

Evaluation

EVALUATION PROCEDURES

October 22, 2021

Model operating procedures created by



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EVALUATION PROCEDURES

What Is Required

An evaluation under the IDEA is the collection of information to determine whether a student is a student with a disability, and to determine the educational needs of the student. The District must complete a REED before conducting an initial evaluation of a student, if appropriate, and as part of any reevaluation, provide the parent with a Prior Written Notice regarding the evaluation, and comply with the parental consent requirements. See [REVIEW OF EXISTING EVALUATION DATA] and [PRIOR WRITTEN NOTICE] and [CONSENT].

Group of Qualified Professionals

The evaluation is conducted by a multi-disciplinary team of qualified professionals. Upon completion of the administration of assessment and other evaluation measures by the evaluators, a group of qualified professionals and the parent of the child determines whether the child is a child with a disability and the educational needs of the child. In Texas, the group of qualified professionals that makes this determination is the student's ARD Committee. The team of qualified professionals, or the ARD Committee, that collects or reviews evaluation data in connection with the determination of eligibility must include, but is not limited to an educational diagnostician and/or LSSP, and other appropriately certified persons with experience and training in the area of the disability. Additional professionals may be required as defined under each eligibility category. See *all procedures under* [EVALUATION].

Initial Evaluations

The District or Campus Assessment Personnel must conduct a full and individual initial evaluation (FIIE) before providing special education and related services to a student with a disability. Before the District or Campus Assessment Personnel conducts an initial evaluation, the District or Campus Assessment Personnel must make reasonable efforts to obtain informed parental consent. If the parent does not provide consent for an initial evaluation, or if the parent fails to respond to a request to provide consent, the District may, but is not required to, pursue the initial evaluation by utilizing the due process procedures. See [CONSENT]. The initial evaluation must consist of procedures to determine:

- Whether the student is a student with a disability; and
- The educational needs of the student.

Timeline for Conducting Initial Evaluations

A written report of an initial evaluation must be completed:

- Not later than the 45th school day following the date on which the District or Campus Assessment Personnel receive written consent for the evaluation from the student's parent. If a student has been absent from school during that period on three or more school days, the period must be extended by a number of school days equal to the number of school days during that period on which the student has been absent; or
- For students under five years of age by September 1 of the school year and not enrolled in public school, and for students enrolled in a private or home school setting, not later than the 45th school day following the date on which the District or Campus Assessment Personnel receive written consent for the evaluation from the student's parent; but

If the District or Campus Assessment Personnel receive written parent consent at least 35, but less than 45, school days before the last instructional day of the school year:

- the written report of the FIIE must be provided to the student's parent not later than June 30 of that year; or
- If the student was absent from school during that time three or more days, the written report of the FIIE must be completed not later than the 45th school day following the date on which consent was received plus the number of school days the student was absent.

A student is considered absent for the school day if the student is not in attendance at the school's official attendance taking time or at the alternate attendance taking time set for that student. A student is considered in attendance if the student is off campus participating in an activity that is approved by the school board and is under the direction of a professional staff member of the District or an adjunct staff member who has a minimum of a bachelor's degree and is eligible for participation in TRS.

In determining evaluation timelines, a "school day" does not include a day that falls after the last instructional day of the spring school term and before the first instructional day of the subsequent fall term.

If the student was in the process of being evaluated for special education eligibility by another district and enrolls in the District before the previous district completes the initial evaluation, the District must coordinate with the previous district as necessary and as expeditiously as possible to ensure a prompt completion of the evaluation. See [CHILDREN WHO TRANSFER].

Reevaluations

District Assessment Personnel will complete a reevaluation of a student with a disability:

- if the ARD Committee determines that the educational or related services needs of the student warrant a reevaluation, including improved academic achievement and functional performance;
- if a reevaluation is requested by the student's parents or teacher; or
- before determining that the student is no longer a student with a disability.

A reevaluation must occur not more frequently than once a year, unless the parent and the ARD Committee, through the REED, agree otherwise, and at least every three years, unless the parent and the ARD Committee, through the REED, agree that a reevaluation is unnecessary. See [REVIEW OF EXISTING EVALUATION DATA]

Evaluation Procedures

When conducting the evaluation, District or Campus Assessment Personnel must use a variety of assessment tools and strategies to gather relevant functional, developmental, and academic information, including information provided by the parent, that may assist in determining:

- Whether the student is a student with a disability; and
- The content of the student's IEP, including information related to enabling the student to be involved in and progress in the general education curriculum, or for the preschool student, to participate in appropriate activities.

District or Campus Assessment Personnel must use technically sound instruments that may assess the relative contribution of cognitive and behavioral factors, in addition to physical or developmental factors. These assessments and other evaluation materials include those tailored to assess areas of educational need and not merely those that are designed to provide a single general intelligence quota.

The assessments and other evaluation materials used to assess the student must be selected and administered so as not to be discriminatory on a racial or cultural basis. In addition, the assessments and other evaluation materials must be provided and administered in the student's native language or other mode of communication and in the form most likely to yield accurate information on what the student knows and can do academically, developmentally, and functionally (unless it is not feasible to provide or administer in that fashion).

The assessment instruments must be used for the purposes for which the assessments or measures are valid and reliable, and must be administered by trained and knowledgeable personnel who administer the assessments in accordance with any instructions provided by their producers.

The assessments used by District or Campus Assessment Personnel must be selected and administered so as best to ensure that if an assessment is administered to a student with impaired sensory, manual, or speaking skills, the assessment results accurately reflect the student's aptitude or achievement level, or whatever other factors the test purports to measure, rather than reflecting the student's impaired sensory, manual, or speaking skills (unless those skills are the factors that the test purports to measure). The procedures used will differentiate between language proficiency and disability.

The evaluation must be sufficiently comprehensive to ensure that the student is assessed in all areas of suspected disability, including, if appropriate:

- Health;
- Vision;
- Hearing;
- Social and emotional status;
- General intelligence;
- Academic performance;
- Communicative status and
- Motor abilities.

The evaluation must also be sufficiently comprehensive to identify all the student's special education and related service needs, whether or not commonly linked to the disability category in which the student has been classified.

Once the FIE is completed, the ARD Committee must review the evaluation. If a determination is made that the student has a disability and needs special education and related services, an IEP will be developed for the student.

Additional Procedures

District Assessment Personnel will ensure that all timelines are followed and that evaluations are completed in accordance with federal and state law.

For all evaluations, Campus and District Assessment Personnel will ensure that current versions of applicable assessments are used and that those administering the assessments have adequate familiarity with how the test is to be administered. Assessment Personnel will also consider whether any extenuating circumstances exist that might impact the assessment such as the health of the student, environmental factors, absences, or other outside influences.

Evaluations help ARD Committees identify the specialized instruction and related services students with disabilities need to receive FAPE, in addition to being used for eligibility purposes. It is imperative for staff working directly with the student to share information about the student's progress or lack of progress, or changed circumstances so that an ARD Committee can determine if additional assessment is indicated.

Campus and District Assessment Personnel will ensure that all assessments are comprehensive and address all concerns and suspected areas of disabilities. The following are components of a full and individual evaluation:

- Reason for Referral
- Sources of Data
- Sociological
- Family History
- Educational History
- Test Conditions and Behavior
- Language/Communication
- Physical/Developmental/Medical
- Academic Achievement/Educational Performance Levels
- Intellectual/Cognitive Functioning
- Adaptive Behavior
- Emotional/Behavioral/Social Functioning
- Assistive Technology
- Post-Secondary Transition
- Conclusions
- Recommendations
- Assurances
- Signatures of multidisciplinary team members

The District or Campus Assessment Personnel will summarize the pertinent findings in all of the above areas, if appropriate, in the FIE and will document the members of the multi-disciplinary team as participants in the FIE. For any related services being considered (i.e. OT, PT, Counseling, AT, etc.), the District or Campus Assessment Personnel will ensure that the FIE includes an assessment and information relevant for the ARD Committee to determine whether that related service is appropriate for the student.

The District or Campus Assessment Personnel will place the final FIE and any relevant supporting data in the student's eligibility folder on the campus. All original protocols or other assessment materials will be maintained in the file of the District or Campus Assessment Personnel and will not be copied. If the parent requests copies of the protocols, the District or Campus Assessment Personnel will instead sit down with the parent at a mutually-agreeable time to review the protocols and information with the parent.

The FIE will be provided to the parent within a reasonable time before the ARD meeting. For an initial evaluation, the District or Campus Assessment Personnel will review the results of the evaluation prior to the ARD meeting in a face-to-face meeting with the parent, when possible. For reevaluations, a face-to-face meeting may not be necessary; however, the results of the evaluation should be reviewed with the parent prior to the

ARD.

If a determination is made that the student has a disability and needs special education and related services, an IEP must be developed for the student. Or, if the re-evaluation indicates a need for changes to the student's IEP, an ARD Committee will meet to review and revise the student's current program.

Initial Evaluations

For initial evaluations, Campus Special Education Personnel (preferably the Special Education Assessment Personnel and/or in consultation with Special Education Assessment Personnel) will meet with parents to explain the evaluation process and attain informed consent to evaluate. Campus Special Education Personnel will communicate with District or Campus Special Education Assessment Personnel regarding the date consent was signed and the date on which the assessment must be completed. A student's absences during the assessment process will be monitored in case the assessment deadline needs to be adjusted due to student absences.

District or Campus Assessment Personnel will collect and review relevant information before deciding what specific assessments will be administered for an initial FIE.. This collection of information will include some or all of the following:

- Concerns from parent regarding the student's academic, developmental, emotional or functional performance, including any suspected disability
- Concerns from teacher(s) or other Campus Personnel regarding the student's academic, developmental, emotional or functional performance in the classroom, including any suspected disability
- Parent Information Form
- Teacher Observation Form
- Documentation of all interventions or accommodations provided to the student and the result of those interventions or accommodations
- Hearing and vision information
- Report card or other grade reports
- Attendance records
- Student profile information
- State & District assessment results
- Dyslexia screenings/evaluations
- Work samples
- Communication skills documentation
- Behavior logs and/or disciplinary referrals
- LPAC information (if applicable)
- Home language survey
- Section 504 documents (if applicable)
- Information received from outside sources (i.e. medical/psychological reports)

This data will inform the type of formal and informal assessments that will be conducted/utilized. However, District or Campus Assessment Personnel will inform the parent and consent will be obtained to conduct a comprehensive evaluation in all areas of suspected disability and need. The parent may not limit the scope of the evaluation. If during the process of an evaluation, additional information supports expanding the evaluation into an area which was not originally suspected, the multi-disciplinary District or Campus Assessment team that reviews and conducts the evaluation will collaborate regarding the scope of the evaluation and ensure that all areas of suspected disability and need are fully evaluated within the applicable timelines.

Once the initial FIE is completed, the ARD Committee will meet to review the evaluation. The ARD Committee will meet to review an initial FIE within 30 calendar days from the date of the completion of the initial FIE. If the 30th day falls during the summer and the school is not in session, the ARD Committee will have until the first day of classes in the fall to meet unless ESY is recommended, and, then, the ARD Committee should meet as soon as possible. If the 30th calendar day falls on a weekend, holiday, or teacher work day, the ARD Committee will meet before the 30th day.

Reevaluations

A reevaluation may occur not more than once a year, unless the parent and the District agree otherwise, and must occur at least once every 3 years.. Unlike initial evaluations, there is no timeline from the date of parental consent for a reevaluation to be completed. The ARD Committee should determine the evaluation completion date. As part of all reevaluations, the ARD Committee will conduct a REED to determine the scope of the reevaluation. See [REVIEW OF EXISTING EVALUATION DATA]. All REED meetings should be conducted at least 90 days prior to the 3-year reevaluation due date, or sooner, if the student's circumstances warrant an earlier timeframe. If formal assessment is recommended as part of the REED by the ARD Committee, parental consent will be obtained by the District or Campus Assessment Personnel and all components of the FIE will be completed. See [PRIOR WRITTEN NOTICE] and [CONSENT FOR REEVALUATION]. If the ARD Committee determines that no additional formal assessments are needed, the REED becomes the reevaluation report and should then be presented at an ARD Committee meeting (if the REED meeting was not at an ARD meeting) and specific eligibility and need for services should be reviewed. The date that the REED is reviewed and accepted by the ARD Committee will be entered as the new FIE date.

The District will maintain documentation requirements of compliance associated with Texas Student Data System (TSDS), Public Education Information Management System (PEIMS), and State Performance Plan (SPP). District staff will provide training, with follow up, to ensure the documentation required is in place and compliant.

[ADD ADDITIONAL DISTRICT PROCEDURES AS APPROPRIATE]

Evidence of Implementation

- Referral Packet
- Assessment Plan
- Notice of FIE
- Consent for FIE
- REED
- FIE
- ARD/IEP
- Documentation for the state in TSDS, PEIMS, and SPP
- **[DISTRICT FORMS]**

Resources

[The Legal Framework for the Child-Centered Special Education Process: Evaluation Procedures Framework - Region 18](#)

[Technical Assistance: Child Find and Evaluation- Texas Education Agency](#)

[OSEP Letter to Mintz \(Feb. 10, 2011\) - U.S. Department of Education](#)

[OSEP Letter to Blodgett \(Nov. 12, 2014\) - U.S. Department of Education](#)

[OSEP Letter to Unnerstall \(Apr. 25, 2016\) - U.S. Department of Education](#)

[Letter to Zirkel \(Dec. 11, 2008\) - U.S. Department of Education](#)

[Letter to Zirkel \(Jan. 6, 2011\) - U.S. Department of Education](#)

[Evaluation and Reevaluation - SPEDTEX](#)

[ADDITIONAL DISTRICT RESOURCES]

CITATIONS

Board Policy EHBAA; 34 CFR 300.8(a)(1), 300.301, 300.303, 300.304(b)–(c), 300.306(a)(1); Texas Education Code 29.004; 19 TAC 89.1011, 89.1040(b)–(c), 89.1050(a), 89.1070(h), 89.1230