

**WORKING DRAFT #4 - Interagency Agreement for La Crosse County Birth to 3, Head Start,
And (school district)**

Time period covered by agreement: November 2006 through October 2007

Purpose Statement

The purpose of this agreement is to promote a smooth and effective service delivery system for young children with special needs as they make the transition from Birth to 3 services to preschool services at age 3. We recognize that a transition from early intervention to an early childhood program is a major event in a child’s life. This agreement will establish guidelines for each agency to follow and reflects our commitment to increase collaboration among participating agencies. We wish to keep each other well informed, provide high quality services, reduce duplication of effort, and ensure that the priorities, resources, and concerns of each family are at the center of each child’s transition. This agreement will define which services will be provided by each agency; ensure children eligible for early childhood special education receive a free and appropriate public education (FAPE) in the least restrictive environment (LRE); establish communication and shared leadership responsibilities at the local level to ensure resources are effectively utilized; and guarantee cooperative arrangements between the school districts, Head Start and La Crosse County Birth to 3 are developed, implemented, and maintained.

Monitoring the Agreement

This is a 3-year agreement; however, an annual review meeting by the monitoring group will be initiated by CESA #4. The monitoring group will consist of at least one representative from each school district serving children in La Crosse County, the Birth to 3 Program, and Head Start. The annual review will occur in October of each year. The evaluation of the agreement will occur through gathering feedback of professionals involved in transitions at the annual meeting.

Child Find

La Crosse County Birth to 3 will send non-identifying information to the school district two times each year - in April and October - including month and year of birth date and possible services. This information will be sent to the school district referral contact person. **Provision:** Referrals that Birth to 3 receives within 90 days of the child’s third birthday will be completed through a screening, to determine if a referral to the School District is warranted. Per the agreement between WI DHFS and DPI (see Appendix A), the primary responsibility for the evaluation of children is dependent upon which agency will be developing and providing the individualized service/education plan. For specific situations, (low-incidence disabilities, summer service issues) a collaborative effort between the Birth to 3 Program and the School District may be made to ensure families have access to services.

Additional Activities Include:

<u><i>Birth to 3 will</i></u>	<u><i>School District will</i></u>	<u><i>Head Start will</i></u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide information to the school district and Head Start for distribution regarding Birth to 3 services • Participate when appropriate in community screening programs (Child Development Days) • Be active in an informed referral network • Invite School & Head Start personnel & parents to in-services/staff development, as appropriate 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Invite Birth to 3 and Head Start to open house, play day and/or Child Dev. Days • Share census data for child find purposes • Post/distribute Birth to 3 and Head Start screening information, flyers and articles • Be active in an informed referral network • Offer training &/or technical assistance to programs serving children with disabilities • Invite Head Start & B-3 personnel & parents to in-services/staff development, as appropriate 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Invite B-3 to the annual Open House/Registration, as appropriate • Encourage targeted families to attend Child Development Days (CDD) • Upon request, will participate in CDD or other screening program • Be active in an informed referral network • Invite school personnel, B-3, & parents to in-services/staff development opportunities, as appropriate

Transition Process

Transition Conference Timelines

- Transition conferences should be held at least 3-6 months before the child’s 3rd birthday.

- Transition planning meetings for children with June, July or August will be held by March 15.*
- Transition planning meetings for children with September birthdays will be held by April 1st.
- Transition planning meetings for children with October and November birthdays will be held in May.

* In the School District of La Crosse, children with birthdays from June-October will have transition planning conferences held in May.

Children Turning 3 During June, July & August: Birth to 3 Service Coordinator will discuss options for service coordination after age 3 for children with special health care needs. Children with disabilities in need of special education services who turn three during June, July or August will have an IEP in place by their 3rd birthday. The IEP team will consider extended school year (ESY) services based on the needs of the child and ESY criteria.

General Expectations:

<u><i>Birth to 3 will</i></u>	<u><i>School will</i></u>	<u><i>Head Start will</i></u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • At the initial ISFP, inform families of service options that may be available when the child turns 3. • With parent permission, schedule a transition planning conference with the family, service coordinator and representatives from the school and/or other agencies as appropriate (Head Start, child care). • With parent permission, a request for screening or referral for special education services may occur during or after the transition planning conference. The goal is for the referral to be made at least 90 days prior to the child's 3rd birthday, unless delayed by parents. • With parental permission, after a referral has been made, B-3 records will be shared with the receiving agencies. Following the transition planning conference, the service coordinator will request transition summaries from the B-3 providers. These will be forwarded to the receiving agencies by the date they have requested. Any IFSP updates occurring after the transition planning conference will also be shared with the receiving agencies. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide B-3 and Head Start with contact person information and update it annually. Transition contact and referral contact will be the same person. • Provide B-3 with the name and contact information of the district's parent liaison, if the district has such person identified • Send a representative when invited to a transition meeting for a child within their district/service area • Secure signed Releases of Information for pertinent early intervention records (i.e. medical or other third party records) at the transition planning conference, if appropriate. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide B-3 w/ contact person info & update annually • Send a representative when invited to a transition meeting for a child within their district/service area • Secure signed Releases of Information for pertinent early intervention records (i.e. medical or other third party records) before or at the transition planning conference. • Explain various program options and provide the necessary forms. • Develop a procedure for referrals from Birth -3 to facilitate smooth transitions for children who are not eligible for special education services • Refer children, ages 3-5, with suspected special educational need to the school district, after parental permission • Include with the referral all relevant information

Transition Meeting Expectations:

<u><i>Birth to 3 Responsibilities</i></u>	<u><i>School Responsibilities</i></u>	<u><i>Head Start Responsibilities</i></u>
<p>Facilitate a Transition Conference:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review of IFSP • Share information about community options • Develop a transition plan with the family as part of the ISFP • With parental permission, send a copy of the IFSP transition plan along with the referral to the agency's designated contact 	<p>At the transition meeting:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide information on making a referral, the IEP process, and potential community options for service delivery • Be prepared to receive the referral, beginning the legal timeline.* <p>*For La Crosse – at parent option, may also seek parental consent for further assessment</p>	<p>At the transition meeting:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prioritize children referred by Birth-3 or IEP team for enrollment consideration • Serve as a LRE placement option • Participate in IEP meeting when Head Start is being considered as a placement option • Work in collaboration with the school district to implement and monitor IEP

<p>person</p> <p>Written transition plan will include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Plans for screening or referral, if necessary, including when it will happen and a list of who is responsible during the process • Plans for preparing the child for transition and who is responsible. This can include a checklist of activities/responsibilities/timelines supplied by B-3 • Supports for families and who is responsible 	<p>After receiving a referral, the school will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Within 15 business days, send parents a request for consent to evaluate the child; OR notification that no additional assessments are necessary to determine eligibility • Within 60 days after the school has received parental consent for evaluation (or after the school has sent the notice that no further testing is needed), the school will determine if the child is a child with a disability • Within 30 days after the determination that the child is a child with a disability, the school will develop an IEP and determine an educational placement <p>Additional provisions by the school:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • With permission, invite Birth to 3, Head Start, and other care providers as appropriate to the IEP team meeting • If eligible, develop IEP goals and determine placement in Least Restrictive Environment • Determine IEP starting and ending dates. • If not eligible, discussion of other options will occur and the family will be informed of further screening opportunities 	<p>Counting and Reporting Children with a Disability</p> <p>(A child with a disability who is provided services by the school system and attends Head Start is eligible to be included in the child count required by IDEA. This same child may also be included in the annual report, which informs Congress about the efforts of Head Start to serve children with disabilities.)</p>
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Appendix A

Program Mandates

<p>Birth to 3 will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Provide early intervention services including, but not limited to identification, screening, evaluation/assessment, individual family service plan (IFSP) development, services coordination, procedural safeguards, and transition planning.• With written parental consent, providing appropriate services to eligible children based on family outcomes and the developmental needs of the child.• Provide appropriate early intervention services to eligible children and their families in natural environments, including home and community settings, to the extent that is appropriate to meet the needs of the child.• Ensure that services will be provided in collaboration with the parents and other care providers, by qualified personnel and in compliance with the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act, Part C and Chapter HFS 90 of Wis. Adm. Code	<p>School Districts will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Provide services to preschool children with disabilities following the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA 2004) and Subchapter V, Chapter 115 Wis statutes and Chapter PI 11 Wis. Adm. Code, and revisions.• Provide preschool children with disabilities a free appropriate public education (FAPE) including the development and implementation of an Individualized Education Program (IEP), procedural safeguards, and provisions of related services.• Place preschool children with disabilities in the least restrictive environment with an opportunity to interact with nondisabled peers to the maximum extent appropriate.• Work with appropriate community agencies to provide services to preschool children with disabilities.	<p>Head Start will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Recruit, enroll and serve eligible children ages 3-5. Make available at least 10 percent of enrollment opportunities in Head Start for children with disabilities who are eligible to participate.• Screen all children for potential problems in the area of health, social-emotional and development.• As soon as the need is evident, refer children with a special education need for an evaluation.• Provide services to enrolled children with disabilities following the Head Start Performance Standards of services to children with disabilities (45CFR 1308).• Work closely with other community agencies in providing necessary services to children with disabilities
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B. Child Find – Evaluation

Under IDEA, both DHFS and DPI have responsibilities for child find evaluation for children with disabilities from birth to three years of age. Through this agreement, the departments agree that the primary responsibility for the evaluation of children depends on which program will be developing and providing the individualized service/education plan. If the child is being evaluated for eligibility for the Birth-3 Program, DHFS and the county Birth-3 administrative agencies are responsible for the evaluation. If the child is being evaluated to determine the existence of special educational needs that determine eligibility for special education services at age three, the DPI and the LEAs are responsible for the evaluation.

An LEA may fulfill its child find and evaluation responsibility for children birth through age 2 years and nine months, by referring and identified child to the county Birth-3 administrative agency and ensuring that an evaluation is completed or the LEA can complete the evaluation for special education and related services. A county Birth-3 administrative agency may fulfill its child find evaluation responsibility for children two years and nine months through three years of age by performing a screening and referring an identified child to the LEA and ensuring that an evaluation is completed.

Though the primary responsibility for evaluation rests with the agency that will be providing the service, it is the position of DHFS and DPI that county Birth-3 administrative agencies and LEAs should maintain their collaborative efforts and enter into agreements to share staff and expertise each have in evaluating the developmental status of young children. This sharing, for example, has occurred when children under the age of three are being evaluated in a low incidence disability area such as vision or hearing. LEAs may have specialized staff who could assist the county Birth-3 administrative lead agency in the evaluation of these children.

