Understanding Evaluations

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What is an evaluation

EVALUATION IS A PROCESS THAT HELPS PARENTS AND SCHOOLS DETERMINE WHETHER A CHILD HAS A DISABILITY
Requesting an Evaluation

MAKE YOUR REQUEST IN WRITING
SCHOOL MUST RESPOND WITHIN 10 DAYS WITH A
PTE / PTRE - YOU SIGN & RETURN
The school may also initiate the process of an evaluation HOWEVER they cannot proceed without your permission to do so PTE / PTRE

If you do not agree AND the school still believes it's necessary, they may seek out Due Process to have an impartial hearing officer give approval to evaluate
Evaluations are a PROCESS

The evaluation process in Pennsylvania cannot take longer than 60 calendar days (not including summer holiday) from when the LEA received your signed permission.

There will be different assessments / components of the evaluation depending on what area of eligibility is being considered.

Different professionals will be included in the process:
- SLP, OT, PT, Nurse, Psychologist, Teacher
- YOU!

These are set forth by IDEA.

Designing the Evaluation
PTE / PTRE

SHOULD CLEARLY STATE WHAT COMPONENTS WILL BE INCLUDED IN THE EVALUATION
Some things you may see

DIFFERENT TYPES OF ASSESSMENTS

- Hearing / Vision Screen
- Cognitive Assessment
- Academic / Achievement Testing
- Rating Scales
- Behavior Assessment
- Physician Input

- Specific measures should be selected in these categories based on each child’s profile
Record Review

REVIEWING RECORDS ONLY
PROS / CONS
Parental Input is Key

YOU ARE THE EXPERT ON YOUR CHILD

- What do they do well?
- Where do they often struggle?
- What are your goals for your child?
13 Disability Categories

- Autism
- Intellectual Disability
- Emotional Disturbance (ED)
- Other Health Impairment (OHI)
- Orthopedic Impairment
- Speech Language Impairment
- Deafness
- Visual Impairment
- Traumatic Brain Injury (TBI)
- Specific Learning Disability (SLD)
- Deaf-Blindness
- Multiple Disabilities
Two criteria must be met to be eligible for special education

MEET CRITERIA FOR ONE OF THE 13 ELIGIBILITY CATEGORIES
HAVE EDUCATIONAL IMPACT
Evaluation Report

Can request in advance

There are pros and cons to getting a copy early

The Evaluation Report (ER) will include the results from the different evaluations that were conducted.

It will also be reviewed at the results meeting.
Eligibility

Either found eligible (create IEP) or not team decision
Quality Evaluation?

MULTIPLE MEASURES
OBSERVATIONS
WORK SAMPLES
MULTIPLE CLINICIANS
WHAT IF I DISAGREE?

- If you disagree with the school's findings, you have the right to request an Independent Educational Evaluation (IEE).
- You explain why you feel your child wasn't comprehensively evaluated and then request an IEE in writing:
  - "Wrong" measures, clinician didn't have the specific skill set for your child, missing professionals,
- You state what you want and by whom.
- This is done by a professional of your choice and at the district's expense.
- They must reply to your request in a timely manner:
  - Usually about 10 days.
Evaluations Occur Frequently

EVERY 2 YEARS ID
EVERY 3 YEARS ALL OTHERS
Is this a diagnosis?

DIFFERENCE BETWEEN DIAGNOSIS & CLASSIFICATION
How will I remember all this?!

THE ARC

PROCEDURAL SAFEGUARDS
RESOURCES

- Pennsylvania's Parent Guide to Special Education for School Age Children
  https://www.pattan.net/assets/PaTTAN/2a/2a2a5b53-4694-41c8-aea6-0769490a89ed.pdf
- Special Education Process Map - PaTTAN https://www.pattan.net/Publications/The-Special-Education-Evaluation-IEP-Process
- Wrightslaw Special Education and Advocacy https://www.wrightslaw.com/
- The Procedural Safeguards provided by your LEA (Local Education Agency) or School District