



Levels of Student Assistance

Step 1: Parent-Teacher Conference

Parent and teacher sit down to discuss a concern about the child. There may be others in attendance who work with the child such as the reading specialist or special education teacher.

Step 2: Instructional Support Team (IST) or Student Assistant Team (SAT)

Either parent or teacher initiated. A “team” consisting of all the people who work with the child (including the parents) meet to discuss the reason for concern and set goals for overcoming the behavior(s). Goals might be established for academic or behavioral issues. The team meets again in 30 days to assess progress towards the goal(s). The team then determines the next course of action based on the child’s progress towards achieving the goal(s). This course of action might be to continue working on the same goals for another 30 days, set new goals, or recommend psychological testing.

Step 3: Multidisciplinary Evaluation (MDE)

Either parent or IST initiated. Recommendations for psychological testing are made to the school psychologist as well as any other evaluations that might be deemed necessary based on the child’s behavior – such as medical, speech/language, occupational or physical therapy, academic, or behavioral indexes. The team meets to discuss the results of these tests and any other evaluations that have been conducted, and determines the best placement for the child based on the results. Psychological testing can only be done with written permission by the child’s parent or legal guardian. Once the parent signs the form and gives permission, the school district must complete the testing within 45 school days.

Step 4: Special Education Services

First the MDE team must determine that a student has a disability and is eligible for special services. Recommendations for services are made by the MDE team after reviewing the results of all evaluations that have been conducted. More than one service may be warranted. Services in the Special Education program can only be done with written permission by the child’s parent or legal guardian.

Step 5: Individualized Education Plan (IEP)

Once it is determined that a student has a disability and needs specialized instruction because of it, a parent (or legal guardian) must give permission for their child to receive special services. The IEP determines the eligible student’s specialized instruction, and is developed as a team effort between school personnel and parents. The IEP is only valid for one year from the date it is written. At any time during that year, parents can ask for an IEP meeting with school personnel to reevaluate anything on it.

Step 6: Reevaluation

An in-depth look at a child’s placement by the MDE team. A reevaluation must take place at least every 2-3 years, but does not necessarily warrant complete re-testing.