Health and Human Services

[Early Childhood Intervention Advisory Committee](#)

January 28, 2026

RESEARCH. ANALYSIS. REPORTING. REAL INSIGHT.

[Early Childhood Intervention Advisory Committee](#) advises the HHSC Early Childhood Intervention (ECI) Services program on developing and implementing policies that constitute the statewide ECI system.

The Early Childhood Intervention Advisory Committee, which is required by Part C of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act, advises the Texas Health and Human Services Commission Division for Early Childhood Intervention Services on development and implementation of policies that constitute the statewide ECI system. The governor appoints the committee members.

The federal law establishing the system of early intervention programs for infants and toddlers with developmental delays or disabilities is Part C of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act. In Texas, the Part C program is Early Childhood Intervention. ECI is a division of the Texas Health and Human Services Commission.

Each state that operates a Part C program must include as a part of its program an advisory council. Part C of the IDEA calls that council the Interagency Coordinating Council. The HHSC/ECI ICC is the ECI Advisory Committee. The function of the Advisory Committee is to advise and assist HHSC/ECI in its operation of the statewide system of providing ECI services to eligible children and families in Texas. The multidisciplinary and multi-constituency representation on the Advisory Committee contributes to making it an important part of the ECI system. It is ECI's major source of stakeholder input.

Members:

Catherine Carlton, Chair
Program Representative
Arlington

Guillermo Lopez, Vice-Chair
Program Representative
Austin

Pattie Rosenlund
Program Representative
Mission

David H. Goff, M.D.
Physician/Pediatrician Representative
Strawn

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Head Start Representative
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Kristina Borenstein Otterstrom
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Cynthia (Cal) Azenneth Lopez
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and Youth (TEHCY) Representative
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HHSC Medicaid/CHIP Representative
San Antonio

Chasey Sanchez, Ph.D.,
Program Representative
Texas City

Allison Pearce Wilson
Texas Workforce Commission
Representative
Austin

1. Call to order, logistical announcements, and roll call. The meeting
was called to order by Guillermo Lopez, Vice-Chair. A quorum was present.

2. Consideration of November 12, 2025, draft meeting minutes.
The minutes were approved as drafted.

3. ECI program updates

Summary:

Program and Data Updates

Megan Young (ECI Director) presented quarterly metrics for FY2026:

- Referral, eligibility determination, evaluation, and service numbers showed seasonality, with a notable but expected drop in the first quarter after a strong fourth quarter in FY25.
- Local program representatives confirmed these trends matched their experiences.
- Enrollment growth stabilized at ~1% per year, matching Texas' under-three population growth.
- Service delivery hours and Medicaid coverage percentages remain steady.

Training, Outreach, and Family Engagement

SMILE bimonthly learning sessions were highlighted, and rescheduling updates. Recently a transition-focused webinar was provided focusing on guidance and parent experiences; the recording available online.

There are new guidance and resources for children who are deaf/hard of hearing or visually impaired, including webinars and flowcharts, that were developed with TEA. .

ECI staff attended and presented at multiple statewide early childhood and therapy conferences; more planned in the coming months.

Ongoing Family Stories Project collects and shares family testimonials to support peer-to-peer outreach and awareness, with newsletter articles, new video content, and social media campaigns underway.

Early Childhood Data System and Grants

House Bill 3963 mandates creation of a Texas Early Childhood Integrated Data System (ECIDS) connecting data across agencies; MOU among TEA, TWC, and HHSC is pending, with a public dashboard in development.

The Preschool Development Grant (PDG) provided significant funding for workforce support, training, and resources (e.g., assessment kits, provider stipends, autism workshops).

The Plan goals include broadening the ECI peer network and statewide training for inclusive education.

Personnel Retention and Policy Updates

HHSC Personnel Retention Grant (in partnership with UTEP) concluded with targeted technical assistance, summits, and resources for retention strategies; there were some local improvements in staff retention noted despite statewide challenges.

HB5629.
There are new application procedures for military-affiliated professionals to obtain EIS credentials per House Bill 5629; under the rule amendments, public complaint tracking has been established. Staff are providing ongoing review and refinement of ECI credentialing, onboarding, and training requirements.
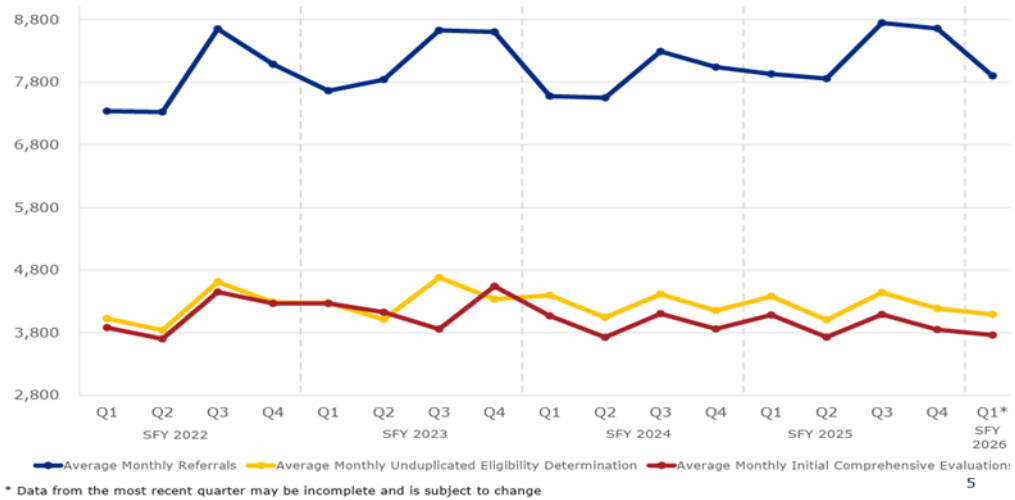
Presentation

Quarterly data
Children Referred, Evaluated, and Served

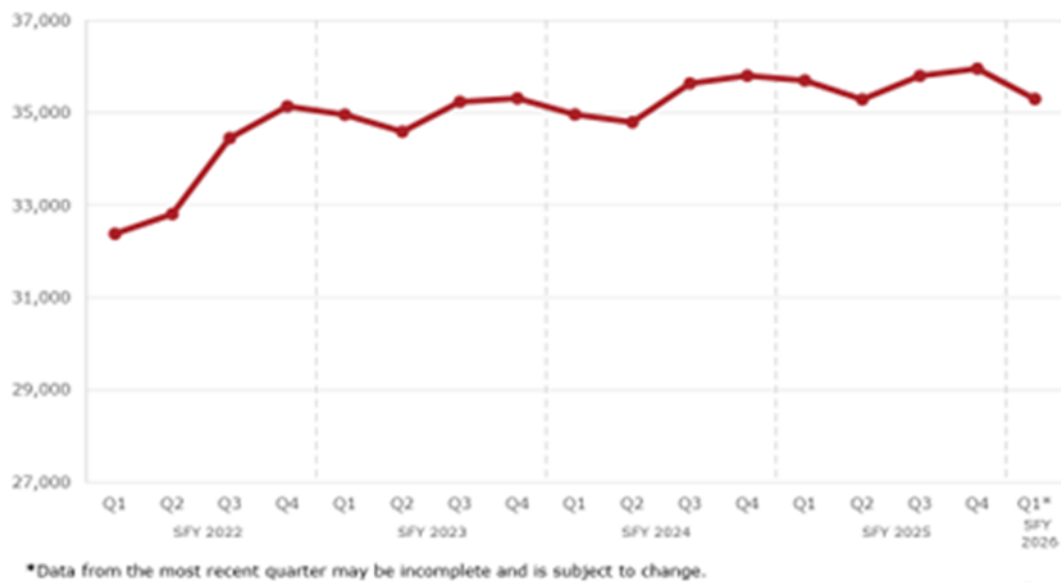|	SFY 2022	SFY 2023	SFY 2024	SFY 2025	SFY 2026 Q1*
Average Monthly Referrals	7,765	8,054	7,867	8,297	7,898
Average Monthly Unduplicated Eligibility Determination	4,209	4,353	4,272	4,252	4,090
Average Monthly Initial Comprehensive Evaluations	3,912	4,030	3,956	3,937	3,762
Average Monthly Comprehensive Served	33,697	35,028	35,302	35,688	35,303
Cumulative Quarterly/Annual Children Served (unduplicated)	65,584	67,512	67,413	67,980	41,311

*Data from the most recent quarter may be incomplete and is subject to change.

Referrals, Eligibility Determination, Evaluations

Legend: Average Monthly Referrals — Average Monthly Unduplicated Eligibility Determination — Average Monthly Initial Comprehensive Evaluations

* Data from the most recent quarter may be incomplete and is subject to change

Children Served

*Data from the most recent quarter may be incomplete and is subject to change.

Delivered Services

	SFY 2022	SFY 2023	SFY 2024	SFY 2025	SFY 2026 Q1*
Average Monthly Delivered Service Hours (not parent-arranged)	75,315	79,859	82,658	84,409	82,336
Average Service Hours Per Child Per Month	2.24	2.28	2.34	2.36	2.33
Average Monthly Service Coordination (SC)/ Targeted Case Management (TCM) Hours	7,970	9,186	9,964	9,894	9,690
Average SC/TCM Hours Per Child Per Month	0.57	0.57	0.57	0.57	0.58

*Data from the most recent quarter may be incomplete and is subject to change.

Average Service Hours Per Child Per Month

* Data from the most recent quarter may be incomplete and is subject to change

ECI Children with Medicaid Coverage

	SFY 2025	SFY 2026 Q1*
Average Monthly Medicaid-Enrolled	21,906	21,462
Average Monthly Comprehensive Served	35,690	35,316
Percent Medicaid	61.38%	60.77%

*Data from the most recent quarter may be incomplete and is subject to change.

Training and outreach

SMILE Webinars: Series for Meaningful Interagency Learning and Education (SMILE) webinar: January 2025: Texas Children in Nature Network

Transition Webinar HHSC ECI hosted a webinar on December 11, 2025 that focused on early childhood transition services, including:
- New transition Q&A document.
- Transition flowchart.
- Updated sample forms.
- Family perspectives on their ECI transition experience.

The webinar was recorded and posted on the ECI Archived Webinars page. ..:: Learning Stream ::..

New Guidance for Children who are Deaf or Hard of Hearing or have a Visual Impairment. New resources were created to support eligibility determination for children who are deaf or hard of Hearing or have a visual impairment.
- Guidance document
- Flowcharts

This was a joint effort between Texas Education Agency and HHSC ECI staff. The Webinar will be on Friday, January 30, 2026, and will be recorded and posted on the ECI Archived Webinars page. ..:: Learning Stream ::..

Recently Attended Conferences

Name	Date	Location
Texas Occupational Therapy Association Annual Conference	November 14 – 15	San Marcos
2025 Partners in Prevention Conference	November 18 – 20	Austin
Texas Rising Star Early Educator Conference	January 14 – 16	San Antonio

Upcoming Conferences

Name	Date	Location
Texas Speech-Language-Hearing Association 70th Annual Convention & Exhibition	February 19 – 21	Fort Worth
Texas Rising Star Early Educator Conference	April 7 - 9	Grapevine

ECI Family Stories Project was launched August 2025 with 8 interviews conducted so far. Upcoming:
- Agency newsletter article
- New ECI video
- Social media posts

Early Childhood Integrated Data System (ECIDS). An ECIDS:
- Connects child-level data across multiple agencies or programs.
- Enables cross-agency analysis of service access, eligibility, and gaps.
- Supports policy, planning, and investment decisions.
- Connects existing systems.

The Texas Early Learning Council's Texas Early Childhood Data Roadmap workgroup published the Texas ECIDS Roadmap in April 2023. House Bill 3963 (89th Texas Legislature, Regular Session, 2025) requires Texas to establish an ECIDS with partners

that include the Texas Education Agency (TEA), Texas Workforce Commission (TWC), and Texas Health and Human Services Commission (HHSC).
Texas ECIDS Roadmap_Final.pdf

Currently, the Preschool Development Grant is being used to fund the development of the ECIDS. TWC and TEA have identified additional funding to continue ECIDS work after the PDG no-cost extension ends. Staff from HHSC, TEA, and TWC:
- Participated in a cohort with the Early Childhood Data Lab to learn from national experts and other states with existing ECIDS.
- Developed a memorandum of understanding to share data between the three agencies.
- Identified and prioritized data use cases.

TEA contractors are creating the minimum viable product that will integrate and share the data to respond to the highest priority use cases. A public ECIDS dashboard will be available soon.

Implementation of House Bill 5629, 89th Legislature, Regular Session, 2025. House Bill 5629, 89th Texas Legislature, Regular Session, 2025, amended Texas Occupations Code, Sections 55.004 and 55.0041.
- State agencies who issue a license must issue a license to qualifying military service members, military veterans, and military spouses.
- HHSC ECI must issue an early intervention specialist (EIS) credential to applicants who are active-duty military service members, military veterans, and military spouses who hold a current out-of-state license or credential similar in scope of practice to an EIS. 20Implementing HB 5629

Application for active-duty military service members, military spouses, and military veterans to obtain the EIS credential is now live on the HHS website. HHSC ECI also:
- Established internal procedures.
- Developed a new complaint form.
- Updated the EIS Registry.

Implementation was announced in December 2025 with rule amendments presently in progress

Early Intervention Personnel Retention Grant project. In October 2020 HHSC ECI partnered with The University of Texas at El Paso (UTEP) for a three-year grant focused on the retention of early intervention personnel. In October 2023: HHSC ECI

and UTEP received a two-year extension on this grant and in October 2025 the grant period ended. A final report was submitted this past December (2025).

Grant Highlights included:
- Personnel retention advisory workgroup.
- Four annual personnel retention summits.
- Three summer webinar series.
- Targeted stipends for programs with retention rates below 85 percent.
- Technical assistance to support action plan implementation.
- Quarterly meetings and webinars for the Professionalism, Engagement, Empowerment, and Resource (PEER) Network community of practice.

ECI Subrecipient Action Plans HHSC ECI funded 68 evidence-based initiatives implemented by ECI subrecipients to address local retention needs.
- 16 for building and sustaining a personnel pipeline.
- 25 for creating and supporting a positive work environment.
- 16 for enhancing training and professional development opportunities.
- 11 for providing and strengthening formal and informal mentoring.

Impact on Retention Rates

Measure	2023	2024	2025
Statewide retention rate for ECI programs.	88	88	78
Retention rate for ECI programs who received financial incentives.	87	85	76

*Counts are based on a reporting period of May 1 – April 30 to align with annual reporting timeframes.

Analysis Retention rates are driven by multiple factors:
- Contract closures and service area changes.
- Subrecipient variations, such as: size; geographic location; entity type (education service center, private nonprofit, etc.).

Successes and Positive Outcomes

- Substantial targeted local improvements in retention.
- PEER Network participation correlated with longer retention among early intervention specialists and service coordinators.
- There were various unanticipated benefits, including deeper university partnerships, policy refinements, and the development of training and technical assistance outside of grant activities.

Sustaining Momentum
- UTEP is conducting research on the core knowledge and skills ECI leaders need to retain professionals.
- HHSC ECI is establishing projects to enhance pre-service and in-service training for ECI professionals.
- HHSC ECI is coordinating projects to improve faculty's knowledge of ECI at universities statewide.
- HHSC ECI continues to support EISes and service coordinators leading the PEER Network to sustain collaborative learning.

Preschool Development Grant ECI was awarded $14.7 million for the three-year grant period, January 2023 through December 2025. PDG activities included:
- Comprehensive service support, including eligibility determination.
  - Developmental Assessment of Young Children, Second Edition
  - Battelle Developmental Inventory, Third Edition
- Staff recruitment, retention, and mentoring stipends.
- Printed materials for ECI provider recruitment.
- Training for childcare and early learning programs.
- Ages and Stages Questionnaires kits for childcare programs.
- Live, virtual autism support workshops for early childhood professionals.

Texas Early Learning Council 2024-2026 Texas Early Learning Strategic Plan containing four focus areas
- Family access, navigation, and engagement
- Workforce recruitment, retention, and support
- Local systems and partnership building
- Data and system coordination

The plan is located on the TELC website. Texas Early Learning Council Home (earlylearningtexas.org) [Texas Early Learning Council Home](#)

Texas Early Learning Strategic Plan

Action 2.4.4: HHSC ECI will continue the Professionalism Engagement Empowerment Resources (PEER) Network for early intervention specialists and service coordinators.

- The PEER Network has 322 registered members.
- HHSC ECI supports ECI programs in leading the PEER Network.

Action 2.4.6: HHSC ECI will continue to develop and make available trainings on children with special needs, including autism, and on managing challenging behavior in young children.

- Since April 2023, ECI programs have reported providing 100 trainings on creating classrooms for children of all abilities.
- Since May 2024, HHSC ECI continues to offer four trainings on engaging children with autism and managing challenging behavior.

Discussion.

Comparison data on Texas retention rates compared to other states. ECI stated that they did not.

Smile and family stories really make a difference. Mom-Mom and parent to parent makes a difference.

4. Texas Education Agency transition materials presentation

Summary. TEA is developing a professional development program to improve transition from ECI (Part C) to Early Childhood Special Education (ECSE, Part B), featuring online and in-person training, joint planning tools, and aligned guidance.

Stakeholder surveys identified key needs including: clearer communication, consistent resources, strategies to engage and reassure families, and logistical support (e.g., for transportation and childcare).

Materials will be posted online, and joint training will roll out by summer 2026.

Presentation

ECI to ECSE Transition Training is a Priority
Critical Development Window Ages 3-5 (Ages 3–5 are foundational for language, social skills, and cognitive growth; interruptions can have long-term effects).

Impact on Child Outcomes (Delays or incomplete transitions disrupt services).

Federal and State Requirements (The Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) mandates timely and coordinated transition from: Part C (ECI) → Part B (ECSE)

Stakeholder Feedback ECI and ECSE staff expressed:
- Need for clearer guidance
- Stronger collaborative processes
- Consistent communication between programs

Stakeholder Feedback Summary. Both Early Childhood Special Education (ECSE) and Early Childhood Intervention (ECI) staff were asked several questions in a focus group format.

ECSE
- Special education directors identified from 8 LEAs across the state that match demographics of Texas
- Region 13 ECSE leaders – a group of over 30 ECSE leaders from general and special education

ECI
- ECI providers across the state
- ECI program directors and service coordinators

Questions Asked in ECI and ECSE Focus Groups
1. What strategies have you found most effective in ensuring a smooth transition from ECI to ECSE?

2. Can you describe any common challenges families face during the ECI to ECSE transition and how your district/ECI programs address these challenges?

3. How do ECI programs or ECSE staff involve parents and caregivers in the transition process to ensure they feel supported and informed?

4. What training or professional development do your staff receive to support children transitioning from ECI to ECSE?

5. Are there any specific resources or tools that your district or ECI programs provide to staff or families to facilitate the transition of children from ECI to ECSE?

Summary of Feedback: Strategies Found Most Effective

1. Collaboration Across Teams (Strong coordination between general education and special education staff to align supports and expectations).

2. Family and Community Engagement (Community outreach by ECI to educate families and referral sources, e.g., medical providers, about the transition process and available services).

3. Streamlined Scheduling and Communication (Using a meeting scheduler link to simplify scheduling ECI transition meetings for all parties).

4. Reviewing informational slides with families during meetings to explain (Explaining the process and gathering feedback from families; Review informational slides with families during meetings to explain ECSE programming, evaluation process, IEP development, and ARD procedures; Conducting parent interviews during meetings to gather intake information for evaluators and address family concerns)

5. Systematic Identification (Flagging ECI students in the system by including ECI in their ID number, ensuring staff recognize these students as transitioning from ECI services).

Summary of Feedback: Challenges Identified
1. Differences in Eligibility and Roles
- Families struggle with understanding the shift from developmental delay-based eligibility (ECI) to educational-based eligibility (ECSE).
- Confusion about who to contact due to varying titles and responsibilities across districts (e.g., separate coordinators for EC SpEd and EC GenEd in some districts, combined roles in others).

2. Limited-Service Hours and Childcare Gaps
- Services for ECSE students often last only 2–3 hours per day, leaving families without full-day care.
- After-school care is challenging, especially with varying dismissal times across campuses.

3. Complexity of Communication and Logistics
- Families find it hard to identify and understand the roles of multiple staff members (e.g., ARD Facilitator, teacher, coordinator).
- Transportation eligibility adds complexity—students must reside within district boundaries, and frequent moves across boundaries create additional challenges.
- Knowledge of ECSE services to help families plan for additional services during transition

Summary of Feedback: Involvement of Parents and Caregivers in the Transition Process

1. Structured Training and Protocols (Some LEA leadership teams developed a training and protocol for families using a train-the-trainer model).

2. Assessment and Child Find Leads (Evaluation and child find staff play a key role in building initial relationships and connecting families to campus resources).

3. Language Accessibility (Ensuring all communication and materials are provided in the parent's primary language to promote understanding and inclusion).

4. Direct Engagement and Follow-Up (Parents actively participate in transition meetings by sharing information about their child; Districts follow up with email summaries and slides to reinforce understanding and maintain communication; ECI service coordinators provide ongoing support).

Summary of Feedback: ECI to ECSE Transition Training and Resources

1.. Education Service Center (ESC) Trainings (Some ESCs offer transition trainings regarding eligibility requirements, engagement with families, and ECI to ECSE collaboration).

2. Ongoing Integration in Meetings (Transition information is incorporated into monthly meetings with ECSE teachers to keep the topic active and relevant).

3. Targeted Cohort Training (Districts have provided ECSE cohorts focused on reviewing the transition process, enabling teachers to better support families and facilitate smoother transitions).

4. Inclusion in ARD Preparation (Transition guidance is embedded in initial ARD prep training, ensuring teachers understand how to prepare ECI families for the move to ECSE services).

5. ECI Transition-Focused Training Sessions (Some ECI providers hold training sessions at least twice a year to ensure they remain well-prepared to support children and families moving from ECI to ECSE).

Resources:

[A Parent's Guide to Special Education Referrals for Children Ages 3-5 | Texas SPED Support](#)

[A Parent's Guide to Early Childhood Intervention and Early Childhood Special Education | Texas SPED Support](#)

[Guidance for the Student Attendance Accounting Handbook (SAAH) Early Childhood Special Education (ECSE) and Prekindergarten (Pre-K) Program Coding Chart: Question and Answer Document | Texas SPED Support](#)

[eci-parent-handbook.pdf](#)

[Beyond-ECI-ECI-17_1117.pdf](#)

[Overview of Special Education for Parents English.pdf](#)

Training Format and Collaboration Practices

Delivery Options and Training Content

Online - TEALearn
- Compliance
- Examples of planning and best practices and procedures
- Information regarding who to contact regarding joint planning
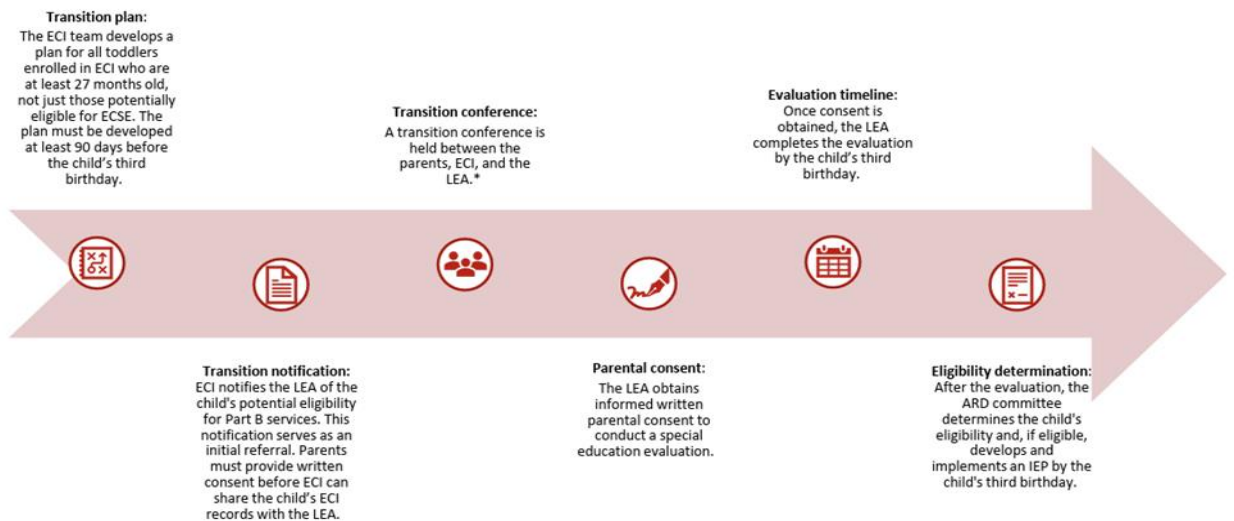
In Person - ESCs
- Includes the same information as the online course, and
- Joint planning activities and best practices and procedures

Both In-Person and Online Training Addresses
1. Compliance – What is required by statute in the transition process
2. Best practices for a smooth transition process

Example Compliance and Procedural Best Practices for the ECI to ECSE Transition Course

Transition Steps Timeline

Transition plan:
The ECI team develops a plan for all toddlers enrolled in ECI who are at least 27 months old, not just those potentially eligible for ECSE. The plan must be developed at least 90 days before the child's third birthday.

Transition conference:
A transition conference is held between the parents, ECI, and the LEA.*

Evaluation timeline:
Once consent is obtained, the LEA completes the evaluation by the child's third birthday.

Transition notification:
ECI notifies the LEA of the child's potential eligibility for Part B services. This notification serves as an initial referral. Parents must provide written consent before ECI can share the child's ECI records with the LEA.

Parental consent:
The LEA obtains informed written parental consent to conduct a special education evaluation.

Eligibility determination:
After the evaluation, the ARD committee determines the child's eligibility and, if eligible, develops and implements an IEP by the child's third birthday.

*An invitation to the LEA for a transition conference can also serve as the required notification to the LEA—if it's sent at least 90 days before the child's third birthday, includes all required information, and is reported under federal indicators.

DRAFT Part B and Part C Responsibilities Side by Side

Example of a stand-alone one-page guidance that will also be included in the ECI to ECSE Compliance and Best Practices Training

IDEA PART C TO PART B TRANSITION RESPONSIBILITIES IN TEXAS

	Part C (Early Childhood Intervention-ECI Responsibilities)	Part B (Local Educational Agency-LEA) Responsibilities
Transition Notification	ECI notifies the LEA that a toddler residing in their district, who is currently receiving Part C services and is potentially eligible for Part B services, will turn three years old and exit the Part C program. ECI notifies the LEA **no fewer than 90 days before the child's third birthday.** 34 CFR § 303.209 (b)(1)(i). At least **10 days** before notifying the appropriate LEA of residence that a child is potentially eligible for Part B services, the ECI program provides written notification to the child's parent advising the parent of: • The information that will be disclosed includes the limited personally identifiable information (child's name, child's date of birth, parent's name, address, and telephone number), the service coordinator's name, and the home language of the child. • The scheduled LEA notification date; and • The **right to opt out** of the disclosure in writing at any time up until the time of the scheduled LEA notification date.	The LEA will ensure that ECI has an up-to-date list of the appropriate local contacts to receive notifications. If the notification reports list children assigned to the incorrect school district, LEA personnel will reply to the notification and identify potential errors. ECI personnel will follow up to verify and make the necessary corrections. Receiving notification of a child who is potentially eligible for Part B services constitutes a **referral to the Part B system**, and steps must be taken **to initiate the evaluation process** to determine whether the child is eligible for Part B services.
Transition Notification (Late Referrals)	When an ECI program provides notification of a potentially eligible child fewer than 90 days before the child's third birthday, the ECI program must provide a written explanation of the LEA stating the reason for the delay. If an ECI program determines that a child is eligible for Part C services fewer **than 90 days and more than 45 days** before the child's third birthday, the ECI program must determine as soon as possible whether the child is	The LEA must complete the full individual and initial evaluation (FIIE) within **45 school days.** The completion of the evaluation and ARD would be reflected under the state performance plan indicator (SPPI) 11 data rather than SPPI 12.

Example of Training - Part B Responsibilities: Transition Conference The Part C transition notification and conference to the LEA is treated as an initial referral under IDEA. Parents must be provided:

- Notice of Procedural Safeguards
- Overview of Special Education for Parents form
- Parent's Guide to the ARD Process
- Opportunity to provide written, informed consent for evaluation (if necessary)

DRAFT Transition from ECI to ECSE Quick Guide

Example of a stand-alone guidance that will also be included in the ECI to ECSE Compliance and Best Practices Training

EARLY CHILDHOOD INTERVENTION (ECI) TO EARLY CHILDHOOD SPECIAL EDUCATION (ECSE) SERVICES TRANSITION QUICK GUIDE

What is the purpose of ECI to ECSE transition?

The transition from ECI (The Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) Part C) to ECSE (IDEA Part B) is a critical process that ensures continuity of services for young children with developmental delays or disabilities. Educators play a central role in ensuring transitions are timely, compliant, and family-centered, with a full initial and individual evaluation (FIIE) completed along with an individualized education program (IEP) developed and implemented by the child's third birthday.

What are the Legal Foundations & Requirements?
ECI
The Texas Health and Human Services Commission (HHSC) provides ECI services under the IDEA Part C for families with children from birth up to 36 months of age with developmental delays, disabilities, or certain medical diagnoses that may impact development. When these children turn three, they may qualify for ECSE services under Part B of the IDEA through their local educational agency (LEA). ECI and ECSE work together to support children with disabilities from infancy through their preschool years and beyond. Within Texas, the Texas Administrative Code (TAC), Title 26, Part 1, Chapter 350 provides state regulations on how ECI services are implemented.

Examples of Best Practices and Joint Collaboration Between ECI and ECSE Staff

Strengthen family engagement and understanding of ECI to ECSE transition by using the same materials and language across ECI and ECSE staff.

- [A Parent's Guide to Early Childhood Intervention and Early Childhood Special Education | Texas SPED Support](#)
- [A Parent's Guide to Special Education Referrals for Children Ages 3-5 | Texas SPED Support](#)
- [Parent's Guide to the ARD Process | SPEDTex](#)

Update the LEA's policies and procedures around transition practices – Online training will offer examples of potential policies and procedures, and face-to-face training will include time to collaborate with ECI and ECSE staff.
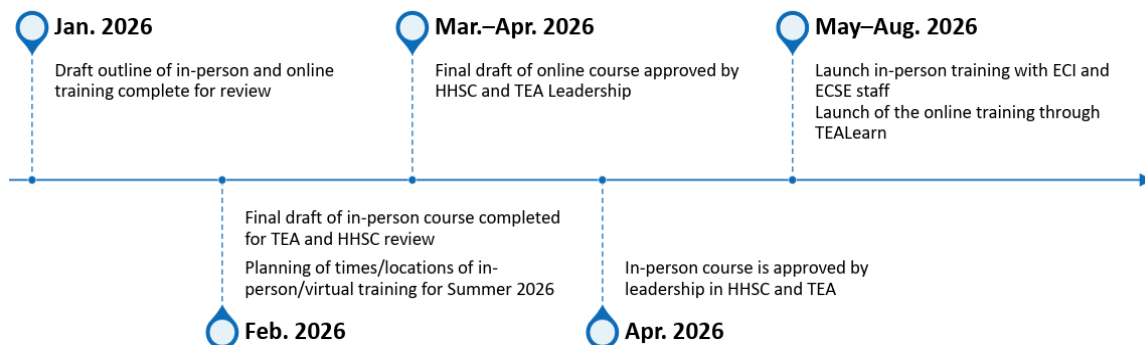
More Best Practices for a Smooth Transition

Reduce administration and scheduling barriers by being proactive – Training will provide examples such as:

- Shared calendars and information to increase communication
- Utilization of centralized tools for scheduling transition conferences
- SPPI 12 responsibility for a timely evaluation and ARD meeting

Enhance coordination and collaboration procedures

- Creation of procedures regarding pre-scheduled transition meeting dates
- Utilization of centralized tools for intake
- Draft agendas for quarterly meetings between LEAs and ECI

Next Steps

Jan. 2026
Draft outline of in-person and online training complete for review

Mar.–Apr. 2026
Final draft of online course approved by HHSC and TEA Leadership

May–Aug. 2026
Launch in-person training with ECI and ECSE staff
Launch of the online training through TEALearn

Final draft of in-person course completed for TEA and HHSC review
Planning of times/locations of in-person/virtual training for Summer 2026
Feb. 2026

In-person course is approved by leadership in HHSC and TEA
Apr. 2026

Discussion

As a parent, I was glad to hear about childcare and transition as well as transportation collaboration.

5. [Overview of upcoming rulemaking project and timeline: Texas Administrative Code, Title 26, Part 1, Chapter 350, concerning Early Childhood Intervention Services](#)

Summary. The ECI rulemaking project for FY26-27 includes new rules (e.g., for children who are deaf-blind and transition referrals), clarification of eligibility and transition requirements, and conversion to plain language as required by recent legislation. Informal public comment on the rules is slated for late February to March 2026, with formal Texas Register publication expected in July 2026.

Presentation

Anticipated Rule Amendments Amended rule language will include the following: • Two new rules:

- Deafblind eligibility category.
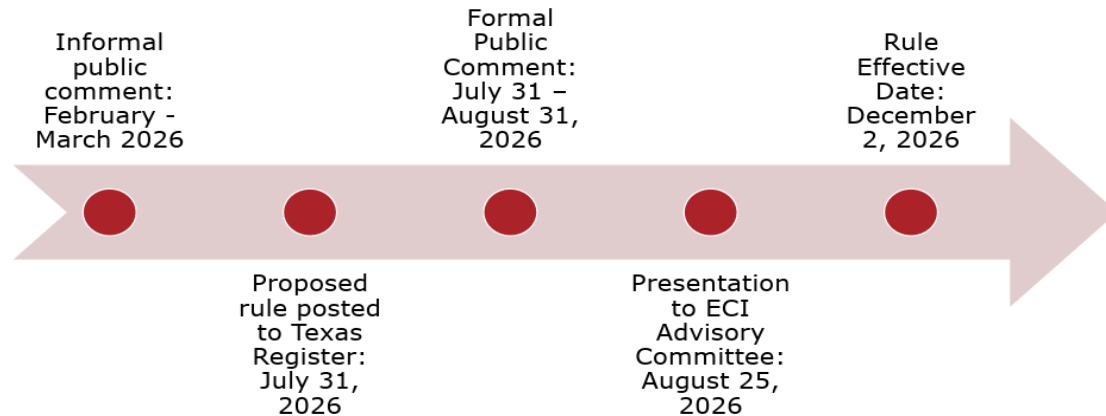- Referrals from ECI to the Texas Education Agency.

Clarification on rules related to:

- Eligibility for children who are deaf or hard of hearing or have a visual impairment.
- Transition from ECI to Early Childhood Special Education.

Updated terminology and amendments to acronym use as well as plain language conversion will be included.

Informal Public Comment . It is anticipated informal public comment period begins in late February. The anticipated informal public comment period will end in March. Proposed rules are posted to Health and Human Services rulemaking website. Feedback should include the rule section in your comment as well as who you are representing. You may send comments to eci.policy@hhs.texas.gov .

Anticipated Timeline

Informal public comment: February – March 2026		Formal Public Comment: July 31 – August 31, 2026		Rule Effective Date: December 2, 2026
	Proposed rule posted to Texas Register: July 31, 2026		Presentation to ECI Advisory Committee: August 25, 2026	

Discussion. No discussion

6. Review the State Performance Plan / Annual Performance Report per Code of Federal Regulations, Title 34, Subtitle B, Chapter III, Subpart G, §303.604 and the Texas Administrative Code, Title 1, Part 15, Subchapter B, Division 1, §351.843

ECI Data and Reports | Texas Health and Human Services. The Plan and Report were not made available to the public.

Summary. The Annual Performance Report (APR) data were presented and reviewed: There are Strong improvements in indicators for timely service initiation, natural environments, and compliance. Family outcome surveys show high satisfaction with ECI support. Texas continues to increase identification and service rates for infants and toddlers, especially before age one. There have been steady gains in transition compliance and resolution of noncompliance findings. A focus on social-emotional outcomes remains a priority, with data showing gains in most categories over previous years.

Texas Insight has requested a copy of the plan and report, and it will be made available once it is received.

Discussion. There was no discussion.

7. Member reports: Local program activities; Parent activities; Inter/intra-agency partners' activities.

Program representatives reported strong staff retention, increased early referrals (many before 12 months), expansion of telehealth (especially during storms), new screening and training efforts for visual impairments, and collaborative inclusion conferences.

Some local challenges remain including: families declining telehealth or evaluations, and logistical hurdles around childcare and transportation during transitions.

Parent representatives expressed gratitude for ECI's impact and promoted upcoming parent conferences and support resources.

Agency partners commented on ongoing interest in data integration (HB 3963) and noted current events (e.g., flu season) affecting operations.

8. Public comment. No public comment was offered

9. Planning for next meeting.

Future Meetings:
- April 29, 2026
- August 25, 2026

No topics were suggested for the next meeting.

10. Adjourn. There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned.