



## Planning and Conducting Comprehensive Special Education Evaluations: Process Chart

IEP teams follow these steps when conducting comprehensive special education evaluations. The Evaluation Process Chart outlines required IDEA timeline procedures and describes recommended actions for each step. Links to related forms and other resources are included.

- Start the Evaluation
- Plan the Evaluation
- Implement the Evaluation Plan
- Complete the Evaluation

Also see [Information Update Bulletin 21.01- Special Education Evaluation](#) for answers to specific questions about special education evaluation timeline procedures, and other requirements and processes.

### Start the Evaluation

<b>Procedures</b> (and related <a href="#">Sample IEP forms</a> )	<b>Actions</b>
Referral or request for reevaluation (Sample form <a href="#">R-1</a> , or <a href="#">RE-1</a> )	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Initial Evaluation: A special education referral starts the initial special education evaluation process. The referral describes why the person making the referral believes the student is a “child with a disability” who needs special education.</li> <li>• Reevaluation: A reevaluation is started when the LEA decides a student’s disability-related needs, including improved academic achievement and functional performance, warrant a reevaluation; or if the student’s parent or teacher requests a reevaluation. A reevaluation occurs at least once every 3 years unless the parent and LEA agree it is unnecessary.</li> </ul>
Notice of start of evaluation or reevaluation and appointment of IEP team (Sample forms <a href="#">IE-1</a> , <a href="#">RE-1</a> , <a href="#">RE-2</a> )	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Select IEP team participants with collective expertise about areas of student strength and need, age and grade level standards and expectations, disability category criteria, and state and federal evaluation process requirements.</li> <li>• Identify if any specialists (from LEA or outside LEA) may be needed on the team to provide expertise about concerns representing particular areas of need such as specific medical or health concerns or a low incidence condition requiring specific expertise such as blind and visually impaired, deafblind, and deaf and hard of hearing.</li> <li>• Ensure someone on the team has expertise in coordination and facilitation.</li> </ul>

## Plan the Evaluation

<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Procedures</b></p> <p style="text-align: center;">(and related <a href="#">Sample IEP forms</a>)</p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Actions</b></p>
<p>Review of Existing Data and determine if additional assessment needed</p> <p>(Sample Form <a href="#">ED-1</a> and appropriate I-1 forms when a meeting is held to review data and made decisions about additional assessment)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Generate student specific developmentally and educationally relevant questions using the <a href="#">Six Areas of Academic and Functional Skill</a> as a guide to explore all areas of suspected concern related to the referral or request for reevaluation. The Six Areas include: academic, cognitive learning, communication, independence and self-determination, social and emotional, physical and health.</li> <li>● Clarify and explore all areas of suspected concern with the person(s) who made the referral or requested the reevaluation as well as related concerns of those who interact with the student in and out of school by asking developmentally and educationally relevant questions.</li> <li>● Use a variety of engagement modes to actively engage the family and student (as appropriate) in the review of existing data and identifying what additional information is needed.</li> <li>● Identify <u>existing</u> functional, developmental, and academic information about student access, engagement and progress in general education curriculum, instruction and other school activities, and environments.</li> <li>● Review and refine educationally relevant questions as needed to ensure nothing will be missed.</li> <li>● Consider potential disability categories that should be considered so sufficient information will be available to apply initial or reevaluation disability category criteria. Make sure the IEP team includes individuals with expertise in the category(ies) of disability that may be considered.</li> <li>● Decide what, if any, additional data or other assessment information is needed to explore all areas of suspected academic and functional skill concern, areas of student strengths and assets, and to apply anticipated disability category criteria.</li> <li>● Use a problem-solving framework (e.g., <a href="#">RIOT/ICEL</a>) to guide review of existing data and maintain focus on the whole student. Consider information about instruction, curriculum, learning environments, and the student.</li> <li>● Review the evaluation plan with a culturally responsive problem-solving lens to address potential systemic, racial, testing, and other types of bias that may affect compiling, collecting, or interpreting assessment results to ensure a comprehensive, non-discriminatory evaluation is completed, as required by IDEA.</li> </ul>

## Plan the Evaluation (continued)

Notice and Consent- Need to Conduct Additional Assessment (Forms [IE-2](#), [IE-3](#), [RE-4](#), [RE-5](#))

- Before moving forward, ensure data and information that will be used to make evaluation decisions comes from multiple sources and is collected using a variety of assessment tools and methods such as record reviews, observations, interviews, dynamic assessments, curriculum-based evaluation, and norm-referenced standardized tests; and includes information gathered in the student's natural learning environments. See Categories and Types of Assessment for more information.
- Document review of existing data and decision about additional assessment or other information needed.
- Communicate with the family and others to clearly explain who will administer assessments and collect other information, the types of assessments that will be implemented and the tools used to collect other information, and clarify any questions that family members or others may have.
- If additional information is needed, request written consent from parent/guardian to collect information.

## Implement the Evaluation Plan

<b>Procedures</b> (and related <a href="#">Sample IEP forms</a> )	<b>Actions</b>
Collect additional data and information as needed (per notice and consent)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Ensure those administering assessments have appropriate training and qualifications as required by the type or method of assessment. This includes training in culturally responsive assessment strategies needed to recognize and identify potential systemic, racial, testing, and other types of bias that may affect reliability and validity of assessment results.</li> <li>● Ensure those who administer assessments and collect additional information are appropriately trained and prepared to analyze, share, summarize, and explain the data and their findings in a manner understandable to all IEP team participants.</li> <li>● Select and administer assessments and collect additional information using culturally responsive assessment techniques to obtain valid and reliable information about current academic and functional performance and the effects of such performance on student access, engagement and progress in general education curriculum, instruction, environments, and other school activities (e.g., extracurricular activities, school sponsored social events, community based vocational training, etc. ). The norm group for norm-referenced tests should include representation of the student being evaluated.</li> <li>● Follow non-discriminatory assessment and data collection requirements and other culturally responsive practices to ensure evaluation decisions are accurate and as free of bias as possible.</li> <li>● Assign someone to revisit the evaluation plan to ensure all developmentally and educationally relevant questions are being addressed and evaluation timelines will be met. Amend Notice and Consent if necessary.</li> <li>● Maintain communication with the parent.</li> <li>● Those who administered assessments or collected or compiled other information should be prepared to answer any questions team participants may have about the tools or methods used to collect information, the findings, and possible implications for answering developmentally and educationally relevant questions.</li> </ul>

## Complete the Evaluation

<b>Procedures</b> (and related <a href="#">Sample IEP forms</a> )	<b>Actions</b>
IEP Team Evaluation Meeting and Eligibility Determination  (Sample Forms I-1: <a href="#">I-1-A</a> , <a href="#">I-1-B</a> , <a href="#">I-1-C</a> )	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Before the meeting, identify a qualified individual to be the meeting facilitator. The facilitator should prepare for and coordinate the IEP team evaluation meeting to ensure all IEP team participants, including the parent, collectively participate in reviewing, analyzing, and interpreting assessment information and make required evaluation decisions: special education eligibility or continuing eligibility and identifying the educational needs of the student.</li> <li>● The IEP team reviews the developmentally and educationally relevant questions (from the evaluation plan) in relation to findings from existing and new assessments and other information gathered in prior steps.</li> <li>● Consider all information and make evaluation decisions:                         <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ For students who are culturally or linguistically diverse, how are the assessment results indicative of a disability versus a difference?</li> <li>○ Do any exclusionary factors apply?</li> <li>○ Does the student meet or continue to meet disability category criteria (refer to disability category forms)?</li> <li>○ What are the effects of disability (e.g., how does the student’s disability affect access, engagement, and progress in age or grade-level general education curriculum, instruction, environments, or activities; under what conditions are these effects intensified or lessened)?</li> <li>○ What are the student’s disability-related needs, whether or not commonly linked to the student’s identified category(ies) of disability (e.g., areas in which the student needs to develop or improve skills that address effects of the student’s disability so the student can access, engage and make progress in general education)?</li> <li>○ Does the student need or continue to need specially designed instruction to address disability-related needs? Or can the student’s educational needs be addressed without specially designed instruction?</li> <li>○ If the student is eligible for special education, ensure there is enough information to include in the evaluation report to support the IEP team’s eligibility decision and information about the student’s educational needs that can be used to develop or review and revise the student’s IEP. Evaluation information should help the team develop an IEP that supports access, engagement and progress to meet age and grade-level general education standards and expectations (i.e. consider <a href="#">CCR IEP development guidelines</a>).</li> </ul> </li> <li>● If the student is not, or is no longer, eligible for special education, ensure there is enough information to support the IEP team eligibility decision and to make recommendations about student needs that can be addressed with general education supports to help the student access, engage, and make progress in age or grade-level general education. The team may consider if the student is eligible for protection under section 504 because of a “physical or mental impairment which substantially limits one or more major life activities.” (Note: the definition and disability criteria under section 504 are different from those under IDEA and Ch. 115 WI Stats.).</li> </ul>

## Complete the Evaluation (continued)

<p>Evaluation Report Including Notice of Eligibility Decision Report Provided to Parent (Forms <a href="#">ER-1</a>, <a href="#">ER-2-A</a>, <a href="#">ER-2-B</a>, <a href="#">ER-3</a>, <a href="#">ER-4</a>)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>● Document the IEP team evaluation decisions about eligibility and educational need on the evaluation report, including all required forms.</li><li>● Communicate and clarify next steps and any questions with the IEP team, including the parent (e.g., timelines for IEP development, plans to address student needs if student is not or no longer eligible for special education under IDEA).</li><li>● If the student is eligible or continues to be eligible for special education: review and revise (as appropriate) the student's Individualized Education Program (IEP).</li><li>● If the student is found not, or no longer eligible for special education, make general education recommendations as appropriate, such as supports other than special education services, within the LEA's equitable multi level system of support (MLSS).</li><li>● If the student is found not, or no longer eligible for special education, information collected during the special education evaluation may be used to consider eligibility for protection under section 504 because of a "physical or mental impairment which substantially limits one or more major life activities." The means of documenting eligibility under section 504 is left up to districts. If found eligible under section 504, the district must address individual needs such as providing general education accommodations or other supports within the district's equitable multilevel system of support (<a href="#">MLSS</a>).</li></ul>
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