

### Referral for Special Education

Special education is “specialized instruction” provided for students (3-21) who are determined to have a specific disability as defined by Public Law 94-142 and amended by the 1997 Individuals with Disabilities Education Act. It may be provided by one or several special teacher(s). Also, related specialists will sometimes assist delivering services for a child.

If your child is struggling academically or behaviorally, you may want to inquire about RtI (Response to Intervention) services. You may do this by contacting your child’s teacher and request a referral for these services. The RtI program includes the use of supplemental instruction that uses research-based interventions. The RtI team may include your child’s teacher(s), parents, RtI coordinators, school counselor, speech therapist, and/or school administrator. The RtI team will follow your child’s progress and then determine if your 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 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 RtI team determines that appropriate progress is not being made after a child receives interventions in Tiers 1-3, then the RtI team may request that a child be referred for special education during a Tier 3 meeting. Parental consent for evaluation will be required before further testing can be completed. At the point of parental consent for evaluation, your child will receive a comprehensive evaluation and a meeting will be held to determine special education eligibility and if needed, special education services, within 60 calendar days from the date of parental consent (excluding Christmas Holidays, Spring Break, and Summer Break). 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 your 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 your child is eligible for special education. If your child is eligible, the appropriate special education services will be discussed and an IEP (Individualized Education Plan) will be developed to assist your 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 you have any questions concerning the referral process for special education, please contact Stacey Sanders, Special Education Director, at 478-272-4767. If you have any questions concerning the RtI process, please contact Stacey Sanders at 478-272-4767.