

**Illinois State Board of Education**  
**Early Childhood Special Education Educational Environments Codes**

The Office of Special Education Programs has changed data reporting for preschool educational environments. Previous categories of early childhood, part-time/part-time, and early childhood special education have changed. The following information describes the new codes and how they must be used in reporting educational environments.

When reporting educational environments for children ages 3 through 5, use the following decision rules to determine which environment to choose. Please note that the order of the categories for children with disabilities ages 3 through 5 does *not* reflect a continuum from least to most restrictive.

**Definition of an early childhood program – a program that includes at least 50 percent nondisabled children.<sup>1</sup> Early childhood programs include, but are not limited to:**

- **Head Start**
- **Kindergarten**
- **Private preschools**
- **Early Childhood Block Grant/Preschool for All programs**
- **Blended classrooms**
- **Reverse mainstream classrooms**
- **Group child care**

**Attendance at an early childhood program need not be funded by IDEA, Part B funds.**

1. The first factor to consider is whether the child is attending a regular early childhood program as defined above. If so, report the child under Codes 20 21 or 22. Report the child in one of these environments even if the child receives special education services in other environments.

Use early childhood program codes 20, 21, or 22 when:

- District sends itinerant staff to child care center, Head Start, private preschool or Preschool for All sites.
- Child comes to an elementary school for speech therapy (walk-in) and district **knows** that the child spends remainder of the day in child care, Head Start, preschool, etc.
- Child spends ½ day in an ECSE class and then attends child care center for remainder of the day.

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<sup>1</sup> The Illinois State Board of Education (ISBE) recognizes this definition does not align with that given in Section 226.730 of the rules for special education; however, this agency (ISBE) does not have the authority to alter federal reporting requirements. Therefore, for collection purposes we must report Early Childhood educational environment data in accordance with the federal requirements.

Refer to the instructions in the section below to determine which of percent of time category is appropriate.

2. If the child does not attend a regular early childhood program or kindergarten, the next factor to consider is whether the child attends a special education program, as defined below. If so, report the child under Code 23, 24, 25 according to the location of the special education program. Report the child in one of these environments even if the child also receives special education at home or in a service provider location.

**Definition of a special education program – a program that includes less than 50 percent nondisabled children.**<sup>2</sup> Special education programs include, but are not limited to, special education and related services provided in:

- Special education classrooms in
    - regular school buildings;
    - trailers or portables outside regular school buildings;
    - child care facilities;
    - hospital facilities on an outpatient basis;
    - other community-based settings
  - Separate schools; and
  - Residential facilities
3. **Home.** If the child does not attend a regular early childhood program or a special education program, the next factor to consider is whether the child receives some or all of his/her special education services in the home. If the child receives any of his/her special education services in the home, report the child under Code 26.
  4. **Service provider location.** Use Code 27 when the child receives all special education instructional and/or related services from a service provider, and who did not attend an early childhood program or a special education program provided in a separate class, separate school, or residential facility. For example, speech instruction provided in: private clinicians' offices, clinicians' offices located in school buildings, hospital facilities on an outpatient basis, and libraries and other public locations. Do not include children who also received special education at home.

### **Calculating Time in Regular Early Childhood Programs**

When determining whether to report a child under Code 20, 21 or 22, you must calculate the percentage of time the child spends in a regular early childhood program. The numerator for this calculation is the amount of time per week the child

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spends in a regular early childhood program. In cases where the district knows the child is in day care but does not know the exact scheduled time, use normal elementary school day (bell-to-bell). The denominator for this calculation is the total number of hours the child spends in a regular early childhood program PLUS any time the child spent receiving special education and related services outside of a regular early childhood program. The result is multiplied by 100. For example,

- If the child attends a regular early childhood program 6 hours a week and receives special education and related services in a special education program for an additional 4 hours a week, report the child under Code 21, in the regular early childhood program 40% to 79% of time ( $6 \text{ divided by } 10 = .60 * 100 = 60\%$ ). Include in the denominator any time spent receiving special education in the special education in the early childhood program. This is true even if the child receives little or no special education in the early childhood program.
- If the child attends a regular early childhood program 6 hours a week and receives 1 hour of special education and related services at home and an additional half hour of special education and related services at a service provider location, report the child under Code 20, in the regular early childhood program at least 80% of time ( $6 \text{ divided by } 7.5 = 0.8 * 100 = 80\%$ ).
- If a child is pulled out of the regular early childhood program to receive special education, this is considered time *outside* the regular early childhood program. Include this time in the denominator but not the numerator of the calculation. For example, if a child attends a regular early childhood program for 6 hours a week, and is pulled out of that environment for 2 hours each week to receive speech instruction, report the child under Code 21, in the regular early childhood program 40% to 79% of time ( $4 \text{ divided by } 6 = .67 * 100 = 67\%$ ).

**The educational environments categories are defined as follows:**

**Code 20 - Early Childhood Program at least 80% of time:** Child receives all special education instructional and/or related services in a regular early childhood or kindergarten program for 80% or more of time.

*Fund Codes A, E, J, K, L, P and X*

**Code 21 - Early Childhood Program 40%-79% of time:** child receives special education instructional and/or related services in the regular early childhood or kindergarten program for no more than 79% but no less than 40% of time.

*Fund Codes A, E, J, K, L, P and X*

**Code 22 - Early Childhood Program less than 40% of time:** child receives special education instructional and/or related services in the regular early childhood or kindergarten program less than 40% of time.

*Fund Codes A, E, J, K, L, P and X*

**Code 23 - Separate Class:** child receives all special education instructional and/or related services in a program with less than 50 percent nondisabled children. (Do not include children who also attended a regular early childhood program. These children should be reported under Codes 20, 21 or 22.)

*Fund Codes A, E, J, and X*

**Code 24 - Separate School:** child receives all special education instructional and/or related services in a public or private day school designed specifically for children with disabilities. (Do not include children who also attended a regular early childhood program. These children should be reported under Codes 20, 21 or 22.)

*Fund Codes A, E, J, X and for Fund Codes B and F only with facility number 001-399, or 600-699 or 950-999*

**Code 25 - Residential facility:** child receives all special education instructional and/or related services in a publicly or privately operated residential school or residential medical facility on an inpatient basis. (Do not include children who also attended a regular early childhood program. These children should be reported under Codes 20, 21 or 22.)

*Fund Code H, and Fund Codes B and F only with facility number 400-599 or 700-949 as well as Fund Codes A and E that are placed in a hospital or Department of Human Services (DHS) Facility (i.e., School for the Deaf)*

**Code 26 - Home:** child receives all special education instructional and/or related services in the principal residence of the child's family or caregivers (including babysitters), and who did not attend an early childhood program or a special education program provided in a separate class, separate school or residential facility. Include children who receive special education both at home and in a service provider location. *Fund Codes A, E, P and X*

**Code 27 - Service provider location:** Child receives all special education instructional and/or related services from a service provider, and who did not attend an early childhood program or a special education program provided in a separate class, separate school, or residential facility. For example, speech instruction provided in: private clinicians' offices, clinicians' offices located in school buildings, hospital facilities on an outpatient basis, and libraries and other public locations. Do not include children who also received special education at home. Children who received special education both in a service provider location and at home should be reported in the home category.

*Fund Codes A, E, K, L, and X*