

## Willoughby-Eastlake Policies and Procedures for the Identification of Students Suspected of Disability



### 1. Interventions:

Universal Screening: Conduct universal screenings using standardized tools (e.g., MClass for reading, Exact Path for math) to identify students who may need additional support. Review academic records, attendance data, and any previous interventions within the [K-5 Literacy Decision Rules](#) or [Tiered System of Support for Students with Mental and Behavioral Health Needs](#).

### 2. Referral:

Referral: A referral for evaluation can come from teachers, parents, or other professionals who observe significant academic, functional, emotional or behavioral challenges that impact the student's academic performance. Refer to the Ohio Department of Education's guide through the Evaluation Process for children ages 3-21 [Roadmap](#).

#### **Intervention Assistance Team Formation:**

Assemble a team including the school psychologist, special education teacher, general education teacher, school counselor, and parents. If applicable, include other relevant professionals (e.g., speech therapist, occupational therapist). Review academic records, attendance data, and any previous interventions within the Multi-Tiered System of Supports (MTSS) framework OR any tier 2 or tier 3 interventions that have been implemented. Analyze the effectiveness of these interventions and identify patterns or consistent behaviors that may indicate a suspicion of disability. *A response to a referral must occur within 30 days from the date of referral (including obtaining consent).*

As a team, including the parents, determine if a disability is suspected. If disability is suspected, complete the Evaluation Documents as indicated in the ETR checklist below. If the team does NOT suspect a disability, consider appropriate intervention(s) and a timeline for a review of student progress.

Interventions must be conducted before or during the evaluation. If interventions have not been conducted, they must happen at the same time as the evaluation. The district has 30 calendar days from the date of the receipt of the request to respond to the request. The district must either send a prior written notice (called a PR-01) indicating that the district does not suspect a disability or obtain parental consent to conduct an evaluation. The district will provide the

parent with a copy of the Special Education Procedural Safeguards Notice titled [“A Guide to Parent Rights in Special Education.”](#)

### **3. Planning for Comprehensive Evaluation:**

As part of the initial evaluation, and as part of any reevaluation, the evaluation team will complete the evaluation planning form which guides the evaluation process. Information gathered through the evaluation process will be summarized in an evaluation team report (ETR).

### **4. Evaluation:**

Conduct a comprehensive assessment including any applicable areas as indicated during the planning of the evaluation (Information Provided by Parent, General Intelligence, Academic Skills, Classroom Based Evaluations and Progress in the General Curriculum, Data from Interventions, Communicative Status, Vision, Hearing, Social and Emotional Status, Physical Health/General Health, Gross Motor, Fine Motor, Vocational/Transition, Background History, Observations, Behavior Assessment, Adaptive Behavior, Sensory).

### **5. Eligibility Determination:**

The ETR team, which must consist of a parent, district representative, qualified examiner, general education teacher and intervention specialist reviews all assessment data to determine if the student meets the criteria for one of the special education eligibility categories (e.g., specific learning disability, emotional disturbance, autism). This includes evaluating if the student’s needs adversely affect their educational performance, despite interventions provided through the MTSS framework.

#### **The initial evaluation:**

- Must be conducted within 60 days of receiving parental consent for the evaluation
- Must consist of procedures to determine:
  - If the child is a child with a disability as defined in the definition section of the Operating Standards
  - The educational needs of the child

#### **A Compliant ETR contains necessary evidence and is located in all of the essentials areas:**

- 1. Evidence of interventions to resolve concerns for any child who is performing below grade-level standards in the following sections of the evaluation:**
  - Referral (applicable for initial evaluations )
  - Data from Interventions within the Part 1
  - Summary Part 2
- 2. Evidence of parental involvement; OR Evidence the parent was provided opportunities to participate in the ETR planning process. If transfer ETR, adopting educational agency documentation of parent involvement in the ETR planning."**
- 3. Evidence that the evaluation addressed all areas related to the suspected disability as noted on the planning form:**

-Meets Expectations: The evaluation comprehensively addressed all areas related to the suspected disability, as documented on the planning form.

**4. Procedures for evaluating Specific Learning Disabilities, Multiple Disabilities, Blind/Visual Impairment, Deafness or Hearing Impairment, and preschool-age children:**

- Meets Expectations: The evaluation followed the appropriate procedures for the specific disability or age group, as required.

**5. Use of multiple sources of information to determine eligibility:**

- Meets Expectations: The eligibility determination was based on multiple sources of information, providing a comprehensive understanding of the student's needs.

**6. The Evaluation Team Report (ETR) provides a comprehensive summary of all assessment results in clear, jargon-free language that is easily understandable to the parents.**

- The report explains the assessment findings in a way that allows the parents to fully understand their child's strengths, needs, and the implications for educational programming.

- The language used in the ETR is accessible and tailored to the parents' level of understanding, ensuring they can actively participate in the decision-making process.

**7. The Evaluation Team Report (ETR) provides a comprehensive and detailed description of the student's educational needs, clearly outlining the areas where the student requires support and intervention.**

- The description of educational needs is directly linked to the assessment results, allowing the IEP team to develop specific, measurable, and achievable goals that address the student's identified areas of need.

- The ETR includes clear explanations of how the student's needs impact their ability to access the general education curriculum, enabling the IEP team to design effective and actionable goals to support the student's academic and functional progress.

**8. For initial evaluations, a group of qualified professionals, including the parent of the child, determines whether the child is a child with a disability. This group consisted of:**

- The child's general education teacher

- A person qualified to conduct individual assessments and interpret the results, such as a School Psychologist

- An educational agency representative

- If determining a specific learning disability (SLD), the group also included:

- The child's general education teacher (or a general education teacher qualified to teach a child of the same age if the child does not have a general education teacher)

- At least one person qualified to conduct individual diagnostic examinations of children, such as a school psychologist, speech-language pathologist, or remedial reading teacher

- When appropriate, the child

- For reevaluations, the group of qualified professionals determining eligibility included:

- The parent

- The child's general education teacher

- The child's special education teacher
- An educational agency representative
- An individual who can interpret the instructional implications of evaluation results
- At the discretion of the parent or the school educational agency, other individuals who have knowledge or special expertise regarding the child, including related services personnel as appropriate and whenever appropriate, the child with a disability.

**9. The Evaluation Team Report (ETR) provides a comprehensive and well-reasoned justification for the eligibility determination decision.**

- The justification clearly explains how the evaluation data, including information from multiple sources, supports the team's conclusion about the child's eligibility or non-eligibility for special education services.
- The justification is presented in a clear and logical manner, allowing the reader to understand the rationale behind the decision and how it aligns with the applicable laws and regulations.
- The justification includes specific details and references to the assessment results, ensuring a transparent and well-documented decision-making process.

**District Compliant Evaluation Team Reports contain the following documentation:**

- Cover page (ETR page 1)
- Referral for evaluation (only if an initial evaluation, signed by person referring and school psychologists)
- Evaluation planning form (signed by int. specialist, reg. ed. teacher, parent, and school psychologist)
- Part 1 - Individual evaluator's assessment pages (all signed by evaluators)
- Part 2 - Team summary page
- Part 3 - SLD page (if considering SLD)
- Part 4 - Eligibility determination page
- Part 5 - Signature page
- Parent invitation for ETR Meeting (ask parents to sign if not previously returned)
- Parent invitation for Planning Meeting
- Scholarship notification
- Consent for evaluation
- Prior written notice (initiating the evaluation)
- Prior written notice (after determination)
- Contact log/documentation of attempts (if needed)
- Eye exam form (initial ETR only)
- PR-10 Medicaid consent form (initial ETR)
- ETR EMIS at a glance form (**must be the last page**)

**T-ETR**

- W-E Cover page (ETR page 1) - with all dates entered
- ETR from receiving district
- Prior written notice (accepting ETR)

\_\_\_\_ PR-10 Medicaid consent form

\_\_\_\_ ETR EMIS at a glance form \*must have eligibility code\* **(must be the last page)**

\_\_\_\_ **Double check the disability code**