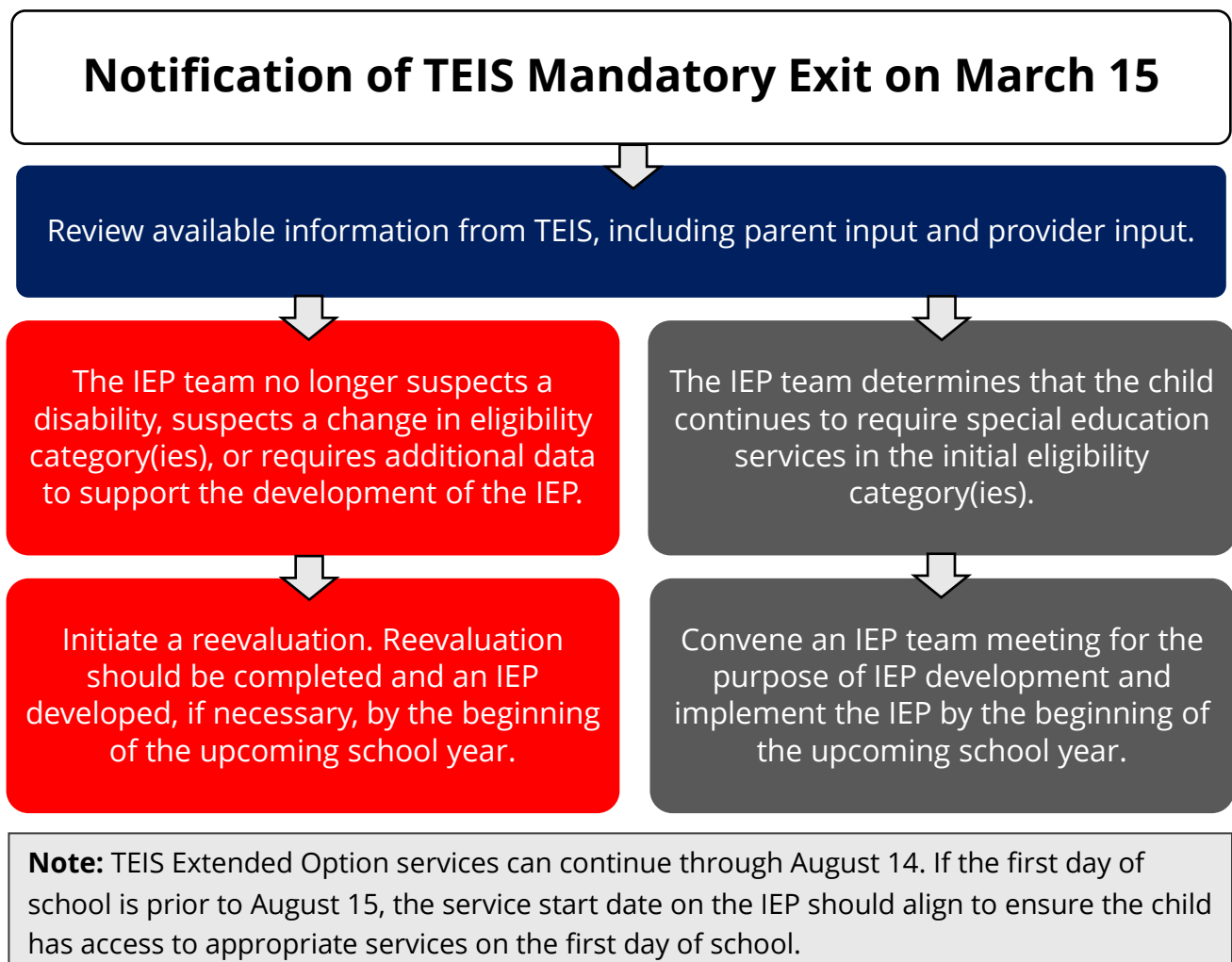


Navigating Part C to Part B Transitions: Mandatory Exits from Tennessee Early Intervention System (TEIS) Extended Option

The Tennessee Early Intervention System (TEIS) Extended Services option allows eligible children served by TEIS the choice of continuing to receive IDEA Part C early intervention services through TEIS beyond age three (3) or to receive IDEA Part B services through the local education agency (LEA) where the child resides. If a family chooses TEIS Extended Option services, the child is eligible to receive services through an Individualized Family Service Plan (IFSP) up to the start of the school year following the child's fifth (5th) birthday.

On March 15 of each calendar year, TEIS will provide a Notification of Mandatory Exit, which informs LEAs of the children who were found eligible for Part B LEA-provided special education services but will no longer be age-eligible for TEIS Extended Option services upon the start of the following school year. This document provides guidance for LEAs as they navigate the Part C to Part B transition.



Frequently Asked Questions:

Mandatory Exits from Tennessee Early Intervention System (TEIS) Extended Option

General Procedures

1. What procedures does TEIS complete to ensure accuracy of information prior to contacting LEAs with the Notification of Mandatory Exits on March 15?

TEIS will contact all families of children who will be required to exit the TEIS Extended Option to confirm the address of residence and ensure that the appropriate LEA is notified of the child's exit.

If the child's LEA of residence has changed since the initial eligibility meeting, TEIS will notify:

- The previous LEA of residence (that completed the eligibility process), and
- The new LEA of residence (based on the confirmed address).

LEAs should then follow the process for an in-state transfer.

2. The LEA has noted children who were previously found eligible for Part B services and selected the TEIS Extended Option were not included on the Notification of Mandatory Exit. What are the LEA's next steps?

LEAs should receive notification of exit for all children who are eligible for Part B services but chose the TEIS Extended Option. If the child exited TEIS Extended Option prior to the start of the school year following their 5th birthday and prior to the date of Notification of Mandatory Exit, the LEA should have received a Notification of Early Exit from TEIS.

If there is no notification of the child's exit, either through Notification of Early Exit or Mandatory Exit, the LEA should contact TEIS, request a copy of the Notification of Early Exit, and inquire about the status of the child. If TEIS informs the LEA that the child previously exited services, the LEA maintains their obligation to offer Part B services and should convene an IEP meeting.

3. What processes should an LEA follow if they are unable to contact the family following the receipt of the Notification of Mandatory Exit?

The LEA should make reasonable attempts to locate the child and family through multiple modes of communication including but not limited to:

- Phone calls,
- Emails,
- Certified mail, and/or
- Home visits.

All communication attempts should be documented in TN PULSE.

If communication attempts are unsuccessful, complete a non-eligibility report marked, “Eligible, but the parents are declining services” and issue a Prior Written Notice (PWN). The child should remain active in TN PULSE.

4. What processes should an LEA follow if there is no longer a suspected disability?

If the IEP team has current data indicating the child may no longer meet eligibility criteria, the LEA should initiate a reevaluation.

This reevaluation must be completed prior to the start of the upcoming school year to ensure a timely decision regarding eligibility and service provision through an IEP, if needed.

5. What data may be used to inform the development of the IEP given that the data collected by the LEA when determining initial eligibility may be outdated and may not support the development of an IEP?

TEIS will provide LEAs with the most recent Individualized Family Service Plan (IFSP), annual evaluation, and other relevant therapy or service information.

The LEA may consider gathering current observational or assessment data to ensure the IEP reflects the child’s present levels of academic achievement and functional performance.

6. The family of a child who was included on the Notification of Mandatory Exit from TEIS has informed the LEA that they will not be enrolling their child in kindergarten, including a parentally placed private or home school. What are the LEA's next steps?

The LEA should:

- Consider convening an IEP meeting to fully communicate the child's right to access a Free Appropriate Public Education (FAPE) and an IEP,
- Issue a Prior Written Notice (PWN), if the parent declines services, and complete a non-eligibility report marked, "Eligible, but parents are declining services,"
- Provide parents with copies of PWN and *Notice of Procedural Safeguards*, and
- Keep the child active in TN PULSE.

7. The family of a child who was included on the Notification of Mandatory Exit from TEIS has informed the LEA that they will be enrolling their child in a parentally placed private or home school for kindergarten. What are the LEA's next steps?

The LEA should:

- Determine where the private or home school is located, as the geographic LEA in which the private or umbrella home school is located is responsible for the provision of equitable services,
- Convene an IEP meeting to consider if equitable services are needed,
- If equitable services are necessary, finalize Individual Service Plan (ISP) in TN PULSE,
- Keep the student eligible in TN PULSE as the student is entitled to triennial reevaluation even if the student does not receive equitable services,
- Provide parents with copies of PWN and *Notice of Procedural Safeguards*, and
- Keep the child active in TN PULSE.

8. Why should LEAs keep children active in TN PULSE after declining services?

Maintaining an active record with the appropriate documentation of the parent's refusal of services allows the LEA to demonstrate it fulfilled its obligations under IDEA. In addition, maintaining the child's active record ensures that, if the child re-enrolls in the LEA or transfers to another LEA, their information is readily accessible, allowing for timely support and service coordination upon reentry.

9. How long will children remain active in TN PULSE after declining services?

Children will always remain active in TN PULSE, even if parents decline services.

10. Some families wish to delay kindergarten enrollment until age 6 with IEP services provided in a preschool environment (e.g., the child's current LEA or non-LEA administered program, first time enrollment in preschool). What are the LEA's responsibilities and options for supporting these children and families?

If a family chooses to delay kindergarten enrollment, the LEA maintains the obligation to offer a Free Appropriate Public Education (FAPE) to eligible children ages 3–5 in their Least Restrictive Environment (LRE), either a preschool environment or school-age setting.

The IEP team, which includes the family as a key member, should consider the parent's input, concerns, and preferences when determining the environment that best supports the child's unique learning needs and access to the general education curriculum.

The IEP team must:

- Develop an Individualized Education Program (IEP) based on the child's Present Levels of Academic Achievement and Functional Performance (PLAAFP),
- Write Measurable Annual Goals (MAGs) that address the child's unique needs,

- Determine the special education and related services required for the child to make progress, and
- Consider placement options, such as pre-K or kindergarten, based on:
 - o The child's individual goals,
 - o General education content standards (aligned with Tennessee's Early Learning Standards or kindergarten standards, as appropriate), and
 - o The least restrictive environment for delivering services.

If the IEP team determines the child's LRE for placement and services is a preschool environment, that must be provided. If the offer of FAPE specifies kindergarten placement, even though the family wants to delay kindergarten enrollment, the parent/guardian may pursue options provided in the *Notice of Procedural Safeguards*.

11. If a family declines Part B services, will the child be eligible to receive services through TEIS Extended Option through the summer?

Yes. Although children must maintain active eligibility through Part B in order to receive services through the TEIS Extended Option, after the Notification of Mandatory Exit, LEAs can proceed with completing the non-eligibility report marked, "Eligible, but the parents are declining services" and the child may continue receiving services until August 14th.