



Requesting an Evaluation

A PEATC
Do You Know
Factsheet for Virginia's Parents

The Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) and state laws guarantee:

- A free, appropriate education for all children
- Placement in the least restrictive environment
- Protection for the rights of children and their parents
- Parent participation in educational planning

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Do You Know What to do if you suspect that your child has a disability?

If you suspect that your child may have a learning disability or require special education services, you should give that information in writing to the school system. The following information explains the process for requesting an evaluation for your child.

How to submit a letter of request

1. Submit the referral in writing
Include:
 - Statement that you suspect a disability
 - Request for a comprehensive evaluation
 - Date letter is written
 - Date you expect to hear back from the school
 - Your signature, address, phone numbers, email where you can be reached
2. Keep a copy and send copies to:
 - Special education director at school
 - *Principal*

First Steps to Evaluation

If your child is identified as needing extra help, a committee comprised of you and other school professionals may be formed. This committee might be called a screening committee, a child study committee, a pre-referral committee, or similar name. The committee's major purpose is to:

1. Discuss your child's learning and developmental needs
2. Consider adaptations or alternative strategies to address those needs. For example, your child may need intensive help with reading, and may qualify for time with a reading specialist.
3. Determine whether your child's learning and developmental needs are significant enough to require a formal evaluation.
4. If the committee believes a full evaluation is needed, they send that recommendation to the special education director. You are notified with a letter including an evaluation consent form. IDEA regulations require schools to make a decision about evaluation in 60 days from receipt of the written referral letter.

Sample Referral Letter

Date

Name of Principal

Name of School

Address of School

Dear (insert name of principal):

I am the parent of (insert student's name), who is in the (insert #) grade. I suspect he/she has a disability, which is affecting his/her education. Please complete a comprehensive evaluation on him/her to see if he/she has a disability.

I look forward to hearing from you by (give a 10-day deadline) to make an appointment to sign the consent forms for this evaluation. After the evaluation is complete, I look forward to working with you to determine if (insert first name of student) is qualified for special education services or services under Section 504.

Thank you for your assistance.

Sincerely,

(insert signature)

Your name

Address

Phone numbers

Email address

Cc: Special Education Director
Principal

Resources

LD Online <http://www.ldonline.org/article/14620>

Understanding Special Education.com <http://www.understandingspecialeducation.com/>

Virginia Department of Education http://www.doe.virginia.gov/special_ed/index.shtml

US Department of Education/Office of Special Education and Rehabilitative Services
<http://www2.ed.gov/about/offices/list/osers/osep/index.html>



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