

# Special Education Assessment and Eligibility

Grades PreK-5, 6-8, and 9-12

# Road to Referral



# Pre-referral Process

- Universal screening procedures (ex. DIBELS, Fry words, DRA, leveled fiction, spelling inventories, iready, Bridges)
- Teachers differentiate instruction
- Teachers may refer students to MTSS when concerns continue despite instruction/classroom interventions/accommodations (DCAP)
- MTSS offers consultation, additional screening, goal setting, additional interventions, and progress monitoring
- MTSS team or parents may refer to special education testing; independent providers, doctors, preschools, private schools and early intervention teams may share concerns with parents

# Assessment

# Purpose of Special Education Assessment

- To identify learning strengths and weaknesses and the why behind concerns or difficulties
- Diagnosis-to determine if profile meets criteria for educational disability, classification for special education



# When Assessment May Occur

- Initial evaluation
- Additional concerns arise from MTSS or IEP teams
- Every 3 years during re-evaluation
- Prior to 3 years if student has made significant progress
- Following consideration of an independent evaluation

# Areas of Assessment

- Psycho-educational or psychological (may include cognition/IQ/processing skills, memory, academic achievement, social, emotional, attention, executive functioning)
- Developmental Assessment
- Educational Assessment Part A and B
- Speech/Language (social, rec/exp, vocab, artic)
- Physical Therapy
- Occupational Therapy (visual/fine motor, sensory)
- Behavior (aggression, off task, work completion, hyperactivity/impulsivity, self-regulation)
- Home Assessment (developmental questionnaire)
- Health Assessment (pediatrician)
- Observations (classroom, testing, private schools/daycares)
- Assistive Technology
- Vision/Hearing

# Timelines

- District responds within 5 days of request for assessment
- Evaluation is completed within 30 school days of signed consent
- Reports are provided 2 days prior to the IEP meeting
- IEP meeting is held within 45 school days of signed consent



# Eligibility

# Four Questions on the Flowchart

- **1. Does the student have one or more of the following types of disabilities?**
- **2. Is the student making effective progress or for re-evaluations, would the student continue to make progress in school without the provided special education services?** (based on progress reports, standardized assessments, teacher feedback, previous interventions, MCAS)
- **3. Is the lack of progress a result of the student's disability?**
- **4. Does the student require specially designed instruction in order to make effective progress in school or does the student require related services in order to access the general curriculum?** (continue tiered interventions, refer to Section 504 team for possible accommodations)



# Question 1: Categories

- Autism
- Developmental Delay
- Intellectual Impairment
- Sensory: hearing, vision, deaf-blind
- Neurological
- Emotional
- Communication
- Physical
- Specific Learning
- Health

- Do not require independent diagnoses or testing in order to meet criteria for educational disability categories
- Disability category does not equal specific intervention (one size fits all), individualized to student
- May meet criteria for a primary and secondary disability
- May meet criteria for a disability but may be making progress with what is already in place or not require specially designed instruction in order to make progress



# Autism

- Developmental disability significantly affecting verbal and nonverbal communication and social interaction, generally evident before age 3, that adversely affects a child's educational performance
- Repetitive activities/play/movements
- Resistance to change in routine
- Unusual responses to sensory experiences

# Developmental Delay

- Learning capacity of a young child (3-9 years old) is significantly limited, impaired, or delayed
- Difficulties in one or more of the following:
  - Receptive or expressive language
  - Cognitive abilities
  - Physical functioning
  - Social-emotional
  - Adaptive or self-help skills

# Intellectual Impairment

- Permanent capacity for performing cognitive tasks, functions, or problem solving is significantly limited or impaired
- Slower rate of learning
- Disorganized patterns
- Adaptive behavior
- Understanding abstract concepts



# Neurological

- Capacity of the nervous system is limited or impaired with difficulties
- Use of memory
- Control and use of cognitive functioning
- Sensory and motor skills
- Speech and language
- Organizational skills
- Information processing
- Affect
- Social skills
- Basic life functions
- May include students who have received TBI

# Emotional

- Long period of time
- To a marked degree
- Adversely affects educational performance, inability to learn
- Excludes intellectual, sensory, or health factors
- Inability to maintain satisfactory interpersonal relationships
- Inappropriate types of behavior or feelings under normal circumstances
- General pervasive mood of unhappiness or depression
- Physical symptoms or fears associated with personal or school problems

# Communication

- Expressive and/or receptive language
- Speech, articulation or voice
- Understanding or using spoken, written, or symbolic language
- May include student with impaired articulation, stuttering, language impairment, or voice impairment if adversely affects student's educational performance



# Specific Learning Disability

- Disorder in one or more of the basic psychological processes involved in understanding or using language, spoken or written
- Imperfect ability to listen, think, speak, read, write, spell, or do mathematical calculations
- Oral expression, written expression, listening comprehension, basic reading skills, fluency, reading comprehension, math problem solving, calculations
- Component 1: Historical Review and Educational Assessment (participation, performance history, medical)
- Component 2: Area of Concern and Evaluation Method (RTI, discrepancy models)
- Component 3: Exclusionary Factors
- Component 4: SLD Observation Forms
- Team Determination Eligibility: all 4 components have been met, finding of eligibility, and signatures

# Health

- Chronic or acute health problem
- Physiological capacity to function is significantly limited or impaired
- Limited strength
- Vitality/alertness
- Asthma
- ADHD
- Diabetes
- Epilepsy
- Heart condition
- Hemophilia
- Lead poisoning
- Leukemia
- If health impairment adversely affect student's educational performance

# IEP Development



# Thank you!

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