



## DRDP *access* Assessment System and Federal Requirements

The DRDP *access* Assessment System offers program administrators, staff, and parents a number of benefits:

- Teachers can better monitor and understand progress and tailor interventions to the individual needs of each child.
- Teachers can use DRDP *access* results to help inform families about their children's progress.
- Families can better understand their child's learning and development.
- Administrators can use the data to assist with program evaluation, continual quality improvement efforts, and program/policy decision-making.
- California's preschool special education programs are better able to document the positive results of their programs and services.

In addition to these benefits, the DRDP *access* Assessment System enables California to comply with federal law. Implementing the DRDP *access* Assessment System assures that the California Department of Education/ Special Education Division, Special Education Local Plan Areas (SELPA) comply with requirements of PL 108-446, the Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act of 2004 (IDEA 2004) and the U.S. Department of Education's Office of Special Education Programs (OSEP). Two components of this law led to the use of the DRDP *access* for preschool special education:

- *Participation in statewide assessments:* Since 2006, the Child Development Division (CDD) of the California Department of Education (CDE) has implemented statewide assessment of children in state-funded preschool programs using the Desired Results System. PL 108-446, the Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act of 2004 (IDEA 2004), requires the inclusion of children with disabilities in any state or district-wide assessments for accountability purposes (IDEA 2004: Sec 612(a)(16)(A)). Therefore, preschool-age children with disabilities need to be included in the Desired Results assessments.
- *Report progress in achieving child outcomes:* In accordance with IDEA 2004, 20 U.S.C. 1416(b)(1), not later than one year after the date of enactment of this law, each State must have in place a six year performance plan that evaluates the State's efforts to implement the requirements and purposes of Part B of IDEA and describe how the State will improve such implementation. This plan is called the Part B State Performance Plan (Part B – SPP). In accordance with IDEA 2004, 20 U.S.C. 1416(b)(2)(C)(ii) the State shall report annually to the public on the performance of each local educational agency located in the State on the targets in the State's performance plan. In California, CDE will report on this performance by SELPA. The State also shall report annually to the U.S. Secretary of Education on the performance of the State under the State's Performance Plan. This report is called the Part B Annual Performance Report, or Part B – APR (OSEP memorandum 05 – 12 to Chief State School Officers, State Directors of Special Education, and State Data Managers from the Office of Special Education Programs, U.S. Department of Education). In the Part B-APR, one of the required Indicators for each state to report is Indicator #7: the percent of preschool children with IEPs who demonstrate improved: positive social-emotional skills (including social relationships); acquisition and use of knowledge and skills (including early language/ communication and early literacy); and use of appropriate behaviors to meet their needs.

The DRDP is used as the instrument to meet this federal requirement. CDE decided to use the DRDP *access* assessment because it is already required under the IDEA statewide assessment requirements. Implementing the DRDP *access* Assessment System also enables California to report progress toward these three child outcomes for preschool-age children with disabilities. CDE has broad authority under IDEA and California Education Code to collect the information that is needed to evaluate pupil and program performance results. (20 USC 1412(a) (15); 1412(a)(16); 1413(a)(7); 30 EC 56600.6 and 30 EC 56601(a)).