



CAIU Transition Panel with I/T Providers, SC's and Supervisors 2/28/23

1. What are the settings for preschool Early Intervention services?

Early intervention services are not offered in terms of a setting, but rather, in terms of the special education support a child is eligible to receive. That support is defined by the Individualized Education Program (IEP) and the team that builds it. Per the Notice of Recommended Educational Placement, the possible environments include service provider location, home, early childhood environment, early childhood special education, etc...)

These services are to be provided in a setting that is as reflective of where the child would learn as possible (referred to as Least Restrictive Environment, or LRE), which could include community preschools/daycare programs, nursery schools, libraries, home daycares, PKC, Head Start, other service provider locations (itinerant locations), home, virtual services, or early childhood special education classrooms.

The IEP team starts with the setting where the child already is - a community preschool/daycare, PKC or Head Start, in the home, or elsewhere in the community. We currently collaborate with six local faith based preschool programs where we provide inclusive opportunities for children. These classrooms are “co-taught” by the early childhood teacher from the site and a CAIU special education teacher. When a child is not enrolled in a community preschool program, the IEP Team looks at different options for the child based on their needs.

The IEP team may provide services at a service provider location: This can look like “outpatient” services where a family member brings their child to an IU location or community location such as a library to receive their services. One of these options may include a Play and Language session where a family member brings their child to a session, which is operated by a special education teacher, speech therapist and at times an OT/PT. When an OT/PT cannot be part of the PAL session, the team may consider a “motor and mindfulness session” for the child and family, which like the PAL service delivery is a coaching model. We currently have 20 PAL configurations. 47.84% of our children are receiving services either in ECE or at a service provider location.

The IEP team may consider providing services in the home. Home is often for children who are medically fragile and for children who may not have access to typical peers or be able to separate from their family. We currently provide home services to 7.14% children.

We also provide services through tele-intervention due to a staffing shortage in certain disciplines. Our tele-therapists provide a quality service to children and families based on the child's individual needs.

When the IEP team does not conclude that the services in the IEP can be delivered in an inclusive focused setting, home, virtually or at a service provider location, then consideration of a more restrictive setting, including an early childhood special education classroom, is made. These classrooms are the most restrictive environment. We are required by law to always look at the least restrictive environment. Currently we have 25.51% of our eligible children in an ECSE.

2. What guidance and information are parents given at the time when their child has their CAIU preschool evaluation and their child continues to qualify for EI services?

- Handouts appropriate for family, based on shared concerns and/or observations

3. In the past, parents have been able to visit a classroom before accepting the placement. Is that still possible and, if so, who does the parent contact to do so? This is something that we do not do since class configurations change regularly. Families will have the opportunity to meet the IEP team at the IEP meeting and then once a child gets comfortable with services, we have an open door policy with families to schedule an observation to see their child in their setting. We ask that families communicate with the IEP case manager to schedule an observation once their child gets started.

4. Parents are finding out about services very close to the 3rd birthday, sometimes a week before the birthday. As providers, what can we tell parents that are anxious about making arrangements?

We apologize for this. We have some vacancies and sometimes we do not know all of the IEP team members. We would appreciate it if you could share with families that the CAIU will be in touch with them and an IEP will be in place by their child's third birthday (unless it is a late referral).

5. What happens when a family cannot provide their own transportation to a play group?

We don't have "play groups", however if a family enrolls their child in a community "playgroup" then the family would be responsible for transporting their child to that community setting. We do not provide transportation to our PAL coaching classes since the family accompanies their child to that program. If a child receives their services in an ECSE class, we offer transportation for the child as an IEP service if families are unable to provide transportation. Please note that most of our school districts provide transportation for EI students. There are times that districts do not have contractors to provide the transportation. When this happens, we ask families to provide transportation.

6. Why are recommendations at the IFSP very different from what was discussed at the IU evaluation? We would like to be able to support families with an appropriate response when this is shared with us at our sessions.

The CAIU has different eligibility criteria than Infant-Toddler per IDEA. We do not have informed clinical opinion as an option to determine eligibility for PS age 3-5 children. Special education services are based on the child's identified educational needs.

7. Parents are asking questions of us regarding services that are recommended when their child is offered CAIU services that are not with peers. Parents are led to believe that interactions with peers is crucial to progress, but options for IU services only include adult child interactions.

Questions about services in early intervention preschool-age programming should be directed to the CAIU EI program. Please encourage families to reach out to the CAIU with their specific questions.

The CAIU Preschool-age Early Intervention program provides special education services to children based on identified needs. We provide information to families about where they can choose to find typical preschool opportunities with peers for their child if they are interested.

We ask families at the initial evaluation and at the IEP meeting where their child has access to peers. We provide referral sources and assist families in reaching out to the Early Learning Resource Center and, if appropriate to PKC and Head Start programs, but it is the families' responsibility to access those resources if they are interested.

8. What happens if a parent does not agree with the services/placement being offered? For example, only being offered a virtual option, but the parent knows that virtual sessions have not worked in EI? If a parent does not sign the NOREP or checks the box stating that they disagree, what happens with services?

IEP services are based on a team decision as to what can be FAPE for each child. Families are provided their procedural safeguards at the initial evaluation and once again at the initial IEP meeting. The CAIU cannot start services with the child until the family signs the NOREP agreeing to services. If the family disagrees with services then they can request an informal meeting, mediation, or a due process.

As with any IEP service, tele-intervention can be a starting point and progress monitored over the first progress-reporting period. Progress monitoring always helps the team to determine if satisfactory progress is being made. The IEP team can reconvene to review progress and determine additional teaching strategies or adjustments to programming as needed.

Tele-intervention can be a successful option for service delivery when parents/caregivers are involved and committed to participating in collaborating with the provider to impart strategies to the child during routines. We work to include families and caregivers in services whether in person or delivered virtually.

9. How are children, 3-5 years of age, diagnosed with Autism Spectrum Disorder if they come to the IU without a diagnosis? IU psychologists? What do IU preschool services look like for children on the autism spectrum?

Prior to the child's third birthday, the CAIU will complete an evaluation to determine eligibility for early intervention services. Many of the children we evaluate have a disability category of Developmental Delay (DD), which allows a child to access special education services. Educational services are not based on a child's diagnosis but on what the child's individual needs are.

Prior to a child transitioning to Kindergarten, the IEP team will determine if a school psychologist needs to be part of the reevaluation process to consider changing the disability category for school age programming. All children with a DD identification will have a psychologist take part in the RR at the IU. Developmental Delay is not an accepted school-age disability identification after November in the Kindergarten Year.

If a child receives an educational disability of autism and families are interested in receiving community-based services, the CAIU will assist families in how to access a clinical evaluation after the CAIU evaluation with the CAIU social worker.

Special education services for a child with a disability category of autism are based on the child's identified needs. The services for a child with autism are not one-size-fits all due to the nature of autism as a spectrum disorder.

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11. What should be the common message EI providers give to families when discussing preschool transition? Parents want to know what their child's services will look like after the age of three, and providers want to educate and support families during the transition process.

Our goal is to have a smooth transition process from the I/T program to the CAIU. Families should participate in the I/T Preschool transition planning meeting. Please note that this is a very brief (15 minute meeting) meeting and is a brief introduction to the process. Encourage families to bring their questions to the meeting.

It would be helpful to share with families that within 90 days of a child's third birthday, the CAIU will notify English-speaking families through the Blackboard Connect messaging system. These families will receive an email, text message and phone call to contact the CAIU for scheduling their child's evaluation. Non-English speaking families will receive a phone call by the CAIU using an interpreter to schedule an evaluation.

For speech only evaluations, the family will be contacted by the assigned speech therapist to schedule.

It is best for providers not to share what services will look like when the child turns three since the child/family has not participated in the evaluation and no one knows what the outcome will be. Once a child is determined to be eligible for preschool-age early intervention services, the IEP team will convene to develop the IEP.

It would also be beneficial for providers to share what the evaluation process is: parents will receive an evaluation packet, they will sign the permission to evaluate and then within 60 days they will receive a copy of the evaluation report. If services are warranted, families will participate in an IEP meeting to review the proposed goals and services by the child's 3rd birthday (if not a late referral) and then be issued a NOREP. This process is discussed as part of the I/T transition meeting.

The CAIU would appreciate it if providers would not discuss service delivery options or make recommendations about EI Preschool services to the family since this is an IEP team discussion.

What I/T providers can do to support families during the transition process to EI Preschool:

- Encourage family's attendance at the transition meeting
- Encourage review of information provided to the families prior to transition by the EI Preschool-age program
- Encourage families to respond quickly to EI Preschool program's attempts to contact families to schedule the transition evaluation appointment

- Keep IFSPs updated and current, consider dismissal from I/T services when appropriate rather than waiting for the child to transition to preschool-age EI
- Provide most recent QPMs to CAIU evaluators
- Respond to communication attempts from CAIU evaluators to answer questions
- Provide information about current AAC trials and tools
- Provide reminders to the family for CAIU evaluation appointments
- Encourage families to keep track of any questions about transition and direct those questions to the CAIU
- Build family understanding of CAIU EI services in that special education services are provided in a variety of ways but that we are not a place to deliver a typical preschool opportunity to young children. Begin the conversation with families on where they can seek those opportunities if they are interested.
- Keep your guesses and opinions about CAIU services separate from the family and guide them having those conversations with the IEP team.
- Understand that you want what is best for the child and family, but that preschool-age services can take many different forms and are individualized to meet the needs of each child.
- Just as our CAIU EI staff participate in transition meetings for our students as they prepare for Kindergarten, we reserve opinions on what the school-age services should look like and respect the relationship between the family and the school district to determine what those services will be. We work to provide the most current information throughout the transition period to the school district.

Questions from Parking Lot on 2/28/2023

Evaluation Process Question:

1. **When calling CAIU to schedule after getting BBC message, does it go straight to VM?**

Families can call the CAIU at 717-732-8400 ext. 8527 to schedule an evaluation. The scheduling secretary works M-F and will answer the phone or families can leave a message.

2. **Is there a screenshot available of the BBC message that families will receive?**

Email and Phone Message:

Hello, It is time to schedule your child's evaluation at the Capital Area Intermediate Unit (CAIU) to determine your child's eligibility for early intervention services. Please contact us to schedule this appointment as soon as possible by

calling 717-732-8400 ext. 8527. We look forward to working with you and your family. Sincerely, CAIU Preschool Program

Text message:

Please call Capital Area Intermediate Unit to schedule your child's evaluation:717-732-8400 ext.8527. We look forward to working with you.

3. Does the SC get notified of the date when the BBC system “contacts” the family?

SC's are not notified when BBC messages are sent to families. After 3 attempts (which are made 1x a week, so essentially 3 weeks after the initial BBC message was sent to the family, the CAIU will notify the SC that we have tried to contact the family without a response. We will also send the family notification through US postal mail and certified mail that we have tried to contact them and to call us. If we do not hear back from them we then we make the child's case inactive. If we do receive any of the certified mail back to us if it was undeliverable, we will reach out to the SC for any updated information that we have may not have in the file and/or let them know that the family did not pick up the certified letter.

4. After the BBC is sent and families call back and leave a message, how soon can the families expect a call back? If they leave a message at ext. 8527, families should receive a phone call back within 24-48 hours on CAIU business days.

5. What is the correct call back number; who is the contact person?
717-732-8400. 8527 (Jen Liebrum)

6. I contacted Michelle Straw to get a child scheduled since not hearing; is this an appropriate action?

You can have the family call the scheduling secretary at 717-732-8400 ext. 8527.

7. Are you/how are you providing interpreters for evaluations/IEPs?

Yes, if a child/family member needs an interpreter for the evaluation and IEP meeting we will provide an interpreter.

8. When is the PTE initiated to the family for the CAIU evaluation?

Once the evaluation is scheduled with the family, an evaluation packet, which includes the PTE, is sent to the family.

9. Are SLI children supposed to call IU scheduler or Jennifer Lyden to schedule appointments (for evaluation)?

If a child is determined to need a “speech evaluation” as a result of the I/T transition meeting, then the assigned CAIU SLP calls the family directly to schedule the evaluation appointment. The scheduling secretary will not schedule it. However, if you have any questions, you may contact the scheduling secretary at 717-732-8400 ext. 8527.

10. If family has a question between the evaluation and child’s 3rd birthday, is it best to ask the SC or call CAIU?

Families should contact the CAIU Service Coordinator who was assigned to their child’s CAIU evaluation between the time of the CAIU evaluation and the IEP meeting.

11. For a late referral - Do you prefer to have I/T evaluation done first before CAIU evaluation, or is this a family decision?

If the family chooses to proceed with the I/T evaluation, then the CAIU will be able to access the I/T evaluation information when finalized and transferred in Pelican. If the I/T program receives the referral within 45 days of the child’s 3rd birthday then the family has the option to complete the referral form that can be found on the CAIU website and the CAIU will then complete the evaluation.

12. If the child does not qualify, are those results for all settings or just CAIU?

If a child is “non-handicapped” based on the results of the evaluation then that means that the child does not qualify for early interventions services at the CAIU. Eligibility for EI Preschool-age services was reviewed during the Roundtable discussion and differs from I/T eligibility.

13. If a family refused virtual (telehealth) but didn’t move forward with a meeting to discuss, can they be brought back into the CAIU system WITHOUT a new evaluation?

Parents should be encouraged to complete the IEP process with the CAIU. If the family does not develop an IEP with the CAIU, the child will become inactive in the system. We will have to create a new initial evaluation report to reactivate them.

14. What if the family does not have transportation to the meeting (evaluation/IEP)?

The CAIU does not provide transportation to families for meetings or the evaluation. However, families should share this possible barrier with the scheduling secretary or the IEP case manager. Pending on where the family lives, there may be an alternative place to be offered for the evaluation. Although we are having face to face IEP meetings we can offer families the option to participate in IEP meetings via phone or zoom.

Service Delivery Questions:

15. What about services in Upper Dauphin Co.; do you plan to start a PAL group in this area?

We are always looking for places in the community to provide services to. We work with the 24 school districts and have asked all of our districts for space in their buildings. We know that the Upper Dauphin area is an area that we need to find space in to offer as a service delivery option for families. We have been using locations in the community in that area such as public libraries as places where we can meet families for services as well.

16. How do you know that the child has separation issues when they haven't had an opportunity to try yet?

Families often share this at the evaluation as part of the parent interview and often times the evaluation team observes this first hand that the child is not able to separate from their family during the evaluation.

17. Can children who only have a gross motor need receive services through the CAIU (i.e., no cognitive or S/L needs), or is outpatient through private insurance the only option?

If a child demonstrates a 25% delay and is in need of specially designed instruction then an IEP would be written to address the gross motor skills.

18. How do you deal with inequalities when a child would benefit from a PAL group but has no transportation/can't afford bus transportation? Service delivery recommendations are an IEP team decision. The family is part of this decision making. If the team, which includes the family, determines that a PAL group is not a viable option, the IEP team will recommend another service delivery model for the child. If it is determined that coaching would benefit the child and parent, this may be done virtually, or in the home. It is individualized; based on the needs of the child/family.

19. Is the CAIU sharing with parents now that the virtual (telehealth) speech sessions may be for a certain amount of time until more therapists are hired?

We write the IEP for a year and measure progress on goals throughout the year. If the virtual speech therapy is allowing the child to make progress on IEP goals, we may look to continue that service environment. We do not have projected timelines when more in person SLPs will be available. We continue to interview speech therapists. Helping families to understand that tele therapy involves the parents as well as the child and is not just the child "sitting in front of the screen" is valuable to build their knowledge of the model. Coaching and collaboration is a

focus of OCDEL's Coaching Across Settings Service Deliver Model announcement for I/T and PS-age services.

- 20. I understand that it is the family's responsibility to pursue EC settings for peer interaction but is it possible to give them support? Maybe ELRC? We provide families with ELRC information as well as make referrals to PKC and Head Start programs when appropriate.**
- 21. What is the EI Behavior team; I thought behavior services ended at age 3?**
The early intervention behavior team at CAIU is a team of special education teachers and consultants specializing in positive behavior support practices. This team works with teachers, inclusion consultants, child care providers, and parents to provide behavioral support and interventions to students with IEPs through the CAIU. The behavior team supports IEP teams with the completion of Functional Behavior Analysis as needed and the development of positive behavior support plans.
- 22. Is the coaching model used in all settings or only PAL groups?**
Coaching can be provided virtually, in the home, or during itinerant sessions as well. Each child's services are designed specifically to meet their individual needs and this may look different from child to child. Refer to OCDEL's announcement on Coaching Across Settings for more information, as well as the document entitled Early Intervention Supports and Services: Facts for Families.
- 23. How is social work provided through CAIU program?**
Referrals for social work services are made by CAIU case managers.
- 24. If we have a SLI child who has not gotten an Autism diagnosis but will, and they are offered virtual services, what can we do?**
If a child has a re-evaluation and continues to qualify for services, whether or not the primary disability changes, the IEP team will convene and a new IEP will be written, at which time the service delivery model will be determined by the team. Also, if the IEP team has concerns about the current IEP services, the team can meet at any time to discuss the concerns. We have children who have made wonderful progress with virtual speech therapy services who have diagnoses of autism; parent commitment and involvement is key.
- 25. If the CAIU is trying to not use IU classroom where in which traditionally transportation was provided, and they also don't want to do services in the home (only 6% 3-5 students receive services in the home), what is being done to help provide services to families who can't transport kids and don't want virtual?**

To clarify, the CAIU is providing services in the home and the IEP team believes that is where the child needs his/her services, then that is where we provide the services. An early childhood special education classroom is the most restrictive environment and is an environment where transportation is offered as a service as needed. Our children receive their services per their IEP which is developed by a team, including the family. These decisions are made individually, per a child's IEP team and reflected in their plan.

26. It seems that only about 200 children are services by the inclusion sites and the Play and Learn groups. I believe you said you have a 2,000+ caseload. How are you servicing the other 1,800 children? I feel that these children are falling through the cracks.

The specific data which was shared on 2/28/23 at the panel discussion was aggregate count of children as provided by OCDEL Docushare reports.

- December 1, 2022 child count showed we have provided services to 116 more children in comparison to December, 2021.
- 7/1/22: aggregate number of children served: 2631
- 1/30/23 aggregate number of children served: 2324
- 1/30/23 active number of children receiving services 1529
- 5/30/23 active number of children receiving services 1926
- 5/30/23 aggregate number of children served: 2724

Data changes daily as we identify children and children are also discharged from service.

Additional Updates/Reminders at this time:

Community evaluations for birth to three evaluations. Currently Michelle Straw is conducting transition meetings and will start to ask if families are interested in an evaluation in their child's community setting. This is something we are hoping to offer more consistently in the Fall 2023. We will keep you all updated.

Reminder to providers: update demographic information in Pelican to make sure that we have parents who have educational rights and to make sure we have any documentation/custody agreements/court orders.