



How do I initiate special education testing?

□ 1. Do you have concerns about your child's learning in school? Do you think a special education evaluation would be appropriate? Consider consulting your child, his/her teachers, adjustment counselor, principal, and medical and mental health team to discuss your concerns. They may have suggestions on whether an IEP, 504 or another service would be more helpful.

□ 2. As the education decision maker, you can send a request for an evaluation to your child's school. In your request, you can explain which tests you would like done. To make the process more efficient, you can explain that this signed document acts as your consent and testing may occur immediately. Check out our sample letters.

Think about what your child should be tested for, and consider consulting other people who know your child well in the school setting for suggestions. Instead of selecting all the evaluations possible, you should request evaluations that relate to the concerns you have for your child. Learn more about the types of evaluations [here](#):

- Cognitive (Wechsler Intelligence Scale for Children (WISC – IV); Stanford Binet Intelligence Scale)
- Achievement (Woodcock-Johnson IV)
- Speech & language
- Occupational therapy
- Psychological - social/emotional rating scales (BASC, Connor's Scale)
- Functional behavioral assessment
- Applied Behavior Analysis
- Exposure to trauma

□ 3. When the school receives your signed consent, it will initiate testing. This testing can be done in one sitting, but it most likely spans a few days. Testing must be completed within **30 school days** from when the school received your signed consent to initiate testing.

□ 4. What can you expect afterward? You can request a summary of the evaluation **2 days prior to the team meeting**. We recommend that you reach out to the special education office in advance to inform them you are requesting these documents. You may be expected to pick up hard copies of the summary at the school. Keep in mind



that this document must be accessible to you. If you need it to be translated to another language, please inform the special education office beforehand. The team meeting should take place within **45 school days** from when the school received your signed consent to initiate testing. Check out our handout “How do I prepare for a team meeting?”

□ 5. During the *eligibility meeting*, the child’s eligibility for special education services will be decided on. If your child is eligible, an IEP is written and submitted to you for your review. You can accept, [partially accept](#), or fully reject the proposal. Your signature is **needed** on the IEP signature page for the school to provide any service. If your child is ineligible and you challenge this finding, there are next steps you can take. Find out more [here](#). Keep in mind that if your child does not qualify for an IEP, he/she may still qualify for a 504 plan.

Information was gathered from the resources below. If you want to learn more, check out the following:

CASA: Comprehensive guide to IEP for foster parents

- Check resource folder

Bureau of Special Education Appeals Massachusetts: Includes information on appealing an IEP

- <https://www.mass.gov/orgs/bureau-of-special-education-appeals>

MGH The Clay Center for Healthy Young Minds: Provides an overview of the types of evaluations that can be requested

- <https://www.mghclaycenter.org/parenting-concerns/grade-school/how-to-get-a-co-re-evaluation-completed-through-your-school-district-2/>

Understood: Guide on how to partially accept pieces of a proposed IEP

- <https://www.understood.org/en/school-learning/your-childs-rights/if-losing-services/how-to-consent-to-some-parts-of-an-iep-and-not-others>