

**SPECIAL SCHOOL DISTRICT OF ST. LOUIS COUNTY**

**PARENT  
INFORMATION**

**EVALUATION  
PROCESS**

**If you want  
more information about the  
special education evaluation process...  
this is where you might want to start:**

**FAMILY & COMMUNITY  
RESOURCE CENTER**

**Parent Education & Diversity Awareness**

12110 Clayton Road  
St. Louis, MO 63131

*(East of Ballas Road, South of Highway 40,  
located at the entrance of the lower level)*

**West: 314-989-8438**

**South: 314-989-8108**

**North: 314-989-8194**

**Central: (all three numbers)**

**<http://www.ssd.k12.mo.us/parenteducation/index.html>**

**TTY: 314-989-8552**

**FAX: 314-989-8449**

# **Outline of the initial evaluation process for school-age children ...**

## **I. Problem Suspected**

- *Student may be referred by teachers, counselors, principals, parents or outside agencies*

## **II. Care Team/Building Level Team (BLT)**

- *Purpose is to brainstorm and develop intervention strategies before considering a referral to Special School District (SSD)*
- *Participants may include counselor, general education teacher, special education teacher, speech-language pathologist, and a school psychologist or educational examiner*
- *Care team process time frame varies from student-to-student and may be as long as a year*
- *The BLT may try many interventions during this time to try to meet your child's needs — your child's response to intervention (RTI) will be the basis for whether or not your child is referred for an evaluation*

## **III. Referral**

- *Data packet is completed by the BLT and forwarded to the Joint Review Committee to determine whether referral is warranted*
- *Joint Review Committee reviews the packet for completeness and appropriateness based on Missouri Department of Elementary and Secondary Education guidelines*
- *SSD and partner school district notifies parent by letter to inform them whether an evaluation will occur due to suspicion of a disability that requires special education and a copy of the Procedural Rights is given*
- *If parents feel their child needs to be referred for evaluation and their local school district refuses, parents may request due process*

## **IV. Review of Existing Data Conference**

- *If an evaluation will occur, a meeting between parents, teachers, counselor and SSD staff is held to review existing data and discuss areas to be assessed*
- *Written consent to evaluate is requested from the parents (should occur within 30 days of Joint Review Committee meeting)*
- *An eligibility conference is scheduled within 40 days of this meeting so that a final determination can be made within 60 days of the receipt of consent*

## **V. Eligibility Conference**

- *Parents are given a verbal report of the assessments by the school psychologist, the school psychological examiner, the speech/language pathologist, the resource teacher and any other evaluator involved in the assessment*
- *Based on Department of Elementary and Secondary Education guidelines, a categorical diagnosis is made if the student is eligible for special education*

## **What is an assessment?**

*An assessment is the detailed gathering of information about a child in areas of suspected disabilities. An educational assessment is required to identify a child who is in need of special education services and to determine the strengths and needs of the child.*

*Prior to an assessment, the school district must provide information about vision and hearing acuity. A screening held in your child's school will eliminate problems of acuity as a possible concern.*

*An assessment is necessary to:*

- *Identify the need for special education*
- *Determine an educational diagnosis*
- *Evaluate a student's performance level*
- *Help intervention to be more successful*
- *Make recommendations for the student's educational program, or*
- *Determine if the student can continue to receive special education services*

*Assessments performed by professionals are called formal assessments. The individuals who perform them (school psychological examiner, speech-language pathologist, school psychologist, etc.) have a license or are certified to give these tests. Parents and/or caregivers are vital in the gathering of information for both formal and informal assessments. No one spends more time with a child and knows him better than the parent or caregiver.*

### **What will happen at a review of existing data conference?**

- *You may be asked a lot of questions concerning you and your child. No one knows the capabilities of your child better than you. Be honest with your answers. The team is there to guide you in helping your child.*
- *The Special School District staff member will review with you and the school the concerns brought to the referral. Specific interventions that have been implemented will be discussed.*
- *An evaluation plan will be developed, an eligibility conference time scheduled and consent to evaluate will be obtained from you.*
- *Your legal rights will be discussed.*
- *Ask questions! If you do not understand something about the process, or if you disagree with the outcome, discuss this with the team.*

### **What will happen at an eligibility conference?**

- *At an eligibility conference, your child's test results will be reported and explained to you. You may request further information or clarification at any time during the conference.*
- *At the conclusion of the conference, an educational diagnosis is reached. This is a determination of whether the evaluation team finds your child meets eligibility criteria and, as indicated by federal and state law, requires special education. A written copy of the evaluation report will be mailed to you.*

## **SSD Resources for the EVALUATION PROCESS**

*SSD Student Intake: 314-989-8123*

*Diagnostic Services: 314-989-8129 or 314-989-8128*

*Diagnostic Effective Practice Specialists (EPS) —*

*Affton, Bayless, Hancock Place, Kirkwood, Lindbergh, Maplewood Richmond-Heights, Mehlville and Webster Groves school districts: 314-989-8533*

*Ferguson-Florissant, Hazelwood and Riverview Gardens school districts:  
314-989-8388*

*Brentwood, Clayton, Jennings, Ladue, Normandy, Pattonville, Ritenour,  
University City and Wellston school districts: 314-989-8564*

*Parkway, Rockwood and Valley Park school districts: 314-989-8126*

***Student Records: 314-989-8170***

***Legal Services/Compliance: 314-989-8135***

## **Additional Resources from the COMMUNITY**

**Some of the many local, state and national resources available for support:**

- **Contact the SSD Family & Community Resource Center** for a Parent Handbook (which includes a section on the evaluation process), books and videos — see our contact numbers on the front of this brochure
- **Missouri State Eligibility Criteria** —  
[http://www.dese.mo.gov/schoollaw/rulesregs/Inc\\_By\\_Ref\\_Mat/Special%20Education/IDEA%20Part%20B.html](http://www.dese.mo.gov/schoollaw/rulesregs/Inc_By_Ref_Mat/Special%20Education/IDEA%20Part%20B.html) (pdf for Regulation III - Identification and Evaluation)
- **Response to Intervention (RTI)** —  
[http://osepideasthatwork.org/toolkit/ta\\_responsiveness\\_intervention.asp](http://osepideasthatwork.org/toolkit/ta_responsiveness_intervention.asp)
- **St. Louis Learning Disabilities Association (LDA)** — 314-966-3088
- **Judevine Center for Autism** — 314-432-6200
- **MPACT (Missouri Parent Act)** — statewide parent training and information center — 800-995-3160 or [www.ptimpact.com/](http://www.ptimpact.com/)
- **Missouri Developmental Disabilities Resource Center** — 800-444-0821 or [www.moddrc.org/](http://www.moddrc.org/)
- **National Dissemination Center for Children with Disabilities (NICHCY)** — 1-800-538-3742 or <http://www.nichcy.org>
- **Family Village Library** — go to [www.familyvillage.wisc.edu/library.htm](http://www.familyvillage.wisc.edu/library.htm) and click on "Specific Diagnosis," which takes you to a "card catalog," or go to "General Information," which leads you to a special education or disability topic.

