

Overview of the Steps to Develop a New SCIS Methodology

Pursuant to Chapter 59 of the laws of 2017

SCIS Methodology – Stakeholder Meetings

Identify Existing Fiscal and Programmatic Challenges

September 13-14 2017

Summary of School District, BOCES and CPSE survey responses

Summary of SCIS Provider survey responses

Panel and Group Discussion:

Defining quality education programming for the inclusion of preschool students with disabilities within State-Administered Pre-Kindergarten, Head Start, and Childcare

Discuss Program Quality Standards for Better Inclusion Opportunities

October 26-27 2017

Overview of Data related to current SCIS Methodology

Define the costs that should be allocated as a preschool “Special Education Cost” within an inclusive State-Administered Pre-K, Head Start, and Childcare

Group Discussion:

Inclusion Staffing within State-Administered Pre-K, Head Start or Childcare programs

Consider Inclusion Funding Models

November 28-29 2017

Continued Group Discussion:

Inclusion Staffing within State-Administered Pre-K, Head Start or Childcare programs

Quantify the actual costs of operating an inclusive Pre-K, Head Start, and Childcare programs

Identify how funding models could best support desired inclusive early childhood program models

Steps of Developing a New SCIS Methodology

- Identify Existing Fiscal and Programmatic Challenges
- Review SCIS Methodology Objectives
- Develop uniform preschool special education Staffing Standards for inclusion within State-Administered Pre-Kindergarten, Head Start, and Childcare settings that allow for flexibility based on student needs
- Quantify the actual costs of operating an inclusive Pre-K, Head Start, and/or Childcare program (multiple models)
- Consider funding models/methods that would best support SCIS objectives
- Determine allocation standards between “4410 funded expenses” and “regular early childhood funded expenses”
- Develop a methodology to calculate rate(s) to reimburse program costs
- Determine the changes to funding, regulations, and guidance that would be needed to implement the new SCIS methodology

Identify Existing Fiscal and Programmatic Challenges

SED issued a survey to solicit feedback and input on the challenges associated with the current SCIS program and funding model. Responses included: 231 School Districts, 3 BOCES, 92 private providers, and 8 County Officials

Lack of Inclusion Opportunities

- Not enough SCIS programs – increasing threat of closures
- Existing SCIS programs do not have sufficient enrollment of typically developing students
- Preschool students with disabilities enrolled in SCIS are not considered enrolled in the regular early childhood program component leading to inequities within classrooms

Insufficient Funding

- Preschool special education funding (4410) and other early childhood funding is complicated, unpredictable, and does not reimburse actual total program expenses
- Differing views as to what expenses should be paid with 4410 funding vs. other early childhood funding streams (UPK, Head Start, Childcare)

Special Class Integrated Setting Methodology Objectives

1	Expand and preserve opportunities for preschool students with disabilities to be enrolled in early childhood programs with their typically developing peers
2	Promote early childhood program inclusion principles - bring the support services to the child rather than moving the child to the services
3	Remove incentives to over-enroll preschool students with disabilities in order to remain fiscally viable
4	Maintain program quality standards among all providers
5	Provide transparency and predictability in funding at levels adequate to achieve the above objectives

- Funding recommendations need to be built from the same blue print.
- No existing “fair or equitable” standard for staffing a quality SCIS program.
- Without standards it is difficult to justify increases in funding, to hold providers accountable, or to defend expenses to OSC on audit.
- A broader definition of inclusion is needed within existing educational settings to increase opportunities for all children.
- The models must provide enough specificity to justify funding, yet flexible enough to respond to the breadth and diversity in student need.
- The models have the potential to include supports for at-risk preschool students who might otherwise be referred for initial evaluation and to ensure continued inclusion of children in an early childhood program after being identified as a preschool student with a disability.

Develop Staffing Standards for better Inclusion Opportunities

For Discussion: Options for Inclusion

SCIS – Consultant Option

- **Possible PSWD population:** students with fewer management needs that require some special education support to make gains in an inclusive setting
- **Possible Classroom Ratios:**
 - The General Education Teacher present for the full instructional day and the Special Education Teacher present for a portion of the day to provide direct instruction and supervision/direction for class. Special Education Teaching Assistant(s), and consultation and whole-group support for the classroom team.
 - One Special Education Teaching Assistant
 - One or two General Education Teaching Assistant(s) depending on class size

Possibilities: for Discussion and Revision	
12:1.5+2 (4:0.5+1)	Eligible for variance by approved application. No class will be approved to enroll more than 20 students.
13:1.5+2 (4:0.5+1)	
14:1.5+2 (4:0.5+1)	
15:1.5+2 (5:0.5+1)	
16:1.5+2 (5:0.5+1)	
17:1.5+2 (5:0.5+1)	
18:1.5+2 (6:0.5+1)	
19:1.5+3 (6:0.5+1)	
20:1.5+3 (6:0.5+1)	

- Possible Additional Classroom Push-In Staff to support skill development for all students
- Potential setting(s): Classrooms with a certified General Education Teacher and Teaching Assistant

SCIS – Standard Option

- **Possible PSWD population:** students with moderate levels of management needs that require full-day special education support to make gains in an inclusive setting
- **Possible Classroom Ratios:**
 - Special Education Teacher present for full instructional day
 - One Special Education Teaching Assistant
 - One or two General Education Teaching Assistant(s) depending on class size

Possibilities: for Discussion and Revision	
12:1+2 (4:1+1)	Eligible for variance by approved application. No class will be approved to enroll more than 20 students.
13:1+2 (4:1+1)	
14:1+2 (4:1+1)	
15:1+2 (5:1+1)	
16:1+2 (5:1+1)	
17:1+2 (5:1+1)	
18:1+2 (6:1+1)	
19:1+3 (6:1+1)	
20:1+3 (6:1+1)	

- Possible Additional Classroom Staff to support skill development for all students
- Potential Setting(s): Any Preschool classroom setting

SCIS – Intensive Option

- **Possible PSWD population:** students with IEPs documenting need for a high level of behavioral, sensory, and/or management supports that can be provided in an inclusive setting of a smaller group size and/or intensified staffing, beyond the need for a full-day special education teacher
- **Possible Classroom Ratios:**
 - Special Education Teacher present for full instructional day
 - Two Special Education Teaching Assistants
 - One General Education Teaching Assistant

Possibilities: for Discussion and Revision	
12:1+3 (4:1+2)	Eligible for variance by approved application. No SCIS-Intensive class will be approved to enroll more than 16 students.
13:1+3 (4:1+2)	
14:1+3 (4:1+2)	
15:1+3 (5:1+2)	
16:1+3 (5:1+2)	

- Possible Additional Classroom Push-In Staff to support skill development for all students
- Potential Setting(s): Any Preschool classroom setting

Staffing Standards for Inclusion – continued discussion

- At the last stakeholder meeting, inclusion staffing models were considered and input was received regarding a consultant option, standard option, and intensive option for inclusion classrooms.
- Next, feedback is needed regarding the specific positions that should be funded as part of these models. The goals for today are to:
 - Identify the Position Title Codes that are applicable to preschool inclusion programs;
 - Determine if there are additional codes needed or codes that could be redefined;
 - Establish criteria for justifying the number of positions needed by program;
 - Discuss supervision and how to best define the roles and responsibilities of those performing a supervising function.

Position Title Codes – Discussion

- Identify the position title codes listed that are applicable to preschool inclusion that:
 - Should be allowed
 - Are necessary; either by regulation or IEP mandate and
 - Are justifiable
- Determine if there are additional codes needed or codes that could be redefined, e.g.;
 - behavior specialist-SED
 - direct whole-class support specialist, or
 - expand the definition of “other direct care staff”
- Establish criteria; points to consider are student need and program size/number of sites
 - Limit on number of FTEs
 - Amount of time
- Discuss supervision and how best to define it
 - Identify specific Job Title OR
 - Identify the roles and responsibilities

Quantifying the Costs an Inclusive Early Childhood Program

- SED staff will be building budget-based rates using the inclusion staffing standards <http://www.p12.nysed.gov/specialed/applications/preschool-home.html>
- The budget-based rates will establish parameters for what may be funded as an allowable SCIS cost and the maximum amount of funding that could go into a program's rate
- In addition to the cost report data, what should SED know about the following costs when building budget-based rates?
 - Personal Services (program/site)
 - Direct Care – Instructional and Related Services (FTE, salary and fringe)
 - Direct Care - Contracted Services (hours of service)
 - Nondirect Care – Support & Program Administration (FTE, salary and fringe)
 - OTPS (direct and nondirect)
 - Equipment (direct and nondirect)
 - Property (nondirect)
 - Agency Administration (nondirect)
- Budget-based rates may serve the purpose of justifying rate “re-base” or as part of a larger funding methodology approach

Identify how funding models could best support desired inclusive early childhood program models

Separate Program Funding

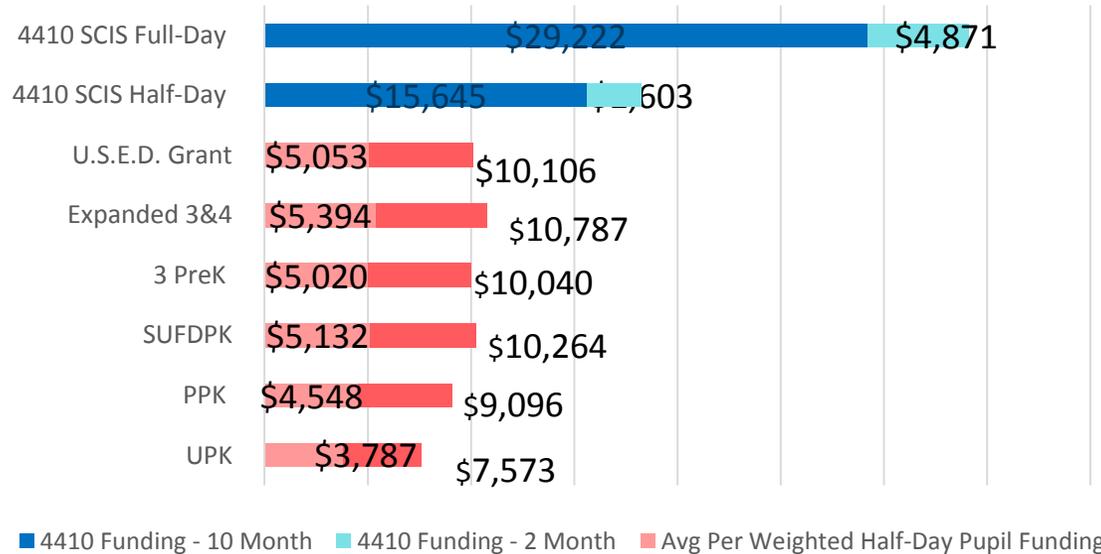
Current SCIS methodology is a “separate program” funding methodology - each early childhood program component is funded separately through different reimbursement methodologies

Whole Program Funding

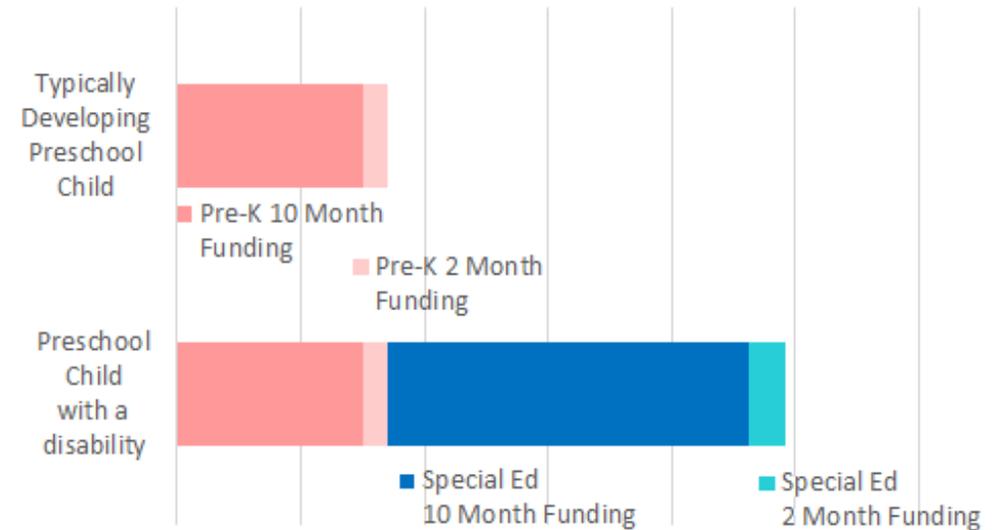
Whole Program funding would fund both early childhood program components under a single reimbursement methodology with blended funding streams (4410 + early childhood program funding)

Consider Funding Models to Support Inclusion Separate Program vs. Whole Program Funding

SCIS and State Administered Pre-K
Average Per Student Funding



Whole Program Funding Concept



The current separate funding model divides students into two programs for purposes of enrollment and funding.

Among the largest fiscal challenges with this model are:

- Ensuring both funding streams are available to serve both student populations equitably within the classroom;
- Creating an incentive to enroll as many SCIS students as possible to cover program expenses;
- Determining the share of expenses that should be assigned to and funded by each separate program funding stream.

A whole class funding methodology would consider all children enrolled in one program with blended funding to provide:

- An equal allocation of funding shared for all children;
- Supplemental funding for Special Education expenses.

The largest fiscal challenges with this model is creating an entirely new funding stream, with the recognition that this classroom will cost more compared to a standard State Administered Pre-K classroom but potentially less than continuing to fund separate systems.

Whole Program Funding Model

Fund both early childhood program components under a single reimbursement methodology with blended funding streams (4410 + early childhood program funding)

Potential Benefits

- If adequately funded, would expand early learning opportunities for all students
- Better promotes inclusion when all children are equally enrolled and receiving same program benefits
- Allows more flexibility in classroom options as conflicts between different program's quality standards and funding requirements are removed
- Removes incentive to over-enroll preschool students with disabilities to remain fiscally viable
- Allocation of costs between 4410 vs. other early childhood funding streams more consistent

Potential Challenges

- Requires new funding and reimbursement structure to supplement existing early childhood dollars
- Requires an expansion of early childhood provider's existing program expectations
- Initially, a significant amount of administrative resources would be needed to combine and consolidate standards and funding requirements
- The cost per child will likely be greater compared to other general education classrooms due to the smaller class sizes and whole class supports

Separate Program Funding Model

Continue to fund each early childhood program component separately under different reimbursement methodologies

Potential Benefits

- Would not require the creation of a new funding stream to fund both program components
- More could be required of existing early childhood providers to leverage current funding toward contracts or collaborations with SCIS providers without new funding
- Opportunities exist to improve the existing rate setting methodology to better support programs serving preschool students with disabilities

Potential Challenges

- Would still require early childhood funds to be directed or redirected to SCIS programs in order to expand and preserve opportunities
- Early childhood program funding is not available in all areas of the state
- Would need strict directives and requirements to achieve inclusion programming which may be difficult to implement without new funding
- Solely addressing 4410 rates places the burden on 4410 funds to cover expenses not otherwise funded which may result in more special education but less inclusion opportunities for children

Next Steps Under Each Approach

Whole Program Funding Model

- Develop uniform preschool special education Staffing Standards for inclusion within State-Administered Pre-K, Head Start, and Childcare settings that allow for flexibility based on student needs
- Quantify the actual costs of operating an inclusive Pre-K, Head Start, and Childcare programs
- Determine the allocation standards between “4410 funded expenses” and “regular early childhood funded expenses”
- Develop a methodology to calculate rate(s) to reimburse both special education and general education
- Identify how funding could potentially flow to providers under this model
- Determine the changes to funding, regulations, and guidance that would be needed to implement this funding methodology

Separate Program Funding Model

- Develop uniform preschool special education Staffing Standards for inclusion within State-Administered Pre-K, Head Start, and Childcare settings that allow for flexibility based on student needs.
- Quantify the actual costs of operating an inclusive Pre-K, Head Start, and Childcare programs
- Determine the allocation standards between “4410 funded expenses” and “regular early childhood funded expenses”
- Develop a methodology to calculate a SCIS rate to reimburse special education expenses only
- Determine whether requirements could be imposed to better ensure that new or existing Early Childhood Program funding is leveraged for directly to or through partnerships with SCIS programs
- Determine the changes to funding, regulations, and guidance that would be needed to implement this funding methodology