

Job Title:	Director of Special Education Services	Job Category:	Certified
Department/Group:	Welcome Center	Job Code/ Req#:	
Location:	Welcome Center	Travel Required:	Yes
Level/Salary Range:		Position Type:	Full-time
HR Contact:	Kim Klosterman	Date:	July 2012

Job Description

The Director of Special Education (DoSE) provides leadership and oversight for special education programs, ensuring compliance with the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) as well as state and local regulations. As one of the most comprehensive federal mandates, IDEA requires extensive knowledge to navigate its legal, financial, and educational implications. The DoSE must have a deep understanding of legal frameworks, case law, and funding mechanisms to ensure compliance and mitigate risks associated with litigation.

This role involves policy implementation, program development, staff training, resource management, and collaboration with various stakeholders to enhance student outcomes. The DoSE manages all aspects of special education, including program development, staff supervision, compliance monitoring, and working closely with school and district leaders. Strategic planning and the implementation of systems to support students with Individualized Education Programs (IEPs) in both public and private schools are critical components of the role.

As the bridge between legal mandates and operational implementation, the DoSE must balance policy enforcement, instructional leadership, financial oversight, and student advocacy. This ensures that all students with disabilities receive a free and appropriate public education (FAPE). The DoSE must also be proficient in state and federal funding structures, managing IDEA grant allocations while adhering to Maintenance of Effort (MOE) and Excess Cost regulations. Close collaboration with district leaders, school administrators, special education teachers, and related service providers is essential to create an inclusive, legally compliant educational environment.

In addition, the DoSE plays a vital role in dispute resolution, addressing conflicts before they escalate into legal challenges. This requires the ability to think quickly, problem-solve under pressure, and mediate conflicts effectively.

This role also requires ongoing professional development, knowledge of emerging legal precedents, and a proactive approach to preventing compliance issues that could lead to litigation. The DoSE must continuously audit and review special education programs and procedures to ensure compliance with federal and state regulations. Failure to maintain high standards in documentation, procedural safeguards, and policy adherence can result in costly litigation, loss of funding, and potential harm to students' educational opportunities. By implementing rigorous monitoring systems and proactive risk management strategies, the DoSE mitigates legal exposure while ensuring that students receive appropriate services.

The Director of Special Education must possess a deep understanding of the science of learning, child development, and the latest research on instructional delivery methods to effectively support students with disabilities. This knowledge enables the DoSE to implement evidence-based strategies and innovative instructional practices tailored to the diverse learning needs of students. By staying current with emerging research on cognitive development, neuroplasticity, and best practices in differentiated instruction, the DoSE ensures that the district's special education programs are grounded in the most effective and up-to-date methodologies. This expertise is crucial for designing personalized learning experiences that enhance student engagement, promote skill acquisition, and support long-term academic success for students with disabilities. The DoSE's ability to translate research into practice ensures that all students, regardless of their challenges, are given the opportunity to reach their fullest potential in a supportive, inclusive learning environment.

Another key responsibility of the DoSE is aligning the special education curriculum with the district's broader curriculum system. The DoSE leads the initiatives and supports delivery of special education services that align with district goals, using expertise in curriculum design tailored to the needs of students with disabilities. This role is essential for creating an inclusive learning environment where students with disabilities can succeed academically.

Key Responsibilities:

1. Compliance & Policy Implementation

- Ensure full compliance with IDEA.
- Develop, implement, and monitor district special education policies and procedures.
- Conduct audits and monitor compliance with IEPs, evaluations, and services.
- Maintain accurate student records, procedural safeguards, and due process compliance.
- Develop and Implement a Record Retention Procedures for student due process records.
- Lead district-wide efforts to ensure compliance with all relevant federal, state, and local regulations, including IDEA, Section 504, ADA, and district-specific policies.
- Spearhead the development and implementation of district-wide special education policies and procedures to meet evolving educational needs.
- Oversee and drive continuous monitoring and audits of the district's IEPs, evaluations, and services to maintain a high standard of compliance and educational integrity.
- Ensure legal compliance is operationalized within the district by establishing procedures, timelines, and accountability measures for all special education services and supports.
- Implement and oversee dispute resolution procedures, including mediation, due process hearings, and complaint investigations, ensuring the district's legal standing and commitment to students' rights.

2. Legal & Financial Compliance in Special Education

- Stay abreast of legal precedents, state and federal mandates, and funding regulations related to special education.

- Provide legal guidance to district leadership and school staff on matters related to special education regulations, procedural safeguards, and parent rights.
- Monitor and ensure compliance with Maintenance of Effort (MOE) and Excess Cost requirements for federal IDEA funding.
- Collaborate with district finance officers to develop and oversee budgets that ensure appropriate allocation and expenditure of IDEA grant funds.
- Conduct internal audits to assess operational efficiency of special education programs, ensuring sustainable funding and legal compliance.
- Maintain a proactive approach to identifying and mitigating risks related to special education funding, legal disputes, and compliance deficiencies.
- Possess in-depth knowledge of legal frameworks, case law, and procedural safeguards necessary to mitigate litigation risks and ensure district-wide adherence to legal requirements.
- Anticipate legal challenges and proactively implement risk-reduction strategies to prevent costly litigation and ensure student rights are upheld.
- Ensure that funding decisions align with both compliance mandates and evidence-based practices to maximize educational outcomes for students with disabilities.

3. State Reports Required for Kentucky Department of Education (KDE) (Submitted Annually)

- Utilize data analytics to identify trends and drive continuous program improvement, ensuring compliance and enhancing student outcomes.
- Ensure timely submission of state-required reports to KDE, including:
 - December 1 Child Count Report – Verifies the number of students with disabilities receiving services under IDEA.
 - Personnel Report – Ensures all special education staff meet certification and licensure requirements.
 - MOE (Maintenance of Effort) & Excess Cost Report – Confirms district compliance with financial requirements for special education funding.
 - Indicator Reports– Data collection for federal special education indicators.
 - Post-School Outcomes Report – Tracks special education students' success in employment or further education.
 - Disproportionality Report – Reviews data on racial and ethnic representation in special education.
 - Indicator 11 & 12 Reports – Monitors timely evaluations and early childhood transitions.
 - Special Education Budget & IDEA Grant Applications – Manages federal and state funding compliance.

4. Curriculum Knowledge and Alignment to District Curriculum System

- **Comprehensive Understanding of Curriculum Standards:** The DoSE must have in-depth knowledge of Kentucky's Academic Standards, which are the foundation of the district's curriculum. This includes understanding the content and performance expectations for all students, including those with disabilities.

- **Special Education Curriculum Integration:** The DoSE ensures that the special education curriculum is fully integrated into the district's overall curriculum system. This involves adapting general education content to meet the needs of students with disabilities while maintaining high academic expectations.
- **Differentiated Instruction:** The DoSE must understand how to adapt and modify district-wide curriculum frameworks to meet the diverse learning needs of students with disabilities. This includes implementing Universal Design for Learning (UDL) principles to provide multiple means of engagement, representation, and expression.
- **Collaboration with Curriculum Leaders:** The DoSE collaborates with general education curriculum leaders and subject area coordinators to ensure that special education students have access to the full curriculum, including any necessary accommodations and modifications to support their participation and achievement.
- **Accessibility to Core Curriculum:** The DoSE is responsible for ensuring that students with disabilities can access the core curriculum and participate in extracurricular activities. This includes selecting appropriate materials, assistive technologies, and strategies that support students with various disabilities.

5. Curriculum Development and Adaptation

- **Development of IEP Goals:** The DoSE is responsible for guiding the development of Individualized Education Programs (IEPs) that align with district curriculum goals. These IEPs should include academic, functional, and behavioral goals that are measurable and aligned with state academic standards.
- **State and Local Assessments:** The DoSE ensures that special education students are appropriately assessed through state and local assessments such as Kentucky's K-PREP (Kentucky Performance Rating for Educational Progress) and the Alternate Assessment, and that these assessments align with the district's curriculum.
- **Curriculum Resources and Materials:** The DoSE oversees the selection and use of instructional resources, including differentiated materials, specialized content, and assistive technology, to ensure students with disabilities have the tools to succeed in the district's curriculum system.
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6. Knowledge of Kentucky's Evaluation Systems

- **KY State Assessment Systems:** The DoSE must be familiar with the Kentucky Department of Education (KDE) assessment systems, the Kentucky Summative Assessments for general education students and the Kentucky Alternate Assessment (KAA) for students with significant cognitive disabilities. The DoSE ensures that all special education students are appropriately included in assessments and that their accommodations are properly implemented.
- **Continuous Improvement Framework:** The DoSE should be well-versed in Kentucky's Continuous Improvement System (KDE's version of a comprehensive school improvement process). This system includes using data from assessments, performance indicators, and student outcomes to evaluate and improve district and school-level programs, including special education services.

- Evaluation of Student Progress: The DoSE is responsible for overseeing the implementation of formative and summative assessments for students with disabilities to track their progress toward IEP goals and Kentucky's academic standards. This data informs the decision-making process for instructional adjustments and curriculum modifications.
- State Performance Plan (SPP) and Annual Performance Report (APR): The DoSE must ensure that the district meets state requirements for the SPP and APR. This involves tracking progress on various indicators of success for students with disabilities, such as graduation rates, and postsecondary outcomes.

7. Alignment to State and Federal Accountability Systems

- Accountability Systems for Special Education: The DoSE is familiar with Kentucky's accountability systems that specifically address the performance of students with disabilities. This includes understanding the state's monitoring and evaluation procedures under IDEA, as well as federal performance measures for special education.
- Improvement Plans: If a district or school is not meeting state or federal performance expectations for students with disabilities, the DoSE will be involved in the development and implementation of corrective action or improvement plans. These plans include addressing gaps in curriculum alignment, instructional practices, and assessment strategies.

8. Program Development & Oversight

- Lead the development and ongoing evaluation of special education programs to maximize student success.
- Implement and ensure evidence-based instructional strategies are provided.
- Oversee early childhood special education services and transition programs (e.g., postsecondary planning).
- Support implementation of Assistive Technology for students with communication and learning needs.
- Support a variety of educational environments appropriate for students with sensory impairments.
- Promote and support the use of inclusive education practices across all levels of instruction.
- Provide leadership in early childhood special education and transition programs, ensuring smooth pathways for students moving from early intervention to postsecondary opportunities.
- Ensure alignment between instructional practices and legal mandates, facilitating high-quality special education programming that meets compliance and educational excellence standards.
- Engage in data-driven decision-making to adapt instructional strategies, interventions, and resource allocation to meet the changing needs of the student population.

9. Collaboration with Parents & Stakeholders

- Foster a culture of collaboration and transparency with parents and guardians, ensuring they are informed and engaged in decision-making related to their child's education.

- Provide training and resources for parents on their rights, responsibilities, and available supports under IDEA and Section 504.
- Develop and oversee parent engagement initiatives, including workshops, and individualized consultation opportunities.
- Ensure all procedural safeguards are effectively communicated to parents, preventing misunderstandings and disputes regarding referral process, evaluation process, eligibility process, and delivery of special education services.
- Act as a mediator in complex cases, working towards collaborative solutions that uphold students' rights while maintaining district compliance.
- Serve as a bridge between families, educators, and legal entities to ensure effective advocacy and equitable access to services.
- Develop proactive communication strategies to address parent concerns before they escalate to formal disputes or litigation.
- Work collaboratively with educators, parents, and external agencies to identify and support students with special needs.

10. Collaboration, Advocacy & Stakeholder Engagement

- Act as the primary liaison between the district and the Kentucky Department of Education (KDE), advocating for the needs of students with disabilities.
- Foster strong relationships with parents, community organizations, advocacy groups, and external partners to ensure comprehensive support for students with disabilities.
- Resolve complex concerns related to special education services, demonstrating the district's commitment to exceptional service and compliance.
- Partner with parents, community organizations, and advocacy groups to support students with disabilities.
- Address and resolve concerns related to special education services and compliance.
- Engage with private and religious school administrators, parents, advocacy groups, and other stakeholders to coordinate services and support for students attending private schools.
- Participate in the Admissions and Release Committee (ARC) to determine student eligibility and appropriate services.

12. Fiscal Management & Resource Optimization

- Oversee the district's special education budgets, including IDEA Part B funds, ensuring that resources are efficiently allocated to meet the needs of students and comply with legal requirements.
- Champion the strategic purchase and implementation of specialized resources, including assistive technologies and accommodations, to enhance learning experiences for students with disabilities.

Impact of Director of Special Education Services Position

The Director of Special Education (DoSE) plays a pivotal role in shaping the educational experience for students with disabilities within the district. Through strategic leadership, the DoSE ensures that special education programs are not only compliant with federal and state regulations but also aligned with district

goals aimed at maximizing student achievement and success. By implementing evidence-based practices, providing professional development for staff, and fostering a collaborative environment among educators and service providers, the DoSE enhances the quality of services for students with disabilities. The position directly impacts the district's ability to create an inclusive learning environment where every student, regardless of their challenges, has access to a free and appropriate public education (FAPE). Through effective resource management, program evaluation, and continuous improvement, the DoSE ensures that special education services are delivered with fidelity, promoting equity and ensuring positive outcomes for students, families, and the community.

Critical Role in Compliance & Accountability

The DoSE's critical role in compliance is essential in keeping the district out of litigation. By overseeing the accurate development and implementation of Individualized Education Programs (IEPs) and ensuring that all required services and accommodations are provided, the DoSE ensures the district meets its legal obligations and reduces the risk of complaints and lawsuits. The DoSE is responsible for maintaining rigorous documentation, conducting compliance audits, and ensuring that staff are well-trained in the legal requirements of special education. Through these actions, the DoSE identifies and addresses potential issues before they escalate into legal disputes. By consistently monitoring procedures and fostering transparent communication with families and stakeholders, the DoSE proactively manages risk, ensures the district remains in full compliance, and mitigates the possibility of litigation. This role is critical in protecting the district's financial resources, reputation, and ability to focus on educational outcomes without the distraction and cost of legal challenges.

Special Education Post-Secondary Education Coordinator

Special Education Post-Secondary Education Coordinator is responsible for developing and overseeing transition services that prepare students with disabilities for successful post-secondary outcomes, including employment, higher education, vocational training, and independent living. This role ensures compliance with Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act, the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA), and state-level transition mandates, while fostering strong collaborations with families, educators, businesses, community organizations, and government agencies.

This role requires a high level of expertise in special education law, workforce trends, job market demands, career and vocational assessments, transition planning tools, and post-secondary supports for students with disabilities. The Director ensures the district meets all federal and state regulations regarding Indicator 13 compliance, Individualized Education Program (IEP) transition requirements, and student outcome reporting (Indicator 14).

The Director plays a pivotal role in ensuring students graduate with the necessary skills, resources, and supports to successfully transition to post-secondary education, employment, and independent living.

Key Responsibilities

1. Legal Compliance & Policy Implementation

- Ensure district compliance with IDEA (transition services requirements), Section 504, Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), and WIOA to protect students' rights and secure post-secondary success.
- Develop and oversee policies and procedures for effective transition planning, aligned with federal and state mandates.
- Maintain thorough documentation for Indicator 13 (compliance with transition IEPs) and Indicator 14 (post-secondary student outcomes reporting).
- Monitor compliance with state and federal transition service timelines, including age-appropriate transition assessments, goal-setting, and work-based learning experiences.
- Oversee due process procedures, transition-related evaluations, parental rights notifications, and dispute resolution strategies.

2. Transition Planning & Student Preparation

- Oversee age-appropriate transition assessments to determine student interests, strengths, skills, and post-secondary readiness, including:
 - Vocational assessments
 - Interest inventories
 - Adaptive behavior assessments
 - Functional life skills evaluations
 - College and career readiness assessments
- Develop individualized transition goals in IEPs by age 14 (or earlier when appropriate) and ensure appropriate course of study, work experiences, and self-advocacy training.
- Coordinate work-based learning, apprenticeships, career exploration programs, and pre-employment transition services (Pre-ETS) for eligible students.
- Ensure students complete transition-focused evaluations, such as career aptitude tests, vocational assessments, and independent living evaluations.
- Provide self-determination and self-advocacy training to students so they understand their rights, responsibilities, and accommodations in post-secondary settings.
- Ensure students have a multi-year course of study that supports them in achieving their post-secondary goals.

3. Postsecondary & Workforce Coordination

- Develop and maintain partnerships with local businesses, vocational rehabilitation agencies, workforce development boards, community colleges, universities, and trade schools to expand post-secondary options for students.

- Guide students and families through college application processes, financial aid, disability services registration, and career/technical education (CTE) opportunities.
- Ensure students with disabilities have access to dual enrollment, apprenticeships, and job training programs while still in high school.
- Work with businesses and local employers to provide on-the-job training, internships, and customized employment opportunities.
- Coordinate with Vocational Rehabilitation (VR), Kentucky Career Centers, Office for the Blind, and other adult service agencies for transition planning.
- Provide training for students and families on Social Security benefits, Medicaid waivers, and other financial supports available for post-secondary transitions.

4. Community & Agency Collaboration

- Lead interagency collaboration efforts to ensure students with disabilities receive necessary supports post-graduation.
- Establish Memorandums of Understanding (MOUs) with agencies such as Vocational Rehabilitation, community colleges, technical schools, workforce development programs, and disability support services.
- Host Transition Fairs and parent workshops on employment, independent living, college access, and self-advocacy.
- Collaborate with independent living centers, mental health providers, transportation services, and social services to ensure a holistic transition approach.

5. Staff Training & Professional Development

- Train IEP teams, general educators, career counselors, and special education staff on transition law, post-secondary requirements, and effective transition services.
- Ensure school staff understand how to develop measurable post-secondary goals and implement evidence-based transition practices.
- Provide professional development on workforce trends, job market data, and in-demand careers for students with disabilities.
- Offer training on assistive technology and accommodations available in post-secondary education and employment settings.

6. Data Collection, Reporting, & Accountability

- Maintain accurate transition planning records, student progress data, and employment/education outcomes.
- Oversee Indicator 14 post-school outcome surveys to track employment, education, and independent living success rates.
- Prepare district-level reports for the state education agency, KDE, and federal compliance monitoring.
- Analyze data trends to improve transition programming, address gaps, and advocate for increased resources.

Impact of Special Education Post-Secondary Transition Coordinator Position

1. Legal Compliance & Reduced Risk

- Ensures full compliance with IDEA transition mandates, Indicator 13, Indicator 14, and Section 504 requirements.
- Reduces the risk of due process complaints and lawsuits related to inadequate transition services.

2. Stronger Workforce & Postsecondary Readiness

- Prepares students for competitive employment, college success, and independent living.
- Expands career pathways, apprenticeships, and job training opportunities. Increased Community & Business Engagement
- Builds partnerships with local businesses, colleges, workforce agencies, and trade programs to support students.
- Strengthens collaboration with families and adult service providers to ensure seamless transitions.

3. Improved Student Outcomes

- Increases graduation rates, employment rates, and post-secondary enrollment for students with disabilities.
- Promotes self-determination, student advocacy, independent living, and lifelong success.

4. Financial Resource Optimization

- Ensures effective use of IDEA funds, WIOA resources, and vocational rehabilitation funding is adequate to support student needs.

Special Education Transition Post-Secondary Education Coordinator plays a critical role in ensuring students with disabilities successfully transition into adulthood. This position demands a strong understanding of special education law, workforce development, career assessment tools, independent living skills training, and interagency collaboration.

By providing comprehensive transition services, legal compliance oversight, and workforce preparation, the coordinator ensures students leave high school with the skills, supports, and connections they need to thrive in post-secondary education, employment, and independent living.

Critical Role in Compliance & Accountability

Failure to provide effective transition services places students at risk of unemployment, dependence on public assistance, and post-secondary failure—creating legal and financial consequences for the district.

Through strategic leadership, community collaboration, and data-driven decision-making, the director enhances student outcomes, strengthens workforce pipelines, and safeguards the district's compliance with federal mandates

Special Education First Steps Coordinator

The Director of Special Education serving as the First Steps Coordinator for the district plays a vital role in ensuring that infants and toddlers with developmental delays or disabilities receive early intervention services within the district. This position is essential in aligning the First Steps program—Kentucky's early intervention system under Part C of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA)—with district priorities and compliance mandates. The Director also manages referral, evaluation, eligibility determination, and transitions to ensure that children are placed in the district's preschool special education program before turning three.

Key Responsibilities:

- **Program Oversight & Compliance:** Ensure the district's First Steps services meet all federal and state regulations, including IDEA Part C and Kentucky Department of Education (KDE) requirements for early intervention and transition services.
- **Oversee transition processes** for children moving from First Steps to preschool special education (IDEA Part B) before their third birthday.
- **Early Intervention Coordination:** Collaborate with parents, caregivers, therapists, physicians, health care facilities, and First Step Service Providers to develop and implement Individualized Family Service Plans (IFSPs) that address the developmental needs of children from birth to age three.
- **Transition Planning:** Facilitate seamless transitions for children moving from First Steps services to preschool special education under IDEA Part B, ensuring compliance with KDE guidelines and district special education policies.
- **Interagency Collaboration:** Work closely with state early intervention agencies, KDE, healthcare professionals, and community organizations to ensure children receive comprehensive services.
- **Training & Support:** Provide professional development for district staff, early childhood educators, and related service providers to ensure high-quality early intervention practices.
- **Family Engagement:** Serve as a key point of contact for families, ensuring they understand their rights, available resources, and the critical role early intervention plays in school readiness.
- **Data Management & Reporting:** Maintain accurate records, track program effectiveness, and submit required data and reports to KDE to ensure program accountability and compliance.
- **Oversee compliance documentation,** data collection, and submission of reports to KDE and other regulatory bodies.
- **Serve as the district liaison** for First Steps service providers, early childhood educators, and external agencies.

- Advocate for increased access to early intervention services within the district and the broader educational community.
- Knowledge of impact of early intention services

1. Collaboration, Advocacy, and Stakeholder Engagement

- Partner with First Steps Agencies: Work closely with First Steps providers (e.g., NorthKey, Associates in Pediatric Therapy) to facilitate smooth referrals.
- Engage Families and Caregivers: Provide workshops, individual meetings, and resources to support families in the transition process.
- Advocate for Early Childhood Special Education: Work with district leaders, KDE, and community organizations to strengthen early childhood intervention services.
- Ensure strong partnerships with Head Start.
- Work closely with medical teams, pediatricians, and healthcare providers to integrate medical insights into the eligibility determination process. Ensure that children with medical needs have their healthcare requirements considered in the development of IEPs. Coordinate with healthcare providers to ensure that educational and medical interventions are aligned to address the child's full spectrum of needs.
- Foster strong partnerships and regular communication with state early intervention agencies, KDE, healthcare professionals, childcare centers, and other community organizations. Ensure that services are comprehensive and coordinated across systems, supporting the needs of children with disabilities and developmental delays. Engage with local agencies to enhance service delivery and ensure children are supported in multiple settings

2. Child Development and Its Impact on Learning:

- Cognitive Development: Understanding typical cognitive milestones for three-year-olds, such as the development of problem-solving skills, memory, and early language comprehension, as well as how cognitive delays or disorders like intellectual disabilities or autism spectrum disorder may affect learning and interaction.
- Motor Development: Knowing the typical progression of fine and gross motor skills at age three, including physical milestones like walking, running, grasping objects, and using utensils, and recognizing how developmental delays in motor skills might indicate conditions such as cerebral palsy, developmental coordination disorder, or muscular dystrophy.
- Social and Emotional Development: Recognizing the development of social interactions, emotional regulation, and the formation of basic social relationships at this age. Understanding how delays in social skills, such as those seen in children with autism spectrum disorder or social communication disorder, can impact a child's ability to interact with peers and adults.
- Speech and Language Development: Being knowledgeable about the milestones for speech and language acquisition in three-year-olds, such as vocabulary growth, sentence structure, and the ability to express needs and understand instructions. Identifying speech or language disorders such as speech delays, expressive language disorder, or speech apraxia.
- Sensory Development: Understanding how sensory processing issues may manifest in children at this age, affecting how they respond to sensory stimuli such as light, sound, and touch.

Recognizing how sensory processing disorder may impact a child's behavior, social interactions, and learning.

- **Medical Conditions and Disabilities:** Possessing knowledge of the common medical conditions or disabilities that may affect children at this age, such as hearing or vision impairments, genetic conditions (e.g., Down syndrome), and neurological disorders. Understanding the role of medical professionals in diagnosing and providing intervention services.
- **Behavioral Development:** Understanding typical behavioral development in three-year-olds, such as the expression of independence and the development of self-regulation. Recognizing how children with behavioral disorders, such as ADHD or oppositional defiant disorder, may exhibit challenges in controlling their impulses and following instructions.
- **Early Intervention and Special Education Services:** Having a deep understanding of the importance of early intervention services, including speech therapy, physical therapy, and behavioral therapy, and knowing how to coordinate these services for three-year-olds with identified developmental or learning needs.

3. Resource Optimization

- **Allocate Special Education Funds Effectively:** Ensure IDEA Part B funding is used efficiently to support transitioning students.
- **Maximize Grants and Additional Funding:** Seek early childhood funding opportunities to expand resources and intervention services.
- **Ensure Equitable Access:** Monitor service availability to prevent delays or shortages in therapy and support services.
- childcare centers, and private preschools to increase service options.

4. Staff Supervision and Support

- **Supervise Preschool Special Education Staff:** Oversee the early childhood special education team, therapists, and service coordinators.
- **Monitor Service Implementation:** Ensure all required services (e.g., speech, OT, PT, special education) are delivered in compliance with students' IEPs.
- **Provide Coaching and Mentoring:** Support preschool teachers and therapists in implementing individualized education programs (IEPs).

5. Required Annual Training and Staff Development

- **Provide Staff Training on First Steps Transitions:** Ensure preschool teachers, evaluators, and therapists understand KDE compliance, assessment procedures, and intervention strategies.
- **Conduct Professional Development:** Offer training on early childhood assessment tools, differentiated instruction, and evidence-based interventions.
- **Ensure Compliance Training for Special Education Staff:** Monitor participation in mandatory KDE and IDEA Part B training.

6. Child Find Activities:

Lead and manage district-wide child find efforts to identify infants, toddlers, and preschool-aged children with disabilities or developmental delays. Collaborate with community partners, including healthcare providers, local childcare centers, and educational agencies, to actively identify children who may benefit from early intervention services. Oversee referrals, screenings, and assessments to ensure that all potentially eligible children are identified, evaluated, and provided with appropriate services.

7. Assessment & Eligibility Determination:

Oversee and coordinate a comprehensive evaluation process to determine eligibility for early intervention services. This includes administering developmental, cognitive, motor, and social assessments to identify children with disabilities or developmental delays. Lead the interdisciplinary evaluation process, which involves collecting data from a variety of sources, such as standardized tests, observational assessments, and input from parents, teachers, medical professionals, and service providers. Ensure that all evaluations comply with IDEA regulations and accurately reflect the child's needs across developmental domains, ensuring fair and equitable eligibility determination.

8. Special Education Services in Public Schools:

Collaborate with parents, caregivers, therapists, physicians, health care facilities, First Steps service providers, and other professionals to develop and Individualized Education Plan for three-year old. These plans must address the developmental needs of children from age three and incorporate a comprehensive approach that considers medical, developmental, and social factors.

9. Transition Planning:

The DoSE ensures the appropriate coordination and implementation of services, ensuring families are supported throughout the process. Facilitate seamless transitions for children moving from First Steps services to preschool special education under IDEA Part B, ensuring compliance with KDE guidelines and district special education policies. Lead the development of transition plans to ensure that children's needs are met as they move into preschool, with continuity in services and a focus on academic, social, and developmental readiness.

10. Family Engagement:

Serve as a key point of contact for families, ensuring they understand their rights, available resources, and the critical role early intervention plays in school readiness. Support families throughout the referral, evaluation, and transition processes, ensuring they are well-informed and involved in decision-making regarding their child's services.

11. Program Development and Oversight

- Develop District Transition Procedures: Implement clear policies to ensure consistent and effective movement from First Steps into district preschool programs.

- Monitor Early Childhood Special Education Services: Ensure appropriate supports (speech therapy, OT, PT, special education teachers) are available without disruption.
- Assess Program Effectiveness: Use data to evaluate transition success, service needs, and program improvement areas.
- Coordinate Services for Dual Enrollment: Work with Head Start, childcare centers, and private preschools when students receive services in multiple settings.

Impact of Role

Special Education as First Steps Coordinator ensures the district meets KDE compliance requirements while fostering a strong foundation for student learning and success, ultimately benefiting students, families, and the district's overall special education programming.

- Student Readiness & Success: By identifying and supporting children with developmental delays early, the district increases the likelihood of improved academic and functional outcomes for students entering preschool and beyond.
- Compliance & Funding: Ensuring compliance with IDEA Part C and KDE regulations helps the district avoid potential corrective actions and maintain access to essential state and federal funding for early intervention and special education services.
- Strengthened Community Partnerships: Collaboration with First Steps providers, healthcare professionals, and KDE fosters a more coordinated system of care, improving outcomes for students and families.
- Efficient Special Education Transitions: Well-managed First Steps to Part B transitions help reduce delays in service delivery, ensuring eligible children receive timely and appropriate supports as they enter preschool special education programs.

Critical Role in Compliance & Accountability

The Director of Special Education (DoSE) serves a critical role in maintaining compliance and accountability within the district's early intervention and special education services. As the First Steps Coordinator, the DoSE ensures that the district adheres to the legal requirements outlined under Part C of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) and Kentucky Department of Education (KDE) guidelines. By overseeing the seamless transition of children from First Steps services to preschool special education (IDEA Part B), the DoSE mitigates the risk of compliance issues and ensures that services are provided in a timely, legally sound manner. The DoSE's expertise in early childhood development—including brain, motor, and social development—enables the district to provide developmentally appropriate interventions that meet the needs of children with disabilities from birth to age three. Their deep knowledge of medical issues related to child development and school environments allows for a holistic approach to service delivery that promotes positive student outcomes.

The DoSE's oversight extends to monitoring program implementation, maintaining compliance with documentation and reporting, and ensuring that all services align with both federal and state mandates. This responsibility helps safeguard the district from potential legal challenges and ensures continued access to crucial funding sources. Through proactive collaboration with First Steps providers, healthcare professionals, and families, the DoSE fosters a coordinated system of care that minimizes delays and disruptions in service delivery. By ensuring the district remains compliant with IDEA and KDE

regulations, the DoSE ensures that students with disabilities have access to the services they need, while protecting the district from costly litigation, corrective actions, and funding loss. Their role is vital in ensuring accountability at all levels, driving successful transitions, and contributing to the long-term success of the district's special education programs.

Special Education Preschool Coordinator

The Special Education Preschool Coordinator is responsible for overseeing the identification, evaluation, eligibility determination, and placement of young children with disabilities in the district's preschool special education program in compliance with federal and state laws. This role ensures smooth transitions from early intervention services (First Steps/IDEA Part C) to preschool special education (IDEA Part B) and coordinates with families, service providers, and district staff to ensure that children receive appropriate supports before they turn three.

This position is critical in ensuring that the district meets all legal requirements, facilitates interagency collaboration, maintains accurate record-keeping, and ensures timely placement of eligible children in preschool special education services. Additionally, the role emphasizes child find activities by engaging with private schools, daycare providers, Head Start programs, and other community agencies to identify children who may require early intervention services. The process of eligibility determination is pivotal to ensure appropriate supports and services are provided, and preschool services are available for children ages 3-5 with disabilities.

Key Responsibilities

1. Legal Compliance and Program Oversight

- Ensure Full Compliance with Federal and State Laws: Adhere to IDEA Part C and Part B, Kentucky Department of Education (KDE) regulations, and district policies regarding early childhood special education services.
- Manage Transition from First Steps: Oversee and ensure the legally required transition from First Steps (IDEA Part C) to preschool special education (IDEA Part B) before the child's third birthday.
- Maintain Accurate Records: Ensure all referral, evaluation, eligibility, and placement documents are properly completed, filed, and reported in compliance with KDE guidelines and state and federal monitoring requirements.

2. Referral, Evaluation, and Eligibility Determination

- Referral Process:
 - Coordinate with First Steps providers, pediatricians, and families to ensure timely referrals for preschool special education evaluation.
 - Guide families through the referral and consent process, ensuring they understand their rights and responsibilities.
- Evaluation Process:
 - Ensure comprehensive evaluations are conducted by a multidisciplinary team to determine a child's eligibility for special education services.

- Coordinate with school psychologists, speech-language pathologists, occupational therapists, physical therapists, and special education teachers to complete developmental assessments in key areas such as cognition, language, motor skills, and adaptive functioning.
- Secure parental consent and ensure all evaluations are completed within required timelines to avoid delays in services.
- Eligibility Determination:
 - Lead the eligibility determination team (ARC meeting) to review evaluation results and decide on the child's eligibility under Kentucky's special education guidelines.
 - Prepare and distribute eligibility reports and ensure families receive a clear explanation of the findings and next steps.
 - Ensure that children eligible for special education services have an Individualized Education Program (IEP) developed before they turn three.

3. Coordination Between Agencies, Parents, and Service Providers

- Facilitate Interagency Collaboration:
 - Work with First Steps agencies, KDE, Head Start programs, and private preschools to ensure smooth transitions and access to appropriate services.
 - Maintain communication with pediatricians, mental health providers, and other professionals involved in early childhood development.
- Engage and Support Parents:
 - Provide families with guidance, resources, and training to support their child's transition to preschool special education services.
 - Assist parents in understanding their rights under IDEA and the special education process.

4. Transition Planning and Preschool Placement

- Ensure Seamless Transitions:
 - Develop and oversee a structured transition plan for each child moving from First Steps to preschool special education services.
 - Ensure that all eligible children receive IEP services on or before their third birthday, as required by law.
- Preschool Placement Coordination:
 - Work with school administrators and special education teams to determine the best educational setting for each child, ensuring their placement aligns with IDEA's Least Restrictive Environment (LRE) requirements.
 - Coordinate with speech-language pathologists, occupational therapists, and other related service providers to ensure timely and appropriate service delivery.

5. Staff Training and Professional Development

- Provide Training to Preschool Staff: Ensure early childhood teachers, related service providers, and instructional assistants are knowledgeable about:
 - IDEA regulations regarding preschool special education.

- Early intervention strategies and best practices.
- Data collection and progress monitoring to assess student growth.
- Monitor and Support Implementation: Oversee the execution of IEPs in preschool classrooms and ensure that required supports are provided effectively.

6. Data Management, Reporting, and Compliance

- Ensure Accurate Data Collection and Reporting:
 - Maintain detailed records of referrals, evaluations, eligibility determinations, and IEP implementation for KDE and federal reporting.
 - Submit required reports to KDE on the number of students transitioning from First Steps and those placed in preschool special education.
 - Track student progress and service delivery to ensure compliance with IEP goals and legal requirements.

7. Resource Management and Funding Optimization

- Manage IDEA Preschool Grant Funds: Ensure that IDEA Part B 619 funds are used effectively to support preschool special education services.
- Optimize Resource Allocation: Identify needs and advocate for additional resources, staffing, and technology to support early childhood special education.

8. Advocacy and Community Engagement

- Promote Awareness of Early Childhood Special Education:
 - Work with families, pediatricians, and community organizations to identify and support children in need of early intervention.
 - Advocate for expanded preschool special education services and inclusion opportunities.
- Support Parent Engagement: Offer workshops, resources, and transition meetings to equip parents with the knowledge and skills to support their child's development.

Impact of Special Education Preschool Coordinator

The Director of Special Education (DoSE) plays a critical role in ensuring that the district remains in full compliance with federal and state laws, demonstrating expertise in safeguarding against service delays, regulatory violations, and potential legal challenges. This proactive oversight ensures the district adheres to the highest standards of educational equity for young students with disabilities. The DoSE also leads the district's commitment to early identification of developmental delays, ensuring that children receive the interventions and support they need as early as possible. This early intervention approach optimizes long-term educational outcomes and maximizes each child's potential for success. Additionally, the DoSE coordinates seamless transitions from First Steps to preschool special education services, eliminating gaps in support and ensuring continuous, uninterrupted services. This strategic management ensures young learners with disabilities receive consistent and effective educational support during critical developmental years. The position also strengthens family partnerships through thoughtful communication, engagement, and collaboration, building trust within the community and fostering a

culture of inclusion. By actively involving parents and community stakeholders, the DoSE ensures a unified approach to supporting students with disabilities both inside and outside the classroom. Ultimately, the DoSE ensures that young children with disabilities receive timely, individualized support tailored to their unique needs, laying a strong foundation for lifelong academic success and improving student achievement district-wide.

Critical Role in Compliance & Accountability

The Special Education Preschool Coordinator plays a vital role in ensuring that children with disabilities receive the services, supports, and placement they need before the age of three. By maintaining legal compliance, facilitating interagency coordination, ensuring accurate record-keeping, and supporting parents and educators, this role helps create a strong foundation for young learners and ensures a smooth transition into preschool special education services.

Special Education 504 Coordinator

The 504 Coordinator plays a critical role in ensuring district-wide compliance with Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, a federal civil rights law that safeguards students with disabilities from discrimination in educational settings. This position is essential in guaranteeing that eligible students receive necessary accommodations, services, and supports, enabling equitable access to education in alignment with legal mandates and best practices.

Key Responsibilities

1. Compliance & Strategic Policy Leadership

- Ensure adherence to federal and state laws governing Section 504.
- Develop, implement, and monitor policies that align with legal requirements.
- Provide strategic direction for Section 504 program implementation.
- Serve as the district's primary contact for Office of Civil Rights (OCR) inquiries and Kentucky Department of Education (KDE) audits.

2. Record Keeping, State and Federal Reporting & Accountability

- Maintain compliance with all state and federal reporting requirements.
- Oversee audits and respond to inquiries from the OCR and KDE.
- Maintain accurate, legally compliant records of evaluations, eligibility determinations, and accommodations.
- Ensure proper documentation in preparation for legal reviews, audits, and investigations.

3. Program Development, Innovation, and Oversight

➤ Identification, Referral, and Evaluation

- Develop and implement procedures to identify students eligible for 504 protections.
- Coordinate referrals, obtain parental consent, and oversee evaluation processes.
- Ensure compliance with KDE guidelines through multi-source evaluations.

➤ Eligibility Determination and 504 Plan Development

- Lead 504 Team meetings to establish student eligibility and create individualized 504 Plans.
- Ensure accommodations are legally sound and adhere to Least Restrictive Environment (LRE) principles.

➤ Implementation, Monitoring, and Compliance

- Train staff on legal requirements and appropriate implementation of accommodations.
- Conduct annual reviews and reevaluations to update plans based on student needs.
- Address and resolve any Section 504-related complaints or grievances.
- Continuously assess and enhance Section 504 processes to improve student support.
- Implement best practices and innovative strategies for service delivery.

4. Staff Leadership & Professional Development

- Train and support staff in understanding Section 504 legal obligations.
- Facilitate professional development on accommodations, compliance, and inclusive education.
- Communicate clearly with parents regarding their rights, responsibilities, and procedural safeguards.

5. Fiscal Management & Resource Optimization

- Ensure budgetary resources are allocated efficiently to support 504 services.
- Identify and advocate for funding opportunities to enhance student support.

6. Collaboration, Advocacy, & Stakeholder Engagement

- Serve as the primary liaison between the district, families, educators, and external agencies.
- Foster relationships with community stakeholders to enhance support networks for students.
- Serve as the primary liaison between the district and Office of Civil Rights (OCR).

7. Community and Stakeholder Engagement

- Facilitate transparent communication between families, educators, and administrators.
- Provide guidance and resources to parents/guardians regarding their rights and procedural safeguards.

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8. Resource Management & Budget Oversight

- Ensure that all necessary resources are available to support students under Section 504.

- Oversee expenditures related to compliance, training, and student accommodations.

Impact of 504 Coordinator Position

- **Risk Mitigation:** Reduces the likelihood of civil rights violations, legal challenges, and federal funding loss.
- **Student Success:** Ensures students with disabilities receive necessary accommodations for academic and social development.
- **Family & Community Trust:** Strengthens relationships with families by fostering transparency and reducing disputes.
- **Educational Equity:** Promotes improved student outcomes through consistent enforcement of federal protections.

Critical Role in Compliance & Accountability

Failure to comply with Section 504 regulations can result in legal action, loss of federal funding, and potential civil rights violations. The 504 Coordinator’s expertise in identification, evaluation, eligibility determination, plan development, staff training, compliance monitoring, and record-keeping is fundamental to ensuring both student success and district-wide legal adherence. This position is not only a compliance necessity but also a key driver in fostering an inclusive, legally sound, and equitable educational environment for all students.

Reviewed By:	Name	Date:	Date
Approved By:	Name	Date:	Date
Last Updated By:	Name	Date/Time:	Date/Time

