

TIMELINES

Overview

Special education services begin when an Individualized Education Program (IEP) team, including the parent(s), determines that a student is a “student with a disability” who “requires special education and related services” to benefit from his/her education and is eligible. This team meeting is the result of a referral to special education that is preceded by documentation of attempted accommodations and/or modifications to the general education curriculum.

Either the student’s teacher or parent may identify a student as a student with a need. At this point, a problem-solving team, sometimes known as a Student Study Team (SST), will convene to discuss the concerns and ways to address them. The SST process is recommended in order to begin and to document accommodations and/or modifications made to the general education curriculum that are required prior to a referral for special education.

For more detailed information, check out:

- Pre-referral Requirements Section
- Referral Process Section



Once the team or parent has submitted a written referral for assessment to determine eligibility for special education programs and services. The school district has fifteen (15) calendar days from the date of a written referral to present an assessment plan to the parent.

After review with the district representative regarding the proposed assessment plan, the parent then has fifteen (15) calendar days to sign in consent and return the plan to the district.

The school district does have the right to decline to assess, with valid reasons. The district must provide notice of the decision not to assess within fifteen (15) calendar days from receipt of the referral. The district must also document and provide the reasons assessment will not be completed.

The school district has sixty (60) calendar days (excluding school breaks of more than five (5) days) from the time of receipt of the signed parent consent for assessment to complete assessment and to schedule and hold the Individualized Education Program (IEP) team meeting. Referrals or Assessment Plans that are received within twenty (20) calendar days of the end of the school year shall be completed within the first thirty (30) calendar days at the beginning of the school year.

At the scheduled IEP team meeting, the team will determine if the student is eligible for special education programs and/or related services. If the student is eligible, the IEP team will develop goals and objectives and determine appropriate services and placement. Services will begin on the date designated in the IEP, after the parent signs the IEP.

Other Important Timelines

- 1. Parent requests for IEP meeting:** When a parent requests an IEP meeting, the district must hold a meeting within 30 day, not counting days between the pupil's regular school sessions, terms or days of school vacation in excess of five schooldays. The parent's request must be in writing. If the parent makes a verbal request, school staff should direct them to make the written request, and help the parent to do this if necessary.
- 2. Beginning of the school year:** Every student with special needs must have a valid IEP in effect at the beginning of the school year.
- 3. Transition meeting:** Each student with special needs must have a transition plan in place in the IEP that will be in effect on his 16th birthday.
- 4. Transfer of rights:** Each student who will become 18 years of age during the duration of an IEP must have been given an explanation of his rights and have signed the IEP acknowledging that he or she knows that the parental rights will transfer to him or her on the 18th birthday.
- 5. Transferring from Early Start to Preschool:** Each child enrolled in an Early Start program must have a Transition Individualized Family Service Plan (IFSP) meeting not more than 9 month or less than 90 days before his or her third birthday. This meeting is required to plan the toddler's evaluation for eligibility for special education services and transition to Preschool or other services. The IEP meeting to discuss evaluation results and if necessary offer a Free Appropriate Public Education (FAPE) must be held before the child's third birthday.
- 6. Examining records:** School districts must provide parents with a copy of the student's records within five days of a request received orally or in writing.

For Due Process
Timelines see the
"Dispute Resolution"
section of the
Procedures Guide.

