

**LIBERTY PUBLIC SCHOOLS  
SPECIAL EDUCATION SERVICES  
DISTRICT IMPLEMENTATION OF PROCEDURES  
CHILD FIND, REFERRALS, & EVALUATIONS**

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**1. COMMUNITY CHILD FIND**

Parents, individual or group home schools, public agencies, and child care facilities who serve children in our school district often are the first to notice that a particular child, other than those previously identified and served in special education, is having learning difficulties. Through observation of behavior, classroom/pre-school performance, and assessment results, or through parental request, it is felt that assistance is needed for a child.

Examples of suspected problem areas might include any of the following:

- low cognitive aptitude and/or learning levels;
- low achievement in basic academic skills or subject matter;
- speech, language, and/or communications difficulties;
- perceptual acuity and/or health impairments;
- social or emotional difficulties;
- delays in physical or adaptive skills.

Parents and/or agencies may request a referral for screening, intervention and evaluation under the following definite procedures as required by state and federal regulations:

**STEP 1: SCREENING REFERRAL**

An informal pre-referral collection of existing data for the preschool child or student will be done so interventions can be provided. It has been found that interventions can solve many problems that the student is having. But, when that is unsuccessful, further action can be taken.

**STEP 2: FORMAL REFERRAL**

Through a standard procedure, a public school team of professionals can determine if the student might benefit from a formal multidisciplinary evaluation. This is a much more extensive process, done only after interventions are unsuccessful. It will result in a determination of eligibility for a disability or for a developmental delay.

The parent or agency must complete a *Community Child Find* referral form and deliver it to the special education director or special education teacher to implement this procedure.

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**2. IN-SCHOOL CHILD FIND**

Regular educators in our schools often are the first to notice that a particular student, others than those identified and served in special education, is having learning difficulties. Through teacher observation of behavior and classroom performance/assessment results, or though parental request, the teacher feels that assistance is needed for a child.

Examples of suspected problem areas might include any of the following:

- low cognitive aptitude and/or learning levels;
- low achievement in basic academic skills or subject matter;
- speech, language, and/or communications difficulties;
- perceptual acuity and/or health impairments;
- social or emotional difficulties;
- delays in physical or adaptive skills.

Regular classroom teachers, and parents working with the teachers, may request screening, intervention and evaluation under the following definite procedures as required by state & federal regulations:

**STEP 1: SCREENING REFERRAL**

An informal pre-referral collection of existing data for the student will be done so interventions can be provided. It has been found that interventions can solve many problems that the student is having. But, when that is unsuccessful, further action can be taken.

**STEP 2: FORMAL REFERRAL**

Through a standard procedure, a public school team of professionals can determine if the student might benefit from a formal multidisciplinary evaluation. This is a much more extensive process, done only after interventions are unsuccessful. It will result in a determination of eligibility for a disability or for a developmental delay.

The regular classroom teacher must complete an *In-School Child Find* referral form and deliver it to the school counselor, special education teacher, or special education director to implement this procedure.

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**3. REFERRAL FOR INITIAL EVALUATION OR FOR REEVALUATION**

In order to achieve district compliance of the state requirements, a standard procedure for evaluation will be followed in Wayne Public Schools. The school group must collect and document the initial review of existing data on the grid pages to determine current student status and needs. Consultations may be made as necessary to obtain the required data.

All necessary state referral forms are available in EdPlan. The appropriate forms must be used for initial referrals and for reevaluations with a new suspected category. We have a small district and have not had a waiting list before, however, if a waiting list is necessary for the testing, the qualified examiner will establish a priority order, or other measures can be taken to establish appropriate timelines for the assessments.

If a disability is suspected for an initial referral, the appropriate special education teacher must now become the teacher of record and set up a confidential folder. The special education teacher will complete the parent consent form, collect evaluation component reports, and conduct the eligibility meeting. When scheduling the meeting with the parent, first consult with the psychologist for availability. Then, send a notification letter to all concerned, including the school psychologist and/or speech language pathologist as appropriate. The qualified examiner will assist in the meeting by completing the forms for the multidisciplinary evaluation and eligibility group summary and the grid pages with the new data.

At that meeting, the required group must determine eligibility for special education and related services. Document all information, obtain all required signatures and dates, and mark agreement/not agreement. If a categorical placement is made, proceed with an Individualized Education Program. If no categorical eligibility is determined, then the group must consider civil rights compliance and eligibility for a Section 504 Accommodation Plan, although the 504 eligibility requirements are different from special education eligibility.