

**Oregon Department of Education
Early Intervention
Early Childhood Special Education**

Program Operation Guideline

Area: Private Schools

Date: Revised September 2006

Citation: OAR 581-015-0126 and Approval of religiously oriented preschools (DOJ, letter dated 2/9/06)

Guideline: Religiously Affiliated Preschools

A. Provision of EI/ECSE services to children enrolled in religiously affiliated preschools by their parents

EI/ECSE services may be provided to children who are attending a religious preschool as long as:

- The EI/ECSE program provides similar types of services in other settings (services are distributed in a neutral manner that do not favor the religious preschool over a public preschool); and
- The purpose of the EI/ECSE instruction is to teach the child skills targeted on the child's IFSP, not to teach the religious content or concepts of the preschool. The IFSP team determines the scope of the EI/ECSE services to be provided to implement the IFSP; and

B. EI/ECSE placement in religiously affiliated preschools

Religiously affiliated preschools may apply for and be approved by ODE as a "approved private preschool" in which EI/ECSE programs may "place" a child to receive EI/ECSE services under the following circumstances:

- The educational curriculum and instructional practices are free of religious content;
- Religious symbols are not pervasive and are not part of the instructional program; and
- The preschool does not accept or reject eligible preschool children on the basis of the children's religious affiliation.

An IFSP team may place a child in a religiously affiliated preschool if a preschool setting is required to implement the child's IFSP services, the preschool is approved by ODE and the EI/ECSE program does not have an appropriate public placement option available.