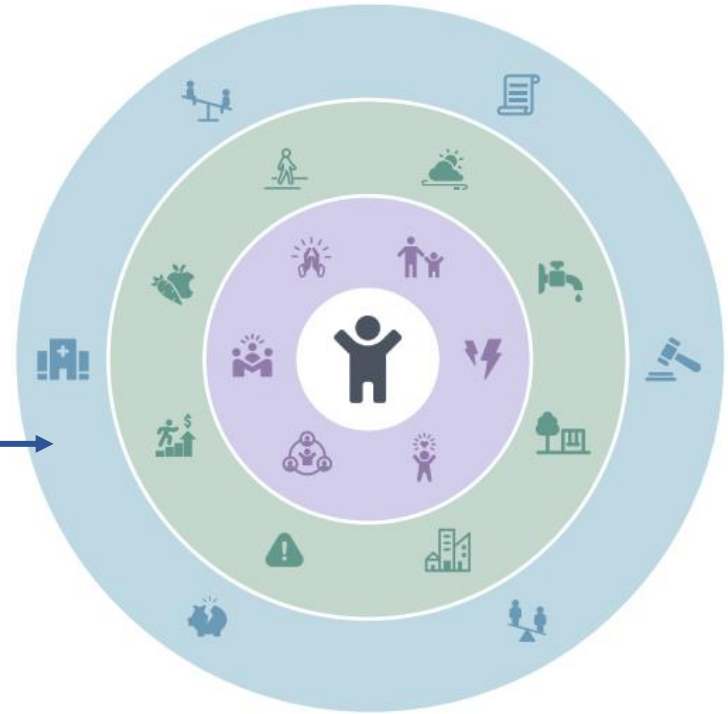
- Availability
- Quality
- Results



Factors Affecting Development

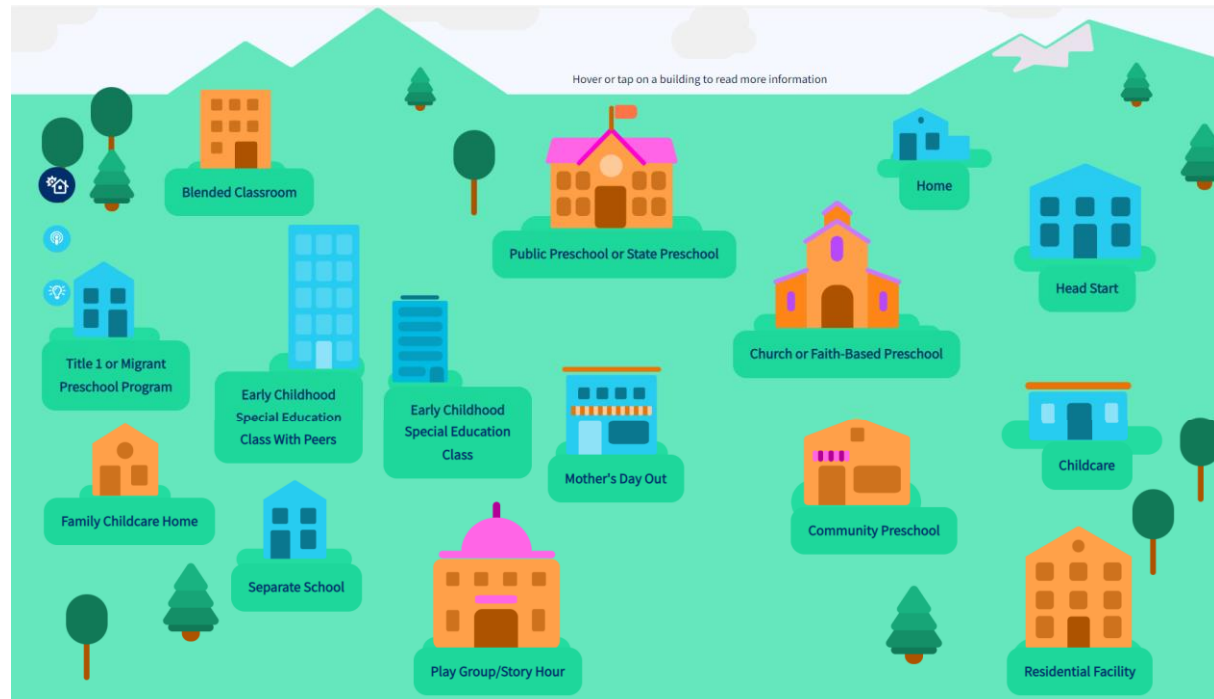
For all children, and preschool children with disabilities, critical brain development is affected by the:

- Social Environment
- Established Community Programs
- Systemic Influences

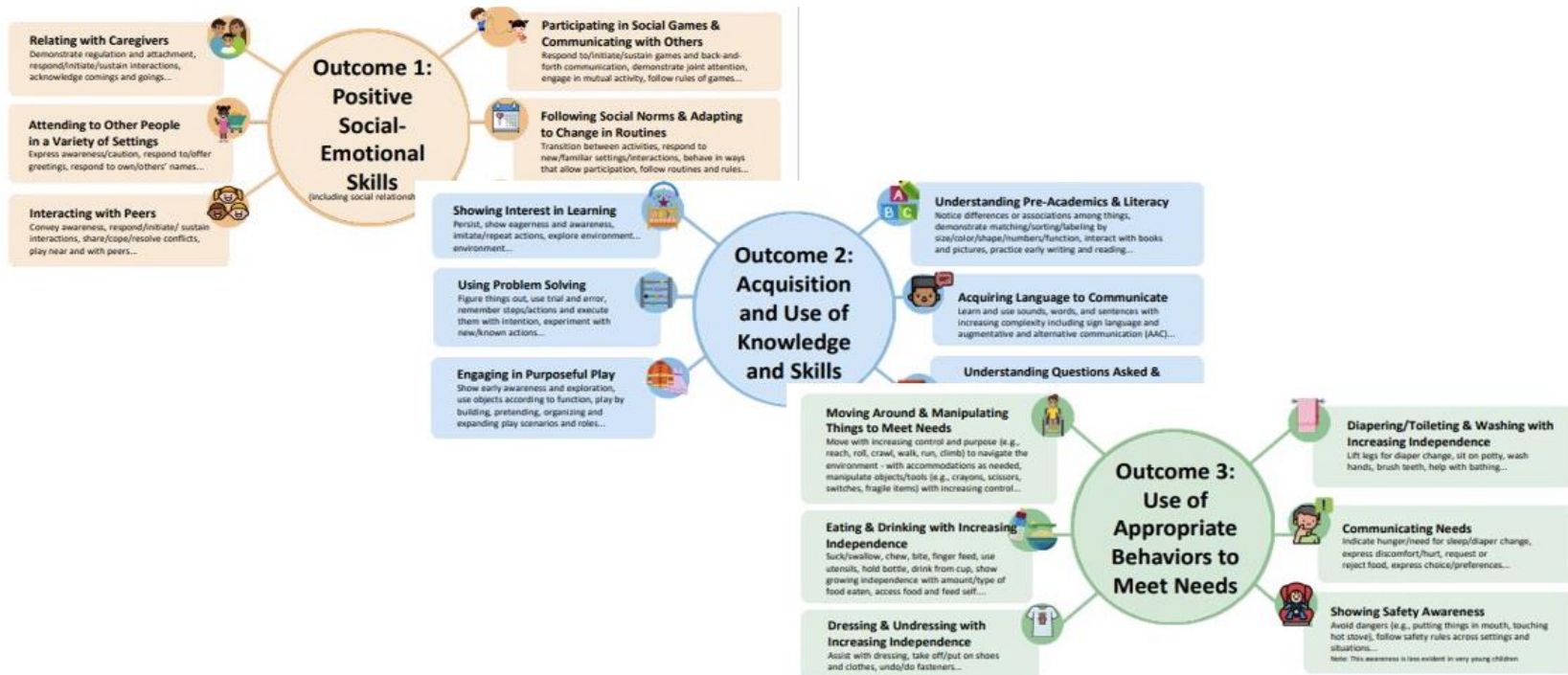


Types of Learning Environments: Mixed Delivery System

- A variety of settings can support the delivery of Specially Designed Instruction (SDI) in the least restrictive setting for the child.
- A Regular Early Childhood Program is the least restrictive—the majority of children in the class are non-disabled



Measuring Children's Progress: The Child Outcomes Summary Process (COS)



Let's collaborate to achieve our goals.

- Supporting children and families to access quality programming
- Offering programs tailored to individual children's needs
- Selecting and using effective evidence-based practices
- Strengthening the special education and early intervention workforce



Web-Based Supports Available

Cohort Recordings

- Includes all topics from last year's sessions

Newsroom | Event Calendar | Newsletters | Contact Us | Language Assistance

Search Maine DOE Webs

Home → Early Childhood Special Education - Cohort Meetings → Early Childhood Special Education - Cohort Meetings

Early Childhood Special Education - Cohort Meetings

Resources, Tools, Notices, and Professional Development Shared with School Administrative Units to Offer Free Appropriate Public Education (FAPE) in Early Childhood Settings

Date	Topic	Recording Link	Agenda/Notes/Files
5-15-2024	Updates to Public Law 643, Readiness Self-Assessment, Approaches to Communication	YouTube	• Cohort 1 Meeting Agenda
5-29-2024	Preschool Special Education Program Fund, Business Manager Focused Q&A	YouTube	• Cohort 1 Meeting Agenda
6/12/2024	FAPE Obligation, Summer Referrals, Transition Notifications, Funding Codes	YouTube	• Cohort 1 Meeting Agenda
7/17/2024	Pathways program, Certification, Fiscal Update	YouTube	• 2024 Pathways Project FAQs • Preschool Special Education Fund
7/31/2024	Child Find Process, Revolving Renovation Fund	YouTube	• Cohort 1 Meeting Agenda

Technical Assistance

- Topic-specific technical assistance documents

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Home → Office of Special Services & Inclusive Education → Personnel Development in Early Childhood Special Education → Personnel Development in Early Childhood Special Education

Personnel Development in Early Childhood Special Education

Cohort 1: Programmatic Tools and Resources to Support Preschool Children with Disabilities in the Mixed Delivery System

- Special Educator Certification, Licensure, Endorsements
- General Education Teacher Certification and Qualification Requirements in Inclusive Settings
- Roles and Responsibilities of Early Childhood Special Education Practitioners
- Practitioner Recruitment and Retention
- Child Find in Early Childhood
- The Child Outcomes Summary (COS) Process
- IDEA Part C to Part B Transition Process
- Preschool Environments and Least Restrictive Environments (LRE)

How Can We Support Coordination, Communication, and Participation During Meetings?

- Surveys
- Bulletin boards
- Breakout groups
- Shared files
- Suggestion box
- Whiteboards
- Q&A time during the meeting
- Others?

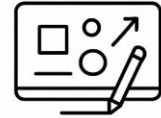
Virtual Team Collaboration & Communication – Visual Dictionary



Video Conferencing



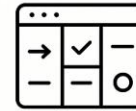
Instant Messaging/Chat



Virtual Whiteboarding



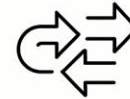
Email



Project Management Tools



Recorded Video Updates



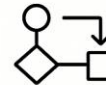
Clear Communication Norms



Regular Check-Ins



Centralized Documentation



Defined Workflows



Transparent Progress Tracking



Team Culture Building

Your Early Childhood Special Education Team

DOE/CDS Cohort Contact Information

Transition Leads



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Contact Our Department

If you need assistance or have questions, contact Jennifer Hopkins, Assistant Transition Coordinator of FAPE Services for Early Childhood Special Education



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Our Sites

[Early Childhood Special Education | Department of Education](#)

