



QUICK GUIDE: REFERRAL TEAM



USING A TEAM APPROACH TO MAKING REFERRAL DECISIONS

When a parent, teacher, or problem-solving team suspects that a student has a disability and may need special education, a referral is made to the evaluation team. The evaluation team completes the *Referral to Consider a Special Education Evaluation* process and form. This process sets the stage for the team to begin making decisions together that are based on evidence and input from all team members, including the parent. The evaluation team determines what information is already available and what information is still needed to answer referral question(s) and make an eligibility decision.

TEAM CONSIDERATIONS

Who should be a member of the evaluation team?

When identifying evaluation team members, in addition to required team members, it is also important to ensure that the team includes individuals who can support the team in answering the following questions:

- Who can speak to the concerns that brought the student forward?
- Who can speak to and/or assess current functioning in each area of concern? (Intellectual/Cognitive, Academic, Speech/Language, Emotional/Social/Behavioral, etc.)
- Who needs to be present to help in the review of existing information?
- Are there individuals that can help the team to identify what, if any, additional information is needed?

Our team is rarely together. How do we ensure full team participation in this process?

In some cases, holding a meeting isn't possible. In order to ensure that all team members have the opportunity to provide input in the referral process, consider the following:

- How can we ensure that we are gathering and documenting input from each team member, including the parent(s)? How can this be done through a virtual meeting, phone conference or email?
- What is our process for identifying areas of concern and determining what assessments need to be completed that allows all team members to provide input? If there is currently not a process in place, how do we establish one?
- Who is responsible for completing the Referral form and gaining Consent for Assessment, if needed?

Why is the team's input at this stage so important?

The referral is the beginning of the special education process and lays the foundation for the rest of the evaluation process. Using a team approach to the referral allows the team to clearly communicate all areas of concern, identify the questions that need to be answered to provide the team with actionable information related to the areas of concern, and determine what assessments need to be completed to answer those questions.