

Vermont's Early Childhood Outcomes Practices and Procedures



Vermont's Early Childhood Outcomes Practices and Procedures Committee

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Part 1: Introduction

Aligned with the Governor’s Early Childhood Framework and Action Plan, measuring early childhood outcomes (ECO) helps to ensure that Vermont is making a difference in realizing the promise of each child with disabilities and their families. Vermonters agree that each child deserves a strong start and the opportunity to reach their maximum potential. Early Childhood Special Education Services (ECSES) enables young children with disabilities to be full participants in everyday routines and activities across a variety of settings (in their homes with their families, in child care, preschool or school programs, and in the community) throughout the early childhood years.

There are a number of acronyms and underlined words throughout this manual that have been further described and defined, respectively (*see Appendix A. Commonly Used Acronyms and Appendix A. Glossary of Commonly Used Terms*).

Audience

Vermont’s Early Child Outcomes Practices and Procedures Manual is intended for use by professionals who are responsible for collecting, reviewing, understanding, and/or reporting ECO for children receiving ECSES within the state. This list includes:

- Early Childhood Educators
- Early Childhood Special Educators
- Special Education Directors
- Directors of Student Support Services
- Data Managers (Part B)
- Early Education Coordinators
- Supervisory Union or Supervisory District Level Coordinators, Superintendents, and Principals
- Related Service Personnel (e.g., Speech and Language Pathologists, Physical Therapists, and Occupational Therapists)

The Early Child Outcomes Practices and Procedures Manual may also be useful to others who could benefit from understanding the ECO data collection for ECSES. This list includes:

- Early Interventionists (Part C)
- Case Managers
- Interdisciplinary Team Members

- Higher Education Faculty
- Elementary special educators and kindergarten teachers

Background Information on ECO under IDEA

Vermont has an ECO accountability system that complies with Federal requirements under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) for reporting ECO to the US Department of Education (USDOE) Office of Special Education Programs (OSEP). In December 2004, language was added in the reauthorization of IDEA that mandated each state develop a State Performance Plan (SPP) and Annual Performance Report (APR) that includes indicators measuring outcome data along with a number of compliance indicators.

OSEP has established three functionally stated ECO on which states must report. The three ECO measure the extent to which children are making progress as a result of receiving ECSES. The outcomes are:

- Outcome A: Children have positive social emotional skills, including social relationships;
- Outcome B: Children acquire knowledge and skills, including language/communication, early literacy, and numeracy; and
- Outcome C: Children take appropriate action to meet their own needs.

Additional information about the ECO within the context of IDEA is discussed later in this manual (*see Part 3: What are the ECO?*).

Alignment with the Vermont Early Learning Standards (VELS)

The Vermont Early Learning Standards (VELS) help inform families about the development and capabilities of children and guide educators in the development and selection of program-wide curriculum and educational strategies for children from birth through grade 3. It is critical to use VELS to:

- Individualize curriculum, instruction, and strategies;
- Inform and use evidence-based practices to support each and every child;
- Serve as a roadmap for next steps in the development; and
- Ensure positive outcomes for children and families.



The VELs were adopted and approved by the Vermont State Board of Education in August 2015, and were subsequently revised to include children ages birth through grade 3 in order to address the full continuum of development and learning across the ages. The approved VELs were written through a cultural, linguistic, and diverse ability lens. VELs is foundational for school district teams to use in the development of age appropriate Individual Education Plan (IEP) goals and objectives, and to support the education of all children with their same age peers in high-quality, early childhood settings.

Teaching Strategies GOLD™ (TSGOLD™)

TSGOLD™ is an assessment tool which allows providers to gather meaningful information on children using multiple methods including observations, portfolios, and developmental profiles. A TSGOLD™ formative assessment is required for all children participating in Vermont’s universal Pre-Kindergarten (PreK).

Vermont recognizes the importance of having a comprehensive early childhood curriculum and assessment system and has worked to implement systems and procedures for gathering information to measure the ECO. TSGOLD™ was selected as one of the tools for measuring child outcomes, not only because it meets federal data collection and reporting requirements, but also because it is a research-driven, criterion-based tool, which utilizes authentic assessment practices; is aligned with the VELs; and can be used to inform instruction that prepares children for school success both academically and socially. The use of TSGOLD™ allows special education teams to measure the three outcomes within a comprehensive assessment process informed by families and community partners that improves teaching and therefore, learning.

More information specifically related to the process of teaming and assessment is discussed later in this manual (*see Part 6: Teaming & Assessment Process*). A copy of the crosswalk between TSGOLD™ and the VELs is also available in the appendices (*see Appendix C: TSGOLD™ and the Vermont Early Learning Standards*).

Universal PreK (Act 166)

During 2014, the Vermont General Assembly passed Act 166 into law, effectively mandating a universal Pre-Kindergarten (PreK) system to offer equal access to high quality programs throughout the state. As of August 2016, Act 166 requires all supervisory unions or supervisory districts to provide access to public PreK for all 3, 4, and 5 year-olds (not enrolled in Kindergarten) for at least 10 hours of instruction per week for 35 weeks over the course of the school year. Enrollment in PreK is voluntary on the family’s part.

Benefits for children with disabilities who participate in Universal PreK:

- Allows families or guardians to choose a pre-qualified PreK program for their child, which can be located in their town of residence or a town of their choice.
- Creates equal opportunity for child and family to benefit from public PreK.
- Broadens the continuum of early childhood inclusive opportunities within a child's community.
- Increases the district's capacity to educate children with disabilities to the maximum extent appropriate along with their same age peers.
- Emphasizes the need to develop and adopt state and local policies and procedures that actively promote and encourage high quality inclusion.

Part 2: Purpose of Vermont's Early Childhood Outcomes

Vermont's ECSES' Early Childhood Outcomes Practices and Procedures document aims to assist professionals in identifying and developing an understanding of the ECO process and measurement system.

The purpose of the ECSES' ECO measurement is to collect and analyze high-quality ECO data to meet federal reporting requirements as well as to inform state and local program improvement efforts, including:

- Improving policies, procedures, and practices;
- Informing focused monitoring and quality assurance;
- Informing professional learning opportunities;
- Informing research and funding; and
- Gathering philanthropic and political support for ECSES.

The following expectations are foundational to successfully implementing ECSES' ECO practices and procedures:

- Families' knowledge about their child is valued and their input into the child outcomes process is important. They have key information about their child that is critical for high quality ECO data.
- Educators and related services providers are vital to the collection of high-quality ECO data. They bring a unique and collectible perspective to the child outcomes process.
- Administrators ensure that staff has all the necessary resources and materials to complete the Early Childhood Outcomes Summary (ECOS) process and support their staff in implementing a quality process.
- The ECOS process is completed as part of each child's IEP process, by a team that includes the child's family.
- Data are of high-quality (e.g., accurate, reliable, and complete) and entered in established timeframes.
- ECO data are used at every level of the system, including the state, district, school, and program levels.
- All ECSES are culturally, linguistically, and developmentally appropriate and evidence-based.

Part 3: What are the ECO?

Vermont ECSES defines the three ECO as functional outcomes. Functional outcomes describe children's mastery and appropriate application of behaviors, knowledge, and skills in an intentional and meaningful way across daily routines, activities and settings. The overarching goal for each and every child is to be an active and successful participant in his/her own learning and development.

Vermont ECSES measures three ECO as defined by Office of Special Education Programs (OSEP) in the State Performance Plan (SPP) and Annual Performance Report (APR). The three ECO are the result of the work of the Early Childhood Outcomes Center, which is now part of the Early Childhood Technical Assistance Center (ECTA).

Vermont ECSES has historically looked across domains to determine current developmental levels. Domains describe children's skills and abilities within areas of development such as social and emotional, adaptive, fine motor, gross motor, cognitive, and communication/language. The skills and abilities described by domains are a necessary but insufficient component of functioning within the routines and activities of early childhood like toileting, feeding, and playing with peers. Functional outcomes look at the integration of behaviors across domains that children need to participate in developmentally appropriate routines and activities. For example, playing with peers requires a social desire to play with peers; expressive communication to initiate, maintain, and direct the peers' attention; cognitive skills to sequence actions in play; and fine and gross motor skills to manipulate objects. The three ECO focus on functioning rather than traditional domains.

In order to have a complete understanding of the three child outcomes and how to effectively measure them, it is expected that, as professionals, each team member should know and understand typical child development and progression of age-expected development. It is also expected that they know how young children use those skills in daily activities, routines, settings, and with familiar adults and peers. It is highly recommended that teams use the VELs, which includes information about what children should know and what they can do by nine age categories, and can be useful in understanding and informing child development.

Definitions for Early Childhood Outcome Areas

Outcome A—Positive Social and Emotional Skills and Relationships

Children develop a sense of who they are by having rich and rewarding relationships and experiences with adults and peers, and thrive within safe, nurturing environments. Positive social-emotional skills refer to how children get along with others; how they relate to adults and with other children. The outcome also includes the way a child expresses emotions and feelings and how he or she interacts, communicates, and plays with other children. They also learn different rules and norms apply to different everyday settings and then adjust their actions accordingly.

Examples of functional skills include, but are not limited to:

- Expressing emotions and feelings
- Relating to adults
- Showing interest in and initiating interactions with peers
- Seeking assistance when needed
- Acting in response to others
- Imitating behaviors of others
- Using play skills to build relationships
- Demonstrating positive self-concept and self-control
- Following conventional rules of conversation
- For older children—following rules related to groups or interacting with one another

Vermont Early Learning Standards that align with Outcome A:

- Developing Self
 - Social and Emotional Learning and Development
 - Emotion and Self-regulation
 - Self-awareness
 - Relationships with Adults and Peers

- Communication and Expression
 - Language Development
 - Social Rules of Language
 - Speaking and Listening

Outcome B—Acquisition and Use of Knowledge and Skills

Over the early childhood years, children display tremendous changes in what they know and can do. The knowledge and skills acquired in the early childhood years, such as those related to communication, early literacy and numeracy, provide the foundation for success in kindergarten and early school years. This outcome also includes activities such as thinking, reasoning, remembering, problem solving, number concepts, counting, and understanding the physical and social worlds.

Examples of functional skills include, but are not limited to:

- Showing curiosity and initiative
- Exploring multiple environments
- Imitating others
- Showing persistence
- Following through with plans
- Problem-solving in a variety of ways
- Communicating to express ideas and thoughts
- Reasoning
- Demonstrating age appropriate concept development (e.g., sorts objects, uses senses)
- Exploring materials, representing ideas and stories through pictures and play
- Building and using vocabulary

Vermont Early Learning Standards that align with this Outcome B:

- Approaches to Learning
 - Play and Exploration
 - Initiative
 - Problem Solving

- Communication and Expression
 - Language Development
 - Receptive and expressive language
 - Expressive Language
 - Language
 - Literacy Development
 - Foundational reading skills
 - Writing
- Learning about the World
 - Mathematics
 - Number sense and quantity
 - Counting and cardinality
 - Measurement and classification
 - Science
 - Physical sciences
 - Life sciences
 - Social Studies
 - Inquiry
 - Physical and Cultural Geography

Outcome C – Taking Appropriate Action to Meet Needs

As children develop, they become increasingly more capable of acting on their world. With the help of supportive adults, young children learn to address their needs in more sophisticated ways and with increasing independence. They integrate their developing skills such as fine motor skills and increasingly complex communication skills, to achieve their goals that are of value to them. This outcome involves actions like taking care of basic needs, getting from place to place, using tools (such as forks, toothbrushes, or crayons) contributing to their own health, safety, and well-being. The outcome includes integrating motor skills to complete tasks such as dressing, feeding, grooming and toileting, as well as taking socially appropriate action to get their needs met.

Examples functional skills include, but are not limited to:

- Taking care of basic needs
- Getting from place to place
- Using objects as tools to make things happen
- Increasingly contributing to their own health and safety
- Developing awareness of immediate environment/surroundings
- Demonstrating self-confidence
- Communicating needs in a variety of ways (e.g., using physical movements, gestures, sounds or words to express wants and needs)
- Discriminating environmental stimuli and adjusting responses accordingly (self-regulation)
- Demonstrating the ability to self-comfort and/or self-soothe

Vermont Early Learning Standards that align with Outcome C:

- Developing Self
 - Social and Emotional Learning and Development
 - Self-awareness
 - Growing, Moving, and Being Healthy
 - Motor development and coordination
 - Health and safety practices
- Communication and Expression
 - Language Development
 - Expressive language
- Learning About the World
 - Science
 - Engineering Design

Part 4: Why We Measure ECO: Federal Requirements

IDEA

The Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) is a Federal law that grants students with disabilities the right to access free and appropriate public education (FAPE), just like all other children throughout the nation. Schools are required to provide special education in the least restrictive environment, meaning schools must teach students with disabilities in general education classroom whenever possible. IDEA regulations describe how states and public agencies provide early intervention, special education, and related services to millions of eligible infants, toddlers, children, and youth with disabilities. IDEA includes a requirement that all states providing Part C Early Intervention and Part B Section 619 ECSES measure the three ECO described in *Part 3: What are the ECO?* above. Annually, each state collects and reports the ECO data in the APR for both early intervention and ECSE. National data are compiled and analyzed annually.

Additional information about the history of the ECO measurement in the US, links to more detailed information on IDEA, and the national outcomes data analysis are available in the appendices (*see*

Appendix D: History of the Early Childhood Outcomes; Individuals with Disabilities Education Act; and Early Childhood Outcomes National Data).

IDEA Oversight

The Office of Special Education Programs (OSEP) at the U.S. Department of Education monitors how IDEA Parts B and C are implemented by states. Each state must supervise the implementation of IDEA Part B by Local Educational Agencies (LEAs) and of Part C by early intervention services (EIS) programs. The State Performance Plan (SPP) is the means by which OSEP oversees the general supervision activities of each state as well as the state's progress.

State Performance Plan

The IDEA reauthorization of 2004 requires each state to have a State Performance Plan (SPP) in place that evaluates its efforts to implement the requirements and purposes of Part B of IDEA (including Section 619 ECSES) and describes how the state will improve such implementation. The SPP, revised annually and submitted to OSEP every six years, includes measurable and rigorous targets for the 20 indicators established under three monitoring priority areas:

1. Free and Appropriate Public Education (FAPE) in the Least Restrictive Environment (LRE);
2. Disproportionality; and
3. General Supervision Part B, including Child Find, effective transition and effective general supervision. In addition to the ECO, states report on other early childhood indicators including settings for preschool children and transition data.

Annual Performance Report

IDEA policy contains the requirement for each state to report annually to the U.S. Secretary of Education the progress it has made that year in meeting the measurable and rigorous targets established in the state's six-year SPP. This is known as the Annual Performance Report (APR). After reviewing each state's APR and assessing its progress, the Secretary is required to issue an annual determination letter—a report card, essentially—which documents the state's overall progress in meeting the requirements of IDEA. This determination letter is an important tool for states in their ongoing efforts to improve education for children with disabilities.



ECO Indicator

Indicator 7 of the SPP and APR focuses on measuring and reporting progress towards the ECO of preschool children (age 3, 4, 5) with IEPs. The specific language of the indicator reads:

Indicator 7: Percent of preschool children with IEPs who demonstrate improved:

- A. Positive Social-emotional skills (including social relationships);
- B. Acquisition and use of knowledge and skills;
- C. Use of appropriate behaviors to meet their needs.



The Vermont Agency of Education and all supervisory unions or supervisory districts serving preschool children with disabilities are required to report data on Indicator 7 each year as part of the APR. OSEP uses each state's data to determine how well the state's program has helped young children and to determine how local school district programs are making a positive difference for young children and their families. The Agency of Education reports the LEA data to the public annually, which includes the state and local performance on each APR indicator.

Implications for ECSES

While the collection of ECO data will help Vermont ECSES respond to the federal attention to accountability, ECO data may be used to benefit ECSES by:

- directing focus to ECO, not only compliance
- retaining federal and state funding
- demonstrating positive outcomes, possibly leading to increased federal and state funding

Practice implications for collecting and reporting ECO may include:

- emphasizing the importance of the family's knowledge and their role in supporting their children's development
- directing greater attention to working in partnership with families to achieve child outcomes
- implementing improved practices in child find, assessment/evaluations, IEP development, planning curriculum and instruction, and ongoing progress monitoring

Part 5: ECO Process and Steps

Connecting ECO to Early Childhood Outcomes Summary (ECOS) Process

The ECOS process was developed so that programs can synthesize assessment information about a child from multiple sources and across different assessment measures to produce data that can be summarized throughout programs in the state, and across states for a national picture. ECSES utilizes the ECOS process to collect and report child outcomes data to the federal government.

The ECOS process answers two key questions about the status of a child's functioning:

1. To what extent does the child show age-expected functioning, across a variety of settings and situations, in each outcome area?
2. Has the child shown any new skills and behaviors in each outcome area since the last ECOS?

To answer the first question teams must be able to use functional assessment information to compare the child's functioning to age expectations. The answer to the second question, commonly known as the "progress question," indicates whether a child has made progress compared to themselves. To be able to answer both questions and accurately complete the ECOS process, teams are expected to know and use the procedures below.

As of 2013, Vermont's ECOS is embedded in the Individualized Education Plan (IEP) process. In Vermont, the ECOS are used as a framework to guide the IEP process, including evaluation and assessment, determination of goals, and the provision of services and supports.

Four Key Elements of ECOS Process

Each one is described in detail below:

- Team-based functional assessment. The foundation of a successful ECOS process is the completion of a team-based functional assessment. It is important for the team to develop a full understanding of a child's functioning across settings and situations and with familiar people. The newly revised Division for Early Childhood (DEC) Recommended Practices on Assessment indicate that assessments should be made up of multiple methods (e.g., tools, interviews and observations) and multiple sources of information (e.g., families, care givers, team members, etc.) in order to get the best possible picture of a child's functional abilities. Team members should confer with one another to determine how they will gather functional information for each child, including which methods will be used and who will provide information. Teams should

gather and share their assessment information with one another to use in the ECOS process.

- Age-anchoring. Age-anchoring is the process of comparing the child’s functioning to age-expectations. As indicated above, one of the key questions that is asked and answered through the ECOS process is to what extent is the child demonstrating age-expected functioning at the time of the ECOS. By gathering functional information about the child, teams are then able to compare their information to that of established child development resources (e.g., developmental checklists, lists of developmental milestones, state early learning standards, etc.).



When age-anchoring, children’s functioning is broken down into three types of development: age-expected, immediate foundational and fundational. *Age-expected skills* are exactly what the phrase says: They are the skills and behaviors that are seen in children of a particular chronological age. For example, if a child is 36 months old, age-expected skills are what a 36-month-old would be expected to do. *Immediate foundational skills* and behaviors are those that come just before age-expected skills in development. In order to determine what immediate foundational skills are, teams must understand the progression of child development and be able to identify skills that come just before age-expected skills in the progression. *Fundational skills* occur much earlier in the developmental progression of skills. They are called *fundational* because they form the foundation for later skill development. This graphic may support teams’ understanding of the concepts.

It is recommended that in each ECOS meeting, an age-anchoring resource be used to ensure accurate comparison to age-expected functioning. *The VELs are age-anchored* and may be used to determine which of the child's functioning is age-expected, immediate foundational and foundational.

- The 7-point scale. The 7-point scale was developed as the common metric by which the team determines to what extent the child shows age-expected functioning in each outcome area at a point in time (i.e., entry and exit). The 7-point scale's highest point represents age-expected functioning and lower points represent the degree of distance from age expectations. It is important to note that each of the 7 points on the scale is defined by specific criteria. These criteria are grounded in the three categories of functional levels defined above: age-expected, immediate foundational, and foundational. Some points on the scale describe a level of functioning that is a combination of age-expected, immediate foundational and foundational skills. Teams review the information collected through the functional assessment, age-anchor it using a tool or a resource, and then together determine which of the points on the 7-point scale describes the mix of functioning the child is demonstrating at that point in time. This is completed for each of the three ECO. Definitions for the points on the scale are available in the appendices (*see Appendix E: ECOS Process Tools*).

To facilitate coming to a team decision on the rating for each outcome area, teams may opt to use the ECTA Decision Tree (*see Appendix E: The Decision Tree*). The Decision Tree is designed to help teams understand and apply the 7 points on the scale. It is made up of a series of questions to help teams determine the most appropriate rating for each ECO. While referencing the Decision Tree, teams begin with answering whether the child ever shows any age-expected development.

- If the answer is yes, then the team will continue down the right side of the decision tree. All of the points on the right side of the Tree (4-7) have some age-expected development included, to varying degrees.

To determine which of the points best applies to the child, the team *then* asks if the child functions in ways that are considered age-expected across all or almost all settings and situations.

- If the answer is yes, the team then discusses any possible concerns and chooses between a 6 and 7.
- If the answer is no, the team discusses the mix of age-expected and not-age expected functioning and chooses between a 4 and 5.

- If the team decides the child uses a mix of age-expected and not age-expected behaviors and skills across settings and situations, then the team would select a 5.
- If, on the other hand, the team decides the child makes occasional use of age-expected skills and that there is more behavior that is not age-expected, then the team would select a rating of 4.

If the team answers no to the first question about age-expected functioning, the team would move to the left side of the decision tree to consider ratings of 1, 2, or 3. Now the team members would ask themselves if the child uses any immediate foundational skills across settings and situations. If the answer is yes, the team should be thinking about a rating of 2 or 3.

- If the child uses immediate foundational skills most or all of the time across settings and situations, the team would choose a rating of 3.
- If the child makes occasional use of immediate foundational skills, the team would select a rating of 2.

If the team thinks the child is not using immediate foundational skills in the outcome area, then the team will assign a rating of 1. A rating of 1 indicates that the child has foundational skills but no immediate foundational or age-expected skills. Children with ratings of 1 still display many skills, but in the sequence of skill development, all their skills are more than one-step removed from age-expected skills.

Teams are encouraged to use the Decision Tree during ECOS discussions to select the most accurate rating. Please note that the Decision Tree is used to facilitate a team discussion that may include the families; a version without numbers, but rather written descriptions, is also in the Appendix. The Decision Tree *should not* be handed to families and used to have them select a rating. Teams are to include families in the discussion and come to a decision together about the number or words that best describe the child's functioning. A copy of the Decision Tree is available in the appendices (*see Appendix E Effective Documentation for Outcome Ratings:*

).

If a family seems overwhelmed and needs more time to process, teams may occasionally opt to complete the decision-making process after the IEP meeting and without the family. Ideally, families have been informed of the child outcomes since the beginning of services and throughout the process of assessment, so that lack of knowledge is not the hindering factor in participating in the discussion. A link to more information on ways to talk with families about the outcomes before and during the outcomes measurement

process is provided in this manual (see *Appendix E: ECOS Teaming and Collaboration Toolkit*).

Documenting the rating. It is important for teams to document the summary of the information they have gathered during functional assessment that supports the selection of the rating for each outcome area. Documentation should be concise and focus on the functional use of skills and behaviors in a child's every day routines and activities and show the mix of age-expected, immediate foundational and foundational skills that led the team to the rating selected (see *Appendix E: Effective Documentation for Outcome Ratings*). Ideally, someone unfamiliar with the child should be able to read the summary and come up with the same rating selected by the team. The team to the rating selected by the team.

In Vermont, ECSES staff provide documentation of the rating on the ECSES IEP in the sent Levels of Educational and Functional Performance (PLEFP), as well as on the ECOS Form (see *Appendix E: The Early Childhood Outcomes Form*).

Effective Documentation for Outcome Ratings

Features of Effective Documentation:

- Mentions specific functional skills the child uses in everyday settings and situations and the consistency with which they are observed.
- Describes the presence and absence of age-anchored skills (AE, IF, and F) that are consistent with the selected rating.
- Focuses on the child’s current level of functioning rather than how much progress the child has made.
- Identifies the assessment tool(s) that contributed information for the rating.

Documentation Key:

Overall Age Expected	7	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide examples of the child’s age-expected functioning. • Indicate: “No concerns.”
	6	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide examples of the child’s age-expected functioning. • Note concerns. • <i>Evidence should not include any functioning that is not age expected for a rating of 6 or 7.</i>
Overall Not Age Appropriate	5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide examples of the child’s age-expected functioning. • Provide examples of the child’s functioning that is not age expected.
	4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide examples of the child’s age-expected functioning. • Provide examples of the child’s functioning that is not age expected. • <i>Evidence should show more functioning that is not age expected.</i>
	3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide examples of the child’s functioning at the immediate foundational skill level. • <i>Evidence should not show age-expected functioning for a rating of 3.</i>
	2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide examples of the child’s functioning at the immediate foundational skill level. • Provide examples of the child’s functioning that is not yet age expected or immediate foundational. • <i>Evidence should show more functioning that is foundational than is immediate foundational for a rating of 2.</i>
	1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide examples of the child’s functioning that is not yet age expected or immediate foundational. • <i>Evidence should not show age-expected or immediate foundational functioning for a rating of 1.</i>

Teams are expected to summarize assessment information on the ECOS form prior to the IEP meeting so that the information may be used to guide the conversation with the family during the IEP meeting. Within the IEP document itself, it is expected that teams will document the full breadth and depth of each outcome area with examples of age-expected, immediate foundational and foundational skills represented within the PLEFP page. This is important as the information documented for the ECOS process will also be used to develop functional goals and objectives for the child.

More information, including an example of the completed PLEFP, is available in this manual (*see Appendix E: Example IEP with Outcomes Completed*)

Key Steps in the Outcomes Process

The ECO measurement process starts with the first conversations with families and continues throughout the time in ECSES. It is not a single conversation that occurs only at the IEP meeting. In order to infuse child outcomes measurement throughout the IEP process, professional team members are expected to know and use the following key steps to talk about and measure ECO:

1. Introduction to Families: When a child enters ECSES, individuals who have contact with the family should discuss the ECO and how this information is used to look at the ECSES program's effectiveness. The Vermont Early Childhood Outcomes brochure (*see Appendix F: Vermont Early Childhood Outcomes Brochure*), provides general information that will assist in this discussion. Individuals should plan to share information within the brochure at a pace and rate based on each individual family.

Entry into ECSES is defined by when a child:

- a. is newly identified as eligible to receive ECSES services;
 - b. transitions from Part C Children's Integrated Services/Early Intervention (CIS/EI) to school district ECSES;
 - c. transfers from another state or school district ECSES; or
 - d. family withdraws or revokes services and then reenters ECSES.
2. Administer Functional Assessment Measures: As mentioned above, it is part of the ECOS process to gather information to determine a child's entry, exit and progress ratings. The team determines and administers the most appropriate functional assessment measure(s) and methods to address the child's developmental and functional concerns. The assessment measures used will be the team's multiple data

sources that will be synthesized on the IEP and the ECOS form to determine the child's outcome ratings. Consideration should be given to how well the measures and methods inform the outcome areas as described in Part 3, as well as how well they provide a picture of functional, everyday use of skills and behaviors. These multiple data sources include reports from the family and others that know the child well; observations; assessment scores; and other valuable information from the disciplines of various IEP team members.

Note: Depending on the intensity of the child's disability, TSGOLD™ may or may not be considered as a tool to determine entry, exit, and progress ratings.

3. ECO Discussion: In Vermont, the ECO discussion is embedded into the IEP process. After the completion of the functional assessment, teams complete the ECOS form with a summary of the child's functioning in each of the three outcome areas. At the IEP meeting, the team discussions include focus on the three ECO areas as a part of the Present Levels of Educational and Functional Performance. The IEP form is set up to document the evidence to support the ratings for each of the three outcomes. The evidence should accurately represent the child's current discrete skill levels and the ways in which the child uses his/her skills for everyday functioning using information from the functional assessment.

Because the ECOS discussion is included in the IEP, it is important that teams have been describing and involving families in the ECOS process throughout the referral, evaluation and assessment process. Families should have information about the ECOS process and be prepared by staff to participate in the discussion about each of the outcome areas as part of their child's IEP. The IEP meeting should not be the first time the family is hearing about the outcomes. Families should not be expected to be experts on the ECOS process or left to their own to determine the rating, but actively engaged as a full team member to participate in the collective decision-making about each of the three outcomes. Families are an excellent source of information about their child, and are to be valued for their expertise on their child and their everyday use of functional skills and behaviors.

4. Complete ECO Ratings: The ratings for each of the three ECO is embedded into the IEP form, at the end of the Present Levels of Educational and Functional Performance section. Ratings are required to be completed at entry into ECSES, and again at exit from the program. Ratings at annual IEP meetings are encouraged.

At entry, IEP teams will answer the first question mentioned in this Part: *to what extent is the child demonstrating age-expected functioning in each of the three ECO areas?* Entry ratings

must be determined no later than the first 30 days after a child enters ECSE services. For the most part, entry ratings should happen at the child's initial IEP, but, as mentioned previously, may rarely occur after the IEP meeting if it is determined that conversation needs to be altered to meet the family's needs.

At exit, IEP teams will answer both of the questions described at the beginning of this Part: *to what extent is the child demonstrating age-expected functioning in each of the three ECO areas, and has the child gained at least one new skill since the last outcomes rating (the progress question)?* Teams must gather and discuss information that is age-anchored to child development resources, as well as demonstrate the progress the child has made compared to him/herself since the last time the ECOS ratings were completed.

Exit ratings must be determined:

- a. when the child transfers to a new district;
- b. when the child moves out of state;
- c. by the end of the preschool year, prior to their kindergarten entrance; or
- d. when the family revokes services.

Specific instructions for how to manage entry and exit ratings for children moving in and out of districts are included later in this Part.

Answering the progress question at annual reviews and exit requires the team to consider whether the child has gained at least one new skill since the time of the last ECO rating. If the child has gained at least *one new skill*, the answer to the progress question will be "yes." If the child did not gain at least one new skill, or even lost skills, the answer to the progress question will be "no." This is expected to be the case for a relatively small number of children who experience significant disabilities where progress is very slow, or conditions that result in a regression or loss of skill over time.

Because the ECO measurement is included in the child's IEP, the exit ECOS ratings should occur at the last IEP meeting before the end of the school year prior to his/her entrance into kindergarten. If a child leaves the program prior to their entrance into kindergarten, the exit ECOS should be completed as close to the end of services as is feasible, not to exceed 30 days after the child has left the program.

In all discussions in which the team is choosing the ratings that best suit the child's current level of functioning, teams are encouraged to use the Decision Tree and the Definitions of the 7-Point Scale to support their discussion (*see Appendix E: Definitions*).

Transfers and Transitions

- Break in Service: ECO data are used to measure the effectiveness of ECSES services for children from entry to exit. Therefore, if a child has not received services for an extended period, IEP teams should use their discretion to determine if it has had an impact on the child's progress and thus the ECSES's ability to measure effectiveness. If so, when the child returns to the program the entry ECOS should be revised and considered the new entry rating. If there are questions about an individual child's scenario, the IEP team should contact their special education director or the AOE.
- Additional information about requirements related to timeline of service was discussed in the previous section (*see Part 5: Key Steps in the Outcomes Process*).

Child Transfers from Other Programs

- Procedures for Children Moving Between Supervisory Unions or Supervisory Districts:
 - **ECOS Form completed by the sending supervisory unions or supervisory districts:** The sending supervisory union or supervisory district should complete an exit ECOS rating and progress rating prior to the child's transfer. For children receiving services in the sending union/district for less than six months then no exit rating is required.
 - **ECOS Form completed by the receiving supervisory unions or supervisory districts:** The receiving supervisory union or supervisory district should complete an entry ECOS rating within 30 days of the child beginning services in the new union/district.
- Procedures for Children Moving Between States:
 - When a child is moving out of state, the sending supervisory union or supervisory district shall complete an exit ECOS rating and progress rating prior to the child's transfer.
 - When a supervisory union or supervisory district receives a transfer from out of state, they should complete an entry ECOS rating within 30 days of the child beginning services in the new supervisory union or supervisory district with adoption or development of the IEP. If the IEP is adopted, then services shall commence within one week of the time the child enrolls in the receiving supervisory union or supervisory district.

Transition from Part C

IEP teams may request exit summary information from Part C (Children's Integrated Services - EI Program). This information may be used as one of the multiple sources of information to consider when determining the entry rating for ECSES at the initial IEP.

Part 6: Teaming and Assessment Process

Teaming Process

The ECOS process is designed to be a team process. Because the ECOS process is embedded in the IEP process, Vermont educators and providers are expected to collaborate with a multidisciplinary team to share information about functional skills and behaviors across routines, daily activities, settings and situations. This collaboration will also include discussions to age-anchor the child's functioning to age expectations and to select a rating for each of the three ECO. Teams are also expected to document the rating. Review Part 5 for more information about documentation procedures.

Who is Involved?

Teachers are encouraged to collaborate with special education professionals, early childhood professionals, and families in order to develop a comprehensive picture of the child. Anyone who has knowledge about the child's functioning across routines, daily activities, settings, and situations can contribute valuable information about each of the ECO areas.

Required IEP team members:

- Family Members
- Early Childhood Special Educator and Related Service Provider
- Supervisory Union or Supervisory District Representative
- Regular Education Teacher (if the child participates in a regular education program)

Recommended IEP team members:

- Child Care providers (if the child is in a child care program)
- Universal Pre-K Providers
- Head Start Teacher or Preschool Teacher
- Occupational Therapist, Physical Therapist, Speech/Language Pathologists or other related service providers
- Others with knowledge of the child

The Importance of Including Family Members on the Team

Families have the right to participate in all of their children's IEP meetings. In fact, IDEA, the Federal law governing special education, lists families first on the list of required members of a student's IEP team. Families may not be experts on special education, but are experts on their

child; they have unique insights about their child’s capabilities across a variety of routines, daily activities, and settings that can help inform the child’s overall assessment and ECOS rating. However, it is important to recognize that not all family members have knowledge of child development. Team members are encouraged to talk with families about the ECO throughout the IEP process to ensure their understanding of and their participation in the ECOS process. Links to further guidance (e.g., brochures, webinars) are available in the appendices (*see Appendix F: Information to Support Family Involvement*).

Teaming and Assessment

There are no assessment instruments that measure the three ECO directly. Furthermore, the Division for Early Childhood (DEC) Recommended Practice for early childhood assessment is to use multiple sources of information about a child. In Vermont, programs are expected to use different assessment instruments and processes based on the individual needs of the children that are served in the program. It is appropriate for various tools to be used within the same program by the various members of the team. Vermont has selected the ECOS process to measure the ECO so that programs can continue to individualize the assessment process by gathering data from different sources and assessment tools, yet be able to summarize the information in a common metric.

When completing the ECOS process, it is expected that teams will use multiple sources of information. Some recommended sources include (but are not limited to):

- Observations from multiple settings and situations
- Interviews with families, guardians, or caregivers
- Work samples
- Formal assessment measures (Battelle Developmental Inventory, TSGOLD™ *, Assessment, Evaluation and Programming System (AEPS), The Peabody Picture Vocabulary Test, etc.)
- IEP progress notes
- Checklists
- Authentic assessments

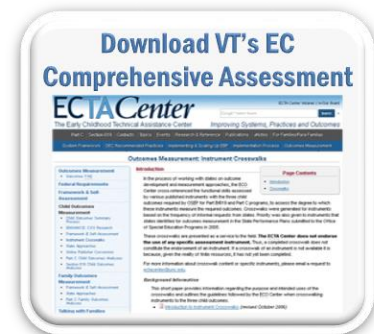
**Teaching Strategies Gold ratings are available for use when determining ECO ratings through the online system. It is important to note that these ratings are generated by the system based on the information that is entered by the local program teachers. Teams may take this information into consideration; however, teams are cautioned not to default to the online ratings without engaging in a team discussion.*

In regard to formal assessment tools, the Vermont ECSES does not endorse the use of any particular assessment instrument over another. However, it is recommended that when considering which assessment tool to use, individuals consider the following:

- How well does the instrument inform the three ECO areas? In other words, how well does the instrument provide information to help the team determine what the ratings will be in each of the three ECO areas?
- Given that the [DEC Recommended Practices](#) indicate that assessment should include multiple sources and multiple methods, and based on the review of the assessment tool, what other methods of functional assessment will be needed to get a full picture of the child’s functioning across settings and situations? Which team members are able to either gather or supply the needed information?

The ECTA Center has cross-walked many of the most commonly used assessment tools to the three ECO areas to show the extent to which each inform the outcomes.

Additional information on teaming practices specific to Vermont’s process is available in this manual (see [Appendix G: Vermont’s Early Childhood Comprehensive Assessment](#)).



Part 7: Summarizing and Reporting the ECOS Data

Child Count

ECO entry, exit, and progress ratings are reported through Vermont's annual child count data collection reporting. Supervisory Unions or Supervisory Districts who work with young children eligible to receive ECSE and related services are responsible for collecting and reporting ECO data as part of the annual child count. All IEPs should be up to date and include ECO entry, exit, and progress ratings.

What Happens to ECOS Data After it is received at the AOE?

Once submitted to AOE, data are reviewed for accuracy by AOE staff. If there are questions about the data or the need for clarification, AOE staff will contact supervisory unions/supervisory districts. Once data accuracy is established, the data are consolidated and analyzed as directed by OSEP to allow the state to report the results in aggregate form on the APR.

The OSEP Progress Categories

Once AOE staff have determined that the ECOS data are accurate, the individual child entry and exit ratings data are summarized to classify each child into one of five progress categories that make up the Office of Special Education Programs (OSEP) reporting requirement on child outcomes. States are required to report to OSEP on the five progress categories for each of the three ECO:

- a. Children who did not improve functioning.
- b. Children who improved functioning but not sufficient to move nearer to functioning comparable to same aged peers.
- c. Children who improved functioning to a level nearer to same aged peers but did not reach it.
- d. Children who improved functioning to reach a level comparable to same aged peers.
- e. Children who maintained functioning at a level comparable to same aged peers.

More information on the 1 through 7 ECOS ratings is available in the appendices (*see Part 5: Four Key Elements of ECOS Process*).

Table 1, on the following page, illustrates how the ECOS data relate to the OSEP progress categories.

Table 1: Relationship of ECOS Ratings to OSEP Progress Category

OSEP Progress Category	Description	Entry and Exit ECOS Ratings
a. Did not improve functioning	Children who acquired no new skills or regressed during their time in the program.	Rated lower at exit than entry; OR Rated 1 at both entry and exit; AND Scored “No”
b. Improved functioning, but not sufficient to move nearer to functioning comparable to same-aged peers	Children who acquired new skills but continued to grow at the same rate throughout their time in the program.	Rated 5 or lower at entry; AND Rated the same or lower at exit; AND “Yes” on the progress question OR Rated 6 or 7 at entry; AND Rated 5 or lower at exit; AND “Yes” on the progress question
c. Improved functioning to a level nearer to same-aged peers but did not reach it	Children who acquired new skills but accelerated their rate of growth during their time in the program. They were making progress toward catching up with their same aged peers but were still functioning below age expectations when they left the program.	Rated higher at exit than entry; AND Rated 5 or below at exit
d. Improved functioning to reach a level comparable to same-aged peers	Children who were functioning below age expectations when they entered the program but were functioning at age expectations when they left.	Rated 5 or lower at entry; AND Rated 6 or 7 at exit
e. Maintained functioning at a level comparable to same-aged peers	Children who were functioning at age expectations when they entered the program and were functioning at age expectations when they left.	Rated 6 or 7 at entry; AND Rated 6 or 7 at exit

The OSEP Summary Statements

In the Annual Performance Report (APR), states must set targets and report performance on two summary statements for each of the three outcomes. The Summary Statements are calculated using the *a-e* progress category data. The first Summary Statement focuses on children who change their growth trajectory while in preschool services. The second Summary Statement focuses on children who exit preschool services functioning at age expectations.

- Summary Statement 1: 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. The formula to calculate summary statement 1 using the progress categories is $(c + d)/(a + b + c + d)$
- Summary Statement 2: The percent of children who were functioning within age expectations in each Outcome by the time they exited the program. The formula to calculate using the progress categories is $(d + e)/(a + b + c + d + e)$

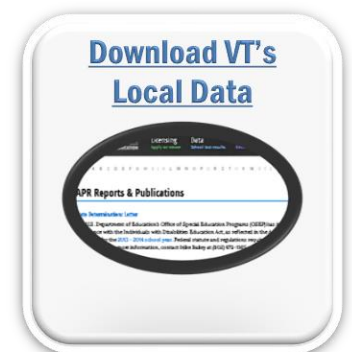
Information about how to calculate progress categories and summary statements are provided in the appendices (*see Appendix H: Calculators*).

Ensuring Data Accuracy for Data Use

The Agency of Education conducts regular reviews of the ECO data to identify data accuracy issues. To support program improvement efforts, local programs may be contacted if there are questions about data submitted. Supervisory unions or supervisory districts should implement strategies for checking the reliability and validity of their own data to ensure that the most accurate data are submitted to the state via Child Count.

OSEP and Public Reporting

Annually, states are required to publicly report the performance of every supervisory union or supervisory district on each SPP/APR indicator against the state targets over the course of the SPP. All supervisory unions or supervisory districts are required to submit all ECO data; however, if the number of children served in a particular supervisory union or supervisory district is less than 11 children, the state will not include the data in local public reporting. States must post SPP, APR, and supervisory union or supervisory district reports on their state website. States are also required to make local determinations for every supervisory union or supervisory district. However, it is a state decision as to whether the ECO indicator (B7) will be considered in the determinations process.



Appendices



Appendix A

Commonly Used Acronyms

AEPS – Assessment, Evaluation and Programming System
AHS – Agency of Human Services
AOE – Agency of Education
APR – Annual Performance Report
BBF – Building Bright Futures
CDD – Child Development Division
CIS – Children’s Integrated Services
DaSy – The Center for IDEA Early Childhood Data Systems
DEC – Division for Early Childhood
ECO – Early Childhood Outcomes
ECOS – Early Childhood Outcomes Summary (can sometimes be used with “Form”)
ECTA – Early Childhood Technical Assistance Center
ECSES – Early Childhood Special Education Services
EIS – Early Intervention Services programs
FAPE – Free and Appropriate Public Education
IDEA – Individuals with Disabilities Education Act
IEP – Individualized Education Plan
PLEFP – Present Levels of Educational and Functional Performance
OSEP – Office of Special Education Programs
SPP – State Performance Plan
TSGOLD™ or TSG™ – Teaching Strategies GOLD
VELS – Vermont Early Learning Standards

Glossary of Commonly Used Terms

Annual Performance Report (APR) - IDEA policy contains the requirement for each state to report annually to the U.S. Secretary of Education the progress it has made that year in meeting the measurable and rigorous targets, established in its six-year SPP. The APR contains a total of 20 indicators.

Authentic Assessment - the assessment of a young child's skills and behaviors in the real life contexts of family, culture and community. Also referred to as functional assessment, authentic assessment focuses on realistic and naturally occurring tasks and circumstances for each individual child in order to gain an understanding of what skills the child has and how they use them in functional, every day activities and routines across a variety of settings.

Early Childhood Outcomes Summary Process (ECOS) - a team process for summarizing information related to a child's progress on each of the three child outcome areas on a 7-point scale. The ECOS process can be used: 1) When the state wants to use multiple sources of information to describe a child's functioning on each of the outcomes. The information could include one or more norm-referenced or curriculum-based assessments, parent report on child's skills and behavior, progress notes of therapists working with the child, observations by a teacher or child care provider, or other sources; and/or 2) When different assessments have been given to different children across the state and the results need to be placed on the same scale to be aggregated in a way for states to summarize data on children for federal reporting purposes. States use the Child Outcomes Summary Form to document children's functioning in the three outcome areas.¹

Early Childhood Outcomes (ECO) - the three ECO measure the extent to which children are making progress as a result of receiving ECSES. The outcomes are: 1) Children have positive social emotional skills, including social relationships; 2) Children acquire knowledge and skills, including language/communication, early literacy, and numeracy; and 3) Children take appropriate action to meet their own needs.

Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) - the United States' special education law. IDEA was first passed in 1975, where it was called the Education for All Handicapped Children's Act. Every few years, the law has been revised (a process called reauthorization). The most current version of IDEA is Public Law 108-446, passed in 2004 and called the "Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act of 2004." It is still most commonly referred to as IDEA, or IDEA 2004 (to distinguish it from other reauthorizations). Final regulations for IDEA 2004 were published in 2006.²

¹ [Early Childhood Technical Assistance Center](#)

² Center for Parent Information and Resources (formerly the National Dissemination Center for Children with Disabilities (NICHCY))

Part B - refers to the section of IDEA that applies to children ages 3 through 21. Often used interchangeably with the term, “school-aged”.

Part B Section 619 - refers to the section of IDEA Part B, which specifically addresses children ages, 3 through 5 (and not enrolled in Kindergarten). Often used interchangeably with the term, “pre-school aged”

Part C Early Intervention - refers to the section of IDEA that applies to children birth - age 3.

Related Service Personnel - practitioners in the fields of Speech and Language Pathology, Physical Therapy, Occupational Therapy, who provide services to ECSES children and families.

State Performance Plan (SPP) - the IDEA reauthorization of 2004 requires each state to have a State Performance Plan (SPP) in place that evaluates its efforts to implement the requirements and purposes of Part B of IDEA (including Section 619 ECSES) and describes how the state will improve such implementation. The SPP, revised annually and submitted to OSEP every six years, includes measurable and rigorous targets for the 20 indicators established under three monitoring priority areas: 1.Free and Appropriate Public Education (FAPE) in the Least Restrictive Environment (LRE); 2.Disproportionality; and 3.General Supervision Part B, including Child Find, effective transition and effective general supervision. In addition to the ECO, states report on other early childhood indicators including, settings for preschool children and transition data.

Teaching Strategies GOLD (TSGOLD™) - an assessment tool that allows providers to gather meaningful information on children using multiple methods including observations, portfolios, and developmental profiles. A TSGOLD™ formative assessment is required for all children participating in Vermont’s universal Pre-Kindergarten (PreK).

[Vermont Early Learning Standards \(VELS\)](#) - a set of standards that help inform families about the development and capabilities of children and guide educators in the development and selection of program-wide curriculum and educational strategies for children from birth through grade 3. The VELS were adopted and approved by the Vermont State Board of Education in August 2015, and were subsequently revised to include children ages birth - grade 3 in order to address the full continuum of development and learning across the ages.

Appendix B

VELS Guiding Principles

Vermont believes that:

1. Each and every child has promise. No matter their circumstances, we don't give up on children.
2. Each and every child develops and learns trust and respect through nurturing, responsive, and predictable relationships with family members, early childhood professionals and other adults and children.
3. Each and every child forms ideas of how the world works and their place in it through actively interacting with people, formal and natural environments and objects.
4. Each and every child has a unique life story written by his/her family, community, culture, heritage, language, beliefs and circumstances.
5. Each and every child learns and develops best when nutritional, physical and emotional needs are met, and when they feel safe and valued.
6. Families are a child's first, most consistent and important teachers.
7. Each family deserves respect and support as partners and decision makers in the education and development of their children.
8. Home language and culture are essential components of each family's identity; they are to be valued and maintained.
9. Young children learn through play, physical activity, exploration, inquiry, engagement, asking questions, and communicating with adults and other children.
10. Learning opportunities that are relevant, integrated across developmental domains, based on children's interests, and build on children's current knowledge and abilities are most effective in supporting each child's full potential.
11. To best support each and every child, early childhood professionals need the knowledge and skill to design, implement, assess, and adapt developmentally, culturally, linguistically, and individually appropriate practices.
12. Early childhood practices need to be evidence-based, aligned, cumulative, and appropriate to each child's developmental levels and needs.

13. Each and every child benefits from a continuous and seamless sequence of educational and developmental supports throughout early childhood (birth through third grade) to maximize their full participation and diminish the challenges of transitions. This consistency is particularly important for young children who are most at risk.

Appendix C

TSGOLD™ and the Vermont Early Learning Standards Crosswalk

Making effective and appropriate use of the VELs is vital to help early care and education providers make informed decisions based on evidence about curriculum and assessment. The thoughtful application of these standards (birth-age 8) is consistent with our best knowledge, understanding, and practice of how children learn, grow, and develop throughout their early years.

This [crosswalk](#), developed by the Teaching Strategies staff, aligns the assessment tool to the VELs. The crosswalk between VELs and TSGOLD will help support the ongoing curriculum planning, instruction, data collection, and evaluation, and review to inform practice and program improvement that will ultimately make a difference for each and every child.

Appendix D

History of the Early Childhood Outcomes

Timeline

January 2003	The Federal Office of Management and Budget uses the Program Assessment Rating Tool (PART) to review 200 federally funded programs including, IDEA, Parts C and B 619 preschool
October 2003	The Early Childhood Outcomes Center (ECO Center) grant was awarded to SRI International to assist the Office of Special Education Programs (OSEP) at the US Department of Education, to address PART results, and to improve both Part C and 619 outcomes.
December 2004	IDEA is reauthorized and language is added to mandate each state to develop a State Performance Plan (SPP) and Annual Performance Report (APR) that includes indicators measuring outcome data, along with a number of compliance indicators.
December 2005	Deadline for the development and submission of each state SSP
February 2007	State APR due; First Family Outcomes data reported for the fiscal year July 1, 2005 –June 30, 2006
February 2008	State APR due; First Child Outcomes data reported for fiscal year July 1, 2006- June 30, 2007

Individuals with Disabilities Education Act

Visit the [IDEA site](#) for in depth information about and history on Part C and B of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act.

Early Childhood Outcomes National Data

Each year, the Early Childhood Technical Assistance (ECTA) Center completes an analysis of the national ECO data and compiles a report for distribution. The current year's analysis can be found [here](#).

Appendix E

ECOS Process Tools

Definitions for Outcome Ratings:

For Use with the Child Outcomes Summary (COS) Form

Overall Age-Appropriate	Completely means:	7	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Child shows functioning expected for his or her age in all or almost all everyday situations that are part of the child's life. Functioning is considered appropriate for his or her age. No one has any concerns about the child's functioning in this outcome area.
		6	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Child's functioning generally is considered appropriate for his or her age but there are some significant concerns about the child's functioning in this outcome area. These concerns are substantial enough to suggest monitoring or possible additional support. Although age-appropriate, the child's functioning may border on not keeping pace with age expectations.
Overall Not Age-Appropriate	Somewhat means:	5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Child shows functioning expected for his or her age some of the time and/or in some settings and situations. Child's functioning is a mix of age-appropriate and not age-appropriate behaviors and skills. Child's functioning might be described as like that of a slightly younger child*
		4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Child shows occasional age-appropriate functioning across settings and situations. More functioning is not age-appropriate than age-appropriate.
	Nearly means:	3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Child does not yet show functioning expected of a child of his or her age in any situation. Child uses immediate foundational skills, most or all of the time, across settings and situations. Immediate foundational skills are the skills upon which to build age-appropriate functioning. Functioning might be described as like that of a younger child*
		2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Child occasionally uses immediate foundational skills across settings and situations. More functioning reflects skills that are not immediate foundational than are immediate foundational.
	Not yet means:	1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Child does not yet show functioning expected of a child his or her age in any situation. Child's functioning does not yet include immediate foundational skills upon which to build age-appropriate functioning. Child functioning reflects skills that developmentally come before immediate foundational skills. Child's functioning might be described as like that of a much younger child*

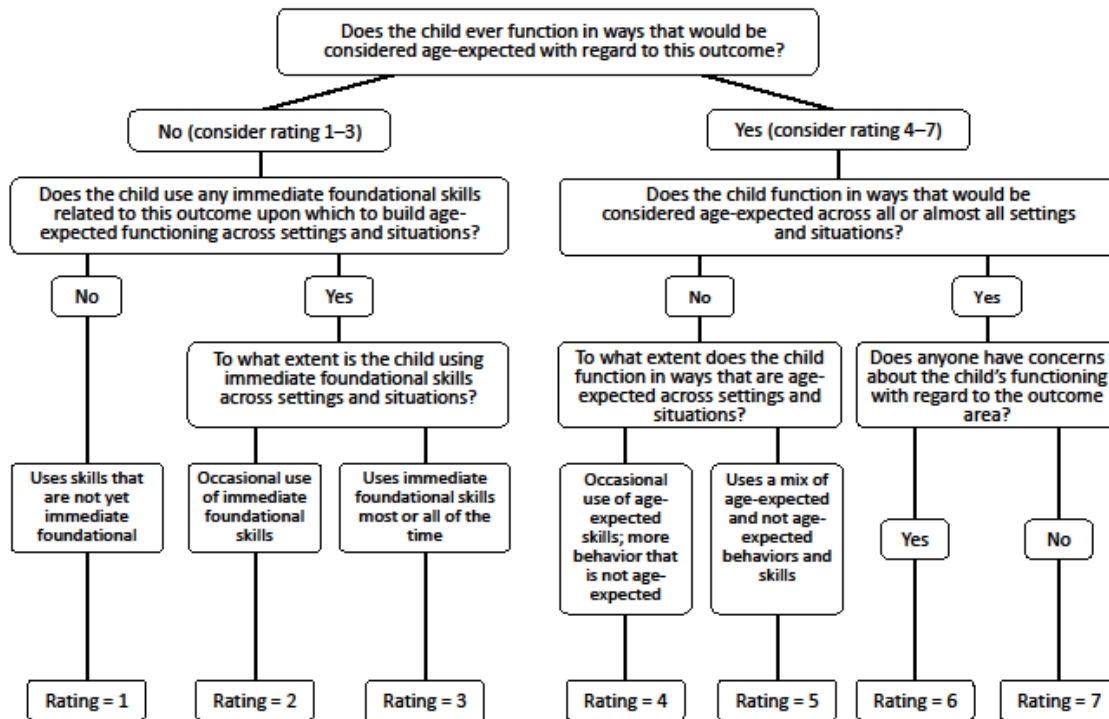
* The characterization of functioning like a younger child only will apply to some children receiving special services, such as children with developmental delays.



The Early Childhood Outcomes Center 11/8/12

The Decision Tree*

Decision Tree for Summary Rating Discussions



*Also available without rating numbers: [The Decision Tree \(without numbers\)](#)

ECOS Teaming and Collaboration Toolkit:

This toolkit has resources that can be used by ECSES staff and supervisors to promote best practices in teaming within the ECOS process. The tool includes resources for supporting the full participation of families in the discussion, as well as indicators of quality collaborations, case studies and self-assessments.

[Toolkit resources and materials](#)

[Interactive Toolkit](#)

Effective Documentation for Outcome Ratings:

Effective Documentation for Outcome Ratings

Features of Effective Documentation:

- Mentions specific functional skills the child uses in everyday settings and situations and the consistency with which they are observed.
- Describes the presence and absence of age-anchored skills (AE, IF, and F) that are consistent with the selected rating.
- Focuses on the child's current level of functioning rather than how much progress the child has made.
- Identifies the assessment tool(s) that contributed information for the rating.

Documentation Key:

Overall Age Expected	7	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide examples of the child's age-expected functioning. • Indicate: "No concerns."
	6	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide examples of the child's age-expected functioning. • Note concerns. • <i>Evidence should not include any functioning that is not age expected for a rating of 6 or 7.</i>
Overall Not Age Appropriate	5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide examples of the child's age-expected functioning. • Provide examples of the child's functioning that is not age expected.
	4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide examples of the child's age-expected functioning. • Provide examples of the child's functioning that is not age expected. • <i>Evidence should show more functioning that is not age expected.</i>
	3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide examples of the child's functioning at the immediate foundational skill level. • <i>Evidence should not show age-expected functioning for a rating of 3.</i>
	2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide examples of the child's functioning at the immediate foundational skill level. • Provide examples of the child's functioning that is not yet age expected or immediate foundational. • <i>Evidence should show more functioning that is foundational than is immediate foundational for a rating of 2.</i>
	1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide examples of the child's functioning that is not yet age expected or immediate foundational. • <i>Evidence should not show age-expected or immediate foundational functioning for a rating of 1.</i>

Example IEP with Outcomes Completed

The following example shows a completed IEP for a child named Amanda, with the outcomes measurement included in the Present Levels of Educational and Functional Performance Section.

- [Completed IEP Form for Amanda](#)

Appendix F

Information to Support Family Involvement

Vermont Early Childhood Outcomes Brochure

[Link coming soon!]

Talking with Families

The ECTA website has several resources that may be helpful for IEP teams when talking with families about the outcomes measurement process. The [Talking with Families site](#) has many suggestions for how to frame the conversations at different points along the IEP Process. Of particular note is the brochure written by the PACER and ECTA Centers to support the family's understanding of their role in the outcomes measurement process titled [*A Family Guide to Participating in the Early Childhood Outcomes Measurement Process*](#).

This brochure may be printed and distributed to families. It has also been translated into several languages by the PACER Center; please [contact the Center](#) to learn more.

The [IEP Flow Chart](#) developed by ECTA may also help programs think through how and when throughout the IEP process outcomes may be infused into conversations with families.

Appendix G

Vermont's Early Childhood Comprehensive Assessment System Framework

Coming soon!

Appendix H

Calculators

ECOS to Progress Category Calculator

The ECO/ECTDA Center has developed a Progress [Category Calculator](#) (Tutorial version and Analytic version) to assist programs calculating OSEP categories from the ECOS data:

The Tutorial version is an Excel file designed to show what OSEP reporting categories are generated from all possible combinations of ECOS ratings at entry and exit. The tutor allows you to experiment with various combinations of outcomes ratings and progress question answers to see what OSEP category each combination produces. The Analytic version is an Excel file that can be used (or adapted for use by someone who knows Excel) with large data sets of ECOS ratings. It will use ECOS ratings data to generate OSEP progress category information on child outcomes (i.e., the data that must be submitted to OSEP every February), summary statement percentages, charts showing entry and exit ECOS ratings, descriptive information on “a” and “e” progress categories across all three outcomes, and some basic descriptive information about the data.

Summary Statements Calculator

The ECO/ECTA Center has also developed a [Summary Statement Calculator](#) to assist programs in converting their progress category data into the two summary statements.

Local programs may use these calculators to look at their data on an ongoing basis for program improvement efforts.