

Referral Process



TIMELINE

Within 15 days of the receipt of the request, the school must complete the referral process. This process should be well organized. The teacher meets with the team to discuss student concerns. During this time period, schools gather information to assist in making the decision to evaluate or not evaluate.

Step 1: School receives a request for an evaluation.

Requests may come from a variety of sources such as:

- General education teachers.
- Parents.
- Early Intervention Program.

Step 2: Obtain and review pertinent information.

Whenever a referral is made, there must be a clear and precise explanation of the concern. In addition, prior to any referral for school aged students it is expected that the student received appropriate instruction and that the referring teacher has attempted to resolve problems in the general education setting. There should be evidence that interventions have been tried and documented. See "Interventions". Pertinent information includes:

- **Reason for Referral:** The reason is clearly expressed. See "Teacher Concern Questionnaire" and "School Age Parent Concern Questionnaire", "Preschool Parent Concern Questionnaire"
- **Educationally relevant information:** Pertinent information related to the area of concern is reviewed (i.e. school history, summary of previous test results, summary of parent conferences, work samples indicative of problem, interview data from teacher, observations or screening information from service providers, reports from other agencies, etc.) See "Educationally Relevant Information"
- **Appropriate Instruction:** For school aged students – Was appropriate instruction provided? (See "Appropriate Instruction")
- **Limited English Proficiency:** When students communicate using another language, teams must obtain information on what the student knows and can do within their own culture. This would involve comparing the student's abilities to other children who come from the same community with similar cultural and linguistic experiences. A parent interview regarding these issues is critical. See "Limited English Proficiency" for additional information regarding this topic, "Parent Questionnaire (ELL)", "Interpreter/Teacher Questionnaire (ELL)".
- **Interventions tried:** Attempts to resolve problems and results of intervention should be documented. See "Effectiveness of Interventions"

Step 3: Discuss the request for a special education evaluation with the parent.

In this discussion the school should:

- Explain what is meant by disability and the difference between special education and related services vs. general education supports for student.

Step 4: Determination to evaluate or not evaluate

- Review all information See "Review of Information Checklist"
- Determine with parent if there is a suspicion of a disability and if the intention is to proceed with a special education evaluation (vs. obtaining general education assistance).
- Explain the decision (to evaluate or not evaluate) to the parent.
- If the decision is to conduct an evaluation with additional assessments
 - determine the additional data needed See "Sufficiency of Data" and "Planning for additional assessments"
 - obtain parental consent*
- Provide the parent(s) with a Prior Written Notice (PWN) informing them of this decision and the reasons.
- Provide parents with the procedural safeguards notice (PSN).

*If a parent refuses to give consent for an initial evaluation for special education and related services, the school may utilize mediation or impartial due process hearing procedures to pursue the evaluation; however, the school is NOT required to pursue the evaluation using due process procedures.