Evaluation Compendium: A Guide to Comprehensive Evaluation of Young Children Birth to Age Six

How to use the Evaluation Compendium

The Evaluation Compendium is to be used by practitioners to assist them in planning for a comprehensive evaluation. The intention is that practitioners will use the guide to help select tools which will give them the most comprehensive view of a child's abilities and needs in order to determine eligibility. This tool does not favor or promote the use of one tool over another. It is up to the staff evaluating the student to read the manual of the instrument so that they have an understanding of how to use the tool, to choose the appropriate tool to meet the needs of the child, and to determine the validity and reliability of the tool.

Abbreviations used in the compendium

Scores alone do not determine eligibility for any disability category, there are many factors included in a comprehensive evaluation including observation, parent interview, and use of other instruments. Please refer to disability category links to understand each eligibility criteria.

S= This instrument provides a score and ***may*** be used to meet the criteria where a score is necessary.

I= This instrument provides information about the child and a score is neither necessary or obtained from this instrument. The information could be used to corroborate the findings.

S/I= A score may be obtained but what is necessary is information.

A= Available in another language.

N= Normed on culturally and linguistically diverse populations.

The top portion of the guide lists the various eligibility criteria that are commonly used with early childhood populations. Each criterion is hyperlinked to the corresponding rule on the Minnesota Department of Education website. They criteria are also broken down into sub-parts according to the rule. Additional

links are provided to categorical manuals whenever possible. Please check the dates of these manuals, some are outdated.

The instruments are listed down the left hand-side the link to the mini manuals is in the top box, this will link you to all the manuals which are in alphabetical order

The Compendium only includes information on evaluation tools, not tools for either screening or ongoing assessment.

A complete guide to assessment tools has already been created and can be found at the following website:

http://www.fpg.unc.edu/~eco/pages/crosswalks.cfm#Crosswalks

A complete guide to screening tools can be found at the following website:
http://www.health.state.mn.us/divs/fh/mch/devscrn/glance.html

An overview of screening tools can be found at:
http://www.health.state.mn.us/divs/fh/mch/devscrn/instruments.html

***Test Selection for Eligibility Decisions:**

Use the following suggestion when selecting technically adequate evaluation tools for eligibility decisions:

- Use tests with age-based norms that are no more than 10 years old.
- Use tests designed specifically for, or considered an appropriate and robust measure of, one of the five developmental domains for developmental delay or a subcategory of another eligibility criterion.
- Use tests with adequate norming sample. The norming should have been conducted using a sample of people from the United States with adequate samples of students at that age of the student being tested.
- Use tests selected and administered in a manner as to not be discriminatory on a racial or cultural basis.

- Use tests that create cluster scores or a score derived from multiple sub-tests.
- Avoid deviations from the standard administration of any standardized test that invalidates the score for eligibility and placement decisions. Non-standard administration includes, for example:
    - Not using a tape recorder for a subtest when required by the standard administration directions in the testing technical manual.
    - Testing in a classroom full of students.
    - Extending the allotted time for a subtest.
    - Completing the math calculation section with a calculator.
- Testing of limits may occur after ceilings are reached, and may provide valuable information for the design of instruction and to reveal a student's thinking strategies or processes.
- Administer a standardized test according to procedures outlined in the administrative manual. Do not administer testing sessions subtest by subtest, occurring on different days. This will invalidate the score.
- Administer assessments that ensure students with impaired sensory, manual, or speaking skills accurately reflect aptitude or achievement level rather than the impairment (unless those are the skills are the factor that testes purports to measure).

***Setting the Stage for Assessing Young Children:**

Use only valid and reliable data to make eligibility decisions. Be aware of the effects on the validity of test scores and testing procedures used, since young students:

- Are sensitive to their surroundings and therefore may be easily distracted.
- Are influenced by their comfort level with the assessor.
- Should be assessed in a variety of situation.
- May have rapid developmental change.
- May have limited interest in being assessed.
- Experience more rapid neuro-biological changes than older students.
- Have limited communication skills that may interfere with their understanding and/or responses.

- May be distractible and have short attention span that could affect their responses.
- May have separation issues with parents making assessment difficult.
- May be noncompliant or have poor understanding of relationships that may affect performance (McLean, Bailey, and Wolery, 1996).

Regulations regarding comprehensive evaluation:

Full requirements for comprehensive evaluations are covered in 34 C.F.R sections 300.301 through 300.306. The most relevant requirements to the content in this chapter are below.

34 C.F.R. section 300.304(b) the public agency must:

- Use a variety of assessment tools and strategies to gather relevant functional, developmental, and academic information about the child, including information provided by the parent that may assist in determining;
    - Whether the child is a child with a disability.
    - The content of the child's Individual Education Progam (IEP), including information related to enabling the child to be involved in and progress in the general education curriculum.
- Not use any single measure or assessment as the sole criterion for determining whether a child is a child with a disability and for determining and appropriate educational program for the child.
- Use technically sound instruments that may assess the relative contribution of cognitive and behavioral factors in addition to physical and developmental factors.
- Ensure that the evaluation is sufficiently comprehensive to identify all of the child's special education and related service needs, whether or not commonly linked to the disability category in which the child has been classified.

Minnesota Rule 3525.2710 subpart b(2): In conducting the evaluation a district shall not use any single procedure as the sole criterion for determining whether a child is a pupil with a disability or determining an appropriate education program for the pupil.

Regulations regarding evaluation materials and procedures:

- 34 C.F.R. section 300.304(c)(1): Each public agency must ensure that:
    - Assessments and other evaluation materials used to assess a child under this part are:
        - Selected and administered as to not be discriminatory on racial or cultural basis.
        - Provide and administered in the child's native language or other mode of communication and in the form most likely to yield accurate information on what the child knows and can do academically, developmentally and functionally, unless it is clearly not feasible to so provide or administer.
        - Used for the purpose for which the assessment or measures are valid and reliable.
        - Administered by trained and knowledgeable personnel.
        - Administered in accordance with any instructions provided by the producer of the assessments.
    - Assessments and other evaluation materials used include those tailored to assess specific areas of education need and not merely those that are designed to provide a single general intelligence quotient (34 C.F.R 300.304(c)(2)).
    - Assessments are selected and administered so as best to ensure that, if any assessment is administered to a child with impaired sensory, manual, or speaking skills, the assessment results accurately reflect the child's aptitude or achievement level or whatever other factors the test purports to measure rather than reflecting the child's impaired sensory, manual, or speaking skills, unless those skills are the factors that the test purports to measure (34 C.F.R. 300.304(c)(3)).
    - The child is assessed in all areas related to the suspected disability including, if appropriate, health, vision, hearing, social and emotional status, general intelligence, academic performance, communicative status, and motor abilities (34 C.F.R. 300.304 (c)(4)).
    - Assessments tools and strategies that provide relevant information that directly assists persons in determining the educational needs of the child are provided (34 C.F.R. 300.304 (c)(7)).
- Additional procedures defined in Minnesota rule 3525.2710 subp. 3(c)(6): Each district shall ensure that materials and procedures used to evaluate a child with limited English proficiency are selected and administered to

ensure that they measure the extent to which the child has a disability and needs special education and related services rather than measure the child's English language skills.

Part C Evaluation Regulations:

Sec. 303.322 Evaluation and assessment.

(a) General.

(1) Each system must include the performance of a timely, comprehensive, multidisciplinary evaluation of each child, birth through age two, referred for evaluation, and a family-directed identification of the needs of each child's family to appropriately assist in the development of the child.

(2) The lead agency shall be responsible for ensuring that the requirements of this section are implemented by all affected public agencies and service providers in the State.

(b) Definitions of evaluation and assessment. As used in this part:

(1) Evaluation means the procedures used by appropriate qualified personnel to determine a child's initial and continuing eligibility under this part, consistent with the definition of ``infants and toddlers with disabilities'' in Sec. 303.16, including determining the status of the child in each of the developmental areas in paragraph (c)(3)(ii)of this section.

(2) Assessment means the ongoing procedures used by appropriate qualified personnel throughout the period of a child's eligibility under this part to identify--

(i) The child's unique strengths and needs and the services appropriate to meet those needs; and

(ii) The resources, priorities, and concerns of the family and the supports and services necessary to enhance the family's capacity to meet the developmental needs of their infant or toddler with a disability.

(c) Evaluation and assessment of the child. The evaluation and assessment of each child must--

(1) Be conducted by personnel trained to utilize appropriate methods and procedures;

(2) Be based on informed clinical opinion; and

(3) Include the following:

(i) A review of pertinent records related to the child's current health status and medical history.

(ii) An evaluation of the child's level of functioning in each of the following developmental areas:

(A) Cognitive development.

(B) Physical development, including vision and hearing.

(C) Communication development.

(D) Social or emotional development.

(E) Adaptive development.

(iii) An assessment of the unique needs of the child in terms of each of the developmental areas in paragraph (c)(3)(ii) of this section, including the identification of services appropriate to meet those needs.

(d) Family assessment.

(1) Family assessments under this part must be family-directed and designed to determine the resources, priorities, and concerns of the family and the identification of the supports and services necessary to enhance the family's capacity to meet the developmental needs of the child.

(2) Any assessment that is conducted must be voluntary on the part of the family.

(3) If an assessment of the family is carried out, the assessment must-

(i) Be conducted by personnel trained to utilize appropriate methods and procedures;

(ii) Be based on information provided by the family through a personal interview; and

(iii) Incorporate the family's description of its resources, priorities, and concerns related to enhancing the child's development.

(e) Timelines.

(1) Except as provided in paragraph (e)(2) of this section, the evaluation and initial assessment of each child (including the family assessment) must be completed within the 45-day time period required in Sec. 303.321(e).

(2) The lead agency shall develop procedures to ensure that in the event of exceptional circumstances that make it impossible to complete the evaluation and assessment within 45 days (e.g., if a child is ill), public agencies will:

(i) Document those circumstances; and

(ii) Develop and implement an interim Individual Family Service Plan, to the extent appropriate and consistent with Sec. 303.345 (b)(1) and (b)(2).

(Approved by the Office of Management and Budget under control number 1820-0550)
(Authority: 20 U.S.C. 1435(a)(3); 1436 (a)(1), (a)(2), (d)(1), and (d)(2))
(58 FR 40959, July 30, 1993, as amended at 63 FR 18295, Apr. 14, 1998)

Part B Evaluation Requirements and Definition

Evaluation means procedures used in accordance with Sec. Sec. 300.304 through 300.311 to determine whether a child has a disability and the nature and extent of the special education and related services that the child needs.

Variance from Standard Evaluation Conditions

Minnesota Rule 3525.2710 subp. 3 (c) (6): If an evaluation is not conducted under standard conditions, ad description of the extent to which it varied from standard conditions must be included in the evaluation report.

Review of Existing Evaluation Data:

- 34 C.F.R., section 300.305(a) As part of in initial evaluation, if appropriate, and as part of any reevaluation under this part, the IEP team and other qualified professionals, as appropriate, must:
    - Review existing evaluation data on the child including:
        - Evaluations and information provided by parents of the child
        - Current classroom-based local and state assessments and classroom-based observations.
        - Observation by teachers and related service providers.
    - On the basis of the review, and input from the pupil's parents, identify what additional data, if any, are needed to determine:
        - Whether the pupil has a particular category of disability, as described in as defined in section 300.8, and the educational needs of the child or in the case of a reevaluation of a child, whether the child continues to have such as disability and educational needs of the child.
    - Whether the child needs special education and related services, or in the case of a reevaluation of a pupil, whether the child continues to need special education and related services.
    - Whether any additions or modifications to the special education and related services are needed to enable the child to meet the measureable annual goals set out in the individualized education program of the child and to participate, as appropriate, in the general curriculum.

- 34 C.F.R. section 300.305(c) Sources of data: The public agency must administer such assessments and other evaluation measures as may be needed to produce the data identified under subpart a.
- 34 C.F.R section 300.305(d):
    - Requirements of additional data are not needed if the IEP team and other qualified professional, as appropriate, determine that no additional data are needed to determine whether the child continues to be a child with a disability, and to determine the child's educational needs, the public agency must notify the child's parents:
        - Of that determination and the reason for the determination.
        - Of the right of the parents to request an assessment to determine whether the child continues to be a child with a disability, and to determine the child's educational needs.
        - That the public agency is not required to conduct the assessments previously described in unless requested to do so by the child's parents.

*** Determining the Eligibility of Students with Specific Learning Disabilities Manual (p. 8-23 and p. 8-35) with permission from Vicki Weinberg.**