

Evaluation/Eligibility

A referral for an initial evaluation is made whenever it is suspected that a child may be a child with an exceptionality. For preschool children, the referral may be a result of screening. For school age children, GEI would have been conducted prior to the referral. As a result of the GEI process, the school would have obtained data-based documentation that would indicate that interventions and strategies implemented during this period were not adequate and an evaluation for special education is appropriate.

A referral for initial evaluation may come from a variety of sources:

- Early childhood screening
- Part C infant-toddler program
- General education intervention team
- Parents
- Self –referral by adult student

Steps to follow for an INITIAL EVALUATION

1. REFERRAL - received from screening, GEI process or parent request
2. PARENT RIGHTS -provided at time of referral
3. PRIOR WRITTEN NOTICE - provided and CONSENT obtained
4. EVALUATION / REEVALUATION CONDUCTED
5. ELIGIBILITY -determined by team
6. ELIGIBILITY REPORT - provided to parents
7. IEP DEVELOPED AND IMPLEMENTED -if the child is found eligible
8. CHILD NOT ELIGIBLE -other intervention plan developed

Kansas has established a 60 school-day timeline for conducting the initial evaluation upon receipt of written parental consent to conduct the evaluation. This 60 school-day timeline ends with the implementation of the IEP if the child is found eligible for special education services or completion of the evaluation report if the child is not found eligible for special education services.

Pre-school attending students count school district calendar school days toward 60 school days. If a preschooler attends three days a week, five days are counted in that week toward the 60 day deadline as long as all five days are district school calendar days.

The initial evaluation must include a variety of assessment tools and strategies to gather the following relevant information:

- If the child is a child with an exceptionality;
- Whether the child needs special education and related services;
- The educational needs of the child;
- The present levels of academic achievement and functional performance of the child; and
- Whether any additions or modifications to the special education and related services are needed to enable the child to meet the measurable goals set out in the IEP and to participate, as appropriate, in the general education curriculum.

GRIOT represents five sources of data that provides a framework in which to organize and structure data collection.

G – General Education Interventions & General Education Curriculum Progress

R – Record Review

I – Interview

O – Observation

T – Test

Regulations stipulate that a child **MUST NOT** be determined to be a child with an exceptionality if:

- The determinant factor is:
 - Lack of appropriate instruction in reading, including the essential components of reading instruction (phonemic awareness, phonics, vocabulary development, reading fluency including oral reading skills, and reading comprehension strategies;
 - Lack of appropriate instruction in math; or
 - Limited English proficiency; and
- The child does not otherwise meet the eligibility criteria as a child with an exceptionality.

Additional conditions apply to determining that a child is a child with a specific learning disability.

A child MUST NOT be determined to be a child with a specific learning disability if the team's findings show that the child's deficits are a result of:

- A visual, hearing, or motor disability;
- Mental retardation;
- Emotional disturbance;
- Cultural factors;
- Environmental or economic disadvantage; or
- Limited English proficiency

(Adapted from the KSDE Process Handbook, 2008)

MAR-NEM COOP evaluation procedures start with a regular education referral form being completed.

- **GEI information is gathered from the school team and the referral form is given to the Director of Special Education.**
- **Parental consent for evaluation is obtained.**
- **School psychologist determines what other types of information needs to be gathered, and by whom (standardized testing, parental information/concerns, CBM info, etc). Other staff members who may be involved include the special education teacher, and any related service personnel (OT, PT, SLP, APE, Behavior consultant, Local Autism Team, etc.)**
- **School psychologist enters demographic information about the student into the WebKIDSS system (using “No IEP” access); this will allow other team members to enter information into the evaluation report.**
- **School psychologist contacts the parent to arrange for a meeting to discuss evaluation results and determine eligibility. The notice of meeting formed is mailed to the parent.**
- **School psychologist makes sure all team members are notified of the meeting date, time, and location.**
- **Paperwork is prepared for the meeting by a case manager and each service provider is responsible to enter their information and develop annual goal(s) needed.**
- **If the team determines at the eval meeting that the child meets eligibility requirements, and demonstrates a need for special education services, then a date, time, and location is set to re-convene for an IEP meeting.**
- **School psychologist sends the paperwork from the evaluation meeting to the Director of MAR-NEM COOP office. A copy of the evaluation report and all other forms are given to the parent.**

Parent Request for Evaluation (see Appendix C)

On occasion, a parent will request their child be evaluated. This request must be in writing and signed and dated by the parent. The Director should be given this written request. Upon review, the Director passes the referral on to the school psychologist, it will be explained to the parent that the process established by law still needs to be followed. The process requires general education interventions in conjunction with the comprehensive evaluation. During the conversation, the parent may decide to revoke their request for a comprehensive evaluation; this revocation must be in writing with their signature and date. If no revocation is given, the school psychologist should obtain parental consent for the comprehensive evaluation.

Special education staff members are encouraged to explain this process to general education staff and administration. History indicates some general ed staff tell parents to submit their request in writing, thinking this will speed up the process. When this occurs, it puts more pressure on all staff members to follow through with the process of GEI and evaluation.