Universal Preschool Update for Special Education

January 23, 2024

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Agenda

1. Team overview
2. Looking back: Setting the context
3. Looking around: What's happening now
4. Looking in: What we've learned from you
5. Looking ahead: What's next
6. How you can stay engaged

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Universal Preschool year 2 team overview

Technology
- Colorado Digital Service
- CDEC
- Propeller (product management consultants)
- Bridgecare (core tech vendor)
- Metrix (payments vendor)

Program
- CDEC
- CDE (SPED subject matter expert)
- Governor's office (general oversight)

Communications
- CDEC

Training
- CDEC
- Local Coordinating Organizations (LCOs)

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Since our last meeting:

- Met with dozens of AUs, providers, LCOs

- Conducted interviews to understand pain points

- Did hands-on testing to validate direction

Coming soon: Testing with families

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Universal Preschool User Groups

~1,900 Providers

32 LCOs

63 AUs

Colorado families

- General education
- Special education
- Metropolitan
- Rural
- Non-English speakers
- Unhoused population

- Foster/kinship care
- Below federal poverty rate
- Want to stay with current provider
- Have siblings at a provider
- Are employed with a provider

... and more

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Looking back:
Setting the context

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What we have delivered

December
- Updated website with high-level guidelines
- Conducted focus groups with AUs, providers, LCOs on proposed processes
- Approved technical system updates
- Update to AU permissions to address a PII concern

January
- January 11: Preparation email
- Tested program setup with providers
- January 22: Program setup form launched
- January 22: Communications sent to providers, AUs, LCOs

Timeline

- Provider program setup: January 22 - February 16
- Pre-registration: Late February/early March - late March
- Family application begins: Late February/early March
- Matching algorithm runs: April and July
- Direct enrollment for children with IEPs begins: Late February/early March
- Direct enrollment for general education students opens: August

Looking around:
What's happening now

Program setup form preview

Program Duration

Please tell us more about the programs you offer. Select **all** of the program durations you plan to offer – in the following pages, we will ask additional questions about each program.

Extended Day: 41+ Hours per week ⊗

Please tell us more about the Full-Time: 30-40 Hours per week - English (Only) program. *

How many seats are for children in the year before kindergarten (non-IEP)? *

If you are an LEA or work under an agreement with an LEA/AU, how many are IEP seats? *

Please tell us more about the Full-Time: 30-40 Hours per week. *

What is the primary language of instruction for this program?

If you have multiple [Full-Time: 30-40 Hours per week] programs, please select all of the program languages you offer for the [Full-Time: 30-40 Hours per week] program(s).

- ☑ English (Only)
- ☑ Native Spanish (Only)
- ☐ Other Native Language (Only)
- ☐ Dual Language (English and Other Language)

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2024/25 process for AUs and IEP placement

Scenario 1 - Direct Upload Path

Step 1: AU (or designee) creates spreadsheet of IEP students (including program ID and contact info) to send to CDEC

Step 2: AU (or designee) uploads list to CDEC

Step 3: CDEC combines AU lists / datasets

Step 4: CDEC uploads combined list monthly to BridgeCare

Step 5: BridgeCare system generates pre-populated family application

Step 6: Family is provided with a link to their specific application

Step 7: Family completes the application

Scenario 2 - Manual Application Initiated by AU through Admin Portal

Step 1: AU (or designee) enters the application portal

Step 2: AU (or designee) creates application for family

Step 3: Family application is available in the BridgeCare system

Step 4: Family is provided with a link to their specific application

Step 5: Family completes the application

Scenario 3 - Family-Initiated Application

Step 1: Family enters the application portal

Step 2: Family attest to IEP

Step 3: Family advised to reach out to their AU

Step 4: Manual application initiated by AU (or designee)

Reducing administrative work for children with IEPs

1. Allowing families to use a specific link to have program options default to the preferred program

2. Not running families you attest to an IEP through the matching algorithm

> **Lower likelihood of children having to move due to gen ed seat being taken by a special ed seat or vice versa**

Ease of making changes

Reviewing Placements

AUs can review a secure report in the Universal Preschool Application Portal that shows the selections for all families in their catchment area where the family self-identified that their student has an IEP.

AUs can access this report at any time directly in the application portal.

Making Changes to Placements

CDEC has implemented a process to make AUs the final decision-maker on these placement determinations consistent with the IEP. The AU may request a different placement from what the family originally indicated in the application portal that aligns best with the IEP. The AU should work directly with families regarding changes.

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Looking in:
What we've learned

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Listening session insights

Areas that received positive affirmation

- Reserved IEP seats
- Not running children with IEPs through matching algorithm
- Batch upload process more closely reflects existing workflows and workload

Process pain points we're still exploring

- Difficult to help families when an AU doesn't know what communication they have received
- Some AUs requested doing batch uploads shortly before Spring Break
- AUs noted additional workload to support the process

Communication and training needs

- AUs and Child Find need tools and training to educate families
- Families need direct training
- Need clear distinctions between "enrollment" and "eligibility"

Looking ahead: What's next

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Technical work in progress

1 Prototyping the family application ahead of late January/early February user testing in English and Spanish

2 Building logic around the four family paths (pre-registration, matching path, IEP path)

3 Enabling ongoing 2023/24 enrollment alongside 2024/25 applications and enrollment

4 Enhancing provider profiles to make program language requirements clearer to families

Discovery work in progress

- **3-year-old processes**
  - Differentiating between 3-year olds with IEPs and 3-year-olds with historical allotment

- **Income verification process**

- **Enhanced language and accessibility**
  - Determining translation languages
  - Accommodations associated with the Colorado Law for Persons with Disabilities

How you can stay engaged

- **Program website:** Includes information, tools, and resources expected in the coming weeks, please find the estimated enrollment timeline and more on the website. It is currently undergoing improvements to become a centralized hub for Colorado Universal Preschool news, updates, resources and information. https://cdec.colorado.gov/universal-preschool-colorado

- **Submit your feedback**: Share your ideas on how to best support you and your important work in ensuring all Colorado children can enroll in high-quality preschool. https://docs.google.com/forms/d/1v2wR7qzMCg-vKjsQV1bSkHt55NqgDlyvcNTjy9pqbi4/edit?ts=653fd161

- **Training opportunities** coming before family application launch. We will inform you via email communications.

- **Comprehensive training handbook** coming soon.

- **Angela Delin:** Point of contact for Administrative Units. angela.delin@state.co.us

Thank you!

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