

Early Learning Ventures EHS Service Plan

Additional Services for Children with Disabilities

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Policy Council Approval:

Governance Approval:

1302.60 Full Participation in Program Services and Activities

Performance Standard:

A program must ensure enrolled children with disabilities, including but not limited to those who are eligible for services under IDEA, and their families receive all applicable program services delivered in the least restrictive possible environment and that they fully participate in all program activities.

Policy and Procedures:

To support children with both potential and diagnosed disabilities, ELV will ensure that all EHS learning environments and FCC homes are inclusive of children with varying abilities. Both children and families will receive comprehensive services in the least restrictive learning environment. Children with disabilities, as well as their families, will be given opportunity to participate fully in all program activities. No child or family may be denied enrollment based on a potential or diagnosed disability.

Early Learning Ventures will offer assistance to its Child Care Partners, to best support children with disabilities and their families. Programs are offered consultation based on community specific MOUs. Sites work with families and community service providers to ensure families have access to developmental plan to meet their needs.

If there is concern about the appropriateness of the placement of a specific child into an Early Head Start classroom or Family Child Care Home, staff will confer with the child's parent(s), Early Childhood Special Education Consultant (ECSE), and the EHS Mental Health Consultant. A visit or trial placement may be scheduled to determine if the setting is most beneficial to the child and allows the child to experience the most success in learning and support of the child's IFSP/IEP goals.

To ensure that Early Head Start continues to be an educational environment where a child with disabilities can interact with typically-developing peers, Early Learning Ventures Early Head Start will work in collaboration with Child Care Partners to limit the number of children with disabilities assigned to any particular learning environment.

1302.61 Additional Services for Children

Performance Standard:

Additional Services for Children with Disabilities - Programs must ensure the individualized needs of children with disabilities, including but not limited to those eligible for services under IDEA, are being met and all children have access to and can fully participate in the full range of activities and services.

Programs must provide any necessary modifications to the environment, multiple and varied formats for instruction, and individualized accommodations and supports as necessary to support the full participation of children with disabilities.

Programs must ensure all individuals with disabilities are protected from discrimination under and provided with all services and program modifications required by section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act (29 U.S.C. 794), the Americans with Disabilities Act (42 U.S.C. 12101 *et seq.*), and their implementing regulations.

Policy and Procedures:

To ensure the individualized needs of children with disabilities, ELV and its Partners will:

- Utilize effective classroom practices which support children's IFSP goals, to the greatest extent possible.
- Provide adaptive materials and items reflective of children with disabilities (i.e., materials of varying difficulty, books, posters, supplemental aids). EHS CC Partners may request for ELV staff to purchase necessary equipment for the learning environment to support children.
- Make every reasonable effort to ensure full accessibility of facilities, including special furniture, equipment, and needed materials.
- Implement a research-based curriculum, inclusive of the needs of all children.
- Utilize on-going assessment to inform individualized lesson plans for all children.
- Support teachers with Practice Based Coaching techniques and strategies which strengthen child's learning and abilities through on-going assessment and individualized lesson plans.
- Engage and support parents and families; Child Care Partnership Specialists are direct supports to families through family development work and access to community resources.
- Provide training and technical assistance to staff, as needed, on the unique disabilities of children enrolled in their center/FCC home.

1302.61 Additional Services for Children

Performance Standard:

Services During IDEA Eligibility Determination - While the local agency responsible for implementing IDEA determines a child's eligibility, a program must provide individualized services and supports, to the maximum extent possible, to meet the child's needs. Such additional supports may be available through a child's health insurance or it may be appropriate or required to provide the needed services and supports under section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act if the child satisfies the definition of disability in section 705(9)(b) of the Rehabilitation Act. When such supports are not available through alternate means, pending the evaluation results and eligibility determination, a program must individualize program services based on available information such as parent input and child observation and assessment data and may use program funds for these purposes.

Policy and Procedures:

Child Care Partnership Specialists and Child Care Partner Staff will work in collaboration with local education agencies to ensure, whenever possible, that the timeframe between the referral of a child with a potential disability and the evaluation/determination of the child, is minimal. Providers are directed to work with the health provider during any lags between assessment and development of IFSP/IEP.

ELV will provide individualized services and supports, to the maximum extent possible, to meet the child's needs; these services will be based on available information such as parent input, child observation and assessment data.

If additional supports (i.e., personal equipment, therapy) are needed, the staff will support the family to determine if these supports are available through a child's health insurance. With approval from Early Learning Ventures' leadership, program funds may be used when a child's health insurance or other funding does not cover the child's needs and/or the delay between referral and evaluation is excessive.

1302.61 Additional Services for Children

Performance Standard:

Additional Services for Children with an IFSP or IEP - To ensure the individual needs of children eligible for services under IDEA are met, a program must:

Work closely with the local agency responsible for implementing IDEA, the family, and other service partners, as appropriate, to ensure:

- Services for a child with disabilities will be planned and delivered as required by their IFSP or IEP, as appropriate;
- Children are working towards the goals in their IFSP or IEP;
- Elements of the IFSP or IEP that the program cannot implement are implemented by other appropriate agencies, related service providers and specialists;
- IFSPs and IEPs are being reviewed and revised, as required by IDEA; and,
- Services are provided in a child's regular Early Head Start or Head Start classroom or family child care home to the greatest extent possible.

Policy and Procedures:

- The Child Care Partnership Specialist, Family Engagement Manager, Early Education Manager and Health Service Coordinator will work together with families to support both the parent/caretaker and the needs of the child.
- Child Care Partnership Specialists will coach teachers to support effective communication with parents.
- Providers will implement interdisciplinary approaches to ensure collaborative communication between parents, providers, teachers and therapists; this collaborative communication will inform the IFSP/IEP.

1302.61 Additional Services for Children

Performance Standard:

Plan and implement the transition services (Subpart G), including at a minimum:

- For children with an IFSP who are transitioning out of Early Head Start, collaborate with the parents, and the local agency responsible for implementing IDEA, to ensure appropriate steps are undertaken in a timely and appropriate manner to determine the child's eligibility for services under Part B of IDEA; and,
- For children with an IEP who are transitioning out of Head Start to kindergarten, collaborate with the parents, and the local agency responsible for implementing IDEA, to ensure steps are undertaken in a timely and appropriate manner to support the child and family as they transition to a new setting.

Policy and Procedures:

ELV works to ensure that children who take part in the EHS-CCP model transition into high-quality settings. To support continuity of services across a birth-to-four continuum, ELV supports providers and families as children transition into and out of early learning settings.

ELV transition plans ensure the new setting aligns with the family's need's and goals. Transitions the child into Head Start or another program as soon as possible after the child's third birthday but permits the child to remain in Early Head Start for a limited number of additional months following the child's third birthday if necessary, for an appropriate transition.

Child Care Partnership Specialists work with families and the EHS-CCP sites to develop transition plans for children and families. In many cases, these children will remain with the Partnership sites. ELV Child Care Partnership Specialists will work with these Partners to access other funding sources (like the Colorado Preschool Program) to improve the quality of preschool and school age classrooms. ELV will also work, with parental consent, to put in place data-sharing agreements so child assessment and other relevant data can be shared with the new early learning and development setting to facilitate continuity of services.

An interdisciplinary team meeting will occur prior to any transition. A transition plan template and guide ensure a smooth transition for the child, family and learning environment within EHS-CCP sites. Training will occur annually to ensure thorough implementation of ELVs transition process.

(Refer to Subpart B for more information on Transitions, including those for children with disabilities).

1302.62 Additional Services for Parents

Performance Standard:

Parents of all Children with Disabilities - A program must collaborate with parents of children with disabilities, including but not limited to children eligible for services under IDEA, to ensure the needs of their children are being met, including support to help parents become advocates for services that meet their children's needs and information and skills to help parents understand their child's disability and how to best support the child's development;

A program must assist parents to access services and resources for their family, including securing adaptive equipment and devices and supports available through a child's health insurance or other entities, creating linkages to family support programs, and helping parents establish eligibility for additional support programs, as needed and practicable.

Policy and Procedures:

ELV and its Partners will collaborate with parents of children with disabilities, to ensure that both the needs of the child and the family are met, to the greatest extent possible.

- Early Learning Ventures utilizes community resources such as mental health agencies, Community Centered Boards and Local Education Agencies to support families.
- Child Care Partnership Specialists work closely with the family to identify any needed supports and make referrals within the community.
- Families support ongoing assessment and give input into their children's development with the completion of ASQ-SE2, ASQ-3 (ELV offers an online optional access for families, teachers, and ELV staff).
- Child Care Partnership Specialists will support and encourage families to participate in interdisciplinary team meetings to act as advocates for their children.
- Families have access to a research informed and customized tool to support the development and maintenance of their child's IFSP/IEP and support their role as an advocate for their child.

1302.62 Additional Services for Parents

Performance Standard:

Parents of Children Eligible for Services under IDEA - For parents of children eligible for services under IDEA, a program must also help parents:

- Understand the referral, evaluation, and service timelines required under IDEA;
- Actively participate in the eligibility process and IFSP or IEP development process with the local agency responsible for implementing IDEA, including by informing parents of their right to invite the program to participate in all meetings;
- Understand the purposes and results of evaluations and services provided under an IFSP or IEP; and,
- Ensure their children's needs are accurately identified in, and addressed through, the IFSP or IEP.

Policy and Procedures:

Early Learning Ventures and its Child Care Partners understand the importance of supporting the parent/family as outlined above and will ensure implementation of these supports. Early Learning Ventures will provide training for Child Care Partnership specialists on the process as needed. Child Care Partnership Specialists will also provide access to the "IFSP/IEP Toolkit" available on the N drive: N:\ELV\EHS Resources\EHS Family Support\Family Engagement Toolkit\IFSP IEP

1302.63 Coordination and Collaboration with the Local Agency Responsible for Implementing IDEA

Performance Standard:

A program must coordinate with the local agency responsible for implementing IDEA to identify children enrolled or who intend to enroll in a program that may be eligible for services under IDEA, including through the process described in 1302.33(a)(3) and through participation in the local agency Child Find efforts.

Policy and Procedures:

In collaboration with each child's parent and with parental consent, ELV will complete a current developmental screening to identify concerns regarding a child's developmental, behavioral, motor, language, social, cognitive, and emotional skills within 45 calendar days of the child's enrollment. If warranted through screening and additional information, and with direct guidance from a mental health or child development professional, ELV must, with the parent's consent, promptly and appropriately address any needs identified through:

- Referral to the local agency responsible for implementing IDEA for a formal evaluation to assess the child's eligibility for services under IDEA as soon as possible, and not to exceed timelines required under IDEA; and,
- Partnership with the child's parents and the relevant local agency to support families through the formal evaluation process.

In the state of Colorado, children need to have at least 33% delay in one area of development to be found eligible. The below link provides the most recent facts related to Eligibility Criteria for Early Intervention services in Colorado.

http://coloradoofficeofearlychildhood.force.com/eicolorado/EI_QuickLinks?p=Home&s=FY-20-21-EI-Program-Cost-Containment-Strategies&lang=en

If a child is determined to be eligible for services under IDEA, ELV must partner with parents and the local agency responsible for implementing IDEA.

If, after the formal evaluation, children do not meet at least 33% delay in one area of development, ELV will be proactive to:

- Seek guidance from a mental health or child development professional to determine if the formal evaluation shows the child has a significant delay in one or more areas of development that is likely to interfere with the child's development and school readiness; and,

- If the child has a significant delay, partner with parents to help the family access services and supports to help address the child's identified needs, this may include but not limited to the use of private insurance or public health insurance if available.

1302.63 Coordination and Collaboration with the Local Agency Responsible for Implementing IDEA

Performance Standard:

A program must work to develop interagency agreements with the local agency responsible for implementing IDEA to improve service delivery to children eligible for services under IDEA, including the referral and evaluation process, service coordination, promotion of service provision in the least restrictive appropriate community-based setting and reduction in dual enrollment which causes reduced time in a less restrictive setting, and transition services as children move from services provided under Part C of IDEA to services provided under Part B of IDEA and from preschool to kindergarten.

Policy and Procedures:

The program has established local MOUs (Memorandum of Understanding) with the Community Centered Board and County Health Departments in each county to support families and children with special needs. The intent of the MOUs is to strengthen:

- The referral and evaluation process;
- Service coordination;
- Promotion of service provision in the least restrictive appropriate community-based setting;
- Reduction in dual enrollment which causes reduced time in a less restrictive setting;
- Transition services as children move from services provided under Part C of IDEA to services provided under Part B of IDEA.

ELV will make efforts to update MOUs annually.

1302.63 Coordination and Collaboration with the Local Agency Responsible for Implementing IDEA

Performance Standard:

A program must participate in the development of the IFSP or IEP if requested by the child's parents, and the implementation of the IFSP or IEP. At a minimum, the program must offer:

- To provide relevant information from its screenings, assessments, and observations to the team developing a child's IFSP or IEP; and,
- To participate in meetings with the local agency responsible for implementing IDEA to develop or review an IEP or IFSP for a child being considered for Head Start enrollment, a currently enrolled child, or a child transitioning from a program.

A program must retain a copy of the IEP or IFSP for any child enrolled in Head Start for the time the child is in the program, consistent with the IDEA requirements in 34 CFR parts 300 and 303.

Policy and Procedures:

ELV Staff and its Child Care Partners will participate in the development of the IFSP or IEP, at the request of the parent. To the greatest extent possible, Child Care Partnership Specialists will work with Child Care Partners to support the child's IFSP/IEP through individualized activities.

ELV and its Child Care Partners will provide relevant information from its screenings, assessments, and observations to the team developing a child's IFSP or IEP; and participate with Early Intervention or the LEA, as well as participate in meetings to develop or review an IEP or IFSP for a child being considered for Early Head Start enrollment, a currently enrolled child, or a child transitioning from another program.

At a minimum, ELV will retain a copy of the IEP or IFSP in Alliance CORE for any child enrolled in Early Head Start for the time the child is in the program.