

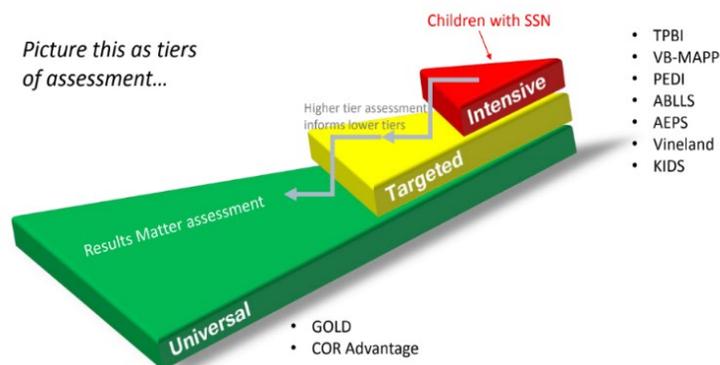
# Results Matter Assessment and Preschool Aged Children with Significant Support Needs

## Introduction

This guidance is for Individualized Education Program (IEP) teams as they collaborate with families in the process of developing and implementing IEPs to serve the needs of the children with significant support needs (SSN) in preschool. It is imperative for families and educators to understand that the purpose for linking Standards and IEPs is to ensure that young children have access to quality instruction, are engaged in meaningful, purposeful learning activities, and can progress in the general curriculum. Results Matter improves the outcomes of our youngest learners by supporting the use of authentic assessment data to inform classroom instruction as well as program and policy decision-making.

## A Multi-Tiered System of Supports Layered Continuum

An essential element of a Multi-Tiered System of Supports (MTSS) is a Layered Continuum of Supports ensuring that every child receives equitable academic and behavioral support that is culturally responsive, matched to need, and developmentally appropriate. These supports are provided through layers that increase in intensity from universal (every student) to targeted (some students) to intensive (few students). Implementation is dependent upon effective use of data and information to make decisions about child-level and system-level progress. Support should also be respectful of a child's age as children with significant delays in development need access to same-aged peers and age-appropriate materials and activities. [The Preschool Outcomes](#) were developed to describe children's mastery of knowledge and skills in meaningful ways in the early years. Children of different ages demonstrate the outcomes in different ways and there are many pathways to competence across the range of abilities and disabilities that children may experience. The goal of early childhood special education is to enable children to be active and successful participants during the early childhood years and in the future in a variety of settings – in their homes with their families, in child care, preschool or school programs, and in the community.



## Individuals with Disabilities Education Act

*Disability is a natural part of the human experience and in no way diminishes the right of individuals to participate in or contribute to society. Improving educational results for children with disabilities is an essential element of our national policy of ensuring equality of opportunity, full participation, independent living, and economic self-sufficiency for individuals with disabilities. (IDEA 2004)*

This guidance is meant to define what “assessment” is referring to with regards to progress monitoring.

- IDEA language requires that children with disabilities are included in general state and district-wide assessment programs {§300.160 (a)} this is described as assessment of student achievement.
- OSEP reporting of Results Matter assessment is a part of Colorado's state monitoring of the Part B State Performance Plan Indicators for state improvement. {§300.600}

**GOLD and COR Advantage are universal tools for authentic assessment.** Universal assessments are curriculum based measures giving teachers the information they need to better plan instruction for every child. This data tells us where children are as compared to peers, it informs next steps in instruction, and monitors progress. The Colorado Academic Standards clearly delineate what students (PK-12) are expected to learn in each



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subject and grade, with each grade level building to the next, to ensure all Colorado students have the academic knowledge and skills needed to be successful in college and career. The updated standards are focused and rigorous and are aligned to GOLD and COR Advantage.

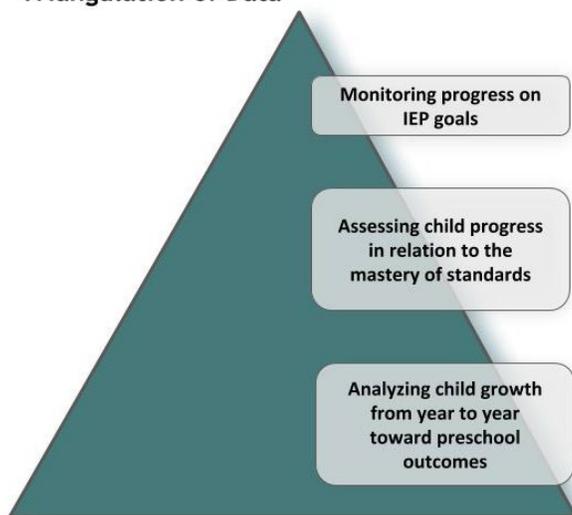
It is incumbent upon everyone who works with children with disabilities to find ways for them to demonstrate their knowledge and progress within everyday activities and routines. The question becomes, **how do assessments support children with the most significant needs and how do we use assessments that will measure what we want the child to know and be able to do?** (e.g. Are the child's significant needs related to Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) or, are the needs the result of a severe physical disability? Which tools will capture the information we need to measure individual differences and growth?). Progress monitoring is a scientific-based practice that is used to assess children's developmental progression and evaluate the effectiveness of instruction to determine whether children are making adequate progress.

There are several important characteristics of progress monitoring. First, measures must be technically sound and have specifically been found to be sensitive to small increments of change for the targeted outcomes. Another important characteristic is ensuring a regular and frequent collection of data in a format that is easy to implement and takes a short amount of time to complete. Finally, one of the most important features of progress monitoring is the ability to analyze performance over time and adjust instruction.

### The IEP and its role in Progress Monitoring

Monitoring a child's progress assists a teacher, service provider, and the family in making ongoing instructional decisions about the strategies and interventions being used. **The IEP must include a description of how the child's progress toward meeting the annual goals will be measured** {§300.320(a)(3)(i)} and therefore, **how the child will be involved in and make progress in the general curriculum** {§300.320(a)(4)(ii)}. The IEP is layered upon the general curriculum. In addition, the annual goals address the missing foundational or prerequisite skills and/or barriers the child is experiencing that affect their participation in daily activities. Progress monitoring procedures guide how data will be collected about the progress of the child and establish a decision-making plan for examining that information. After the IEP Team has determined the child's annual goals, based upon the Present Levels of Academic Achievement and Functional Performance (PLAAFP), the tool used for progress monitoring will be developed or stated in the IEP. There are many assessment tools designed for monitoring progress, such as (but not limited to) TPBI, AEPS, PEDI, etc., that focus on foundational trajectories and can be used with children with significant support needs.

### Triangulation of Data



The IEP specifies how progress toward each individual goal will be monitored and when progress will be reported to families. Data collection tools should represent different types of measurement to provide a clear picture of the child's progress. These tools are to be considered a part of the individualized tier of instruction. It would be important for providers to know how these tools connect to the general curriculum and therefore to the Results Matter assessment tools. Progress monitoring provides evidence that the child has achieved his or her annual goals and can show overall growth gained toward meeting the state standards. It is the IEP Team's responsibility to carefully examine what is known about the student's ability to participate in daily activities and routines and how their disability impacts their access to the preschool curriculum. In order to make data-driven decisions, the factual information about the child's academic and functional performance in relation to the expectations of the common standards and outcomes.



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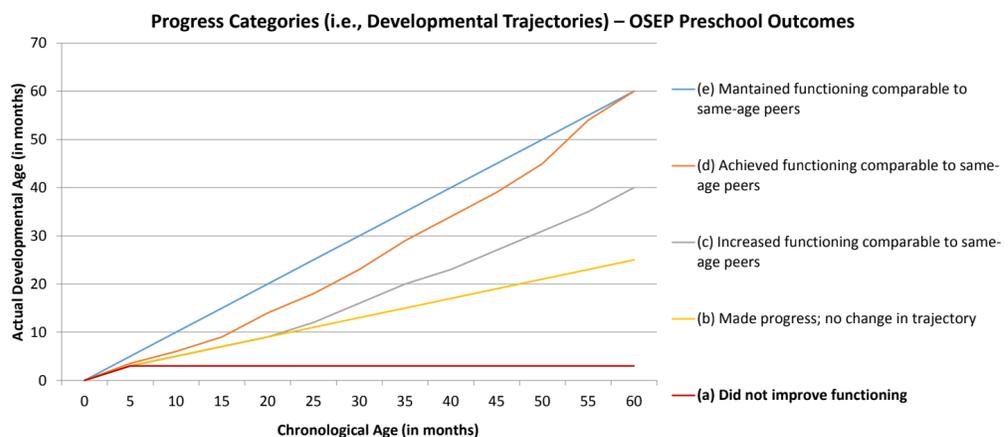
The Colorado Academic Standards (CAS) are the foundation of teaching and learning in our state. They are broad goals that in preschool articulate what children may know and be able to do when they leave preschool at about 5 years of age (or 60 months). Extended Evidence Outcomes (EEOs) have been developed for students with significant support needs and are directly aligned to the grade level expectations for all students to give clear and rigorous connections to the content and skills that are expected at each level. When the IEP is written to align with standards, it will help drive the selection of an individualized tool for progress monitoring that will complement Results Matter assessment.

### OSEP Reporting

**Every child on an IEP, including those with significant needs, is required to be assessed through Results Matter** (currently GOLD or COR Advantage are the approved tools). The data is reported to CDE who then reports to the Office of Special Education Programs (OSEP). For more information, here is a link to a self-paced module, [Preschool Outcomes: A Data Dialogue on OSEP Indicator 7 Reporting](#) containing information to assist professionals in understanding the system of reporting.

**There is no alternative assessment tool for OSEP reporting** as the use of GOLD and COR Advantage is not an “assessment of student achievement” (which starts at grade 3). Results Matter is a state monitoring process for Indicator 7 (or, Preschool Outcomes) of Part B of IDEA.

Children with significant support needs often may be assigned to progress category (a) regardless of the tool used for assessment due to the extreme gap between their skills and those of peers. Children are assigned a disability category based on entry and exit scores.



These categories acknowledge that a certain percentage of children (less than 5%) will be in category (a), who “did not improve functioning”. Many children do show progress in this system of monitoring and it can tell us how our programs and the state is doing in the work of educating young children with disabilities. **We recognize that children in Progress Category (a) can make progress toward annual goals and Preschool Outcomes.**

- Progress for children in this category should be monitored and measured as described in their IEP in addition to the Results Matter progress monitoring tool.
- Preschool Outcomes were developed at the national level to assist states in reporting and are a part of the system’s continuous improvement. These outcomes promote access, participation and support all children.
- The IEP team should work collaboratively identifying team members responsible for assessment and monitoring of children with IEPs so that all members are aware of their individual roles and responsibilities in data collection.

Ultimately, the IEP drives instruction that leads to progress. The IEP captures that progress through a body of evidence that includes, but is not limited to, Results Matter assessment, and progress monitoring tools matched to appropriate, well-developed, targeted participation-based IEP goals.



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### Where can I learn more?

Bagnato, S. J., Neisworth, J. T., & Pretti-Frontczak, K. (2010). *LINKing authentic assessment and early childhood intervention: Best measures for best practices*. Baltimore, MD: Paul H. Brookes Publishing Co.

Child Outcomes Step by Step. (2015, February 02).

Policy Statement: Inclusion of Children with Disabilities in Early Childhood Programs. Retrieved 2023, November 28.

ECTACenter. (n.d.). Outcomes. Retrieved June 13, 2019.

Grisham-Brown, J. L. & Pretti-Frontczak, K. (Eds.). (2011). *Assessing young children in inclusive settings. The blended practices approach*. Baltimore, MD: Paul H. Brookes Publishing Co.

IDEA Individuals with Disabilities Education Act. (n.d.). Retrieved June 13, 2019.

Results Matter. (n.d.). Retrieved June 13, 2019.

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