Merchantville Board of Education 130 South Centre Street Merchantville, NJ 08109	File Code : 5120 Adopted : 09/27/1988 Revised : 07/26/2016 Reviewed : 06/03/2024

Assessment of Individual Needs

Each pupil shall be assessed upon entrance into the district's schools and beginning in grade three shall be assessed annually thereafter, to identify pupils not meeting district proficiency levels.

The chief school administrator shall develop procedures to implement a program of individual pupil needs assessment that shall include but not be limited to:

A. Identifying district needs as the basis for development of mandated goals; development of staff inservice programs; selecting and approving instructional materials; staffing;

B. Identifying and determining the needs of:
   1. Gifted and talented pupils;
   2. Disruptive pupils;
   3. Disaffected pupils;
   4. Potential dropouts;
   5. Students who exhibit one or more potential indicators of dyslexia or other reading disability
   6. Pupils who require basic skills improvement programs;
   7. Pupils with limited English proficiency;
   8. Pupils who may require formal referral to the child study team for classification.

   Policies addressing these specific groups and appropriate educational programs for them are listed in the cross references to this policy.

C. Disseminating results of such assessments to parents/guardians and to appropriate staff and state and federal agencies as required without invading the privacy of the individual pupil.

The chief school administrator/designee shall review all individual assessment procedures annually to ensure that they serve the purposes for which they are intended. At all times, these procedures shall be in full conformity with federal and state law.

Dyslexia Assessment

"Dyslexia" means a specific learning disability that is neurobiological in origin. It can be characterized by difficulties with accurate and/or fluent word recognition and by poor spelling and decoding abilities. These difficulties typically result from a deficit in the phonological component of language that is often unexpected in relation to other cognitive abilities and the provision of effective classroom instruction. Secondary consequences may include problems in reading comprehension and reduced reading comprehension and reduce reading experience that can impede growth of vocabulary and background knowledge (N.J.A.C. 6A:14-1.3).

The board shall select and implement age-appropriate screening instruments for the early diagnosis of dyslexia and other reading disabilities.

The board shall ensure that each student enrolled in the school district who has exhibited one or more potential indicators of dyslexia or other reading disabilities is screened for dyslexia and other reading disabilities using a screening instrument selected by the board. The screening shall be conducted no later than the student's completion of the first semester of the second grade.

Students newly enrolling in the district or transferring into the district in kindergarten or grades one through six who exhibit potential indicators of dyslexia or other reading disabilities and who have not been previously assessed, shall be assessed using the board selected age-appropriate screening instruments. Students shall be assessed at the same time as other students enrolled in the student's grade if feasible. If other students enrolled in the student's grade have previously been screened, the assessment shall be conducted within 90 calendar days of the date the student is enrolled in the district.

Potential indicators of dyslexia or other reading disabilities include, but are not be limited to:

A. Difficulty in acquiring language skills;

B. Inability to comprehend oral or written language;

C. Difficulty in rhyming words;

D. Difficulty in naming letters, recognizing letters, matching letters to sounds, and blending sounds when speaking and reading words;

E. Difficulty recognizing and remembering sight words; consistent transposition of number sequences, letter reversals, inversions, and substitutions; and

F. Trouble in replication of content.

The screening shall be administered by a teacher or other teaching staff member properly trained in the screening process for dyslexia and other reading disabilities. If the results of the assessment substantiate that the student possesses one or more potential indicators of dyslexia or other reading disabilities, the student shall receive a comprehensive assessment for the learning disorder. If the diagnosis of dyslexia or other reading disability is confirmed by the comprehensive assessment, appropriate evidence-based intervention strategies shall be provided to the student, including intense instruction on phonemic awareness, phonics and fluency, vocabulary, and reading comprehension.

Key Words

Pupil Assessment; Assessment of Individual Needs

Legal References:

N.J.S.A. 18A:7A-10 Evaluation of performance of each school

N.J.S.A. 18A:40-5.1 Definitions relative to reading disabilities

N.J.S.A. 18A:40-5.2 Distribution of information on screening instruments

N.J.S.A. 18A:40-5.3 Screening for dyslexia, other reading disabilities

N.J.S.A. 18A:40-5.4 Comprehensive assessment for learning disorder

N.J.A.C. 6A:8-3.1 *et seq*. Implementation of the Core Curriculum Content Standard

N.J.A.C. 6A:8-4.1 *et seq*. Implementation of the Statewide Assessment System

See particularly:

N.J.A.C. 6A:8-4.1(d), -4.3(c)(d), -4.4

N.J.A.C. 6A:8-5.1 Graduation requirements

N.J.A.C. 6A:10-1.1 *et seq*. Educator effectiveness

See particularly:

N.J.A.C. 6A:10-2.4 Evaluation procedures for all teaching staff members

N.J.A.C. 6A:10-5.1 *et seq*. Components of principal evaluation

N.J.A.C. 6A:10-8.1 Evaluation of the chief school administrator

N.J.A.C. 6A:14-1.1 *et seq*. Special Education

See particularly:

N.J.A.C. 6A:14-1.3, -3.3, -3.4, -3.8, -4.11, -4.12

N.J.A.C. 6A:15-1.1 *et seq*. Bilingual Education

See particularly:

N.J.A.C. 6A:15-1.3, -1.10, -1.11

N.J.A.C. 6A:16-8.1 Establishment of intervention and referral services

N.J.A.C. 6A:30-1.1 *et seq*. Evaluation of the Performance of School Districts

No Child Left Behind Act of 2001, Pub. L. 107-110, 20 U.S.C.A. 6301 *et seq*.

Possible Cross References:

*1100 Communicating with the public

*1120 Board of education meetings

*2240 Research, evaluation and planning

*4131/4131.1 Staff development; inservice education/visitations/conferences

*5111 Admission

5119 Transfers

*5124 Reporting to parents/guardians

*5125 Pupil records

*6010 Goals and objectives

*6141 Curriculum design/development

*6142.2 English as a second language; bilingual/bicultural

*6146 Graduation requirements

*6146.2 Promotion/retention

*6147 Standards of proficiency

*6147.1 Evaluation of individual student performance

*6160 Instructional services and resources

*6161.1 Guidelines for evaluation and selection of instructional materials

*6164.2 Guidance services

*6164.4 Child study team

*6171.1 Remedial instruction

*6171.2 Gifted and talented

*6171.3 At-risk and Title 1

*6171.4 Special education

*6172 Alternative educational programs

*Indicates policy is included in the Critical Policy Reference Manual.