



**Coordinator Name**

Martha Disbennett

**Planning Team**

- Kathy Biedenstein-ECSE Deaf/Hard of Hearing
- Tracy Brangle-ECSE Staff Development Facilitator
- Peggy Cassani-ECSE Behavior Facilitator
- Kay Castello-ECSE Classroom Teacher
- Jen Corcoran-ECSE Speech Pathologist
- Laurie Corners-ECSE Area Coordinator
- Brenda Deakin-ECSE OT/PT EPS
- Mary Elfrink-ECSE Itinerant Teacher
- Monica Fanning-Deaf/Hard of Hearing Area Coordinator
- Chris Gardiner-ECSE Area Coordinator
- Sharon Ghormley-ECSE Physical Therapist
- Daniele Cerone-Griffin-ECSE Augmentative Communication Facilitator
- Susan Harrman-ECSE Diagnostic Teacher
- Michelle Kappesser-ECSE Classroom Teacher
- Tracy Kroenlein-ECSE Occupational Therapist
- Jeannie Longo-ECSE Speech Pathologist
- Lisa Mackenzie-ECSE Itinerant Teacher
- Julie McClard-ECSE Area Coordinator
- Laura Moore-ECSE Team Teacher
- Sarah Murphy-ECSE Social Worker
- Bernadette Pankey-ECSE Speech Pathologist
- Nicole Sigona-ECSE Occupational Therapist
- Anna Slaughter-ECSE Area Coordinator
- Stacy Sturdivant-ECSE Itinerant Teacher
- Ryan Tilley-ECSE Classroom Teacher
- Nancy Tumbrink-ECSE Area Coordinator
- Cheryl Waldrop-ECSE Nurse

**Description of the Program**

The Early Childhood Special Education Program for Special School District serves children ages 3-5 with disabilities in fourteen local school districts. Children are referred from the Missouri First Steps Program, Parents as Teachers, local preschools and daycares, and parents.

**Description of How the Program's Services are Developed and Delivered**

Once children are found eligible for special education, the IEP team meets to determine what services are necessary based on the areas a child is found eligible. Services range from an itinerant level of service delivered in local preschools and daycares to classroom-based services. The majority of classroom-based services are delivered four half days per week. There are also five full-day programs for students with more intense needs.

**Key Program Stakeholder Groups**

- Students
- Parents
- Staff
- Administrators
- Board of Education
- Taxpayers
- Other Partner District Administrators, Head Start Teachers

## **Student and/or Stakeholder Needs Addressed by the Program**

The needs of the Students and Stakeholders of the ECSE Program are to provide appropriate services to our students in order to prepare them to the best of their ability to enter kindergarten. National research has shown that preschool children with disabilities who receive services prior to kindergarten generally require less special education in elementary school, go into less restrictive placements or are dismissed from special education services. (Markowitz et al., 2006)\*

## **Overall Goals of the Program**

Goal 1: Children being served by SSD's ECSE program will enter kindergarten prepared to the best of their ability.

Goal 2: Increase communication between parents, partner district administrators and preschool staff.

## **Expected Measureable Outcomes**

Data from the ECSE Department's Developmental Curriculum Checklist will show progress from pre to post testing in all domains.

Children who received services in ECSE will score higher on the 3rd grade Map test than students with IEPs who did not receive services in ECSE.

Survey of parents and general education preschool teachers will indicate an improvement in perception of communication over last year.

## **Evaluation Questions**

- What is the status of the program's progress toward achieving the goals?
- What do students and other stakeholders consider to be the strengths and weaknesses of the program?
- What does staff consider to be the strengths and weaknesses of the program?
- How does the program's actual implementation compare with the program's design?
- How should priorities be changed to put more focus on achieving the goals?
- How should goals be changed? Any added or removed?

## **Data Collection Methods**

- Surveys and questionnaires
- Interviews
- Document reviews
- Observations
- Focus groups
- Case studies
- Assessments
- Other (Curriculum Based Measure)

\* Markowitz, J., Carlson, E., Frey, W., Riley, J., Shimshak, A., Heinzen, H., Strohl, J., Lee, H., and Klein, S. (2006). *Preschoolers' Characteristics, Services, and Results: Wave 1 Overview Report from the Pre-Elementary Education Longitudinal Study (PEELS)*. Rockville, MD: Westat. Available at [www.peels.org](http://www.peels.org).



Measureable Objective 2:	Survey of partner district and SSD staff will indicate an improvement in perception of communication over last year.
Results: 100% of partner district teachers (N=37) agreed or strongly agreed that they have good communication with their student's SSD ECSE teacher or therapist. "Working with the speech therapist is a pleasure. She is approachable and easy to communicate with." 100% of SSD ECSE teachers (N=46) agreed or strongly agreed that they had good communication with their student's general education teacher. "I have good communication with my Itinerant speech students teachers." "It is a high priority for me."	

What do key staff and stakeholders consider to be the strengths and opportunities for improvement /weaknesses of the program?

<p>Strengths</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Strength 1 ECSE children are making progress in the program based upon data from the DCC.</i></li> <li>• <i>Strength 2 Parent survey overall indicated the majority of questions were rated in the agree and strongly agree categories. All questions were rated 92% or higher. Comments regarding their child's progress were very favorable.</i></li> <li>• <i>Strength 3 All comments from the Partner district teachers' survey were positive, indicating there is strong collaboration between SSD ECSE and Partner district staff.</i></li> </ul>
<p>Opportunities/Weaknesses</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Opportunity 1-Consider conducting inter-rater reliability checks with the DCC. DESE has applied for an Early Learning Grant. If awarded all early childhood programs would be required to use the Teaching Strategies Gold as an assessment measure. This would eliminate the DCC.</i></li> <li>• <i>Opportunity 2 -ECSE Area Leadership teams are looking at implementation with fidelity of developmentally appropriate curriculum or behavior strategies/universals to ensure that children in the ECSE program are being taught the skills to be as prepared as possible in kindergarten.</i></li> <li>• <i>Opportunity 3- Comments from parents regarding IEP language indicated some concerns with special education terminology. Parents also requested more specific information regarding progress and what they can do to support the instruction at home.</i></li> <li>• <i>Opportunity 4 – Staff involved with Baldrige process identified client focus in relation to parents and partner districts as an opportunity to improve focus.</i></li> </ul>

How well aligned are the program's priorities and processes with the goals of the program?

The program goals are well aligned with the program priorities and processes.
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Deployment Level of Program Services: Services are well deployed, with no significant gaps.

Should priorities be changed to put more focus on achieving the goals?  Yes  No  
If Yes describe change in priorities.

Should goals be changed, added or removed?  Yes  No  
If Yes describe the changes to goals listed.

The ECSE Department will focus on client satisfaction in providing services to students. These clients will include, but not be limited to parents and partner districts.

### **Evaluation Implications**

#### **General Recommendation Resulting from the Evaluation**

Select from the following possible recommendations resulting from the evaluation:

- Continue the program as is. It is meeting or exceeding all expected outcomes.
- Expand the program, replicating effective components.
- Streamline, refine, or consolidate elements of the program.
- Redesign the program.
- Reevaluate the purpose and/or goals of the program.
- Discontinue ineffective or nonessential program components.
- Discontinue the program.
- Other (Specify.)

#### **Action Plan**

1. Consult with Saint Louis University to determine what needs to be done to increase reliability of the DCC. ECSE and Saint Louis University are in partnership regarding the efficacy of our supplemental literacy curriculum and outcome results as measured by the DCC.
2. Explore the Teaching Strategies Gold as a department measure in the event DESE receives the Federal Grant.
3. Train staff to include ideas for carrying on instructional strategies for parent in the home setting in their weekly communication. Remind staff to use lay terminology in all their communication with parents and give specific feedback regarding what and how the child is doing in the classroom.
4. Add to ECSE Progress report a section to give parents suggestions for working with their child at home.

#### **Cost and Funding Source**

Fully funded by the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education.