Michigan Birth through Five Child Outcomes Summary (COS) Process Manual

January 2025

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Section 1: Acknowledgement and Purpose

This Michigan Birth through Five Child Outcomes Summary (COS) Process Manual was originally written and recently updated as a means of supporting practitioners in their understanding of the regulatory requirements, essential processes, and the evidence-based practices associated with child outcomes. This manual is written as a resource for personnel serving children and families in *Early On* and preschool special education. Much of the information provided in the manual applies to both *Early On* and preschool special education. When processes and/or practices differ between *Early On* and preschool special education, the differences are explained in stand-alone text for each.

The historical context provided in this document is intended to provide a clear understanding as to why Child Outcomes were developed. The outlined essential processes are supplied to ensure valid and reliable outcomes data that can be used both to enhance the quality of early childhood programs/services and to promote integrated, functional plans for children.

The information provided is based on a variety of expert sources including the Early Childhood Outcomes (ECO) Center, the Early Childhood Technical Assistance (ECTA) Center, the Army Educational and Developmental Intervention Services (EDIS), as well as many others. The expert resources are noted throughout the manual as well as in the Reference List. We are grateful for the knowledge provided on this topic and thank these experts for their generous sharing of materials and ideas.

Section 2: The Beginning of Child Outcomes

The beginning of outcomes, as they relate to early intervention services and preschool special education, can be traced back to the year 1993 when congress passed the [Government Performance and Results Act of 1993 (GPRA)](https://www.congress.gov/bill/103rd-congress/senate-bill/20) (https://www.congress.gov/bill/103rd-congress/senate-bill/20). This act provided a framework for performance management and reporting, requiring all federal agencies to establish clear objectives and performance indicators as a way to improve governmental accountability.

Within this context of accountability, The Office of Management and Budget developed the [Program Assessment Rating Tool (PART)](https://www.strategisys.com/omb_part) (https://www.strategisys.com/omb_part) and in 2002 began using it as a mechanism for implementing the principles of the GPRA. The PART provided a way in which to evaluate program effectiveness and to guide budget decisions based on program performance (ECO Center, May 2011).

Part C of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) addresses the provision of early intervention services to infants and toddlers with disabilities and their families. Part B, Section 619 of IDEA addresses the provision of special education and related services to preschool-aged children with disabilities. In 2003, with the continued emphasis on accountability, programs operating under Part C and Part B, Section 619 were evaluated

using the PART. The finding of this evaluation was "results not demonstrated," indicating that insufficient data existed to determine the performance of these two programs. Because of these findings, the National Research Council recommended that the Office of Special Education Programs (OSEP) establish long-term early child outcome objectives and develop a strategy to collect annual performance data (ECO Center, May 2011).

In implementing the Council's recommendations, OSEP initiated the Early Childhood Outcomes (ECO) Center. Between fall 2003 and spring 2005, the ECO Center convened numerous stakeholder groups to gather input on what the outcomes should be and to gather feedback on initial drafts. These stakeholder groups included representation from state and local education agencies, from early intervention and special education providers, as well as from family members and childcare providers of children with disabilities. Also included were representatives from OSEP, Health and Human Services and Congress. In December of 2004, a draft set of early childhood outcomes was posted on the ECO Center's website and in February of 2005, the ECO Center recommended a set of child outcomes to OSEP.

The reauthorization of IDEA in December of 2004 also incorporated a much stronger emphasis on program accountability. The reauthorized act contained specific direction for OSEP to define performance indicators by which states' efforts to align with the requirements and purpose of IDEA could be measured. OSEP was given until July of 2005 to define these indicators and by that deadline OSEP had developed 14 indicators for Part C and 20 indicators for Part B of IDEA. These indicators were the foundation of the State Performance Plan (SPP) on which each state was and is required to report. The SPP for both Part C and Part B separately included a performance indicator for Child Outcomes.

After OSEP's development work, states had until the school year 2007-2008 to develop and implement their SPP and to submit their initial Annual Performance Report (APR) around the performance indicators outlined by OSEP. In February of 2007, states began reporting APR data on child outcomes data regarding the status of children at program entry. In 2008, states reported their first APR data on children's progress at exit. Since that time, states have continued to report child outcomes progress data annually using their APR. (ECO Center Q&A, January 2013).

As a sidenote, the work of the ECO Center is now enveloped into the Early Childhood Technical Assistance (ECTA) Center and the work and resources regarding the child outcomes are found on the [ECTA Center website](https://ectacenter.org/) (https://ectacenter.org/).

Section 3: What are Child Outcomes?

Defining Distinctions of Child Outcomes

From a regulatory standpoint, child outcomes for early intervention and preschool special education are performance indicators and, as required by IDEA, part of each state's State Performance Plan (SPP). Child outcomes from this standpoint are a mandated means by

which practitioners, districts, local service areas, and states are held accountable for program performance and funding allocations. However, from a practice-standpoint child outcomes have several important distinctions that make them much more than just program accountability measures. These distinctions are described in the following paragraphs.

Measure of benefit - Child outcomes are best defined as the measure of impact or the benefit each child experiences because of services provided through early intervention and/or preschool special education. In determining this benefit, child outcomes depend on comparing two ratings, or snapshots, of a child's functioning. These snapshots are taken at entry and exit from programming. By comparing these two snapshots, we can measure the level of improvement or benefit the child has achieved.

Age expectations – A crucial distinction that must be included in defining child outcomes is the standard by which they are measured. Relying on the input of multiple stakeholders, the Early Childhood Outcomes (ECO) Center chose age expectations as that standard. This standard stipulates that outcomes ratings are based on a thoughtful process of comparing the child's current functional skills to what is expected for children of the same chronological age.

Initially this standard of age expectations as it relates to the COS process may seem curious or even unfair for children with delays or disabilities. However, in choosing this standard, personnel at the ECO center were strongly conveying the message that all children must be viewed primarily through the lens of capability and that the goal of early intervention and preschool special education is to help children move closer to the age expectations. This goal in turn enhances their ability to participate with same-age peers.

Meaningful versus missing – Closely related to the distinction of age expectations is the emphasis that child outcomes places on the development of skills that are meaningful rather than missing. Outcomes ratings have an unwavering focus on helping a child to develop skills that will further a child's ability to participate more effectively across settings and situations. Although domain-based and standardized assessments may assist in understanding these functional skills, routines-based interviews and functional assessments are the most effective tools in determining the meaningful skills and behaviors on which to focus intervention.

Child Outcomes and IFSP Outcomes - One last distinction to be noted is the difference between child outcomes and the outcomes that are part of an Individualized Family Service Plan (IFSP). Child outcomes are considerably different. While child-level *IFSP outcomes* reflect a child's intervention needs, *child*

outcomes reflect a child's current functional skills and behaviors.

The distinctions outlined in the paragraphs above are consistently emphasized in the work that the ECO Center accomplished in defining the overarching goal of the outcomes and the three global outcomes. This work is described below.

The Overarching Goal of Child Outcomes

Through the work of the ECO Center (https://ectacenter.org/eco/pages/faqs.asp), stakeholders helped to create a statement defining the overarching goal of early intervention and/or preschool special education. This statement is:

> *"…To enable young children to be active and successful participants during their early childhood years and in the future in a variety of settings – in their homes with their families, in child care, preschool or school programs and in the community."*

In this statement stakeholders accentuated the need for all individuals and agencies who are working with children to focus on functional skills and behaviors that will enhance the child's ability to actively participate in various settings and routines both now and in the future.

The Three Child Outcomes

In defining the overarching goal of child outcomes, the stakeholders from the ECO Center outlined three specific areas of functionality. These areas are the *three child outcomes,* and they are as follows:

1. Positive social-emotional skills including social relationships,

2. The acquisition and use of knowledge and skills,

3. Use of appropriate behaviors to meet needs.

In crafting the three outcomes, the stakeholders from the ECO center chose to convey a consistent and powerful message of the need to focus on a child's functionality rather than disability. Although child outcomes were to be used to assess the benefit of supports for children with delays and disabilities, the stakeholders intentionally chose outcome areas and associated bundles of skills that *all* children must develop to participate fully in routines and activities with their families, caregivers, teachers, and community members.

This focus on a child's functionality remains a foundational part of child outcomes and is a focus that is reflected in current resources. In 2021 the ECTA Center in collaboration with the Center for IDEA Early Childhood Data Systems (DaSy Center) (https://dasycenter.org/) created a reference document which clearly defines the three child outcomes and the skill bundles that are part of each. This resource is called The

[Breadth of the Three Child Outcomes](https://ectacenter.org/eco/pages/childoutcomes.asp)
(https://ectacenter.org/eco/pages/childoutcomes.asp) and it forms a framework for uniformly understanding and summarizing children's functional skills and behaviors across routines. Using this resource and the prior work of the ECO Center, the three child outcomes may best be understood as follows:

Outcome A: Positive Social Emotional Skills

Outcome A, *positive social emotional skills, including social relationships*, involves building and maintaining relationships with adults and other children as well as following rules related to groups and interacting with others. Included in this outcome are the child's attachment, separation, and autonomy, as well as his or her ability to express emotions, to initiate and maintain relationships, and to learn rules and expectations.

Skills and behaviors in this area allow children to participate in a variety of settings and situations – at home, on the playground, at mealtime, at the grocery store, in child care, at preschool, etc. Based on The Breadth of the Three Child Outcomes, the skill bundles that make up this outcome are:

Bundle 1: Relating to Caregivers,

Bundle 2: Interacting with Peers,

Bundle 3: Attending to Other People in a Variety of Settings,

Bundle 4: Engaging in Social Games and Communication with Others,

Bundle 5: Adapting to Changes in the Environment or Routines,

Bundle 6: Expressing Own Emotions and Responding to the Emotions of Others.

Outcome B: Acquisition and Use of Knowledge and Skills

This outcome, *acquisition and use of knowledge and skills, including early communication/language/early literacy*, consists of the ability to understand information, symbols, and the physical and social world as well as to think, reason, and problem-solve. Behaviors and skills that reflect this outcome include a child's eagerness to explore and learn about his or her environment, to show increasing imagination and creativity, and to develop a foundation of information, including language and literacy skills, on which later behaviors, skills, and learning can be built. Based on The Breadth of the Three Child Outcomes, the skill bundles that make up this outcome are:

Bundle 1: Showing Interest in Learning,

Bundle 2: Using Problem Solving Skills,

Bundle 3: Engaging in Purposeful Play,

Bundle 4: Understanding Pre-Academics and Literacy,

Bundle 5: Acquiring Language to Communicate,

Bundle 6: Understanding Questions Asked and Directions Given.

Outcome C: Use of Appropriate Behaviors to Meet Needs

This outcome encompasses the ability of a child to take care of basic needs and contribute to safety and health. Also included is the child's ability to get from place to place and use tools and resources effectively. Based on The Breadth of the Three Child Outcomes, the skill bundles that make up this outcome are:

Bundle 1: Moving Around and Manipulating Things to Meet Needs,

Bundle 2: Eating and Drinking with Increasing Independence,

Bundle 3: Dressing and Undressing with Increasing Independence,

Bundle 4: Diapering/Toileting and Washing with Increasing Independence,

Bundle 5: Communicating Needs,

Bundle 6: Showing Safety Awareness.

Only when practitioners and families understand the definition and functional focus of the three outcomes as well as the associated skill bundles, will they be equipped to engage in the summary process and arrive at a child's valid outcome ratings.

Section 4: Essential Practices and Components of the COS Process

The [COS process](https://ectacenter.org/eco/pages/faqs.asp) (https://ectacenter.org/eco/pages/faqs.asp) is the team-based approach that is used to collect, discuss, and summarize a child's functional skills for the purpose of arriving at valid numerical ratings in each of the three outcomes. Separate from the numerical ratings, the COS process is also used to answer the progress question that is required when a child exits *Early On* or preschool special education. Details about engaging in the rating process and answering the exit question are addressed later in this document.

Essential Practices of the COS Process

Multiple Sources and Multiple Measures - In terms of structure, the COS process is not based on the input of a single individual or the data provided solely

by one or more standardized assessment tools. The structure is built on a team approach with discussion around *multiple sources* and *multiple measures* to arrive at accurate ratings and measure benefit. Individuals included in the COS team are the child's family members, caregivers, related service providers, teachers, and others who know the child best and have had the opportunity to observe the child's skills and behaviors across a variety of settings and routines. According to the ECTA Center (https://ectacenter.org/):

> *"Assessing children's functioning in three outcome areas requires multiple sources of information, including observation, family input, and data from one or more assessment tools. Observation and family input provide information about the child's functioning across situations and settings. Data from the administration of a reliable assessment tool can be used to compare a child's skills and behaviors to those of his/her same-age peers."*

The child outcomes are intended to help us understand how children function within their daily routines and activities, and how they benefit from *Early On* and preschool special education supports and services.

A Structured and Documented Process – The COS process begins with and involves one or more structured conversations centered on gathering rich information about a child's functional abilities across settings and routines. These conversations are typically facilitated by practitioners, including service providers or teachers, and involve family members, caregivers and other individuals who know the child best. The information that is gathered through these conversations and provided through other means is the foundation of the COS process upon which accurate outcomes ratings rely. For this reason, practitioners are strongly encouraged to develop or select a framework that organizes the conversation and documentation around the three outcomes and the child's functional skills within across settings and routines. Appendix A: Conversation Starters for Making Functional Child Outcome Ratings, adapted from OSEP, is one example of a framework that helps practitioners to facilitate, organize, and document these conversations well.

Another tool that may be considered as a framework for these conversations is The Breadth of the Three Child Outcomes (https://ectacenter.org/eco/pages/childoutcomes.asp). This resource is not only helpful in understanding what skill bundles are included in an outcome area; it is also helpful in guiding the data collection process as well as determining if the team has gathered enough useable data to proceed with rating the child's skills and behaviors.

Depending on factors such as the child's developmental age-level and cultural expectations, all the skill bundles described in The Breadth of the Three Child Outcomes document do not need to be represented in the data. However, enough data must be collected within each outcome area for the COS team members to engage in meaningful conversations and arrive at valid ratings. Certainly, if during the rating process the COS team members determine additional data is needed, they are encouraged to gather this information through additional input or observation.

The [Routines Based Interview](#) (RBI) (protocol_for_the_rbi_english.pdf) may be used to gather the rich information needed to determine accurate child outcome ratings. Similarly, the [Measure of Engagement, Independence, and Social Relationships](#) (MEISR) (Microsoft Word - MEISR with GOLD link) is a tool that many have found valuable in gathering information about a child's functional skills and behaviors. This instrument, like the RBI, is structured to inquire about and record a child's abilities within the context of daily routines including, waking up, eating, playtime, and going out, etc. The MEISR has the added advantages of providing age expectations for the included skills as well as the option of sorting the child's abilities by Outcome Area and domain.

Important to remember in using any of these tools is that the COS process begins with the child and involves gathering rich, culturally relevant, functional information from those who know the child best. Only when the COS team members have sufficient meaningful data are they able to progress through the essential components of the COS process and arrive at valid child outcome ratings.

Essential Components of the COS Process

The COS process relies on *four essential components* to ensure valid and reliable child outcomes data at the child, local, state, and federal levels. These four components will be discussed in more detail in the following sections and include:

1. Family Voice and Participation
2. Professional Observation and Expertise
3. An Assessment Tool
4. A Seven-Point Rating Scale

1. Family Voice and Participation

The information family members provide is crucial to developing a complete picture of a child's functioning. Family voice and participation are essential in ensuring that child outcomes ratings are comprehensive, meaningful, and reflective of a child's functioning.

Parents and other family members are keen and ongoing observers of the child's skills and behaviors. They have the unique opportunity of observing and interacting with the child across multiple settings and routines.

To promote a rich conversation with parents and caregivers, as mentioned earlier in this document, providers are encouraged to start a semi-structured conversation about the child's routines, strengths, and needs. Focus on asking questions that allow parents and caregivers to tell you what they have seen. For example, "When Anthony is thirsty or wants a drink what does he do?" Sometimes you will need to ask yes/no or multiple-choice questions when information that is more specific or clarification is needed. For example, "Does Anthony drink from a regular cup or sippy cup?" Throughout the conversation keep in mind that you are wanting to gather information on the child's functional skills with enough detail to allow for age-anchoring.

Cultural Expectations

When completing child outcome information, considering and reflecting the cultural norms and expectations of the child's family is extremely important. Different cultures have varying expectations regarding skills and behaviors related to social engagement, language acquisition, motor skills, self-help abilities, and more. So, for example, what is typical for a two-year-old in one culture may not be the same in another culture.

Throughout the COS process, the COS team should actively employ various resources and practices to ensure cultural sensitivity and rating accuracy when discussing children's skills and behaviors with families from diverse backgrounds. Ideally, rating teams should use frameworks, developmental checklists, and questionnaires that align with the family's cultural norms and expectations if such resources are available. Additionally, involving team members who either share the cultural background of the family or possess knowledge about their culture can be beneficial.

Above all, prioritizing the voice and input of the family throughout the COS rating process is vital. They can provide the most reliable information about their child's development within the context of cultural expectations. Their participation and input ensure that COS ratings accurately reflect the child's developmental progress while respecting their cultural background.

2. Professional Observation and Expertise

The second essential component of the COS process is professional observation and expertise. Practitioners are keen and ongoing observers of a child's functional abilities across settings and routines. The information they provide to the COS process builds on and expands the information that parents, caregivers, and family members provide. Through the multiple perspectives of family members and practitioners, the functional abilities of a child are more broadly understood and more accurately determined.

Professional expertise is a crucial piece that practitioners bring to the COS process. Because child outcomes are based on age expectations, valid ratings depend on an understanding of typical child development and skill progression. Practitioners bring this developmental context to the COS process as the team examines a child's functional and integrated skills and behaviors through the lens of age expectations. This important process is termed *age-anchoring* and is explained in more detail below.

Age-anchoring a Child's Functional Skills and Behaviors

Age-anchoring is an indispensable part of the COS process and one that involves reviewing each of the child's reported or observed abilities through the lens of age expectations. The purpose of age-anchoring is to develop a functional profile of skills for the child in each of the three outcome areas (1. Positive social-emotional skills, 2. Acquisition of knowledge and skills, 3. Appropriate behaviors to meet needs). This profile provides a clear picture for determining accurate COS ratings. The purpose of age-anchoring is to represent the mixture and proportion of age-expected and not-yet age-expected skills the child is using.

Age-anchoring relies on having enough reported and observed functional abilities for the child in each outcome area. If at any point in the COS process the gathered information does not provide sufficient, rich information in one or more outcome areas to generate an accurate profile of skills, team members must obtain additional information through further reporting or observation.

> **Age-anchoring Each Skill and Behavior** - The first requirement in age-anchoring is to connect *each* of the child's skills and behaviors to the appropriate developmental age-level. From a *process standpoint*, this requirement may be incorporated into the information-gathering phase of the COS process, determining the developmental age-level for each ability as it is reported or observed. However, from a workability standpoint, practitioners are encouraged to consider connecting the child's skills to developmental age-levels afterwards, relying on a combination of their professional expertise and one of the age-anchoring tools referenced later in this manual.
>
> From a *documentation standpoint*, COS team members may find it most helpful to have the developmental age-level data added on the instrument that was used for the information-gathering phase of the COS process. For example, if an instrument such as The Breadth of the Child Outcomes or a Routines Based Interview (RBI) was initially used to guide and document the information-gathering conversation, developmental age-levels may be added to this documentation. COS team members may choose to use another form to document a child's functional skills and the connection of each skill to a developmental age-level. Regardless of which option the COS team opts to use, documenting the child's abilities along with the

associated developmental age-levels is a key practice for arriving at valid ratings.

Categorizing All Skills and Behaviors - The second requirement of age-anchoring is to assign a category to each of the child's skills and behaviors. This categorization is based on comparing the developmental level of each of the child's abilities with age expectations for children of that child's chronological age. As a result of this comparison each of the child's skills and behaviors are sorted in one of the three categories listed below:

1.   Age-Expected (AE),

2.   Immediate Foundational (IF), and

3.   Foundational (F).

Team members must possess a shared understanding regarding the definition of the terms used to categorize a child's abilities. The information below is provided to support this shared understanding:

- **Age-expected (AE)** - As the term implies, this designation is used to label skills or behaviors that are expected based on the child's chronological age. Although typical development most often includes a mixture of age-expected and not yet age-expected skills, for the purpose of age-anchoring a child's individual abilities are viewed through the lens of age-level alone and only those abilities occurring within a developmental range that *includes* the child's chronological age should be considered age-expected. For example, a child who is 36-months old and based on an age-anchoring tool and/or professional expertise is using a skill that is in the 32–36-month range, would be said to be using an age-expected skill. Conversely the same child who is using skills in the 28–32-month range would *not* be said to be demonstrating an age-expected skill. The best descriptor of age-expected skills is *"at and around"* the child's chronological age.

- **Immediate Foundational (IF)** - This term describes skills and behaviors that occur developmentally just before age-expected functioning. These abilities may be described as one step before age-expected development. A child who is functionally using a skill that is indicative of a slightly younger child is demonstrating an immediate foundational skill, as the child's functioning does not yet meet age expectations. The best descriptor of an immediate foundational skill is *"just before."*

- **Foundational (F)** – This term indicates a skill or behavior that develops much earlier or is farther from age-expectations on the developmental progression. These abilities might be described as those of a much younger

child and are two or more steps before age-expected skills in the sequence of development. Although significantly below what would be considered age-expected standards, these skills and behaviors are used by a child meaningfully and in most instances serve as the foundation for more complex and proficient abilities. For example, children typically roll over, sit, crawl, and stand independently before they walk. It is like a staircase where foundational (F) skills lead to immediate foundational (IF) skills which then lead to age-expected (AE) functioning. The best descriptor for foundational skills is *"much younger."*

Prior to sorting a child's abilities into these three categories, team members are urged to agree upon a manner of indicating within their documentation the category to which each skill or behavior will be assigned. Some options include using the letter designations of "AE," "IF," and "F" or indicating the assigned category through color-coding.

Age-anchoring Tools

Age-anchoring tools are instruments, developed by states and publishers, for the purpose of comparing a child's skills and behaviors to age expectations. Most often, age-anchoring tools are criterion-referenced or developmental checklists. These tools help to determine the mixture of age-expected, immediate foundational, and foundational skills a child is using and serve as a reference point for evaluating whether a child is meeting, exceeding, or falling behind developmental expectations for their age group.

Because staying true to the detailed developmental progression and age expectations for every set of functional abilities is difficult for any individual, as part of the COS process practitioners are strongly encouraged to use age-anchoring tools in addition to their expertise. For more information on age-anchoring tools visit [Age-anchoring Guidance](https://ectacenter.org/~pdfs/eco/COS_Age_Anchoring_Guidance.pdf) (https://ectacenter.org/~pdfs/eco/COS_Age_Anchoring_Guidance.pdf).

Part C Early Childhood Outcomes Age-anchoring Tools

Several age-anchoring tools have been developed by states and various agencies to assist with the age-anchoring process for children ages birth to three years old. The [Measure of Engagement, Independence, and Social Relationships](#) (MEISR) (Microsoft Word - MEISR with GOLD link (ne.gov) is referenced earlier in this manual as an instrument that is structured to record a child's skills and behaviors within the context of daily routines. Within these routines the child's skills and behaviors are documented and compared to age expectations. Because the MEISR emphasizes both daily routines *and* age expectations, this tool may be used not only to guide and document the abilities reported or observed for a child but also to inform the age anchoring process.

Additional age-anchoring tools for children ages birth to three include:

- [North Carolina ELN Age-Anchoring Tool for Use with the Child Outcomes Summary Process](http://ioniaisd.pbworks.com/w/file/fetch/115581526/Age-Anchoring%20Tool%20for%20COS.pdf) (http://ioniaisd.pbworks.com/w/file/fetch/115581526/Age-Anchoring%20Tool%20for%20COS.pdf),

- [Colorado's Larimer County Age-anchoring Tool for Outcome A](https://ectacenter.org/eco/assets/pdfs/Outcome1LarimerCountyAgeAnchoringTool.pdf) (https://ectacenter.org/eco/assets/pdfs/Outcome1LarimerCountyAgeAnchoringTool.pdf),

- [Colorado's Larimer County Age-anchoring Tool for Outcome B](https://ectacenter.org/eco/assets/pdfs/Outcome2LarimerCountyAgeAnchoringTool.pdf) (https://ectacenter.org/eco/assets/pdfs/Outcome2LarimerCountyAgeAnchoringTool.pdf),

- [Colorado's Larimer County Age-anchoring Tool for Outcome C](https://ectacenter.org/eco/assets/pdfs/Outcome3LarimerCountyAgeAnchoringTool.pdf) (https://ectacenter.org/eco/assets/pdfs/Outcome3LarimerCountyAgeAnchoringTool.pdf).

Part B Preschool Outcomes Age-anchoring Tools

Currently there are no publisher developed age-anchoring tools for children ages 3-5; however, in the Part C bulleted list above is one tool that may also be used for children served in Part B. This tool, developed in 2014 by North Carolina's Early Learning Network, includes age-anchored skills from birth to 72-months. It is the first link provided in the list below and may be used for children across early intervention and preschool special education.

Another consideration was developed by North Dakota's Department of Public Instruction. This developmental checklist divides age-expected skills and behaviors into the three outcome areas. Both the full and quick reference versions of the North Dakota age-anchoring tool are linked below.

- [North Carolina ELN Age-Anchoring Tool for Use with the Child Outcomes Summary Process](http://ioniaisd.pbworks.com/w/file/fetch/115581526/Age-Anchoring%20Tool%20for%20COS.pdf) (http://ioniaisd.pbworks.com/w/file/fetch/115581526/Age-Anchoring%20Tool%20for%20COS.pdf),

- [North Dakota DPI Age Expectation Developmental Milestones-Full Version](https://www.nd.gov/dpi/sites/www/files/documents/SpeEd/Early%20Childhood/ND%20Early%20Childhood%20Outcomes%20Process%20Full%20Version.pdf) (https://www.nd.gov/dpi/sites/www/files/documents/SpeEd/Early%20Childhood/ND%20Early%20Childhood%20Outcomes%20Process%20Full%20Version.pdf),

- [North Dakota DPI Age Expectation Developmental Milestones-Quick Reference](https://www.nd.gov/dpi/sites/www/files/documents/SpeEd/Early%20Childhood/Age%20Expectation%20Developmental%20Guidelines%20quick%20reference%20landscape%201%20.pdf) (https://www.nd.gov/dpi/sites/www/files/documents/SpeEd/Early%20Childhood/Age%20Expectation%20Developmental%20Guidelines%20quick%20reference%20landscape%201%20.pdf)

3. An Assessment Tool

An assessment tool is the third essential and required component of the COS process. Local service area and/or district personnel may choose the assessment tool or list of tools that they will use to support accurate ratings. Their choice may be to use one of the assessment tools from the list below or to use another tool or list of tools that they find better reflects children's functional abilities across contexts. In making their choice, local service area and district personnel should remember that no assessment tool alone can provide all the rich and contextual information needed to determine accurate COS ratings. Putting too much emphasis on this component will lead to inaccurate results. Accurate outcomes ratings rely on beginning with documenting the functional skills and behaviors that are reported and observed by those persons who know the child best and subsequently using the remaining essential components of the COS process.

One additional note about the assessment tool component is with regard to situations in which a child has recently been assessed as part of an evaluation process or due to attending an early care and education setting in which a tool is used for screening, instruction, and/or progress reporting. To avoid overuse of assessment measures, participants in the COS process are encouraged to use the results of any assessment that has already been completed with the child and family. For example, the rating team may choose to use information provided by an evaluation tool used for eligibility determination or an assessment tool being used to inform the development of the child's Initial IFSP. Another example is for a child who is receiving preschool special education supports and enrolled in a preschool program such as Head Start or the Great Start Readiness Program (GSRP). In these instances, the program is often employing an assessment tool that meets district standards. If this case is true, the results of the tool should be used so the child is not subjected to unneeded assessment.

Selecting an Assessment Tool

Part C Early Childhood Outcomes Assessment Tools

In selecting an assessment tool for *Early On*, personnel are encouraged to consider tools that reflect a child's functional skills across settings and routines. Some tools worth considering are:

- [Measurement of Engagement, Independence, and Social Relationships (MEISR): Crosswalk to the Three Child Outcomes](#) - This crosswalk shows how the skills listed in the MEISR cover The Breadth of the Three Child Outcomes, including the six bundles of skills that comprise each outcome. Additionally, the MEISR age references the skills, which can be useful for age anchoring when Child Outcomes Summary (COS) teams determine ratings on the COS 7-point scale.

- Routines-Based Interview (RBI) – This is an evidence-based assessment practice that gathers information about home and community routines and the child's engagement, independence, and social relationships within those routines to promote routines-based intervention [2018, Maryland Infants & Toddlers Program Individualized Family Service Plan (IFSP) Process & Document Guide, Maryland State Department of Education, Division of Special Education/Early Intervention Services].

Other Assessment Tools for *Early On*: Several assessment tools have historically been used for children participating in *Early On.* A list of these tools is provided below for reference. Local service area personnel may choose to use one of these tools; however, caution must be taken to use the most current version of any listed tool.

- Assessment, Evaluation and Programming System

- Early Learning Accomplishment Profile

- Hawaii Early Learning Profile

- Brigance Inventory of Early Development

- Infant-Toddler Developmental Assessment

- Carolina Curriculum for Infants and Toddlers with Special Needs

- Battelle Developmental Inventory

- Bayley Scales of Infant Toddler Development

Part B Preschool Outcomes Assessment Tools

Assessment Tools for Preschool Special Education: As with *Early On*, several assessment tools have historically been used for children participating in preschool special education. These tools are listed below and provided for reference. District personnel may choose to use one of these tools; however, caution must be taken to use most current version of any listed tool.

- Assessment, Evaluation and Programming System

- Battelle Developmental Inventory

- Battelle Developmental Inventory, Screening Test

- Brigance Inventory of Early Development

- The Carolina Curriculum for Preschoolers with Special Needs

- COR-Preschool Child Observation Record

- COR Advantage

- Creative Curriculum for Preschoolers

- Learning Accomplishments Profile

- Teaching Strategies Gold

Continuum Tools are assessment tools that include the full age range of skills and behaviors for children birth through age five *in one comprehensive instrument*. This type of assessment tool is to be used as part of the COS process for children who are starting services on their IEP prior to turning three-years of age. Because in Michigan a child may have an IEP as early as two-years, six-months, district personnel are encouraged to consider selecting one of these tools to be used with all preschool aged children or as the necessary option for any child who is beginning the services on an IEP prior to age three. Continuum tool options include:

- Assessment, Evaluation and Programming System

- Battelle Developmental Inventory

- Brigance Inventory of Early Development

- The Carolina Curriculum for Preschoolers with Special Needs

- COR-Preschool Child Observation Record

- Teaching Strategies Gold

Assessment Tools for Preschool Children Receiving Services Only: For children who are receiving related services only as documented on their IEPs, less involved assessment tools may be considered. These tools include:

- Battelle Developmental Inventory, Screening Test

- Ages and Stages Questionnaire

4. The Seven-point Rating Scale

The seven-point rating scale is the fourth essential component of the COS rating process. This component serves as the framework for COS team members to arrive at a shared

and accurate outcome rating in each of the outcome areas. Using prompts and guiding questions, the framework outlines a systematic review of the information provided about the child's functional abilities through family reporting, professional observation, age-anchoring, and an assessment tool.

As indicated by the name, the seven-point rating scale uses the numerals 1-7 to represent how a closely a child's functioning has been determined to align with typical age expectations within an outcome area. For example, a rating of 1 would indicate that following a discussion of the child's functional abilities the COS team has determined that the child is using the skills and behaviors of a much younger child. In contrast, a rating of 7 would indicate that the team has determined the child is using all age-expected functional skills in the outcome area with no concerns. The numerals 2 through 6 indicate different mixtures of age-expected and not-yet age-expected abilities that the child is using in a functional manner.

When to Use the Seven-Point Rating Scale

Although the COS process does not provide a set order for collecting and reviewing data, the seven-point rating scale may best be employed *after* the COS team has documented sufficient rich, functional information about the child and after the child's functional skills and behaviors have been age-anchored. Even with this general timeline in mind, if at any point during the COS process, team members discover that they need additional data to determine a valid rating, they must obtain further information through reporting on or observation of the child's abilities.

Choosing a Seven-point Rating Scale Tool

Most often local area service coordinators and district supervisors are charged with making the decision as to which seven-point rating scale tool will be used. There are several rating scale tools from which to choose; however, all rating scale tools are one of three primary types. These three types are differentiated from one another based on the *approach* they use to determine valid outcomes ratings. These three approaches are:

1.   A process-driven approach,

2.   A summary approach, and

3.   A hybrid approach.

The information provided below is intended to support local service area personnel and district personnel in deciding which seven-point rating scale tool will best meet the needs of the families they serve and the providers they support. The information briefly includes a key advantage and possible drawback associated with each approach. To aid the selection of a specific seven-point rating scale tool, one that aligns with each of the three primary approaches is provided and a hyperlink included.

A Process-driven Approach – Rating scale tools of this type involve having the COS team members consider a series of "yes/no" questions to reach the child's outcome ratings. The advantage of a process-driven approach is that it scripts a thorough discussion of the child's skills and behaviors. An associated drawback of this approach is that this type of rating scale tool can be time consuming for COS teams to use. The COS Decision Tree for Summary Rating Discussions (Updated 2024) (https://ectacenter.org/eco/pages/cosform-rating.asp#definitions) is an excellent example of this type of rating scale tool and is the one that is used by many states.

A Summary Approach – Rating scale tools of this type rely on graphics and descriptors rather than a list of "yes/no" questions to review a child's abilities and generate a valid rating. The advantage of this type of tool is that it is relatively quick to use and less complicated to understand. The drawback of a summary approach rating scale tool is that it may lead COS team members to be less thorough in their review of the child's functional skills and behaviors. The Bucket List 7 Point Scale (https://ectacenter.org/eco/assets/pdfs/COSF_Scale_Descriptors_w-buckets.pdf) is the leading example of this type of rating scale tool.

Hybrid Approach - This type of rating scale tool was first used in 2016 when the Army Educational and Developmental Intervention Services (EDIS) combined the process-driven approach and the summary approach into one tool. The advantage of this type of rating scale tool is found in the multiple ways in which a child's skills and behaviors may be reviewed, rated, and confirmed. The drawback is related to the training needs associated with using this tool well. This tool aligned with the hybrid approach is called the EDIS COS Organizing Tool (https://ectacenter.org/eco/assets/pdfs/EDISCOSOrganizingToolSep2016.pdf) and is the one that is recommended for COS teams.

As indicated, the information above is provided so local service area coordinators and district supervisors can make an informed decision regarding their choice of a seven-point rating scale tool. The section below further describes how each of the named seven-point ratings scale tools is used in determining valid outcome ratings. This information may also be helpful in deciding on a rating scale tool.

How to Use a Seven-point Rating Scale Tool for COS Ratings

COS team members must think through three key steps when using any seven-point rating scale tool. These key steps are listed below, and the information about each of the three steps begins by delineating which rating scale tool(s) require the step, which scale tool(s) recommend the step, and for which rating scale tool(s) the step is not applicable.

The information goes on to describe the purpose and result of each step and COS team members are strongly encouraged to download and familiarize themselves with the layout, requirements, and approach of their chosen seven-point rating scale tool prior to engaging in the COS rating process for the first time.

Step One: Establishing a Range – This first step is required when COS teams use the following seven-point rating scale tools and approaches:

>   EDIS COS Organizing Tool *(or any rating scale tool that relies on a hybrid approach)*, or
>
>   COS Decision Tree for Summary Rating Discussions *(or any rating scale tool that relies on a process-driven approach), or*
>
>   Bucket List 7 Point Scale *(or any rating scale tool that relies on the summary approach)*.

This first step involves answering a single "yes/no" question about whether within the outcome area being reviewed the child *ever* functions in ways that would be considered age-expected. This question is critical because, regardless of whether the team is using a hybrid, process, or summary approach, the answer establishes the range of valid COS ratings for the child. If the COS team answers "yes," the child's rating will be between 4 and 7. If they answer "no," the rating will be between 1 and 3.

To answer this question, the COS team members review the age-anchoring documentation developed earlier in the COS process looking for settings or situations in which the child is demonstrating functional, age-expected skills or behaviors. This review is not about the child's overall functioning within an outcome area and therefore even infrequent or rare examples of age-expected skills or behaviors count.

Step Two: Defining the Mixture – This second step is required when COS teams use the following seven-point rating scale tools and approaches:

>   EDIS COS Organizing Tool *(or any rating scale tool that relies on a hybrid approach)*, or
>
>   Bucket List 7 Point Scale *(or any rating scale tool that relies on the summary approach)*.

While this step is not required for COS teams utilizing a process-driven approach rating scale tool, the information that is gained may prove helpful. Understanding the child's mixture of age-expected and not-yet age-expected abilities can assist

team members in answering the "yes/no" questions of the process-driven approach.

Step two occurs after the COS team has established a rating range and involves defining the child's mixture of age-expected and not-yet age expected skills. For this step, the COS team once again refers to the age-anchoring documentation; however, this time they are reviewing *all* the child's abilities within the outcome area to ascertain what proportion of the skills and behaviors area are age-expected, what proportion are immediate foundational, and what proportion are foundational.

After determining these proportions, this information is compared to the seven bucket illustrations and associated skill descriptors reflected on the rating scale tool. Based on this comparison the COS team selects the rating 1-7 that best summarizes the child's mixture of age-expected and not-yet age expected abilities. For COS teams that use a summary tool the numerical rating portion of the COS process is completed at this step.

Step Three: Weighing Settings and Situations – This third step is required when COS teams use the following seven-point rating scale tool and approach:

> [COS Decision Tree for Summary Rating Discussions](#) *(or any rating scale tool that relies on a process-driven approach).*

This step is not required in most situations where COS teams are utilizing a hybrid approach rating scale tool such as is reflected in the EDIS COS Organizing Tool. However, in instances where the illustrations and descriptors of the step two are insufficient for the COS team to determine an accurate rating, team members will use the remaining questions of the decision tree within the EDIS tool to examine the child's skills more deeply and thereby arrive at an agreed upon rating.

In terms of process and results, step three explores the *extent* to which, within an outcome area, a child is using the age-expected, immediate foundational, and foundational skills they possess *across settings and situations*. Unlike step two where the purpose was to define the child's mixture of skills, step three uses a series of questions to examine the degree to which the child has generalized the documented skills or behaviors across environments and persons. Utilizing the process approach, step three uses "yes/no" questions along with phrases such as "occasional use," "more than" and "most or all of the time," to guide the COS team to a valid COS rating.

Regardless which seven-point rating scale tool and associated approach the COS team uses, infrequently team members may struggle to agree on the appropriate rating for a child. In these circumstances participants are encouraged to consider using a resource

such as Appendix B: What If We Can't Reach Consensus developed by the ECO Center.

One final point that can be made about the COS process at entry is the strong foundation that these conversations and ratings provide for understanding a child's functional strengths and needs. This strong foundation subsequently may be used in developing meaningful, integrated IFSPs and IEPs. This topic is addressed in more detail later in this section under the heading of Integrating the Child Outcomes into the IFSP/IEP Process.

Understanding and Answering the "Exit Progress Question"

When children *exit* Early On or preschool special education, in addition to determining a numerical rating of 1-7 for each outcome area, the COS team is also responsible for answering the exit progress question. Sometimes referred to as the "new skills question," this question is answered separately for each outcome area and is a pivotal part of the COS process. From a data standpoint, the COS team's response to this question has the power to define whether a child benefited from participating in *Early On* or preschool special education. For this reason, participants in the COS process must understand what the question is asking and how to answer it correctly.

The response to the exit progress question *is not* based on comparing a child's entry and exit numerical ratings. This question stands separate from the numerical rating and is simply asking whether a child has acquired *any new skills or behaviors* since the entry rating was determined. Stated another way, the progress question is asking about the child's current skills and behaviors compared to those that the child was using functionally upon entry into the program. In almost all cases the answer to this question is "yes." The key point to remember is that the exit progress question is asking about the child's progress compared to self, not about progress relative to age expectations. In practice, COS teams must answer "yes" to the question even if the child has acquired only one new functional skill related to the outcome area being considered.

In rare instances, the answer to the exit progress question is no; however, these instances occur for less than 2 percent of the child population and typically occur for children with a regressive condition and/or severe disabilities. In these situations, where the child has not been able to develop new skills or behaviors, the exit progress question must be answered correctly as no.

Included in this manual is Appendix C, which lists all the *impossible* numerical COS ratings when combined with the exit progress question. This document may be of help in determining correct answers to the exit progress question.

Using Part C Exit Ratings as Part B Entry Ratings

For a child entering preschool special education from *Early On*, the preschool team is permitted to report the *Early On* exit ratings as the child's preschool special education entry ratings. Before taking this step, however, the preschool team must ensure that the

Early On exit ratings are an accurate reflection of the child's *current* functional skills and behaviors.

Deciding if Part C Exit Rating May Be Used

A primary question that the preschool team must address is regarding the validity of the ratings. A few important considerations are key to answering the question of validity. They are as follows:

Time is one of the most crucial considerations regarding whether Part C *Early On* exit ratings will be used as Part B Preschool entry ratings. Because children develop and change rapidly at this age, the number of days that have elapsed between when the Part C exit ratings were determined and when the Part B entry rating will be reported is critical. As a general guideline, only those Part C exit ratings that were determined within the past *30 calendar days or less* should be used for Part B entry ratings.

Collaboration is another important consideration in ensuring the validity of outcome ratings across Part C exit and Part B entry. As part of early childhood transition IDEA regulations require collaboration between the programs to ensure a meaningful, timely process. In that spirit Part C and Part B personnel are encouraged to collaborate during the transition process to determine valid child outcome ratings. The structured conversations associated with the COS process will lead to outcome ratings that are valid for both Part C and Part B purposes as well as a shared understanding of the child's functional strengths and instructional needs. Part B personnel may best use this information not only to report accurate COS ratings but also as the strong foundation of the IEP process.

Consultation is a key consideration for ensuring valid outcomes ratings in systems that do not yet collaborate around determining valid child outcomes ratings to be used for both Part C exit and Part B entry. In these instances, if Part B is determining entry ratings within 30 calendar days of when Part C determined exit ratings, Part B personnel are encouraged to consult with Part C personnel and review the exit documentation to determine if the Part C ratings are an accurate reflection of the child's current skills and behaviors and appropriate for use as Part B entry ratings.

Requirements for Reporting Part C Exit Ratings as Part B Entry

Requirements for reporting Part C exit ratings as Part B entry ratings are the same as for reporting any Part B entry ratings. However, there are some additional reporting clarifications that may prove helpful.

Date of Entry Ratings: The Part B entry date would be a different and later date than that reported by Part C as the exit rating date. Although Part B personnel are using and submitting the same COS ratings, the Part B entry rating date will reflect a date which is *both* after Part B personnel have determined the Part C exit ratings to be a current and valid reflection of the child's entry skills *and* after the child's services on the IEP have started.

All or None: When reporting the Part C exit ratings as Part B entry ratings, *all three outcome exit ratings* from Part C must be used and reported a second time as the entry ratings for Part B.

Reporting in MSDS: There is not a mechanism within the state data system that will automatically pull Part C data forward and report it as Part B data. The *Early On* exit ratings that were reported for a child in the MSDS Part C Early Childhood Outcomes component must be reported again in the Part B Preschool Outcomes component with a new entry rating date.

Appendix D includes a quick reference guide to the reporting requirements associated with *Early On* and preschool special education child outcomes.

Special Considerations Regarding Child Outcomes Ratings

Prematurity

For determining a child's *eligibility* for *Early On*, providers consider and may adjust for prematurity until the child is two years of age. However, chronological age, not adjusted age is used for the COS process. No age adjustments are made for prematurity at any point in determining a child's COS ratings. Always using a child's chronological age provides a uniform basis from which ratings are determined. Consistently using chronological age for all children also allows programs to show how children born prematurely catch up and have benefitted from early intervention services.

Assistive Technology/Supports

During the COS process, allow children to use any assistive technology or supports that they typically use to complete a task or participate meaningfully in a routine. COS ratings are not altered because a child uses assistive technology or supports. In the COS process, a child's true functionality can only be determined when the use of technology or supports in demonstrating a particular skill or behavior are welcomed.

Child outcomes ratings measure functionality, not form; and assistive measures, including the use of language, vision, hearing, or mobility devices, are a proven pathway to competency for many children. As programs help children and families access and use assistive measures successfully, a child's functioning will improve, and COS ratings will

reflect these positive changes.

Appropriate Use of Standardized Assessment Tools

The information from a standardized or domain-based assessment tool alone is insufficient for determining an outcome rating. The COS process is completed as a means of determining a child's functional abilities across settings and situations. In contrast, most standardized and domain-based instruments are designed to assess specific knowledge or skills that a child can demonstrate within a prescribed setting and time frame.

A related, but separate point of concern regarding assessment occurs when persons completing the COS process seek to gather routines-based, functional information using a standardized assessment manner. Instead of relying on observation and information supplied by multiple sources across multiple settings, the child is prompted to perform discrete skills from everyday life in a test-like situation. This method of gathering information does not reflect the child's ability to use skills in an integrated, functional manner.

Foster Care

For a child who is in foster care, the ongoing role and input of the biological parent, unless rights have been terminated, is important to recognize and include. Additionally, the role and input of the foster parent(s) should also be sought and included. The combined contributions provide a broader picture of the child's functional skills across settings and situations and together they will be key factors in the child's development and progress.

Online Resources for Understanding the COS Process

Online options for learning about and following the quality practices associated with child outcomes have been developed through funding from OSEP.

An online learning resource that provides foundational information about the COS process and key practices for promoting consistent and meaningful COS decisions is called COS Process Online Module: Collecting & Using Data to Improve Programs (https://eotta.ccresa.org/Event.php?id=3408). This module is available on the EOT&TA website at the link provided. It is self-paced and may be revisited as often as users desire. The module consists of eight sessions with each of the sessions taking from 30-45 minutes to complete. The sessions are organized in a consistent manner of providing the learner with a presentation after setting the purpose of the session. Following the presentation, an opportunity is given to practice the new skills and assess one's understanding.

An additional online option for learning more about the COS measurement process is called the **Child Outcomes Summary-Team Collaboration (COS-TC) Quality Practices and Checklist.** This resource tool is presented in module format with each

segment giving *Early On* and preschool special education providers opportunities to extend their learning by watching video clips of COS team meetings with families and rating the extent to which providers depicted in the videos use COS-TC quality practices. For those interested in these modules, they are available on the [ECTA Center website](#) (http://olms.cte.jhu.edu/olms2/COSTC).

The COS-TC checklist is supplied to identify, observe, and assess recommended team collaboration within the COS process. A description of each of the quality practices and the associated indicators of quality are included in the checklist. The checklist is available for downloading as a Word document on the [ECTA Center website](#) (http://ectacenter.org/~docs/eco/COS- TC_Checklist_March_2017.docx).

Converting COS Data to OSEP Progress Categories/Summary Statements is another online resource that is presented through video and activities. This online interactive experience explains how the data obtained from the COS process are converted to child outcomes data that states report annually to the federal government. This resource may be accessed on the [DaSy Center website](#) (http://dasyonline.org/cos-osep-reporting).

Additional Training Materials And Resources related to the COS process are available on the ECTA Center webpage called [COS Process Professional Development](#) (http://ectacenter.org/eco/pages/cospd.asp).

Integrating the COS Process into the IFSP/IEP Process

The practice of using the rich child outcomes data to inform the IEP/IFSP process is called integrating the child outcomes. This practice of combining the COS process and the IFSP or IEP development process into one seamless experience for teams, including family members, has multiple, strong benefits which are described in the following paragraphs.

Functional IFSPs and IEPs - Keeping a focus on the three child outcome areas during referral and evaluation encourages teams to gather information that is essential for understanding a child's functional skills, the adverse impact of any identified delays or disabilities, and the child's current intervention needs within the context of functional routines. Moving forward, this consistent focus on outcomes when developing and updating IFSPs/IEPs encourages the team to craft outcomes and goals that emphasize what is meaningful for the child and family rather than what is simply missing.

Promoting Family Engagement - When child outcome information is woven into each step of supporting children and families, integration strongly promotes family voice and participation. Using the shared, functional vocabulary of child outcomes lessens a reliance on standardized terminology and assessment alone. The ensuing

reliance on routines and settings acknowledges the rich and culturally relevant information that only families can provide and sets the stage for increased family collaboration in both the development and implementation of effective IFSPs and IEPs.

Meaningful Work - For the practitioner, the integration of child outcomes promises alignment between work and purpose. In this context child outcomes data is not just used to fulfill federal reporting requirements, but to truly inform the work of early intervention and preschool special education. Additionally, the alignment of the COS process and the IFSP/IEP development processes provides practitioners with the opportunity to use their time and resources in a coordinated and efficient manner.

The idea of integrating child outcomes into the IFSP/IEP process has momentum in several states. These states most often have developed IFSP and IEP forms that contain the child outcomes information as an essential and embedded element; however, integration of the COS process does not require specifically designed paperwork. The most crucial factor in integration is the practitioner's understanding of the integration process.

The ECTA website (https://ectacenter.org/eco/pages/ifsp-iep.asp) contains resources and documents that outline the practice of integrating child outcome information throughout the processes of developing a child's plan or program. This website contains separate documents that illustrate integrating child outcomes in the IFSP process (http://ectacenter.org/~pdfs/eco/IFSP-OutcomesFlowChart.pdf) as well as the IEP process (http://ectacenter.org/~pdfs/eco/original_IEP- Outcomes_Flow_Chart.pdf).

Section 5: Reporting Requirements for Child Outcomes

Federal and Michigan Requirements for Reporting

Federal Requirements - The child outcomes calculations completed for comparison to indicator targets and reporting at the federal level use matched records for children who have been enrolled in and receiving *Early On* or preschool special education supports for at least six continuous months within a state. The six-month timeframe refers to the months a child has been receiving supports, it does not refer to the time a child has been receiving support from a particular district, program, or provider. For federal reporting, the six-month calculation is done at the state systems level and data based on matched records that meet this threshold are included in Michigan's annual submission to OSEP.

Michigan Requirements - As a general expectation, COS ratings for all children, whether entry or exit, are to be reported as part of the *next* MSDS Collection that occurs after the rating was completed. This timely reporting of COS ratings aligns with the reporting timelines listed below and has the resulting benefit of Child Outcomes data that are more accurate and complete.

In those instances when a child's COS ratings were not included in the next MSDS Collection, local service area and district personnel are strongly encouraged to submit these data through a subsequent MSDS General or SRM Collection. The reporting rules in MSDS do not limit the reporting of COS ratings based on their alignment to an MSDS Collection date or program/school year. Indeed, for a child who has participated in *Early On* or preschool special education, the child's entry and exit ratings may be reported in *any* MSDS Collection up to and including the one in which the child was reported as having exited the program. In practice, both a child's entry and exit ratings may be reported in the *same* MSDS Collection. Further, in rare instances in which no COS rating data were reported for a child, both the entry and exit ratings may be reported as part of the same MSDS Collection that reports the child's exit from *Early On* or preschool special education.

Part C Early Childhood Outcomes Children Reported

Part C federal reporting requirements also include indicating how many of the children exiting Part C had both entry and exit ratings completed regardless of length of time in service, therefore, all children who are enrolled and receive any duration of services through *Early On* are to have entry and exit ratings reported. With a focus on this federal requirement, Michigan's reporting rate for Part C Early Childhood Outcomes has significantly increased.

Part B Preschool Outcomes Children Reported

Aligning with the federal requirements, children in Michigan who are enrolled and receive six months or more of preschool special education supports are to have entry and exit ratings reported.

What are the Required Timelines for the COS Process?

Part C Early Childhood Outcomes Timelines

Entry rating must be completed within 90 days after the *referral date* and be based upon recent data describing the child's functional development.

Annual rating is currently optional for data submission. Conducting the COS process is, however, a meaningful way to determine functional child and family outcomes for annual IFSP development. For MSDS reporting purposes, an annual rating can be used as an exit rating if there is a loss of contact with the family. To do so, the same information and a rating date would need to be submitted as an exit rating using the general collection or student record maintenance (SRM) collection.

Exit rating must be completed when the child discontinues *Early On* services and is a fundamental part of reporting accurate child outcomes. The exit rating is based

on recent information describing the child's development. The exit rating must be determined up to 90 days *prior to exit* from *Early On*.

Once again, parent input is an essential part of gathering exit data. At the time of an annual or exit rating, the additional exit progress question for each of the three child outcomes is required.

Most often, the child outcomes data is collected when *Early On* services discontinue around the age of three. In addition, there are other situations when an exit rating needs to be completed. These additional situations include:

A. **Completion of the IFSP** - The child has successfully completed the IFSP and the IFSP team, including the family, determines that the child no longer meets eligibility criteria and therefore no longer requires services. The exit date is the date that the services end.

B. **Decline Services** - The family has withdrawn from *Early On* (after an IFSP is in place and prior to the third birthday) and has declined further services; exit is the date that the family provides written or verbal indication of withdrawal from services and the parent/guardian is provided Prior Written Notice.

C. **Unable to Contact** - *Early On* is unable to contact the family after repeated attempts. If there is ongoing assessment data from no greater than 90 days *prior* to the exit date, that data should be used to determine exit rating for that child. Be sure to use any information gathered from parents during this time to inform the ratings of the child upon exit. If a local service area conducts annual COS ratings, a rating completed up to 90 days prior to the child's exit date could be used.

D. **Moved, In-state** - The family has moved in-state. If the duration of the break in services for the move is short, and/or the family provides notice of the move and actively takes steps to have their record/IFSP transferred to a new local service area, i.e., indicates desire to continue services, this would NOT be considered an exit for the purposes of child outcomes data collection. The new local service area would not need to provide an entry rating but would assume responsibility for any exit ratings. If the family moves in-state and there is a break in services, with no continuity in activity or service plan between the old and new local service areas, the original local service area should complete an exit rating, and the new local service area would consider this a new enrollment and would start with an entry rating and move forward from that point.

E. **Moved, Out-of-state** - Family has moved out-of-state. In this case, you would provide exit data based on the date *Early On* services were discontinued in Michigan.

F. **Death** - The child is deceased. In this case, you would not collect or submit annual or exit data and would instead document the child exiting *Early On* with the appropriate code per directions provided in the Michigan Student Data System (MSDS) manual.

Part B Preschool Outcomes Timelines

Entry ratings are to be completed no later than 30 school days after the child's *start of service*. The start of service date is the first day that a child receives any service listed on his or her IEP. Although a child's start date may occasionally be the same as the child's IEP date, in most instances when a child is moving from the year-round support of *Early On* to the school year supports of preschool special education, the IEP date and the start of service date will be different. It is always the start of services date that "starts the clock" for completing a child's entry ratings.

Annual ratings are optional for data submission. IEP teams are encouraged to go through the COS process as a meaningful way of determining an accurate picture of the child's current functional performance and for developing IEPs that reflect this important outcome information in the child's present level statement and instructional objectives.

Exit rating may be completed up to 30 school days prior to the child's exit from preschool special education supports due to one of the following factors:

A. **No longer eligible** - Through the re-evaluation and IEP process, the child has been found no longer in need of special education.

B. **Turning six** - For children who continue to receive preschool special education instruction/supports past their fifth birthday, their COS ratings should be submitted on or before their sixth birthday. The submission of the outcomes data does not indicate or necessitate a change in placement, only that they have reached the maximum age for collecting child outcomes data.

C. **Enrolling in Kindergarten or Developmental Kindergarten** - Child outcomes data must be submitted prior to a child's enrollment for any portion of the day in developmental kindergarten or kindergarten. This stipulation is true even for children who are dually enrolled in preschool special education and kindergarten experience.

D. **Revocation of consent** - In rare instances when a parent or guardian withdraws consent for the provision of special education, an exit rating should be completed if the child has had six months or more of services.

At the time of an exit COS rating, the participants in the process will answer the exit progress question for each of the three child outcomes. As emphasized earlier in this document, the exit progress question is an essential part of reporting accurate child outcome ratings requiring a "yes" or "no" response regarding whether the child has developed any new skills or behaviors since the entry rating.

Section 6: How Child Outcomes Data is Used to Demonstrate Benefit

Accurate, complete, and timely outcome information on all children served through *Early On* and preschool special education is arguably the most important factor in demonstrating the benefit of these programs. The data that practitioners provide are foundational to making *all* calculations regarding the benefit of *Early On* and preschool special education. For this reason, the data from those working directly with families, caregivers, and children are essential to the process of demonstrating benefit.

Matched Records – The Importance of Entry AND Exit Ratings

An important part of measuring benefit is a clear understanding of the concept of matched records. The term *matched records* means that the child, upon exiting *Early On* or preschool special education, has *both* an entry and an exit rating reported in the Michigan Student Data System (MSDS) for *each of the three outcome areas*. Matched records also include the answer to the exit progress question.

Lead personnel in each local service area and district are responsible for establishing a cohesive process for collecting and reporting entry and exit ratings to MSDS. Practitioners in both *Early On* and preschool special education are typically assigned the responsibility of collecting entry and exit ratings and then reporting these data at the local service area and district levels. Although in some cases this information is reported using paper forms, in most cases these data components are collected using an electronic Student Information System (SIS). From the SIS, the entry and exit data are subsequently reported to MSDS as part of a General or SRM collection. A cohesive process for collecting and reporting ensures completeness of data and subsequently allows entry and exit rating records to be matched at the state level.

At the state level, matched records are computed separately for *Early On* and preschool special education. For this reason, a child who participates first in *Early On* and then in preschool special education will need to have two sets of entry and exit ratings reported separately to MSDS, resulting in a matched record for each program.

Occasionally, within a single program, *Early On* or preschool special education, a child

may have more than one entry or exit rating submitted in MSDS. This duplication is most often due to a child moving to another provider, district, or school. In these instances, when more than one rating of the same type is submitted, the *earliest* entry rating and *latest* exit rating are used to compute the child's matched records.

In addition to entry and exit ratings, annual ratings may also be submitted to MSDS. These records are not considered in defining matched records and there is not a mechanism within the state data system that automatically converts an annual rating to be an exit rating even if it was the latest rating submitted for a child. However, to improve completeness of child outcomes data, particularly when contact has been lost with a child/family, district personnel may subsequently report a child's annual rating data as an exit rating by changing the rating type and re-submitting the data through the MSDS general collection or SRM collection. Doing so will increase the matched records reporting rate.

Progress Categories

The next step in demonstrating benefit is completed annually at the end of each school/program year. This step involves using the matched record data to group children into progress categories that best describe their movement toward age-expectations. *Progress categories* are used to capture this movement toward age-expectations and there are five distinct groupings, labeled "a" through "e", that describe the improvement a child has made in functioning since entering *Early On* or preschool special education. The lettered groupings with the associated descriptions of improvement are listed below:

a) *Did not improve functioning.*
b) *Improved functioning, but not sufficiently to move nearer to functioning comparable to same-aged peers.*
c) *Improved functioning to a level nearer to same-aged peers but did not reach it.*
d) *Improved functioning to reach a level comparable to same-aged peers.*
e) *Improved functioning to maintain at a level comparable to same-aged peers.*

As suggested, determining the appropriate progress category for a child in each outcome area relies solely on the child's matched records data including the numerical entry and exit ratings along with the "yes" or "no" response to the exit progress question. Appendix E provides a reference regarding in which progress category a child would be included once the entry and exit ratings within a child's record have been matched.

After the appropriate progress categories are established for each child with matched records, the data are aggregated at the state level which results in totals reflecting the number of children included in each progress category within each outcome area. These aggregated data are used in the next step of measuring benefit, Summary Statements.

Summary Statements

The Child Outcomes *Summary Statements* are two broad classifications used to measure, and report benefit for children who have participated in *Early On* or preschool special education. Both statements utilize aggregated progress category data described earlier in this manual to calculate the percentage of children in each outcome area who have *moved substantially closer to age-expectations* and the percentage who *are meeting age expectations*. For *Early On* and for preschool special education the data regarding the two summary statements for each of the three Child Outcomes is collected and calculated separately resulting in six data reporting points for both *Early On* and preschool special education. These data points are used to annually report information to the United States Department of Education, Office of Special Education Programs (OSEP).

Additional information about the definition of each the summary statement and their associated calculations using the progress categories is provided below.

Summary Statement 1: Substantially Increased Rate of Growth

Definition: Of those children who entered the program below age expectations in each outcome, the percent who *substantially increased their rate of growth* by the time they exited the program.

Calculation: To determine what percentage of children made substantial growth toward age expectations by the time they exited the program, the number of children whose progress is described by categories "c" and "d" are first added together. These two progress categories each describe children who, over the course of the intervention, have moved closer to age-expected functioning. The total number of children in categories "c" and "d" is then divided by the number of children in all the categories except "e" (a+b+c+d) to arrive at a percentage. For this calculation, progress category "e" is omitted because descriptively these children entered *Early On*/preschool special education using age-expected skills and behaviors and subsequently exited the program demonstrating age-expected skills and behaviors and therefore do not meet the definition for this summary statement of entering below age expectations. The formula below indicates how substantial growth towards age expectations is calculated for *summary statement 1:*

$$(c + d) / (a + b + c + d)$$

Summary Statement 2: Functioning Within Age Expectations

Definition: The percent of children who were functioning *within age expectations* in each outcome by the time they exited the program.

Calculation: To determine what percentage of children were functioning within age expectations when they exited the program, the number of children whose progress is described by categories "d" and "e" are first added together. These two progress categories each describe children who left intervention demonstrating age-expected

functioning. The total number of children in categories "d" and "e" is then divided by the number of children in all the categories (a+b+c+d+e) to arrive at a percentage. The formula below indicates how functioning within age expectations is calculated for *summary statement 2:*

$$(d + e) / (a + b + c + d + e)$$

Federal Reporting of Benefit

The Summary Statements data are used by OSEP federally to determine the benefit for children who have participated in Part C/*Early On* or Part B/preschool special education. This determination is computed annually for each state by reviewing the most recently reported outcomes data and comparing that information to targets that the state previously developed and submitted for the program/school year. The paragraphs below are provided to clarify how this comparison is done.

The State Performance Plan/Annual Performance Report (SPP/APR)

IDEA requires each state and territory to develop and submit a separate Part C and Part B *State Performance Plan/Annual Performance Report (SPP/APR).* Each SPP/APR is made up of both compliance and results indicators and these two types of indicators are used by OSEP to evaluate the state's efforts to fulfill the requirements and purposes of IDEA. Part C and Part B SPP/APRs each have an indicator for Child Outcomes. For Part C it is called *Indicator C3: Early Childhood Outcomes*. For Part B it is called *Indicator B7: Preschool Outcomes*.

The SPP/APR and associated indicators have two distinct facets that are used to evaluate the state's efforts related to Part C and Part B. For the first facet, the state is required to set achievable and rigorous targets for all results indicators. These targets are submitted to OSEP for a five-year span and must show improvement over time. For the second facet, the state is required to annually report to OSEP their performance data associated with each indicator. Performance data is compared to the targets for the same program/school year. These data are reported with an expectation that the state is meeting the submitted targets or can provide suitable rationale for any target(s) that are not met.

Target Setting - The SPP/APR for both Part C and Part B utilizes the two Child Outcomes Summary Statements as a framework for defining annual targets. Using this framework of the two Summary Statements, states must develop and submit annual targets for each of the three outcome areas. In other words, for each program/school year states are required to develop and submit three targets for Summary Statement 1 and three targets for Summary Statement 2. All totaled states submit six targets for each reporting year.

Part C and Part B engage in this target setting process separately and the paragraphs following provide additional detail on how this facet of the SPP/APR is accomplished for each.

Part C Early Childhood Outcomes Target Setting

In Michigan the process of setting annual performance targets for IDEA Indicator C3: Early Childhood Outcomes is coordinated within the MiLEAP Office of Early Education, Division of Early Learning and Family Support. This process begins with a review of historical indicator performance data reported by local service areas and analyzed at the state level. Following this analysis and with input from a broad stakeholder base, including families and agency personnel, new measurable and rigorous performance targets are recommended for the next five years of reporting. These recommended targets are presented to the Michigan Interagency Coordinating Council (MICC) for their input. Following a review of the input provided by MICC, the new targets are finalized by the MiLEAP, Office of Early Education and submitted to OSEP as part of Michigan's Part C SPP/APR.

Part B Preschool Outcomes Target Setting

In collaboration with the MDE OSE, the MiLEAP Office of Early Education, Division of Early Learning and Family Support coordinates the process of setting annual performance targets for Indicator B7: Preschool Outcomes. This process begins with a review of historical performance data reported by local educational agencies and analyzed at the state level. Based on this data analysis, new measurable and rigorous performance targets are recommended for the next five years of reporting. These recommended targets are presented to the Special Education Advisory Council (SEAC), who reviews the recommendations and provides input. With consideration of the input from SEAC, the performance targets are approved by MDE OSE and submitted to OSEP as part of Michigan's Part B SPP/APR.

For reference purposes, the most recently approved Indicator C3: Early Childhood Outcomes state performance targets for *Early On* are provided in Appendix F. The most recently approved Indicator B7: Preschool Outcomes state performance targets for preschool special education are provided in Appendix G.

Performance Reporting - The SPP/APR for both Part C and Part B once again use the two Child Outcomes Summary Statements as a framework for annual reporting. For each of the two summary statements, the annual performance data are reported and compared to targets for each of the three child outcomes, resulting in a total of six performance results being reported. In other words, Summary Statement 1 will have results reported and compared to the annual targets for each of the three outcomes. Likewise, Summary Statement 2 will have results reported and compared to the annual target for each of the

three outcomes.

As with target setting, the facet of performance reporting is done separately for Part C and Part B. The *Early On* performance results and target comparisons associated with Indicator C3: Early Childhood Outcomes are reported in the Part C SPP/APR. The Part B SPP/APR will contain the performance results and target comparisons for Indicator B7: Preschool Outcomes.

Section 7: Accessing Your Child Outcomes Data

Accessing the Most Recently Collected Child Outcomes Data

Part C Early Childhood Outcomes Data

Early On Reporting Website - Local service area specific and child-level outcomes data are available to *Early On* Coordinators on the [Early On Reporting](https://survey.cus.wayne.edu/EarlyOn/Default.aspx) (https://survey.cus.wayne.edu/EarlyOn/Default.aspx) website. These data for a program year are available in February following the close of the previous program year. For example, child outcomes data collected in the 22-23 program year was available in February of 2024. These data are accessed by using the unique username and password assigned to the *Early On* coordinator. *Early On* coordinators who experience challenges with accessing these data may reach out to their MiLEAP Consultant for assistance.

Early On Data Website – the [Early On Data](https://www.earlyondata.com) (https://www.earlyondata.com) website provides compliance and results data for Part C Indictors. Child Outcomes data are typically updated in early Spring. As part of the functionality of this website, the rankings tab may be used to display child outcomes data and reporting rates comparing local service areas and trends may be displayed to compare child outcomes data and reporting rates across reporting years.

Part B Preschool Outcomes Data Access

The preschool outcomes data are available in October following the close of the previous school year in which they were collected. For example, the child outcomes data collected in the 22-23 school year was available in October 2023. To receive the state and district level data, special education supervisors should contact the state 619 Coordinator. Requested reports will be sent via email with ISD and local district level information included.

Accessing Publicly Reported Child Outcomes Data

Child Outcomes data for the preceding school/program year are publicly reported annually in late May for both *Early On* and preschool special education. As an example, data for

school/program year 22-23 is publicly reported by the end of May 2024.

Part C Early Childhood Outcomes Public Reporting

For *Early On*, local service area data are publicly reported for Part C indicators 1-8 on [MiSchoolData](https://www.mischooldata.org/special-education-summary/) (https://www.mischooldata.org/special-education-summary/). The data for Indicator 3: Early Childhood Outcomes, including both the annual targets and results for each local service area, are available as part of a downloadable spreadsheet.

Part B Preschool Outcomes Public Reporting

For Part B, intermediate and member school districts data are publicly reported for Indicators 1-14 on [MiSchoolData](https://www.mischooldata.org/selected-indicator-reports/) (https://www.mischooldata.org/selected-indicator-reports/). The most recent publicly available data at the intermediate and member district levels are available via separate downloadable spreadsheets. Both spreadsheets include the data for Indicator 7: Preschool Outcomes. Using the Selected Indictor Reports tab on the website, the Preschool Outcomes data may be filtered by reporting year and location, including the state, intermediate, and member district level. The annual results and targets for Preschool Outcomes are included in both the downloadable spreadsheets and the Selected Indictor Reports.

For more information about accessing your local service area data for *Early On,* please contact the Part C Data Manager at MiLEAP. For preschool special education data questions, contact the Part B 619 Coordinator at MiLEAP.

Section 8: Reference List

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Section 9: Appendices

Appendix A: Conversation Starters - Making Functional Child Outcome Ratings

Source: Thinking about Functional Child Outcomes. Donna Spiker, Lauren Barton, Mary Beth Bruder. OSEP Early Childhood Outcomes Meeting, August 2007, Baltimore, MD.

As you discuss each of the three global outcomes, consider these general questions:

1. What does your child typically do?

2. How does your child use his/her skills to accomplish tasks?

3. Is your child's performance consistent across a variety of settings and situations?

Outcome	Functional Skills	Conversation Starters
A: Children have positive social relationships	▪ Relating with adults ▪ Relating with other children ▪ For older children following rules related to groups or interacting with others Includes: ▪ Attachment/ separation/autonomy ▪ Expressing emotions and feelings ▪ Learning rules and expectations ▪ Social interactions and play	▪ How does the child relate to his/her parents? ▪ How does the child relate to strangers? At first? After a while? In different settings? ▪ How does the child display emotions? ▪ How would you describe the child's participation in 'games' (e.g., joint attention, social, cooperative, rule-based, with turn-taking?) ▪ How does the child interact with other children? ▪ How does the child let others know he/she needs help? Is frustrated? ▪ Are there social skills or behaviors, or factors from across the developmental domains, which impact the child's positive social relationships? ▪ Does this child integrate social skills and put them to use across settings and situations?

Outcome	Functional Skills	Conversation Starters
B: Children acquire and use knowledge and skills	▪ Thinking, reasoning, remembering, problem solving ▪ Using symbols and language ▪ Understanding physical and social worlds Includes: ▪ Early concepts - symbols, pictures, numbers, classification, spatial relations ▪ Imitation ▪ Object permanence ▪ Expressive language and communication ▪ Early literacy	▪ How does the child use words and skills/behaviors he/she has in everyday settings (e.g., at home, at the park, at child care, at a store or mall, with different people)? ▪ How does the child understand and respond to directions or requests from others? ▪ Does the child use something learned at one time later or in another situation? ▪ How does the child interact with books, pictures, and print?

Outcome	Functional Skills	Conversation Starters
C: Children take appropriate action to meet their needs	▪ Taking care of basic needs ▪ Getting from place to place ▪ Using tools (e.g., fork, toothbrush, crayon) ▪ In older children, contributing to their own health and safety. Includes: ▪ Integrating motor skills to complete tasks ▪ Self-help skills (e.g., dressing, feeding, grooming, toileting, household responsibility) ▪ Acting on the world to get what one wants, taking appropriate actions to meet needs	▪ What does the child do when he/she can't get or doesn't have what he/she wants? ▪ What does the child do when he/she is hungry? Frustrated? Needs help? Is upset or needs comfort? ▪ How does the child behave when dressing and undressing? When eating? ▪ Does the child display toy preferences? How? ▪ Are the actions the child uses to meet his/her needs appropriate for his/her age? Can he/she accomplish things that peers do?

Appendix B: What if We Can't Reach Consensus?

Source: Early Childhood Outcomes Center

Team disagreement is a commonly mentioned concern when considering the Child Outcome Summary (COS) Process. Team disagreement occur infrequently. The text below gives strategies for coming to consensus and for dealing effectively with the rare situations in which the group is having difficulty reaching an agreement.

Suggestions and Strategies for Reaching Consensus

Structure - Structure the discussion to minimize the likelihood of reaching an impasse.

Policy - Adopt a policy/procedure for dealing with these situations. Possible options:

- Majority rules.

- Supervisor decides.

Pace - Focus most of the discussion on the child's behaviors and skills related to the outcome; don't select a rating number too quickly.

Rationale - Discuss the rationales for the differing ratings; focus on concrete descriptions and explore how these descriptions support a rating.

Background - Include more discussion on what behaviors and skills you would see in a typically developing child this age to provide more background for the discussion of this child.

Review - If unresolvable differences are occurring frequently, revisit and discuss how the rating is being decided.

Conversation Prompts for Groups Having Difficulty Reaching Consensus

Focus on Outcomes - In the rare instances in which group members are having difficulty coming to consensus, suggest that they re-visit documents that give examples of the breadth of content covered in each outcome. Have they discussed the child's behaviors and skills regarding those aspects of the child outcomes? Are the comments being considered relevant to the child outcome up for rating discussion? Conversation prompts may include the following:

"I hear you describing the child's skills regarding [insert content], what information do you have about the child's skills in [insert another relevant setting or situation or outcome component that hasn't yet been discussed]?"

"Tell me about the kinds of evidence that suggest to you this child has [insert modifier] age-expected behavior or has [insert modifier] immediate foundational skills?"

- When have you observed or documented those skills?
- In what situations?
- How frequently does that occur?
- Were the accommodations/supports available in that setting those that are usually available to the child? What were they?
- You identified this as an immediate foundational skill. Are there other steps in the sequence of development that need to occur between developing this skill and the age-expected skills in this area?
- Is there other information you need or want to be better equipped to make this decision?
- Has everyone on the team had a chance to talk about the skills they have observed and the evidence they are considering in reaching a rating?
- Is any one person dominating conversation and that is part of the problem?

"What do most [insert child's age] year old children do with regard to this skill [or this outcome area]?"

"How does the child's disability/the child's delay/the change in the child's approach to these skills impact his/her ability to function in achieving this outcome RIGHT NOW?"

"Ratings are based on the child's functioning RIGHT NOW at one point in time."

"Thinking about the child's skills that have been discussed":

- Right now, is the child showing skills that are expected for his/her age?
- Right now, is the child showing skills that are immediate foundations for the skills that other peers his/her age are showing?
- How often? Can you describe what they are and when and where they occur?
- What behaviors and skills (or lack of skills) stand out in making you choose that number [or insert differentiating language associated with number?

There is at times discussion about wanting ratings to agree with eligibility. With some children and in some states, there is a lot of overlap between achievement of functional outcomes and eligibility; with other children and in other states, there is not. Eligibility

may focus a lot on testing done in contexts that differ substantially from those common in everyday functioning. Eligibility may or may not allow certain kinds of accommodations or supports; to the extent that these are available to the child in everyday situations, then they would be allowed in considering child outcomes ratings.

Eligibility usually is organized around specific domains whereas the functional outcomes are organized in a different way that could lead to different conclusions. Eligibility may assume corrections for prematurity; while this is a state decision, in many places outcomes ratings are based on a true chronological comparison.

> *"Taking all this into account, let's set eligibility decisions aside for a moment (though not necessarily the data you got to help make them), what do the child's skills and actions suggest about the child's functioning right now regarding the outcome?"*

Appendix C: Impossible Combinations of COS Process Responses

Source: Adapted from the Early Childhood Outcomes Center, August 2007.

The table below presents child outcomes rating scenarios with *technically impossible combinations* of the entry and exit ratings with a response of "no" to the exit progress question. For each impossible combination, the table provides an explanation as to why the rating information provided for entry and exit cannot be combined with a response of "no."

Scenario	ENTRY COS Rating *(Initial or Prior Rating)*	EXIT COS Rating *(Subsequent Rating)*	EXIT Question Response *("… any new skills or behaviors?")*	Explanation *(Why this combination of COS responses is impossible.)*
A	7 or 6	7 or 6	No	A "no" response to the new skills question means the child has not shown any new skills or behaviors related to the outcome between entry and exit. This combination of responses is impossible since a child must have acquired new skills to receive a rating of age- expected development (over the minimum time span which is six months); children must acquire new skills over time to maintain age-expected development.
B	5	6 or 7	No	A "no" response to the new skills question means the child has not shown any new skills or behaviors related to the outcome between entry and exit. A higher rating at exit means the child has acquired new skills.
C	5	5	No	A "no" response to the new skills question means the child has not shown any new skills

Scenario	ENTRY COS Rating (Initial or Prior Rating)	EXIT COS Rating (Subsequent Rating)	EXIT Question Response ("… any new skills or behaviors?")	Explanation (Why this combination of COS responses is impossible.)
				or behaviors related to the outcome between entry and exit. To receive the same rating on the scale at two different points in time, the child must have acquired new skills, because as children get older it takes more skills to receive the same rating.
D	4	5, 6, or 7	No	See explanation for #**B** above.
E	4	4	No	See explanation for #**C** above.
F	3	4, 5, 6, or 7	No	See explanation for #**B** above.
G	3	3	No	See explanation for #**C** above.
H	2	3, 4, 5, 6, or 7	No	See explanation for #**B** above.
I	2	2	No	See explanation for #**C** above.
J	1	2, 3, 4, 5, 6, or 7	No	See explanation for #**B** above.

Appendix D: Comparing Part C and B COS Process Elements

COS Process Element	Part C Early Childhood Outcomes Requirement	Part B Preschool Outcomes Requirement
Entry Rating Date	Up to 90 **calendar** days after Referral Date.	Up to 30 **school** days after start of IEP services.
Exit Rating Date	Up to 90 **calendar** days prior to exit from *Early On.*	Up to 30 **school** days prior to: • Becoming Ineligible • Turning six • Starting kindergarten or developmental kindergarten.
Annual Rating	Considered best practice for assessing functional abilities and developing or updating IFSPs.	Considered best practice for assessing functional abilities and developing or updating IEPs.
Assessment Tool	Using an assessment tool is a required part of the COS process. *Early On* local service areas are permitted to select any tool that accurately reflects children's skills and behaviors across developmental domains.	Districts are permitted to select and are required to use a valid and reliable assessment tool of children's skills and behaviors across developmental domains **OR** Preschool special education staff may choose to use the *Early On outcomes e*xit ratings as the Preschool outcomes entry ratings if those ratings are determined to be a current and accurate reflection of a child's functioning in all three outcome areas.
Eligibility Information	May be used to inform the COS rating, but not as a substitute for the COS process.	May be used to inform the COS rating, but not as a substitute for the COS process.
Child Outcomes Ratings	All infants and toddlers with an IFSP must be assigned a rating for all three child outcomes at **entry** and **exit**.	All children, age 2 ½ -5, with an IEP who are not yet enrolled in kindergarten or developmental kindergarten must be assigned a COS rating for all three child outcomes at **entry** and **exit**.
Family Input	Required to be sought as part of the COS process.	Required to be sought as part of the COS process.

Appendix E: Calculating OSEP Categories from COS Process Responses

Source: Adapted from the Early Childhood Outcomes Center, August 2007.

The table below shows the *resulting OSEP Progress Category* for all possible combinations of the numerical entry rating, numerical exit rating and response to the Exit Progress Question.

ENTRY COS Rating *(Initial or Prior Rating)*	EXIT COS Rating *(Subsequent Rating)*	EXIT Question Response *("… any new skills or behaviors?")*	Resulting OSEP Progress Reporting Category *(Based on information from prior three columns)*
7	6 or 7	Yes	e
7	1 to 5	Yes	b
7	1 to 5	No	a
6	6 or 7	Yes	e
6	1 to 5	Yes	b
6	1 to 5	No	a
5	6 or 7	Yes	d
5	5	Yes	b
5	1 to 4	Yes	b
5	1 to 4	No	a
4	6 or 7	Yes	d
4	5	Yes	c
4	4	Yes	b
4	1 to 3	Yes	b
4	1 to 3	No	a
3	6 or 7	Yes	d
3	4 or 5	Yes	c
3	3	Yes	b
3	1 or 2	Yes	b
3	1 or 2	No	a

ENTRY COS Rating *(Initial or Prior Rating)*	EXIT COS Rating *(Subsequent Rating)*	EXIT Question Response *("… any new skills or behaviors?")*	Resulting OSEP Progress Reporting Category *(Based on information from prior three columns)*
2	6 or 7	Yes	d
2	3 to 5	Yes	c
2	2	Yes	b
2	1	Yes	b
2	1	No	a
1	6 or 7	Yes	d
1	2 to 5	Yes	c
1	1	Yes	b
1	1	No	a

Note: The "Exit Question Response" refers to the "Yes" or "No" response provided to the question, "Has the child shown any new skills or behaviors related to this outcome since the last outcomes summary?"

Appendix F: Part C Early Childhood Outcomes Targets for 2020-2025

The information below reflects the measurable and rigorous performance targets that were developed and submitted to OSEP as part of Michigan's Part C SPP/APR.

Summary Statement 1: Substantial Growth Toward Age Expectations

Definition: Of those children who entered the program below age expectations in each outcome, the percent who *substantially increased their rate of growth* by the time they exited the program.

Outcome/FFY	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025
C3-A1: Positive Social Emotional Skills	75.19	75.29	75.39	75.49	75.59	75.69
C3-B1: Acquisition and Use of Knowledge and Skills	77.60	77.60	77.88	78.16	78.44	78.73
C3-C1: Use of Appropriate Behaviors to Meet Needs	78.24	78.34	78.44	78.54	78.64	78.74

Summary Statement 2: Functioning Within Age Expectations

Definition: The percent of children who were *functioning within age expectations* in each outcome by the time they exited the program.

Outcome/FFY	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025
C3-A2: Positive Social Emotional Skills	52.00	52.22	52.44	52.67	52.90	53.13
C3-B2: Acquisition and Use of Knowledge and Skills	45.50	45.50	45.94	46.38	46.82	47.28
C3-C2: Use of Appropriate Behaviors to Meet Needs	47.20	47.20	47.30	47.40	47.50	47.60

Appendix G: Part B Preschool Outcomes Targets for 2020-2025

The information below reflects the measurable and rigorous performance targets that were developed and submitted to OSEP as part of Michigan's Part B SPP/APR.

Summary Statement 1: Substantial Growth Toward Age Expectations

Definition: Of those children who entered the program below age expectations in each outcome, the percent who *substantially increased their rate of growth* by the time they exited the program.

Outcome/FFY	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025
B7-A1: Positive Social Emotional Skills	88.00	88.00	88.00	88.00	88.00	88.00
B7-B1: Acquisition and Use of Knowledge and Skills	86.00	86.00	87.00	87.00	88.00	88.00
B7-C1: Use of Appropriate Behaviors to Meet Needs	86.00	86.00	87.00	87.00	88.00	88.00

Summary Statement 2: Functioning Within Age Expectations

Definition: The percent of children who were *functioning within age expectations* in each outcome by the time they exited the program.

Outcome/FFY	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025
B7-A2: Positive Social Emotional Skills	57.00	57.00	58.00	58.00	59.00	59.00
B7-B2: Acquisition and Use of Knowledge and Skills	56.00	56.00	56.50	56.50	57.00	57.00
B7-C2: Use of Appropriate Behaviors to Meet Needs	59.00	59.00	59.50	59.50	60.00	60.00