

There are two kinds of evaluations related to Special Education services.

1. Initial evaluation is done to determine if a student is eligible for Special Education services. If a student is found to be eligible, the team uses the evaluation finding to determine what goals and services are needed to address the impact of the student's disability to write and Individualized Education Program (IEP).

2. Reevaluation is required by law every three years, unless the team agrees it is not necessary. The purpose is to determine if a student who already has an IEP still qualifies and if his/her needs have changed. If a student's needs have changed, the goals or services may also need to be changed. This would be the time to address a new concern but evaluating an area not yet considered. Parents may request a reevaluation of their student's needs related to the IEP up to once per year, or more often if the school agrees it is necessary.

Both the initial evaluation and reevaluation include testing and observations requiring parent consent. The student should be evaluated in all areas – referred to as **performance domains** – related to the disability or area of concern. Performance domains are the skill areas in which a student can be evaluated; they provide a framework for consideration of the individual's instructional needs. The seven performance domains are: academic, behavior, physical, health, hearing/vision, adaptive, and communication. See chart on the next page for more details.

IEP teams should review the current information available in each of the performance domains to determine whether additional evaluations should be conducted in that area or if it can be ruled out as a factor impacting the student's learning. The evaluation results must be detailed enough to identify the student's educational needs.

When an evaluation is completed, a meeting should be held with the parents to review the results and make decisions about the student's needs.

Evaluation Tips for Families

- Put all requests in writing.
- Share concerns about your student's learning or behavior with the team before the evaluation.
- Parents signing permission for an evaluation, starts the 60 calendar day timeline
- Parents can ask for a copy of the evaluation results before the meeting for the chance to review and come prepared to the meeting with any questions about the results
- If parents disagree with the results of the AEA's evaluation or feel that an area of need was not covered they can ask for an Independent Educational Evaluation (IEE) not done by the AEA.

Related Resources

- Special Education Evaluations
- Sample Letter Requesting an Initial Evaluation
- Reevaluations
- Independent Evaluations

ASK Essential Questions

- Did the team include all areas where I am concerned about my student's performance?
- Are all the correct boxes checked on the consent for evaluation form I have to sign?
- Did I sign permission for the testing to start?

Performance Domains

Areas to consider for Special Education evaluations

Academic	Grade level achievement of standards related to listening comprehension, verbal and written expression, reading skills, math calculation and problem solving.
Behavior	Awareness of self, including identification and expression of emotions, self-regulation and interaction with others.
Physical	Gross motor skills, fine motor skills and mobility needed for learning, living and work.
Health	General condition of the body or mind, especially in terms of illness, injury or impairments.
Hearing/Vision	The ability to perceive sound and/or the ability to see.
Adaptive	Everyday living skills (e.g., dressing, eating, toileting), work skills, or school functioning skills (e.g., meeting timelines, organization of materials) that a child needs in adapting to his/her surroundings.
Communication	Receptive and expressive language. This includes, expressive language (social communication), vocabulary, speech sound production, voice or fluency.