



EVALUATIONS

The short version

Family Matters is not a legal services agency and cannot provide legal advice or legal representation. Information received from Family Matters is not intended as legal advice and should not be used as a substitution for legal advice.

What an evaluation does

The purpose of a special education evaluation is to determine if a child has a disability that affects their ability to learn and to identify the specific educational supports and services they need. This evaluation helps assess the child's strengths and challenges across various areas, such as academic skills, communication, social skills, and physical development. The evaluation results guide the creation of an Individualized Education Program (IEP), which outlines goals and services tailored to help the child succeed in school. The goal is to ensure the child receives an appropriate education that meets their unique needs.

Resources

ISBE Parent Guide Chapter 3 Referral & Evaluation:

<https://www.isbe.net/Documents/Parent-Guide-Special-Ed-Aug20.pdf#page=25>

Equip for Equality: Special Education Timelines

<https://www.equipforequality.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/12/03-Special-Education-Timelines.pdf>

TIP: Make sure to ask for a special education evaluation in writing, either by letter or email. Talking about it isn't enough!

QUESTIONS YOU CAN ASK A SCHOOL ABOUT A SPECIAL EDUCATION EVALUATION:

General Questions About the Evaluation Process

- What specific assessments were used during the evaluation?
- Who conducted the evaluation, and what are their qualifications?
- Were parents or guardians consulted about the areas to be assessed before the evaluation began?
- How were the student's strengths and challenges identified and addressed in the evaluation?
- Were any informal or observational assessments included in addition to formal testing?
- Was the evaluation conducted in the student's primary language or mode of communication?
- Were the assessments culturally appropriate and free from bias?

Questions About Results and Findings

- What areas of development or learning were assessed (e.g., academics, behavior, speech, motor skills)?
- How do the results compare to age- or grade-level expectations?
- Were any patterns or discrepancies identified in the student's performance or learning?
- How do the results reflect the student's performance in the classroom?
- Are there any additional areas of concern that were identified during the evaluation process?

Eligibility Determination

- Based on the evaluation results, does the student meet the criteria for special education services? If so, under what category of eligibility?
- How were the evaluation results used to make the eligibility determination?
- If the student was found not eligible, what recommendations were made to address their needs?

QUESTIONS YOU CAN ASK A SCHOOL ABOUT A SPECIAL EDUCATION EVALUATION:

Recommendations and Next Steps

- What specific services or supports are being recommended based on the evaluation results?
- How will these supports address the student's identified needs and goals?
- How will the evaluation results inform the student's IEP, if they qualify?
- Are there additional evaluations or assessments that you recommend to gain more insight into the student's needs?
- What is the process for requesting a re-evaluation if the parent or guardian disagrees with the findings?

Parental Involvement and Rights

- Can you explain how the parent's input was considered in the evaluation process?
- How will parents or guardians be involved in the next steps following this evaluation?
- What are the parent's rights if they disagree with the evaluation results or eligibility determination?
- Can parents request an Independent Educational Evaluation (IEE) if they disagree with the school's evaluation?
- Are there resources available to help parents understand the evaluation results and process?

Monitoring and Follow-Up

- How will the school monitor the student's progress if services are provided?
- What will be done to ensure that the student's needs continue to be met over time?
- How often will the student be re-evaluated, and what does that process entail?

If you need help in understanding any of the questions on the checklist or would like to have an individual consultation, call Family Matters at 866-436-7842 or email info@fmptic.org.

The contents of this document were developed under a grant from the US Department of Education, #H328M200072. However, those contents do not necessarily represent the policy of the US Department of Education, and you should not assume endorsement by the Federal Government.
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