

## **Prior to Request for Evaluation**

The law requires school teams to conduct universal screening. Best practice indicates that screenings should be conducted at least three times per year. Data from screening tools will indicate if a student requires academic and/or behavioral interventions. School staff will implement interventions within general education. These interventions should be reasonably designed to confer educational benefit by a group of persons knowledgeable about the student. Additionally, interventions should be implemented with integrity, tried for reasonable periods of time, monitored for effectiveness and revised with data based decisions.

If a student is identified through universal screening, a number of steps should be taken within the standard program before the request for evaluation. “The message from the Federal Government to date has been school district often identified students as disabled when, in fact, the student have no disability; rather, they haven’t been taught (The RTI Guide – J. McCook).”

To learn more about the student’s educational needs, the team should take the following steps:

1. Review past school records

- Educational history – homework completion, grades, academic achievement data, etc.
- Inconsistency in instruction – changing schools, attendance, differences in teaching strategies, etc.
- Medical information – extended illnesses, hearing problems, glasses not being worn, etc.
- Other areas as deemed necessary

2. Discuss the problem with previous teacher(s) if possible

Some factors that could temporarily inhibit student achievement might not be reported in the student records. Previous teachers may report on difficulties, which may occur:

- after an extended vacation period
- when working with peers
- due to environmental factors

If the student’s behavior was the same last year, perhaps the previous teacher tried an intervention that works well.

3. Discuss the problems with the student and/or parent(s)

Occasionally, problems are of a temporary nature or are caused by a misunderstanding on the part of the student and can be addressed and/or remediated.

- Change in family dynamics
- Trauma within the home

The School Social Worker may be able to offer guidance and assistance in these situations.

4. Try a variety of teaching/management strategies

There are many factors in a classroom that can be adjusted by an individual teacher:

- Instructional groups
- Teacher made materials
- Management plans
- Peer tutoring

The problem-solving model is a required systematic approach for providing scientific, research-based intervention. The method identifies struggling students before they fall behind; this method also provides students with support throughout the educational process.

5. Discuss the problems with the problem-solving team, other form of teacher assistance team, and building administrator(s) if not on the previously mentioned team.

These teams should be available in each building/district and are responsible for providing teachers with ideas and scientific research-based intervention strategies.

These interventions should be reasonably designed to confer educational benefit by a group of persons knowledgeable about the student. Additionally, interventions should be effective and revised with data based decisions.

## **Request for Evaluation**

After intervention and progress monitoring data have been gathered over time, and the team concluded that the resources needed by a particular student exceed the capacity of general education, a request for a full individualized evaluation for special education services should be initiated according to the process that follows:

The request for evaluation of a student for special education services may be made by any number of people including: the problem-solving team, parents, teachers, administrators, and persons from appropriate community series and/or state agencies. The request is deemed necessary when a child has not demonstrated marked progress with intensive, individual interventions while progressing through several tiers, In addition, the student requires more explicit and specifically designed instruction than can be offered in the general education program.

When an evaluation is deemed necessary, please see section 3 of the Procedural Manual for Initial Request for Evaluation instructions.