



SCHOOL CITY OF MISHAWAKA
EXCEPTIONAL LEARNERS
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Barbara Michalos, Director

When you think your child might need special education services.....

Federal and state law requires that local school districts "identify, locate and evaluate every child who may have a disability requiring special education services." This is called **Child Find**.

If your child is between the ages of three to twenty-two, you reside in the boundaries of School City of Mishawaka, and you suspect that your child has a **disability**, you can make a request for your child to be evaluated. This is called a **referral**.

You may make a referral by informing your child's principal that you would like your child evaluated.

While a referral is being considered, you will be asked to complete a **Social/Developmental History** form which provides the school psychologist with information about your concerns and the child's developmental, health/medical, social, and school history. Likewise, the teacher will complete a **Teacher survey** to provide current academic, social, and behavioral information to help in the decision making. Current and previous grades, test results, attendance, discipline records, information from any private provider, etc. will also be reviewed prior to making a decision about the evaluation.

There are **thirteen disability** areas which are recognized by Indiana and which could qualify a student for special education and related services:

- Autism Spectrum Disorder
- Blind/Low Vision
- Deaf/Hard of Hearing
- Deaf/Blind
- Developmental Delay (ages 3-9)
- Emotional Disability
- Intellectual Disability
- Language or Speech Impaired
- Multiple Disabilities
- Orthopedic Impairment
- Other Health Impairment
- Specific Learning Disability
- Traumatic Brain Injury

Children with a "medical diagnosis" from DSM-5 (such as Autism Spectrum Disorder, ADHD, etc.) *may or may not* be eligible for special education services.

From the date of your request, the school will have **10 school days** in which to respond to you in one of two ways:

1. The school could **decline** to conduct an evaluation
 - a. You will be sent a Notice of Refusal, describing the information reviewed and the reasoning for declining the evaluation. It may be suggested that your child's case be referred to a building based team to determine appropriate interventions prior to evaluating for a suspected disability. You will be given a copy of your Parent's Rights (Procedural Safeguards).
2. The school could **proceed** with an evaluation
 - a. You will be sent a Notice of Evaluation describing the information reviewed and why the decision was made to move forward. It will list the suspected disability and the assessment procedures. You will be given a copy of your Parent's Rights (**Procedural Safeguards**).

Prior to proceeding with an evaluation, the school must have your **written consent**. If you agree to the evaluation, **sign and return the Notice of Evaluation**. Once your written consent is *received* by the Special Education office, the evaluation process will begin.

In most cases, your child will be evaluated and/or observed by various team members during the regular school day. Testing will be conducted in one on one sessions. You may be asked to complete some additional checklists. It is helpful to the psychologist if these completed forms are returned promptly.

The school will have **50 school days** from the date they receive your written consent to conduct all of the evaluations and have a meeting with you, called a **case conference**.

The purpose of the case conference is for the **case conference committee** (you, general education teacher, psychologist, special education teacher, principal or designee, etc) to discuss the results and determine if your child meets the eligibility requirements for special education and related services, and if he/she needs specialized instruction. If so, an **Individual Education Plan (IEP)** will be written.

A full description of your parental rights regarding special education processes is located in the Procedural Safeguards document you received when making a referral.

If you have any questions, please contact the Exceptional Learners Department at 574-254-4530.