

When a preschool age child experiences developmental difficulties, parents, teachers, and medical professionals can refer the child to the school district for further assessment and possible evaluation. Ohio revised code requires that if a school district suspect that a child has an educational disability, they will conduct an evaluation. The district will provide services for children 3-5 years of age who subsequently qualify as having a documented educational disability. The process of identifying and documenting the disability follows several stages and involves a variety of school professionals.

Stage One: Parent Contact and Screening

- Parents contact 1st Step Preschool to discuss concerns about possible developmental delays.
- 1st Step staff will gather information from the parent and will schedule a play based screening.
 - The screening procedure allows members of the preschool evaluation team (typically a school psychologist, speech and language pathologist, intervention specialist, and/or an occupational therapist) to observe the child and gather background information. In addition, formal screening instruments may be used for comparisons with typically developing peers and to highlight potential areas of concern.
- If through the screening process, it is determined that the child does not have a suspected disability, the preschool team will consult with parents to determine the options other than special education interventions that would be beneficial for the child.

Stage Two: Evaluation

- If, as a result of the screening process, it is determined that the child's difficulties are due to a suspected educational disability rather than variations in normal development, an Evaluation Team Report (ETR) will be conducted by the preschool evaluation team.
 - If PCSD determines that the child will be evaluated, a team of qualified individuals, including the parent, will discuss the suspected disability categories and the areas that need to be evaluated. This will be documented on the Evaluation Team Report (ETR) Planning form and if the parent is in agreement with the evaluation plan, he/she can sign giving consent to start the evaluation at that time.
- In order to assess the area(s) of concern, standardized tests, structured interviews (parental checklists), observations, and criterion-based tests (play-based assessments) may be used to develop an accurate depiction of the child's abilities.
- Once all of the assessments are completed, the preschool team will meet with the parents to review the ETR and determine whether or not an educational disability is present in the suspected disability area(s).
- If, through the ETR process, it is determined that the child does not have an educational disability, the preschool team will consult with parents to determine the options other than special needs preschool interventions that would be beneficial for the child.

Stage Three: Individual Education Plan (IEP)

- If a disability has been documented as a result of the ETR, the next step is to plan the educational program that best meets the needs of the child.
- At this stage, an Individualized Education Plan (IEP) is developed by the preschool evaluation team with input from the parents.
 - The IEP outlines the educational and developmental goals for the child. The IEP describes services that will be provided to help the child reach his/her specific goals, within the least restrictive setting.

Questions about the Preschool Assessment Process?

Call First Step Preschool 440-885-8645 or email Lara Svihlik svihlikl@parmacityschools.org

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Screening conducted by members of the preschool evaluation team
Is there a suspected disability?

No

No further assessment is required. The preschool will provide parents with non-school based resource information.

No

Preschool Evaluation Team will review assessment data with parents and provide suggestions/recommendations, as needed.

Yes

In-depth assessments of various area of functioning by evaluation team, is there a documented deficit?

Yes

Child is eligible for preschool special education services and Individualized Education Plan (IEP) is developed.

Child is enrolled and service delivery options discussed from the IEP meeting will be implemented.