

Frequently Asked Questions

Part C Tennessee Early Intervention System (TEIS) Extended Services Option

The Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) requires the early identification and timely transition of children with disabilities who are referred from IDEA Part C (early intervention services) to IDEA Part B (school system services). See 34 C.F.R. § 300.124. The Tennessee Early Intervention System (TEIS) extended services option will allow eligible children served by TEIS the choice of continuing to receive IDEA Part C early intervention services through TEIS through the beginning of the school year following child's fifth birthday or to receive IDEA Part B services through the local education agency (LEA) where the child resides. This document addresses frequently asked questions related to this topic.

General Procedures

1. How does a child qualify for the TEIS Extended Option?

Step 1: The child is eligible and receiving services from TEIS prior to the child's third birthday and the family consented to TEIS notifying the school district.

Step 2: The local school district obtains consent to conduct an evaluation and determines that the child is eligible for special education services under Part B.

Step 3: The process for the parent/guardian to make their decision depends on whether a TEIS representative is present at the Part B eligibility meeting or if an additional TEIS Extended Option Decision Meeting must be held.

- If the TEIS representative is present at the eligibility meeting to review the TEIS Extended Option, the child's parent/guardian has up to 10 calendar days to make a decision from the date of the joint eligibility and decision meeting.
- If the child is found eligible for Part B but a TEIS representative was not present at the eligibility meeting, TEIS will schedule a TEIS Extended Option Decision Meeting within 7 calendar days of the eligibility meeting to inform the family of their options. The family will have up to 10 calendar days to make a decision from the date of the decision meeting.

The child's parent/guardian will choose one of the following:

- receive TEIS Extended Option services beginning on the child's third birthday,
- transition to receiving Part B services from the local school district with an IEP begin date on the child's third birthday, or
- decline both options.

Step 4: TEIS will provide the LEA with a signed and dated TEIS Extended Option Decision form within 3 business days. The LEA should upload the signed decision form to TN PULSE for documentation.

If the parent/guardian does not opt into the TEIS Extended Option within 10 calendar days of the TEIS Extended Option Decision Meeting, the child will no longer be eligible to receive TEIS Extended Option services.

2. How should an LEA adjust transition timelines to account for the TEIS Extended Option decision-making process?

LEAs should invite a TEIS representative to Part B eligibility meetings to support a smooth and efficient transition for the child and family. The following timeline adjustments may be made to support timely transitions:

- Up to 10 additional calendar days may be required if the TEIS representative is present at the Part B eligibility meeting and the TEIS Extended Option Decision Meeting is held jointly.
- Up to 17 additional calendar days may be required if the TEIS representative is not present and a TEIS Extended Option Decision Meeting must be held.

After the parent/guardian signs the decision form, TEIS has up to 3 business days to provide a copy to the LEA.

LEAs should account for these additional processes (up to 20 days) in the transition process to ensure that, when applicable, an individualized education program (IEP) is implemented by the child's third birthday.

3. What happens when a parent/guardian does not consent to TEIS notifying the school district of their child's potential eligibility for preschool services under Part B?

If there is no notification due to the parent/guardian opting out of notification to the LEA, a transition planning conference (TPC) will not be held and the LEA will not be accountable to evaluate, determine eligibility, and, if applicable, implement an Individualized Education Program (IEP) by the child's third birthday.

4. How will children referred to TEIS less than 90 days before their third birthday be managed?

45 – 90 Days Before the Child's Third Birthday: TEIS will notify the LEA of the referral, evaluate the child, and determine eligibility for Part C services. If the child is eligible for Part C services, a transition planning conference (TPC) will be held, and the LEA will be invited. The processes outlined in question 1 should then be followed.

These children will be included in the “late referral” category for Indicator 12 reporting, and the LEA will not be considered out of compliance when the IEP is not implemented by the third birthday, provided the LEA has made reasonable efforts to complete the eligibility process as close to the third birthday as possible. The LEA should document these attempts in the “Contacts” section of TN PULSE.

Less than 45 Days Before the Child’s Third Birthday: TEIS will notify the LEA of the referral but will not evaluate the child or determine Part C eligibility. A TPC will not be held, and these children are not eligible for TEIS Extended Option. The LEA should proceed with Part B eligibility process.

5. Who is responsible for providing interpreters at joint TEIS and LEA meetings?

The host of the meeting should provide an interpreter.

- For TPCs, TEIS is the host and must provide an interpreter.
- For Part B eligibility meetings, the LEA is the host and must provide an interpreter.
 - If the TEIS Extended Option Decision Meeting occurs at the same time and a TEIS representative is present, the LEA’s interpreter may interpret for both parties.
 - If the TEIS Extended Option Decision Meeting is held separately, TEIS is responsible for providing the interpreter.

6. What steps should an LEA take if the eligibility determination, TEIS Extended Option Decision Meeting, and, if applicable, IEP implementation will not take place by the child’s third birthday?

LEAs must operate under the assumption that they will be responsible for serving children determined eligible for Part B services. Therefore, all IDEA requirements for timely IEP development and implementation remain in effect unless the LEA is formally notified that the parent/guardian has opted into TEIS Extended Option or declined Part B services.

LEAs are expected to make every effort to have the IEP implemented, when applicable, by the child’s third birthday. However, when this is not possible, the LEA must notify TEIS of the reason for the delay.

- If the delay is due to the LEA, TEIS will continue providing Part C services for a reasonable period of time beyond the child’s third birthday until Part B eligibility is determined.
- If the delay is due to the parent/guardian (e.g., repeated failure to make the child available for evaluation or declining participation in the eligibility meeting), Part C services will end on the child’s third birthday.

7. What should be done if the LEA loses contact with the parent/guardian during the Part B evaluation/eligibility determination process?

The LEA should notify TEIS as soon as they experience challenges with contacting the parent/guardian. TEIS will support the LEA in contacting the parent/guardian. The LEA should provide detailed documentation of all contact attempts in the “Contacts” section of TN PULSE.

8. Can the LEA provide a draft IEP to the parent/guardian before the TEIS Extended Option Decision form has been signed to support their decision-making?

Yes. After the eligibility meeting, the IEP team may create a draft of the IEP.

The IEP should reflect the individualized services a child needs—including the intensity, duration, and frequency of interventions—to make meaningful progress toward their goals in their Least Restrictive Environment (LRE). Services must be based on the child’s unique needs, not on the name of a preschool program or the number of hours the child attends that program.

LEAs are encouraged to upload a paper copy of the draft IEP to the TN PULSE document library. This ensures that, if the parent/guardian later chooses to exit TEIS Extended Option and transition to LEA services, the draft IEP developed following the initial eligibility meeting is available for review and consideration.

9. Can a child receive special education and/or related services from the local school district and TEIS Extended Option simultaneously?

No, a child cannot receive special education and/or related services from both the local school district and TEIS Extended Option at the same time. The parent/guardian for an eligible child must choose to either opt into TEIS Extended Option services **or** transition to receive services from the local school district.

10. Can a child who turns three late in the school year or during the summer months continue TEIS Extended Option services until the beginning of the subsequent school year?

Yes. If the parent/guardian elects the TEIS Extended Option, the child will receive services through Part C until they complete a Notification of Exit form indicating that they wish to exit TEIS Extended Option.

- LEAs should communicate the free appropriate public education (FAPE) available through the IEP, including consideration of an extended school year (ESY).
- TEIS representatives will ensure information regarding the TEIS Extended Option is available to parents/guardians.
- Both TEIS and the LEA should support informed family decision-making—not attempt to persuade or dissuade families toward either option.

11. Can a child receiving TEIS Extended Option services enroll in Voluntary Pre-K (VPK) or another LEA-operated pre-K program such as a Title I preschool?

Yes. When a child meets the eligibility criteria to attend a pre-K program in the LEA, the LEA should offer to meet with the parent/guardian to ensure they understand the special education services and access to FAPE that could be provided through an IEP to support the child within the LEA pre-K program. Parents/guardians may choose to exit from TEIS Extended Option and transition to the LEA for special education services, or they may choose to continue early intervention services through the TEIS Extended Option while their child is enrolled in the LEA pre-K program.

If TEIS service providers and the parent/guardian request to provide early intervention services during the school day, the LEA should individually consider whether accommodating the request would support or disrupt the child's learning and the overall classroom environment.

12. What are the LEAs next steps after being notified that the parent/guardian chose the TEIS Extended Option?

TEIS will provide the LEA with a TEIS Extended Option Decision form indicating the parent/guardian's decision. Then, TEIS will invite the LEA to participate in an IFSP meeting to share relevant Part B evaluation data for children who participated in the TEIS Extended Services Option. This will support TEIS in ensuring that components of school readiness are incorporated into the IFSP.

The LEA must maintain the child's eligibility for Part B services in TN PULSE. Therefore, an eligibility report indicating the eligibility determination indicating that "This student is eligible for special education because s/he meets the State of Tennessee's eligibility standards for..." should be maintained in TN PULSE.

The LEA will inactivate the child's record and select "Parent elected Part C TEIS Extended Services Option" as the reason. The TEIS Extended Option Decision form should be uploaded, and a prior written notice should be completed to summarize and document that the parent/guardian has chosen the TEIS Extended Option.

13. When must the LEA develop and finalize an IEP if the family chooses Part B services?

Once the TEIS Extended Option Decision form is completed and indicates that the parent/guardian elects to receive services through the LEA, the LEA should ensure that the IEP is in place by the child's third birthday and within 30 days of the eligibility determination meeting.

14. What if a child referred from TEIS is determined to not be eligible for Part B services?

If the child is not eligible for Part B services, they will not be eligible for the TEIS Extended Option. The LEA should inactivate the child's record and select "transferred to regular education" as the reason. The eligibility determination document, along with a detailed prior written notice, must be provided to the parent. Within TN PULSE, the LEA should ensure that the contact log is updated, and all pertinent documentation is uploaded. If a TEIS representative was invited but is not present at the eligibility determination meeting, the LEA should inform TEIS of the Part B non-eligibility determination.

15. What happens if the child's parent/guardian challenges the LEA's non-eligibility determination?

The child's parent/guardian can utilize any of the procedural safeguards available under Part B to challenge the non-eligibility determination, including the right to seek an independent educational evaluation (IEE) or to request a due process hearing.

TEIS will continue to provide Part C services to the child until the dispute is resolved (e.g., the LEA has an opportunity to consider the results of the IEE or a final determination is reached in a due process hearing) or until the child ages out of the Part C TEIS extended services option at the beginning of the school year following the child's fifth birthday, whichever occurs first.

16. What happens if the parent/guardian initially chooses the TEIS Extended Option but later wants to transition to Part B services before kindergarten?

A child can exit the TEIS Extended Option at any time after their initial decision. If the parent/guardian wishes to exit TEIS Extended Option, TEIS will notify the LEA via a Notification of Exit form which will indicate the parent/guardian's decision to do one of the following:

- exit TEIS Extended Option early and decline to initiate Part B services,
- exit TEIS Extended Option early and begin Part B services as soon as possible, or
- exit TEIS Extended Option on a date (provided) which is greater than sixty (60) days from the date of signature on the form and begin Part B services at that time.

If the parent/guardian indicates that they do not wish to initiate Part B services, the LEA maintains eligibility for the child and should convene an IEP meeting. If the parent/guardian does not wish to transition to Part B services, the LEA should obtain signatures indicating that the child is eligible, but the parents are declining services and issue a prior written notice (PWN). The child's record should remain active in TN PULSE.

If the family indicates to TEIS that they wish to transition to Part B services, the LEA should convene an IEP team meeting to review existing data and determine if additional assessments are needed. The IEP must be developed and implemented within 60 days of the exit date indicated on the Notification of Exit form.

Families cannot return to TEIS Extended Option after completing the Notification of Exit Form.

17. When a child exits from TEIS Extended Option, will the district be found non-compliant for a timely transition due to the IEP not being implemented by the child's third birthday?

No. Children who opt into TEIS Extended services will be reported in a separate category within Indicator 12. LEAs should maintain thorough documentation throughout the eligibility determination and TEIS Extended Option Decision Meeting process, including uploading the Decision Meeting form and indicating the parent/guardian's decision in a prior written notice (PWN). When the child exits TEIS Extended Option, the Notification of Exit form should also be uploaded as evidence of the parent/guardian's decision to transition to Part B services. All communications should be documented in the "Contacts" section of TN PULSE.

18. How will a district know that a child who chose the TEIS Extended Option will be kindergarten age by August 15 and will no longer be eligible for TEIS Extended Option Services?

Children are eligible to continue receiving TEIS Extended Option services until the beginning of the school year following the child's fifth birthday. LEAs are encouraged to maintain an internal list of all children who are found eligible for Part B services but elect for the TEIS Extended Option.

By March 15 of each year, TEIS will provide a Mandatory Exit list to LEAs indicating all children served under TEIS Extended Option who are approaching the start of the school year that follows their fifth birthday. The LEA must ensure that IEPs are developed, and special education and related services can begin by the start of the school year. Additional information on navigating Mandatory Exits from TEIS Extended Option can be found [here](#).

TEIS Extended Option services can continue through August 14. If the first day of school is prior to August 15, the service start date on the IEP should align to ensure the child has access to appropriate services on the first day of school.

For additional support with navigating Part C to Part B transitions, please contact:

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