

Margaretta Local Schools

Margaretta Local Schools Policies, Practices, and Procedures for Speech & Language Evaluations

I. Introduction

This document outlines the revised policies, practices, and procedures for identifying children with disabilities, conducting initial and reevaluations, and ensuring compliance with IDEA (Individuals with Disabilities Education Act) and the Ohio Operating Standards for the Education of Children with Disabilities. These procedures apply to all students within the Margaretta Local School District.

II. Initial Evaluations

A. Overview

The district will ensure that initial evaluations are conducted in a timely and thorough manner to determine whether a student has a disability and the specific educational needs of the student. The process follows the requirements set forth in IDEA and the Ohio Operating Standards.

B. Procedures for Conducting Initial Evaluations

1. MTSS Referral:

- A referral will be made to the MTSS team to ensure interventions are provided, documented, and progress is monitored prior to an initial evaluation
- Parents will be included and informed throughout the process of the MTSS interventions regarding their child

2. Referral Process:

- A referral for an initial evaluation may be made by a teacher, parent, or other school personnel if there are concerns about a student's academic performance or behavior that may indicate a disability.
- A written consent form will be obtained from the parent or guardian before conducting the evaluation.

3. Evaluation Planning:

- The IEP team will be convened to review the referral and determine the areas of evaluation needed based on the student's presenting concerns.
- The team will decide on the assessment tools and methodologies to ensure the evaluation is comprehensive.

4. Data Collection:

- Relevant data such as academic performance, behavior observations, teacher reports, and parent input will be collected.

- Assessments will include multiple measures, including standardized tests, behavioral assessments, and other relevant evaluations.
- 5. Timeliness:**
- The initial evaluation will be completed within 60 days of obtaining parental consent, as mandated by IDEA.
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III. Reevaluations

A. Overview

Reevaluations will occur periodically or when there is a change in the student's needs, educational placement, or disability status. The district will ensure that all reevaluations are conducted in accordance with IDEA requirements.

B. Procedures for Conducting Reevaluations

- 1. Frequency:**
 - Reevaluations will be conducted at least once every three years or more frequently if necessary to determine continued eligibility or the need for changes in services.
 - 2. Parental Involvement:**
 - Parents will be notified of the reevaluation process, and their consent will be obtained before conducting assessments.
 - 3. Assessment Areas:**
 - Reevaluations may focus on areas such as academic performance, social/emotional development, physical development, and functional performance.
 - If the student's needs have changed, additional assessments may be conducted.
 - 4. Review of Existing Data:**
 - The IEP team will review existing data (e.g., prior evaluations, academic records, and progress reports) before conducting new assessments to ensure they are necessary.
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IV. Evaluation Procedures

A. General Guidelines

Evaluations will be comprehensive and include information from multiple sources. The purpose of evaluations is to provide an accurate understanding of the student's strengths, weaknesses, and educational needs.

B. Appropriate Assessments

1. **Variety of Tools:**
 - The district will use a variety of assessment tools, including standardized tests, observations, interviews, and classroom-based assessments.
 2. **Non-discriminatory Assessment:**
 - Assessments will be conducted in a language and format that is understandable to the student, ensuring no bias based on culture, language, or disability.
 3. **Accurate Representation of Disability:**
 - The assessments will aim to measure the student's abilities and difficulties and will not be influenced by socioeconomic status or limited English proficiency.
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V. Procedural Safeguards

A. Rights of Parents

1. **Parental Notification:**
 - Parents will be informed of all actions, assessments, and evaluations related to their child's eligibility and educational needs.
 2. **Right to Participate:**
 - Parents have the right to participate in all meetings concerning their child's evaluation, eligibility determination, and placement.
 3. **Right to Consent:**
 - Written parental consent is required before conducting evaluations and reevaluations.
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VI. Determination of Eligibility

A. Overview

Eligibility for special education services will be determined based on the results of the evaluations and the criteria set forth in IDEA and Ohio Operating Standards.

B. Determination Process

1. **Review of Evaluation Results:**
 - The IEP team will review the data from the evaluations and determine if the child meets the eligibility criteria for a specific disability category.
2. **Disability Categories:**
 - The student may be eligible for services under one or more of the following categories: Autism, Deafness, Emotional Disturbance, Intellectual Disability, Specific Learning Disability, Multiple Disabilities, Visual Impairments, Speech

& Language Impairments, Orthopedic Impairments, Traumatic Brain Injury, Developmental Delay or Other Health Impairment

3. Educational Impact:

- The team will also consider whether the disability adversely affects the student's educational performance.
- Educational impact will be clearly documented in the Evaluation Team Report.

VII. Qualified Team Members

A. Team Composition

The IEP team will include a variety of qualified professionals to ensure comprehensive evaluation and decision-making. This team may include:

- Intervention Specialists
- General education teachers
- School psychologists
- Speech-language pathologists
- Occupational therapists
- Physical Therapists
- School Counselors
- Transition Specialists
- Parents or guardians of the student
- Other professionals working with the student
- Student, if age 14 or above

B. Team Responsibilities

The team members will collaborate to ensure all aspects of the student's disability are understood and addressed, using both objective data and professional expertise.

VIII. Additional Procedures for Identifying Children with Specific Learning Disabilities (SLD)

A. Screening Process

1. Universal Screening:

- The district will implement a universal screening process to identify students who may be at risk for specific learning disabilities.

2. Response to Intervention (RTI):

- The district will use a multi-tiered system of support (MTSS) as part of the process for identifying students with SLD, focusing on response to research-based interventions.

B. Evaluation Process

1. Data Collection:

- In addition to traditional assessments, the IEP team will review progress data from intervention strategies used in general education.

2. Criteria for SLD:

- Specific criteria related to discrepancies between intellectual ability and academic achievement will be used, including measures of progress or lack thereof in key academic areas.
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IX. Additional Procedures for Identifying Children with Multiple Disabilities

A. Screening and Evaluation

1. Comprehensive Assessments:

- For students suspected of having multiple disabilities, the district will ensure that comprehensive, individualized assessments are conducted to understand the range of disabilities and how they impact the student.

2. Collaboration:

- Collaboration between specialists in various disability categories will be necessary to ensure that all aspects of the student's needs are met.

B. Eligibility Determination

The eligibility determination for students with multiple disabilities will be made based on all available data, including assessments from various disciplines and the impact on the student's ability to participate in the general education curriculum.

X. Conclusion

The Margaretta Local School District is committed to providing a fair, equitable, and thorough evaluation process for all students suspected of having a disability. By implementing these policies and procedures, we aim to ensure compliance with IDEA and Ohio Operating Standards, promote best practices in special education, and most importantly, provide the necessary support for students with disabilities.

Contact Information:

For questions regarding the special education evaluation procedures, please contact the Special Education Department at 419-684-5351.
