

Referral Procedure for Special Education Evaluation

Laurens County Schools must conduct/review a full and individual initial evaluation before the initial provision of special education and related services to a child with a disability.

If a student is struggling academically or behaviorally, one may inquire about MTSS (Multi-Tiered System of Supports)/RtI (Response to Intervention) services. This can be done by contacting the child's teacher and requesting a referral for these services.

The MTSS/RtI program includes the use of supplemental instruction that uses research-based interventions. The MTSS/RtI team may include the child's teacher(s), parents, MTSS/RtI coordinator, school counselor, speech therapist, and/or school administrator. The RtI team will follow the child's progress and then determine if the child may need to be moved up the tiers of the RtI pyramid (Tier 1 – Tier 3) over several weeks.

As a child is moved up the RtI Tiers, the level of intensity and/or amount of interventions is increased. Academic screeners, intelligence screeners, vision/hearing screeners, communication screeners, fine/gross motor screeners, and/or behavior screeners may be completed during Tiers 1-3 to assist the RtI team in delivering appropriate interventions. Permission from parents will be required before the screeners are completed.

If the MTSS/RtI team determines that appropriate progress is not being made after a child receives interventions in Tiers 1-3, then the MTSS/RtI team may request that a child be referred for special education testing during a SST/Tier 3 meeting.

At this time, the MTSS/RtI school-level coordinator will submit the RtI referral folder to the district-level RtI coordinator for review. In a timely manner, the district-level RtI coordinator will submit the RtI referral folder to the special education director.

In a timely manner, the special education director will send the school-level MTSS/RtI coordinator a parental consent for evaluation to give to the parents. Parental consent for evaluation will be required before further testing can be completed.

Once the parental consent for evaluation is received by the school, the MTSS/RtI school-level coordinator documents the date in which the consent was returned to the school. Then the school-level coordinator forwards the signed consent to the special education director.

At this time, the special education director gives the RtI referral folder to a school psychologist. The school psychologist documents on the School Psychologist Calendar the date in which the evaluation is due. The child will receive a comprehensive evaluation and a report will be completed within 60 calendar days from the date of parental consent (excluding Christmas Holidays, Spring Break, and Summer Break). A meeting will be held to determine special education eligibility and if needed, special education services. During this time, the school psychologist will work with parents to gain information to assist in the evaluation process. More in-depth testing will be completed that may include achievement tests, intelligence tests, communication tests, fine/gross motor tests, and/or behavioral scales.

Parents will be contacted by the school to schedule an initial IEP meeting. Members of the IEP team may include the child's teacher(s), special education teachers, school counselors, school psychologists, special education staff, therapists, and/or school administrators. The purpose of this initial IEP meeting will be to review the comprehensive psychological and to determine if the child is eligible for special education. If the child is eligible, the appropriate special education services will be discussed and an IEP (Individualized Education Plan) will be developed to assist the child in his/her areas of need. Parental consent for special education services is required before a child receives special education services. Parents will receive a copy of the psychological evaluation report, eligibility report, and IEP (if one is created).

Parents have the right to request an evaluation of their child at any time. If one has any questions concerning the referral process for special education, please contact Stacey Sanders, Special Education Director, at 478-272-4767. If one has any questions concerning the MTSS/RtI process, please contact Dana Hall at 478-272-4767.