

JOHNSTON PUBLIC SCHOOLS

Office of Special Services

EVALUATION CRITERIA

Notice – The Johnston Public Schools must provide notice to the parents of a child with a (suspected) disability that describes any evaluation procedures the Evaluation Team proposes to conduct.

Conduct of evaluation –

1. Use a variety of assessment tools and strategies to gather relevant functional, developmental, and academic information about the child, including information provided by the parent and staff and observation(s) of the child to assist in determining whether the child is a child with a disability.
2. Not use any single measure or assessment as the sole criterion for determining whether a child is a child with a disability and for determining an appropriate educational program for the child.
3. Use technically sound instruments that may assess the relative contribution of cognitive and behavioral factors, in addition to physical or developmental factors.

Other evaluation procedures

1. Assessments and other evaluation materials used to assess a child
 - are selected and administered so as not to be discriminatory on a racial or cultural basis;
 - are provided and administered in the child's native language or other mode of communication and in the form most likely to yield accurate information on what the child knows and can do academically, developmentally and functionally unless it is clearly not feasible to so provide or administer;
 - are used for the purposes for which the assessment or measures are valid and reliable;
 - are administered by trained and knowledgeable personnel;
 - are administered in accordance with any instructions provided by the producer of the assessment;
 - are selected and administered so as to best ensure that if an assessment is administered to a child who is learning English as a second language, the assessment results accurately reflect the child's aptitude or achievement level or whatever other factors the test purports to measure, rather than reflecting the child's linguistic difference. Results are analyzed and interpreted using the matrix.
2. Assessment and other evaluation materials include those tailored to assess specific areas of educational need and not merely those that are designed to provide a single general intelligence quotient.
3. Assessments are selected and administered so as best to ensure that if an assessment is administered to a child with impaired sensory, manual or speaking skills, the assessment results accurately reflect the child's aptitude or achievement level or whatever other factors the test purports to measure, rather than reflecting the child's sensory, manual or speaking skills (unless those skills are the factor that the test purports to measure).
4. The child is assessed in all areas related to the suspected disability, including, if appropriate, health, vision, hearing, social and emotional status, general intelligence, academic performance, communicative status and motor abilities.

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5. Assessments of children with disabilities who transfer from one public agency to another public agency in the same school year are coordinated with those children's prior and subsequent schools, as necessary and as expeditiously as possible to ensure prompt completion of full evaluations.
6. In evaluating each child with a disability the evaluation is sufficiently comprehensive to identify all of the child's special education and related services needs, whether or not commonly linked to the disability category in which the child has been classified.
7. Assessment tools and strategies that provide relevant information that directly assists persons in determining the educational needs of the child are provided.
8. Individual evaluators are not qualified to make unilateral conclusions or recommendations, i.e. regulations state that recommendations and conclusions must be made by a **team** of professionals.

Additional requirements for evaluation (and reevaluations) include:

Review of existing evaluation data –

As part of an initial evaluation (if appropriate) and as part of any reevaluation, the IEP Team and other qualified professionals must

1. Review existing evaluation data on the child, including
 - evaluations and information provided by the parents of the child
 - current classroom-based, local, or state assessments, screening results, interventions implemented, progress monitoring data and classroom-based observations
 - observations by teachers and related services providers
2. On the basis of that review, and input from the child's parents, identify what additional data, if any, are needed to determine
 - whether the child is a child with a disability and the educational needs of the child the present levels of academic achievement and related developmental needs of the child
 - whether the child needs special education and related services . . .

Special rule for eligibility determination –

A child must not be determined to be a child with a disability

1. If the determinant factor for that determination is
 - lack of appropriate instruction in reading, including the essential components of reading instruction
 - lack of appropriate instruction in math
 - limited English proficiency
 - inconsistent exposure to curriculum due to poor attendance or transient status
2. If the child does not otherwise meet the eligibility criteria

There are additional procedures for the identifying children with ***specific learning disabilities*** – see Section 300.307 through 300.311 of the regulations.