

Guidance for Addressing Recommendations from Outside Reports

When presented with reports from outside agencies that pose a diagnosis of a specific learning disability, there are steps the team may consider to ensure that decisions of the school are consistent with legal requirements and educationally relevant. There may be situations in which the recommendations from outside reports may be clinically meaningful but not relevant to schools. Definitions of specific learning disability in clinical settings are in accordance with diagnostic criteria that adhere to medical models. Schools must adhere to definitions of learning disability from Federal and State rules. Educational criteria of disability require extensive documentation of classroom performance. It is entirely possible for an individual to have characteristics of a handicapping condition but not be eligible for special education because the student is able to benefit from instruction in general education without special education services, supports, modifications or programs.

Teams must consider the information and recommendations from the outside report. This does not mean that the team must accept all recommendations as directions for their actions. The team has the responsibility to review the information relative to State and Federal rules, County guidelines, local district procedures, and within the context of the multiple information sources that are integral to the determination of a specific learning disability. The team may take the following steps to address recommendations from outside agencies.

- Begin with a Review of Existing Education Data (REED).
- Review the information in the report.
- Seek information from existing school records and current classroom performance data.
- Review student progress toward State standards using state and local assessments.
- Obtain a report from the teacher on student performance.
- Request input from the parent.
- Determine the additional tests and evaluation components the team will need to complete the comprehensive assessment of the student.
- Conduct at least one classroom observation by a member of the team.
- Locate or collect repeated measures of student performance with results provided to parents.
- Apply County Guidance and local procedures to the analysis of all information.

- Answer the question, “Is the student able to benefit from instruction without special education?”
- The multi-disciplinary team will then offer the appropriate recommendation as to whether or not the student is eligible for special education.
- The IEP team will determine the eligibility and the IEP team will determine the goals, modifications, supports, services, and programs that are most appropriate to meeting the needs of the student.