

Referral Process for a Child Study Team Evaluation

What is a referral?

A referral is a written request for an evaluation that is given to the school district when a child is suspected of having a disability and might need special education services. In most instances, the student suspected of having a disability should first be referred to the Intervention and Referral Services Team. If as a result of the interventions recommended by the team, the student continues to experience difficulties in the general education classroom, the I&RS Team will determine the next course of action which could include amending the Action Plan, determining 504 eligibility, or referring the student to the Child Study Team for evaluation.

Who can make a referral?

- Parents
- School personnel
- Agencies concerned with the welfare of students, including the New Jersey Department of Education

If you believe that your child may have a disability, you may refer your child for an evaluation by submitting a written request to your school district.

What happens when a referral is made?

Referrals for a Child Study team Evaluation should be submitted to the Supervisor of Special Education (information can be found on the district's web site). Within 20 calendar days of receiving a referral, the school district must hold a meeting to decide whether an evaluation will be conducted. If an evaluation will be conducted, another decision is made about the types of testing and other procedures that will be used to determine if your child needs Special Education Services. If an evaluation will not be conducted, recommendations may be made with respect to interventions or services to be provided the student in general education.

EVALUATION

What is an evaluation?

An evaluation is the process used to determine whether your child has a disability. This process includes a review of any relevant data, and the individual administration of any tests, assessments and observations of your child. For an initial evaluation, at least two child study team member and other specialists, as required or as determined necessary, must participate. A minimum of two assessments of your child are needed to determine eligibility for special education and related services. Each assessments must be conducted by a person who has appropriate training, or who is qualified to conduct the assessment through his or her professional license or certification.

When is an evaluation needed?

An evaluation is needed when you, the members of the child study team, and your child's teacher meet and decide that your child may have a disability.

ELIGIBILITY

How is eligibility determined?

When the evaluation is completed, eligibility is determined collaboratively at a meeting according to N.J.A.C. 6A:14-2.3(k). To be eligible for special education and related services.

- A student must have a disability according to one of the eligibility categories;
- The disability must adversely affect the student's educational performances; and
- The student must be in need of Special Education and Related Services.

The school district must provide a copy of the evaluation report(s) and documentation to be used to make a determination of eligibility to the parent (or adult student, when applicable) not less than 10 days prior to the meeting.

INDIVIDUALIZED EDUCATION PROGRAM (IEP)

What is an Individualized Education Program?

After your child is determined to be eligible for special education and related services, a meeting will be held to develop your child's IEP. The IEP is a written plan that describes in detail your child's special education program. The IEP should describe how your child currently performs and your child's specific instructional needs. The IEP must include detailed and measurable annual goals and short-term objectives or benchmarks.

Who must attend the IEP Meeting

Except when they have been excused from attending the meeting with your consent in accordance with the procedure on page 2, the following persons must attend IEP meetings:

- Student, if appropriate;
- Parent;
- Not less than one general education teacher (to the extent appropriate), if the student is or will be participating in regular education;
- Not less than one special education teacher (or special education provider where appropriate);
- At least one child study team member;
- Case manager;
- School district representative;
- Others at the discretion of the parent or school district; and
- If transition will be discussed at the IEP , a representative of any other agency likely to provide or pay for services; and
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You have the right to:

- Copies of your child's IEP;
- Bring others with you to the meeting;
- Tape record IEP meetings if you inform the other persons orally or in writing, prior to the meeting stating that you intend to record the meeting;
- Have the IEP implemented within 90 days of the school district's receipt of your consent for the first evaluation;
- Have the IEP implemented as soon as possible following the IEP meeting;
- Have the IEP reviewed at least annually; and
- Have extended school year services considered by the IEP team.