

NORTH DAKOTA DEPARTMENT OF  
**PUBLIC INSTRUCTION**

## Part B

# Educational Environments

## Early Childhood Special Education

### Children Ages 3-5

## Why Do Preschool Educational Environments Data Matter?

Educational Environments data are one of the annual types of data states report to the U.S. Department of Education (Department), Office of Special Education Programs (OSEP). Before states report these data, educators engage in many activities and steps that lead up to and are part of the decisionmaking process regarding placement of children in the least restrictive educational environments. Despite the expansion of early childhood programs, there has not yet been a proportionate expansion of inclusive early learning opportunities for young children with disabilities. If states and LEAs are to have high-quality data to use for program improvement, it is crucial that they understand the process of collecting and reporting the preschool educational environments data.

# Federal requirements mandate that states collect and report Part B Data

## Indicator 6- Preschool Environments:

- Represents the percentage of children with IEPs, ages 3, 4, and 5, who are enrolled in a preschool program, (A) receiving majority of special education and related services in a regular early childhood program (B) attending a separate special education class, separate school, or residential facility; (C) receiving special education and related services in the home.


# Educational Environments for Children Ages 3-5 who receive Early Childhood Special Education Services

(These environments are embedded into the ND statewide IEP system known as TIENET)

- (A) Children attending a regular early childhood program at least 10 hour per week
  - (A1) and receiving the majority of hours of special education and related services in the regular early childhood program.
  - (A2) and receiving the majority of hours of special education and related services in some other location.
  
- (B) Children attending a regular education program less than 10 hours per week
  - (B1) and receiving the majority of hours of special education and related services in the regular early childhood program.
  - (B2) and receiving the majority of hours of special education and related services in some other location.
  
- (C) Children not attending a regular early childhood program
  - (C1) Special education class
  - (C2) Separate school
  - (C3) Residential facility
  
- (D) Children not attending a regular early childhood program or a special education program (not included in A, B, C, above)
  - (D1) Home
  - (D2) Service provider location or some other location not in any other category above

# The North Dakota Department of Public Instruction uses the TIENET IEP system to collect student level data for all children receiving special education services.

The data for Indicator 6 reporting is pulled from the following location in the child’s IEP in the Educational Environment Section:

I. Educational Environment
<p>Note: Use this setting information to check the federal child count code. By selecting a category, the IEP team affirms that they have considered the continuum of services and the selected setting is believed to be the most appropriate environment for the student.</p>
<p>As of 12/1 will this student be Preschool or School Aged? <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Preschool <input type="checkbox"/> School Aged</p>
<p><b>PRESCHOOL SETTING - Check one of the following settings:</b></p> <p><b>(A) Children attending a regular early childhood program <u>at least</u> 10 hours per week:</b></p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> A1. And receiving the majority of hours of special education and related services <b>in the regular early childhood program</b></p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> A2. And receiving the majority of hours of special education and related services in <b>some other location</b></p> <p><b>(B) Children attending a regular early childhood program <u>less than</u> 10 hours per week:</b></p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> B1. And receiving the majority of hours of special education and related services <b>in the regular early childhood program</b></p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> B2. And receiving the majority of hours of special education and related services in <b>some other location</b></p> <p><b>(C) Children not attending a regular early childhood program:</b></p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> C1. Separate special education class</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> C2. Separate school</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> C3. Residential facility</p> <p><b>(D) Children not attending a regular early childhood program or a special education program (not included in A, B, C above)</b></p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> D1. Home</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> D2. Service provider location or some other location not in any other category above</p>
<p><b>SCHOOL AGED SETTING - Check one of the following settings:</b></p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> A. Inside regular class 80% or more of day</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> B. Inside regular class no more than 79% of day but no less than 40% of day</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> C. Inside regular class for less than 40% of day</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> D. Separate school</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> E. Residential facility</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> F. Homebound/hospital</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> G. Correctional facility</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> H. Parentally placed in private schools</p>
<p>Justification for the teams decision. The IEP team must document why the options selected in determining the environment setting are the most appropriate and least restrictive:</p> <div></div>



A group of approximately ten diverse young children, ranging from toddlers to young children, are posed together outdoors. They are all smiling and looking towards the camera. The children have various ethnicities and are wearing colorful clothing. The background is a soft-focus outdoor setting with greenery and a body of water. The text "Environmental Definitions" is overlaid in the center of the image.

# Environmental Definitions

# Regular Early Childhood Program

Children who attend **a regular early childhood program** that includes at least 50 percent nondisabled children (children not on an IEP).

Regular early childhood programs may include:

- Head Start;
- Private or public preschool programs
- Group child development center or childcare.







# Special Education Program

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A program that includes less than 50 percent nondisabled children(children not on an IEP). Special education programs include, but are not limited to, special education and related services provided in: regular school buildings; trailers or portables outside regular school buildings; child care facilities; hospital facilities on an outpatient basis; other community-based settings; separate schools; and residential facilities.

- C1. Special education class. Children who attend a special education program in a class with less than 50% nondisabled children.
- C2. Separate school. Children who receive education programs in public or private day schools designed specifically for children with disabilities.
- C3. Residential facility. Children who received education programs in publicly or privately operated residential schools or residential medical facilities on an inpatient basis.

If the child also receives services in the home (D1) or in a service provider location or some other location (D2), report the child in one of the settings listed above.



# Children Not Attending a Special Education Program

## D1. Home

- Children who receive special education and related services in the principle residence of the child's family or caregivers, and who did not attend a regular early childhood program or a special education program provided in a separate class, separate school, or residential facility. The term caregiver includes babysitters.
- Children who received special education both in a service provider location and at home should be reported in the home category.

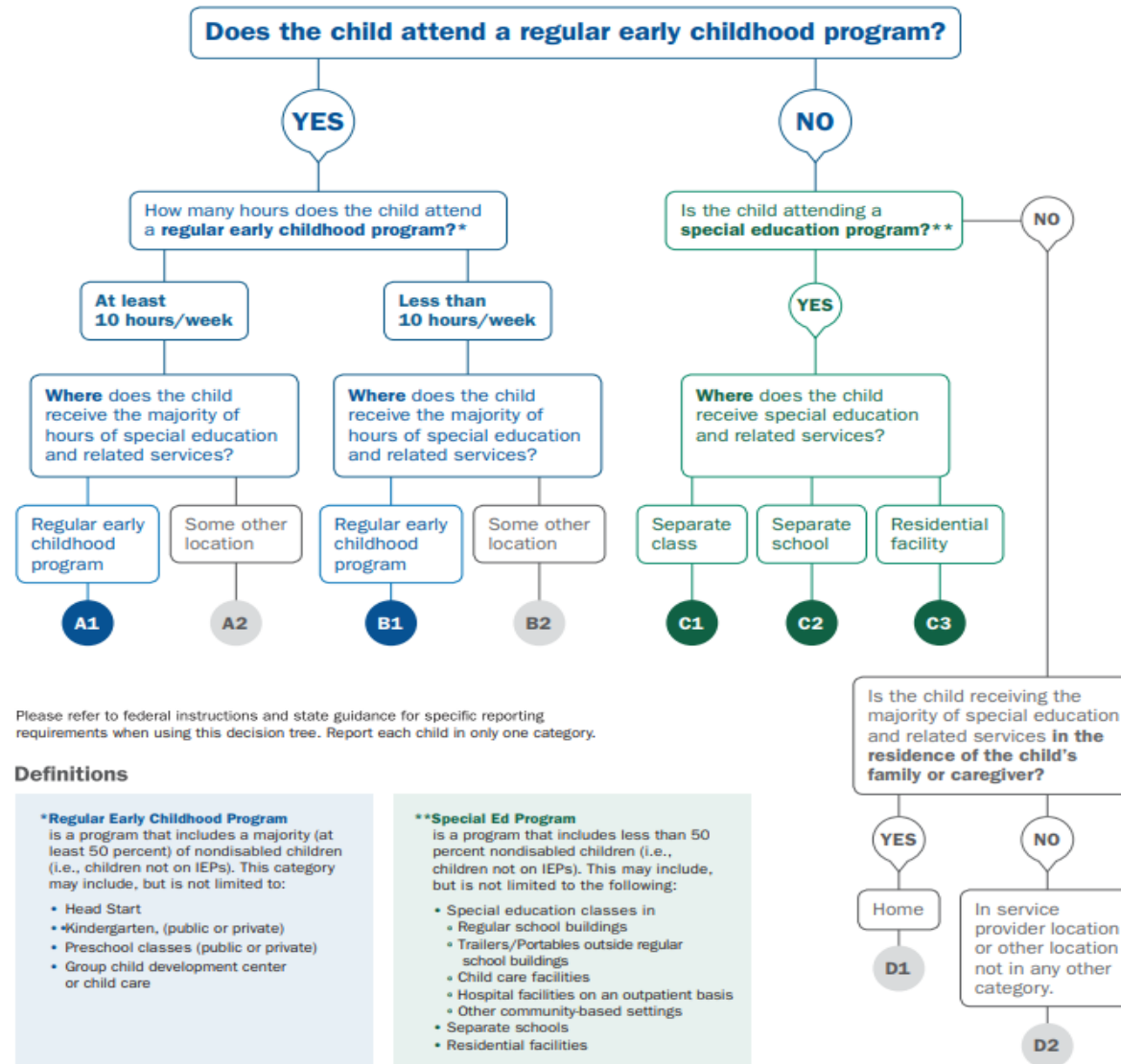
## D2. Service provider location or some other location not in any other category above

- Children who receive all of their special education and related services from a service provider, and who did not attend an early childhood program or a special education program provided in a special education class, separate school, or residential facility. For example, speech instruction provided in: private clinicians' offices, clinicians' offices located in school buildings, hospital facilities on an outpatient basis, and libraries and other public locations.

Programs can utilize the printable decision tree from the IDC Data Center to determine the correct code on the IEP.

A digital Decision Tree is also available at:  
<https://ideadata.org/B6tools/decision-tree.html>

## Decision Tree for Reporting Educational Environments for Children Ages 3-5 with IEPs



# Group Childcare Considerations:

- To determine whether a child attends a group childcare program, IEP teams should ask the parent if the child is in a non-residential setting where the other children in care are not related to one another. If the child is in a setting like this, the child should be reported as being in a group childcare program.
- If the child is in a home setting where the other children in care may be related to one another, then the child should be reported in the home category. Group childcare would not be the same as in-home babysitters, nannies, caregivers, au pairs, or the home of a neighborhood babysitter or a relative providing childcare.



# Family Input

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- The Office of Special Education Programs (OSEP) expects states to rely on parents to report to IEP teams about the child's educational environment and classroom composition. In turn, the LEA should obtain this information from the appropriate program contact and relay the information to the state.
- If the parent does not know whether the child is in an educational environment that includes a majority of typically developing children, the IEP team should ask the parent to report whether the program is designed for typically-developing children or children with disabilities. If the program is designed for typically-developing children, then the IEP team should document that the child is attending a regular early childhood program.



# Scenario 1

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## Scenario 1

- The child attends a regular early childhood program for 30 hours a week (5 days a week at 6 hours per day) but receives the majority of her special education and related services in some other location.

### *LRE Category*

- Report the child in the A2 category. The child receives at least 10 hours per week in a regular early childhood program and receives the majority of hours for special education services in some other location.



# Scenario 2

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## Scenario 2

- The child attends a regular early childhood program for 5 hours a week (5 days a week at 1 hour per day) but is pulled out of the regular early childhood classroom for 3 hours each week to receive special education services.

## LRE Category

- Report the child in the B2 category – The child receives less the 10 hours per week in a regular early childhood program and receives the majority of hours for special education services in some other location.



# Scenario 3

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## Scenario 3

- The child attends a regular early childhood program 27 hours a week (3 days a week at 9 hours per day) and receives 5 hours of special education and related service within this setting and 7 hours outside of the regular early childhood setting.

## LRE Category

- Report the child in the A2 category – The child receives at least 10 hours per week in a regular early childhood program and receives the majority of hours for special education services in some other location.





# Head Start Scenarios

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## Scenario

- The child is in a Head Start program, where the majority of children are typically developing, for 9 hours per week. The child receives all special education services in the Head Start classroom.

## LRE Category

- Report the child in the B1 category – The child receives less than 10 hours per week in a regular early childhood program and receives the majority of hours for special education services in the regular education setting.



# Head Start Scenarios Continued

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## Scenario

- The child is in a Head Start program, where the majority of children have disabilities, for 15 hours per week (3 days a week at 5 hours per day) and receives special education services in the Head Start classroom.

## LRE Category

- Since the child is in a setting where the majority of the children have disabilities, the child should be reported in one of the special education program categories.



# Public & Private Preschool Scenarios

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## Scenario

- The child is in a preschool program, where the majority of children are typically developing, for 25 hours per week (5 days a week at 5 hours per day). The child receives special education services in some other location.

## LRE Category

- Report the child in the A2 category – The child receives at least 10 hours per week in a regular early childhood program and receives the majority of hours of special education and related services in some other location.



# Public & Private Preschool Scenarios Continued

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## Scenario

- The child is in a preschool program, where the majority of children have disabilities, for 25 hours per week (5 days a week at 5 hours per day). The child receives special education services in the preschool program.

## LRE Category

- Since the child is in a setting where the majority of the children have disabilities, the child should be reported in one of the special education program categories.





# Public & Private Preschool Scenarios Continued

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## Scenario

- The child is in a preschool program, but the parent does not know the composition of the classroom. The parent reports that the program is designed to serve typically-developing children. The child attends this program for 25 hours per week (5 days a week at 5 hours per day) and receives special education services in the classroom.

## LRE Category

- Report the child in the A1 category – The child receives at least 10 hours per week in a regular early childhood program and receives the majority of hours for special education services in the regular education setting.



A photograph of two young children, a boy and a girl, in a library. The boy, on the left, is holding an open book titled 'Famous Americans'. The girl, on the right, is pointing at the book. They are both looking at the book with interest. The background shows wooden bookshelves filled with books.

# Additional Resources

An interactive digital toolkit is available that defines all environments for Indicator 6.

[Preschool Environments Toolkit - Introduction \(ideadata.org\)](https://ideadata.org/preschool-environments-toolkit-introduction)

Blended Classroom

Public Preschool or State Preschool

Home

Head Start

Title 1 or Migrant  
Preschool Program

Church or Faith-Based Preschool

Early Childhood  
Special Education  
Class With Peers

Early Childhood  
Special Education  
Class

Mother's Day Out

Childcare

Family Childcare Home

Community Preschool

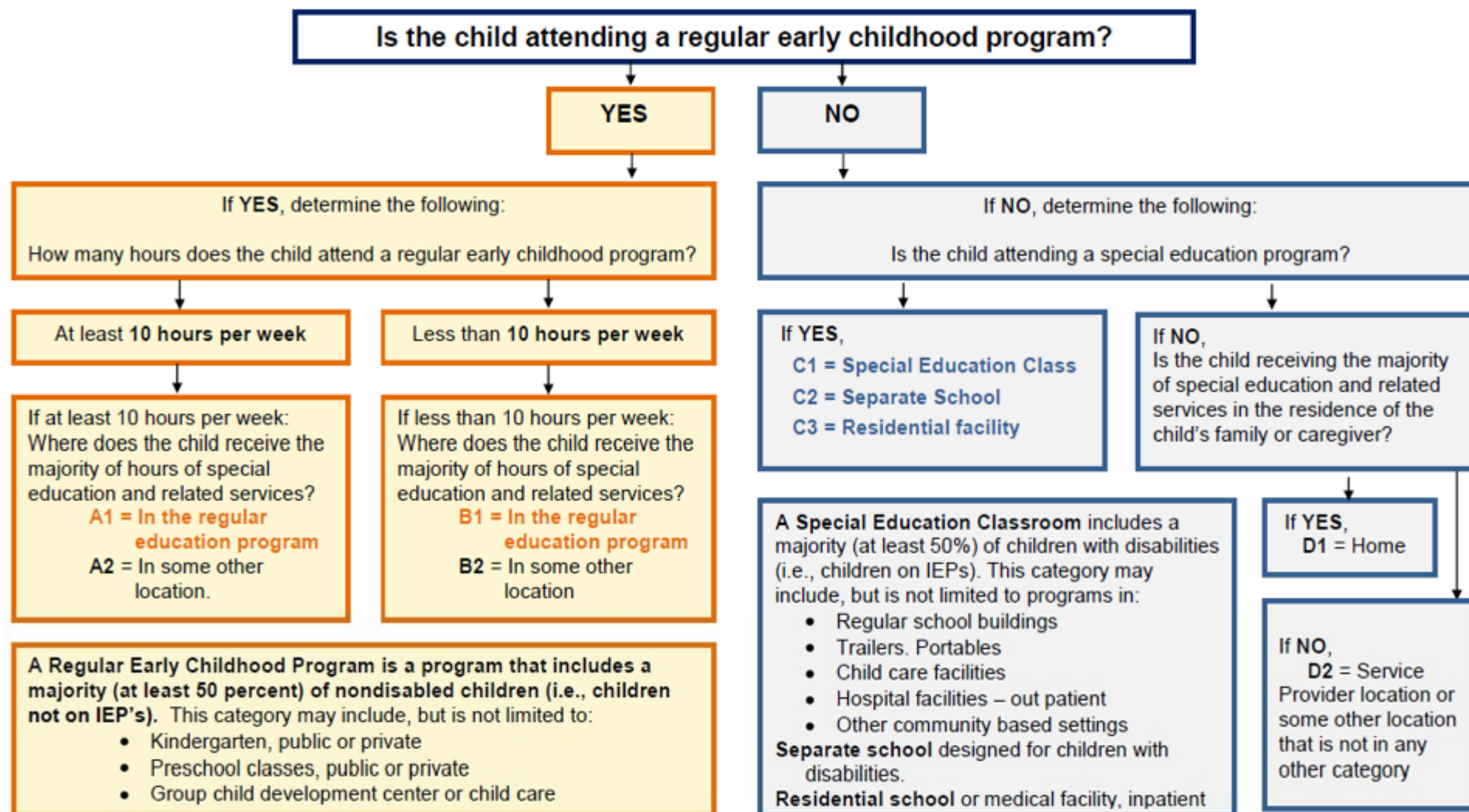
Separate School

Play Group/Story Hour

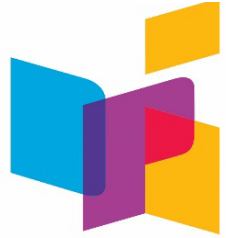
Residential Facility



## Decision Tree for Coding Educational Environments Table 3 - Child Count







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