

HOWARD GARDNER MULTIPLE INTELLIGENCE CHARTER SCHOOL

	Special Education	SP22-0122
	Screening and Evaluations for Students with Disabilities	ADOPTED DATE: January 18, 2022 REVIEWED DATE: February 18, 2025 REVISED DATE: September 15, 2026

Purpose

The Board of Trustees recognizes that in accordance with applicable state and federal laws, including Chapter 711 of Title 22 of the Pennsylvania Code and the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), every eligible child has the right to a Free and Appropriate Public Education (FAPE).

The Board adopts this policy to define the minimum requirements for screening; educational evaluations conducted to determine eligibility for special education services, instructional levels and programming requirements for students with disabilities, including functional behavioral assessments; and requirements for independent educational evaluations.

Authority

The Board shall adopt a system of screening that may include intervening services and must be designed to accomplish identification and initial screening for students prior to school referral for a special education evaluation. The system shall provide support to staff to improve working effectively with students in the general education curriculum, identify students who may require special education services and programs, and must include hearing and vision screening and screening at reasonable intervals to determine whether students are performing at grade appropriate levels in core academic subjects. (See: School's Annual Special Education Notice on website at: <https://howardgardnerschool.com/policies-procedures/> for further information and contacts for questions/requests.)

Intervening services shall comply with the requirements of state and federal law and regulations in order to address academic concerns or behaviors that may be impeding success, but which can be resolved through research-based intervention programs in the regular education setting.

The Board authorizes the use of functional behavioral assessments (FBAs) as an evaluation to gather information to understand the purpose of the student's behaviors and to assist with developing a positive Behavior Support Plan. FBAs must be conducted when:

1. A student's behavior interferes with their learning or the learning of others and information is necessary to provide appropriate educational programming.
2. A student's behavior violates the Code of Student Conduct and is determined to be a manifestation of a student's disability.
3. A student is placed in an interim alternative educational placement for a qualifying reason permitting such placement for up to forty-five (45) school days for certain offenses.
4. The school contacts law enforcement regarding a student who already has a positive Behavior Support Plan.

FBAs may also constitute part of the initial evaluation to determine eligibility for special education.

The school shall comply with requirements of state and federal laws and regulations when conducting

evaluations.

An appropriate evaluation of a student, whether conducted by school staff or individuals not employed by the school, shall consist of the administration of all testing and the use of all assessment procedures required to determine the existence of all legally defined disabilities reasonably suspected by school staff, parents/guardians, or the evaluator. An appropriate evaluation shall assist in determining the content of the IEP to enable a student with a disability to be involved in and progress in the general curriculum.

A student shall be assessed in all areas related to the suspected disability including, as appropriate, health, vision, hearing, social and emotional status, general intelligence, academic performance, communicative status and motor abilities.

A re-evaluation of a student who currently has an IEP shall be conducted as required by state and federal law and regulations.

Guidelines

Parent/Guardian Requests

Parents/Guardians may request an evaluation at any time. The parent/guardian request must be in writing. If a request is made orally to any professional employee or administrator, that individual shall provide a copy of the permission to evaluate request form to the parents/guardians within ten (10) calendar days of the oral request.

Upon receipt of the parent request form, a permission to evaluate consent form will be provided to the parent/guardian for signature within 10 calendar days.

The evaluation shall be completed and a copy of the evaluation report presented to parents/guardians no later than sixty (60) calendar days after receipt of written parent/guardian consent for an evaluation, exclusive of the period following the last day of the spring school term to the first day of the subsequent fall term.

Appropriate Evaluations

An appropriate evaluation shall use a variety of assessment tools and strategies to gather relevant functional, developmental and academic information about a student.

An appropriate evaluation shall include:

1. Testing and assessment techniques required in light of information currently available from previous evaluations.
2. Information from parents/guardians and school staff familiar with the performance of the student.
3. The student's education records.

To the extent that the results of such instructional assessments are inconsistent with the results of norm or criterion-referenced testing and assessments that the evaluator has administered, the evaluator shall explain the reason for the inconsistency in their report, if possible.

When assessing the presence of a specific learning disability, the evaluation shall be consistent with procedures adopted by the school and comply with state and federal law and regulations.

Testing and assessment procedures shall be selected and administered to yield valid measurement or assessment of the construct or quality they purport to measure or assess. The evaluator shall administer any testing or assessment procedures in a manner consistent with the requirements and recommendations of the publisher of the test or procedure and in compliance with applicable and authoritatively recognized professional principles and ethical tenets. S/He shall report any factor that might affect the validity of any results obtained.

All assessments and evaluation materials shall be selected and administered so as not to be discriminatory on a racial or cultural basis. Where feasible, assessments and evaluations shall be administered in a language and form most likely to provide accurate information about the student.

The evaluation shall include an observation of the student in an educational setting, unless the student is not currently in such a setting. The evaluator shall obtain information concerning the performance of the student directly from at least one (1) current teacher of the student, unless s/he does not have a current teacher.

The evaluator shall hold an active certification that qualifies the evaluator to conduct that type of evaluation. If certification is not issued for the particular area of professional practice in which the evaluator is lawfully engaged, the evaluator shall hold such license or other credentials as required for the area of professional practice under state law.

The evaluator shall prepare and sign a full report of the evaluation containing:

1. Clear explanation of the testing and assessment results.
2. Complete summary of all test scores, including, for all standardized testing administered, all applicable full scale or battery scores; domain or composite scores; and subtest scores reported in standard, scaled, or T-score format.
3. Complete summary of all information obtained or reviewed from sources other than testing conducted by the evaluator.
4. Identification of all special education and related services needs and relevant information that directly assists persons in determining the educational needs of the student.
5. Specific, individualized recommendations for consideration by the IEP team for educational programming and placement to enable the student to participate as appropriate in the general education curriculum in the least restrictive environment, as defined by federal and state law and regulations.

Re-Evaluations

Re-evaluations shall be conducted within the timeframes required by state and federal laws and regulations unless the parent/guardian and the school agree in writing that a re-evaluation is unnecessary. For students with intellectual disability, the re-evaluation cannot be waived. The group of qualified professionals that reviews the evaluation materials to determine whether the child is a student with a disability shall include a certified school psychologist when evaluating a student for autism, emotional disturbance, intellectual disability, multiple disabilities, other health impairment, specific learning disability and traumatic brain injury.

Copies of the re-evaluation report shall be disseminated to parents/guardians at least ten (10) days prior to the meeting of the IEP team unless this requirement is waived in writing.

