



PRESTON PUBLIC SCHOOLS
Guidelines for Independent Educational Evaluations (IEEs)

Preston Public Schools has established the following guidelines for obtaining an Independent Educational Evaluation (IEE) and criteria for the selection of an appropriate evaluator. These criteria also apply to evaluations performed by an outside evaluator selected by, and/or, at the request of the Preston School District. Exceptions to the guidelines set forth in this document may be granted by the district where good cause can be demonstrated.

According to state and federal special education laws, parents/guardians have the right to request an Independent Educational Evaluation (IEE) of their child at public expense if they disagree with an evaluation of the child conducted by the District. Such request may be made either at a Planning and Placement Team (PPT) meeting or in writing and submitted to the Director of Special Education.

Upon request, the District will provide names, addresses, and phone numbers of possible independent evaluators who meet the District's criteria. Parents may also select evaluators not included on the District's list, provided they fully satisfy all of the criteria set forth below.

Parents will be expected to contact the evaluator they have selected to conduct the IEE in a timely manner and to schedule any necessary appointments. The parent/guardian is responsible for transporting their child to/from the evaluator's office.

Criteria for Outside Evaluators

Evaluators chosen to conduct independent evaluations should meet ***all of*** the following criteria:

- A. For individuals conducting psychological testing, the individual must ***either***:
 1. Hold a valid Department of Health license as a psychologist and an advanced degree in Psychology, Neuropsychology or Clinical Psychology from an accredited university; ***or***
 2. Hold a valid Connecticut State Department of Education certificate as a School Psychologist (070); ***and***
 3. Have training and experience in evaluating students of the relevant age level; ***and***
 4. Have appropriate background, training, and experience in the area(s) being evaluated.

- B. For individuals conducting academic achievement testing, the individual must ***either***:
 1. Have attained a minimum of a Master's degree;
 2. Hold an appropriate and valid special education or other academic specialization (such as reading or mathematics) certificate from an accredited university;
 3. Have experience evaluating students in the area of suspected disability; or
 4. Fulfill the credentials for a psychologist, as set forth above.

C. For Speech Language Pathologists, Audiologists, Occupational or Physical Therapists:

1. Hold a valid Connecticut Department of Health license to practice and have training and experience in evaluating and treating children in the area of disability being evaluated.
2. Evaluators otherwise qualified to conduct the evaluation who hold current Connecticut certifications in the relevant area will be preferred.
3. In the case of an audiology evaluation, the evaluator should have appropriate specialist-level training in audiology from a program accredited by the American Speech-Language Hearing Association and a certificate of Clinical Competence in Audiology issued by the American Speech-Language Hearing Association.

D. For Physicians:

1. Hold a valid Connecticut Department of Health license to practice and have training and experience in pediatric care, as well as in the area of disability.
2. Hold Board Certification in the appropriate specialty area.

Additional Criteria

Public funding of an IEE is conditional on prior agreement to the contractual terms set forth by the District. Evaluators must charge fees for evaluation services which, in the judgment of the District, are reasonable and customary for such evaluations. Evaluation costs exceeding the contracted amount will not be funded without advance notice of unexpected costs and prior written approval for same.

The evaluator must not be an employee of the District.

Evaluators who will be considered for approval must be located within a radius of SIXTY (60) miles. Evaluators located outside this geographic area will be approved on an exceptional basis.

The evaluator must directly communicate with staff members who work with the child in the school, members of the Planning and Placement Team, and the Director of Special Education, as necessary, in order to obtain information from (and share information with) the District. The evaluator should notify the school in advance and schedule visits, observations, or test sessions directly with the Building Administrator or his/her designee.

The evaluator **must** restrict their evaluations to areas in which they are qualified to evaluate and for which prior approval has been obtained. He or she must use assessments that are current, technically reliable and valid, and in accordance with the corresponding test manual and protocols. The evaluator must obtain and consider school information as well as **conduct observations of the child in the school setting** as part of the evaluation process and include such information within the written report.

The evaluator must comply with all guidelines required under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) and the Connecticut State Department of Education regulations regarding the evaluation of children with disabilities. The evaluator must also comply with all applicable confidentiality requirements under state and federal law.

Evaluation Report and Parental/School District Feedback Session

The evaluator must be able to schedule and complete an evaluation, in addition to produce a written report, in a timely manner. Any extraordinary or unusual circumstances which may result in an extended timeline is subject to agreement by the District.

The evaluator must agree to simultaneously provide the District and the Parent/Guardian with a written evaluation report which is to be delivered at least three (3) days in advance of the PPT meeting at which the report will be formally reviewed. One official, signed copy of the report is to be sent to the attention of the Director of Special Education prior to receipt of payment for services.

In the event that the evaluator intends to meet with the parent to provide an individual session to review the evaluation results, that **same** opportunity must be extended to District personnel. If such opportunity for a feedback session is not accepted or is deemed inappropriate by the District, a full report must be provided to the District **prior** to the scheduled parent meeting.

In lieu of any of the meetings referenced above, the evaluator may be asked to present evaluation findings, in person, at the PPT meeting which will be held for the purpose of reviewing the report.

Outside Evaluations Which Are Not IEEs

Parents/guardians who obtain an evaluation or assessment that does not meet the criteria established for an IEE are not entitled to reimbursement or payment from the District. Nonetheless, if a parent/guardian decides to unilaterally obtain an outside evaluation and to share the results of such evaluation with the District, these will be considered at a PPT meeting, as appropriate.

Questions

Please contact the Director of Special Education in Preston at 860-889-6098 with any questions regarding the criteria established for Independent Educational Evaluations (IEEs).

Revised 5/7/19