

Standards for Special Education Evaluation & Eligibility

The following standards for special education evaluation and eligibility shall be effective July 1, 2017.

DEVELOPMENTAL DELAY

I. Definition

Developmental Delay refers to children aged three years, zero months (3:0) through nine years, eleven months (9:11) who are experiencing developmental delays, as measured by appropriate diagnostic instruments and procedures, in one (1) or more of the following areas: physical (gross motor and/or fine motor), cognitive, communication, social or emotional, or adaptive development that adversely affects a child's educational performance. Other disability categories shall be used if they are more descriptive of a young child's strengths and needs. Initial eligibility as Developmental Delay shall be determined before the child's seventh birthday. The use of developmental delay as a disability category is optional for local school districts.

II. Evaluation

The characteristics identified in the Developmental Delay Definition are present.

Evaluation Procedures

A comprehensive evaluation performed by a multidisciplinary team using a variety of sources of information that are sensitive to cultural, linguistic, and environmental factors or sensory impairments to include the following:

- (1) Evaluation through an appropriate multi-measure diagnostic procedure, administered by a multi-disciplinary assessment team in all of the following areas (not only areas of suspected delays):
 - (a) Physical development (assessments should include fine and gross motor skills);
 - (b) Cognitive development;
 - (c) Communication development which includes receptive and expressive language skills combined;
 - (d) Social/emotional development; and
 - (e) Adaptive development.
- (2) Demonstration of significant delay in one or more of the above areas which is documented by:

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- (a) Performance on a standardized developmental evaluation instrument which yields a 1.5 standard deviations below the mean (i.e., approximately 6th-7th) percentile or less) with consideration of the measure's standard error of measure (SEM); or when standard scores for the instrument used are not available, a 25% delay based on chronological age in two or more of the developmental areas;
 - (b) Performance on a standardized developmental evaluation instrument which yields 2.0 standard deviations below the mean (i.e., 2nd % percentile or less) with consideration of the measure's SEM; or when standard scores for the instrument used are not available, a 40% delay based on chronological age in one of the developmental areas; or
 - (c) When one area is determined to be deficit by 2.0 standard deviations (i.e., 2nd % percentile or less) with consideration of the measure's SEM or 40% of the child's chronological age, the existence of other disability categories that are more descriptive of the child's learning style shall be ruled out.
- (3) Evaluation by appropriate team member(s) of the following:
- (a) A review of any existing records or data;
 - (b) Interview with the parent to gain the child's developmental history and identify the noted strengths and needs in the child's development;
 - (c) Measurement of current developmental skills to include at least one (1) individually administered standardized assessment;
 - (d) Observation by a qualified professional in an environment developmentally appropriate for the child which may include the school, child-care agency, and/or home/community to document delayed or atypical development; and
- (4) Documentation, including observation and/or assessment, of how Developmental Delay adversely affects the child's educational performance in his/her learning environment and the need for specialized instruction and related services (i.e., to include academic and/or nonacademic areas).

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- (5) A comprehensive re-evaluation for continued eligibility must be conducted for re-evaluations that occur after the age of seven (7) in order to consider the existence of other disability categories that are more descriptive of the child's learning (i.e. a file review for continued eligibility is not permissible).

Evaluation Participants

Information shall be gathered from the following persons in the evaluation of Developmental Delay:

- (1) The parent;
- (2) The child's general education classroom teacher (with a child of less than school age, an individual qualified to teach a child of his/her age);
- (3) A licensed special education teacher; and
- (4) One or more of the following persons (as appropriate):
 - (a) A licensed school psychologist, licensed psychologist, licensed psychological examiner (under the direct supervision of a licensed psychologist), licensed senior psychological examiner, or licensed psychiatrist;
 - (b) A licensed speech/language pathologist;
 - (c) A licensed related services provider; and/or
 - (d) Other personnel, as indicated.