



Hebron Public Schools



High Expectations, Bright Futures

Administration Office

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Criteria for Outside Evaluators (Independent Evaluators and Outside Evaluators Selected by Hebron Public Schools.

Evaluators chosen to conduct outside evaluations, including Independent Educational Evaluations (IEEs) must meet **all of** the criteria established by the district as follows:

A. Minimum Credentials for Evaluators

For Psychologists:

1. Hold a valid Connecticut Department of Health license as a psychologist.
2. Have achieved a Doctor of Philosophy (Ph.D) or Doctor of Psychology (Psy.D.) in Psychology, Neuropsychology or clinical Psychology from an accredited university.
3. Have training and experience in evaluating students of the same age level as the student being evaluated.
4. Have clinical background, advanced training, and recent experience in the areas of disability being evaluated.
5. Be able to schedule an evaluation in a timely manner and produce a written report within forty-five (45) school days of the provision of consent, subject to any contractual arrangement with the district or unusual circumstances which justify an extension of this timeline.

For individuals conducting academic achievement testing, the individual must either:

1. Fulfill the following requirements:
 - (a) Have attained a minimum of a Master's degree; **and**
 - (b) Hold an appropriate and valid special education or other academic specialization (such as reading or mathematics) certificate from the Connecticut, Massachusetts or Rhode Island State Departments of Education; **and**
 - (c) Have experience in teaching and evaluating students in the area of suspected disability.

Or

2. Fulfill the requirement of the psychologist above.

For Speech Pathologists, Audiologists, Occupational Therapists, Physical Therapists and Physicians:

1. Hold a valid Connecticut Department of Health license to practice.
2. Have clinical pediatric experience in evaluating and treating children in the area of disability being evaluated.
3. In the case of physicians, be Board Certified in the appropriate specialty area (psychiatric, pediatrics, care of children and adolescents, etc.)

B. **Cost:** Evaluators must charge fees for evaluation services which, in the judgment of the school district, are reasonable and customary for such evaluations.

C. The evaluator must not be an employee of the school district.

D. The evaluator must be permitted to directly communicate with school staff who work with the child in school and the members of the Planning and Placement Team, including the Director of Educational Services, as well as to obtain information from the school and share information with the school.

E. The evaluator must obtain and consider school information and observations of the child in the school setting in the evaluation process and the written report. Unless otherwise determined by the members of a child's PPT, the evaluator must observe the child in one or more educational settings. The evaluator must make at least one contact with the child's general and/or special education teacher for the purpose of determining how the student is progressing in the general curriculum. In addition, evaluators are encouraged to make additional contacts with other involved general or special education teachers, and related service providers.

F. The evaluator must agree to provide the assessment information and results, including the results of teacher and parent checklists and surveys, in a written report to the district prior to receipt of payment for services. The evaluator will be expected to produce his/her written report within forty-five (45) school days of the provision of consent, subject to any contractual arrangement with the district or unusual circumstances which justify an extension of this timeline.

G. The evaluator must comply with all guidelines required under the Individuals with Disability Education Act (IDEA) and the Connecticut State Department of Education regulations regarding the evaluation of children with disabilities. The evaluator must also comply with all applicable confidentiality requirements under state and federal law.

It is the responsibility of the independent evaluator to contact the building principal or Director of Educational Services to arrange dates of classroom observations and discussions with school staff and to send a copy of their state certification/licenses to the Director of Educational Services prior to the initiation of the evaluation, if the district does not already have such information on file. The evaluation must use a variety of assessment tools and strategies, not a single procedure, to gather relevant functional and developmental information, including a review of prior evaluative information when such information exists. The evaluation must be provided and administered in the child's native language, if feasible, and may not be selected or administered so as to be discriminatory on a racial or cultural basis.

Standardized tests are to be used, they must be validated for the purpose for which they are used, administered by trained and knowledgeable personnel in accordance with any instructions provided by the producer of such tests and the data must be included in the evaluation report (standard/raw scores, percentile rankings and any other relevant data). A portion of the evaluation must consider the student's natural educational environment, content of the child's individualized educational program (if an IEP has been drafted for the student) and must consider school district staff's input.

The evaluator shall make recommendations that address educational interventions and strategies that will assist the student to achieve appropriate educational progress. The evaluator should not make recommendations concerning the educational placement of the child.

As part of the post-evaluation process, a meeting with the parent/guardian and a school district representative should take place to review the evaluation report. If the parent/guardian is invited to a post-evaluation meeting to review the evaluation, school district staff must also participate in such a meeting.

Location Limitations for Evaluators

Evaluators who will be considered for approval must be located within a radius of seventy-five miles. Evaluators outside of this geographic area will be approved only on an exceptional basis, provided that the parent can demonstrate the necessity of using personnel outside of this geographic area. The district shall not be responsible to provide transportation, nor pay any travel expenses, to and from the location of the evaluator. In the case of low incidence or severe disabilities where qualified evaluators may not exist in the geographic area, this requirement may be reconsidered by the district.

Additional Information

If the district has not first conducted or had the opportunity to conduct an evaluation of a child, the parent does not have a right to an independent evaluation at public cost. The district has the right to conduct the first evaluation. A parent/guardian may request only one independent evaluation at public expense for each evaluation conducted by the district.

Outside Evaluations which are Not IEEs

Evaluations and/or assessment obtained by parents/guardians which do not meet the criteria for an IEE are considered outside evaluations for which parents/guardians are not entitled to reimbursement or payment from a public school district. Nonetheless, if a parent/guardian decides to unilaterally obtain an outside evaluation and to share the results of such evaluation with the district, the school district will consider the evaluation at a Planning and Placement Team meeting, as appropriate.

The results of an independent evaluation procured by the district will be considered at a Planning and Placement Team meeting.

Questions

Please contact the Director of Educational Services with any questions regarding the criteria for independent educational evaluations.

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