

Fact Sheet: Evaluation and Re-Evaluation

What is an initial evaluation? An initial evaluation is a comprehensive, individual assessment of your child. Various testing tools and data collection are used by the school system to determine if your child requires specialized instruction and is eligible for special education services.

The Facts you should know:

- Parents/guardians must give permission before the school will conduct an evaluation. There will be a form you will be asked to sign. The form will list the kinds of tests the school may conduct. School systems are required to make sure the consent you sign is *informed consent*, meaning the system has told you about all the types of tests that may be administered, why they are being administered and what to expect. Writing a letter to request an evaluation does not mean you have given consent.
- The school system has **60 calendar days** from the day they receive your signed consent to complete the initial evaluation. Completing the initial evaluation is defined as completion of the evaluation report(s). The evaluation report may include several reports that are combined into one report, but the report with the latest date is the date that will be used as the end of the initial evaluation.
- The school system must provide a copy of the evaluation report and documentation of determination of eligibility to parents at no cost.
- The school system is **not** required to make the eligibility determination during the 60-day initial evaluation timeline. As a matter of best practice, **within 10 calendar days** of completion of the evaluation report(s), an eligibility meeting should be held.
- If your child is eligible for special education, a meeting to develop an IEP must be held within 30 calendar days (this time period does not include exceptions for holidays or summer vacations).
- The same 60-day timeline applies to all students, whether they are students enrolled in home school, private school or public school.

Re-evaluation Process

The purpose of the reevaluation is to determine if a child continues to have a disability and the educational needs of the child. Reevaluations are just as important as initial evaluations!

- Eligibility for special education does not expire. However, data used in the last eligibility report may be outdated and no longer valid, in which case a comprehensive reevaluation is needed.
- The 60-day timeline only applies to the initial evaluation. This timeline does **not** apply to reevaluations.
- Reevaluation can include only a review of existing evaluation data. Review of existing data may include evaluations and information provided by parents, classroom assessments, classroom observations, and observations by teachers and related service providers.
- Review of existing data may be done without a meeting if the parent and teacher agree not to hold a meeting.
- Reevaluation must be conducted **at least once every three (3) years**, unless the parent and the school system agree that it is not necessary.
- Reevaluation can be completed at any time if requested by the teacher or parent OR if the school system feels it is needed.
- Reevaluation should not occur more than one (1) time per year, unless the parent and school system agree.
- Before determining that a child is no longer eligible for special education services, the school system must comprehensively reevaluate the child.
- Reevaluation is not needed when a child graduates from high school with a regular education diploma or when the child has exceeded the age of eligibility (22nd birthday) for a free and appropriate public education (FAPE).

The information contained in this document is a summary and does not provide every detail, exception or circumstance. Please refer to other resources or your local system for complete information. Nothing in this document is intended to state new law or supplant any federal or state laws, regulations or requirements.

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Tips for Families:

- ✓ Always put your request for an evaluation in writing. Give copies to your child's teacher, principal, and the special education director.
- ✓ Share any reports or evaluations about your child that you have from other programs or professionals, if you are comfortable doing so.
- ✓ Ask how you will be involved or give input during the evaluation process.
- ✓ Ask questions to help you understand what to expect, such as:
 - Why do you want to evaluate my child?
 - What will happen if my child is NOT evaluated? Will he or she still get help for the problems that have been identified?
 - What do you think you will learn from the evaluation?
 - What kinds of test will be used? What areas will be tested?
 - Will someone observe my child in the classroom and talk to my child's teachers?
 - Who will evaluate my child? Has the evaluator had experience testing children who are similar to my child?
 - Does my child need a translator or interpreter? (Testing must be done in a child's native language or sign language if needed.)
 - When will I receive a written copy of the evaluation results?
 - What can I do if I do not agree with the evaluation results?
- ✓ Ask for a copy of the evaluation report, if one is not provided.
- ✓ Ask to have the evaluation results explained if you do not understand them.

Where to go for more information:

Parent to Parent of Georgia
770 451-5484 or 800-229-2038
www.p2pga.org

Georgia Department of Education, Divisions for Special Education Services and Supports
(404) 657-9968 or spedhelpdesk@doe.k12.ga.us

Georgia Department of Education Implementation Manual
[Evaluation & Reevaluation](#)

Georgia Special Education [Rule 160-4-7-.04](#)

Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA)
[34 C.F.R. 300.301-300.311](#)

Additional resources: Contact the **Special Education Director** for your school system.