

SPECIAL EDUCATION

The TEAM Evaluation

When a student is referred for a Special Education Evaluation the process begins by identifying a clear referral question. This is crucial to the effectiveness of the evaluation and will assist in the TEAM being able to more accurately assess the areas of suspected disability. State and federal law require evaluation in the areas of suspected disability and the evaluations conducted by the Norwell Public Schools are comprehensive and child-driven.

The Director of Student Services approves the components of all TEAM evaluations. The Norwell Public Schools utilizes a variety of assessment methods to guarantee that the Special Education Eligibility Determination Team will have an understanding of the student's suspected disability and its effect on the child's ability to make effective progress in school. Evaluation may include both formal and informal assessments.

The intent of a Team approach in evaluation is to ensure that a comprehensive picture of student functioning within a school environment will emerge. No individual assessment or assessor may determine eligibility for special education and/or related services.

The Norwell Public Schools ensures that assessment measures, not only those designed to provide a single general intelligence quotient, when administered to a student with impaired sensory, manual, or speaking skills, accurately reflect the student's aptitude or achievement level or any other factors the test purports to measure. All assessment measures used have been found to evidence appropriate technical soundness, reliability, and validity.

The Norwell Public Schools, when interpreting evaluation data and making decisions, uses information from a variety of sources to gather relevant functional and developmental information, including information provided by the parent. We ensure that information obtained from these sources and subsequently used to make eligibility and placement determinations conforms with placement in the least restrictive environment, and that information related to enabling the student to be involved in and progress in the general curriculum.

The following assessments are required as a part of an Initial Special Education Eligibility Determination Team Evaluation:

1. An assessment in all areas related to the suspected disability.
2. An educational assessment which includes:
 - A. History of student's progress in general education curriculum;
 - B. At least one teacher's assessment in the area of curriculum conducted by a teacher with current knowledge regarding the Mass. Curriculum Frameworks;
 - C. An assessment of behaviors that contribute to learning (attention, participation, memory, social skills, etc.);
 - D. For Early Childhood Evaluations: a classroom performance summary or parent pre-k developmental inventory for a child at home.
3. Optional Assessments: The Director of Student Services may recommend or the parent may request an assessment in one or more of the following areas:
 - A. A comprehensive Health assessment by a physician that identifies medical problems or constraints that may affect the student's education. The school nurse may add additional relevant information from the student's health records.
 - B. A psychological assessment.
 - C. A home assessment that includes the student's developmental history and other pertinent family information.

All assessors conducting assessments/evaluations apart of the Special Education Eligibility Determination TEAM must submit in writing the procedures employed as apart of the assessment, the results of any assessment given, their professional diagnostic impressions, and their determination of the student's needs and specific services needed.

These written reports, upon request, are available to the parent three working days prior to the date of the Eligibility Meeting.