

Getting through the Gate

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March 18, 2021

WEBINAR:

Getting through the Gate: Special Education Eligibility

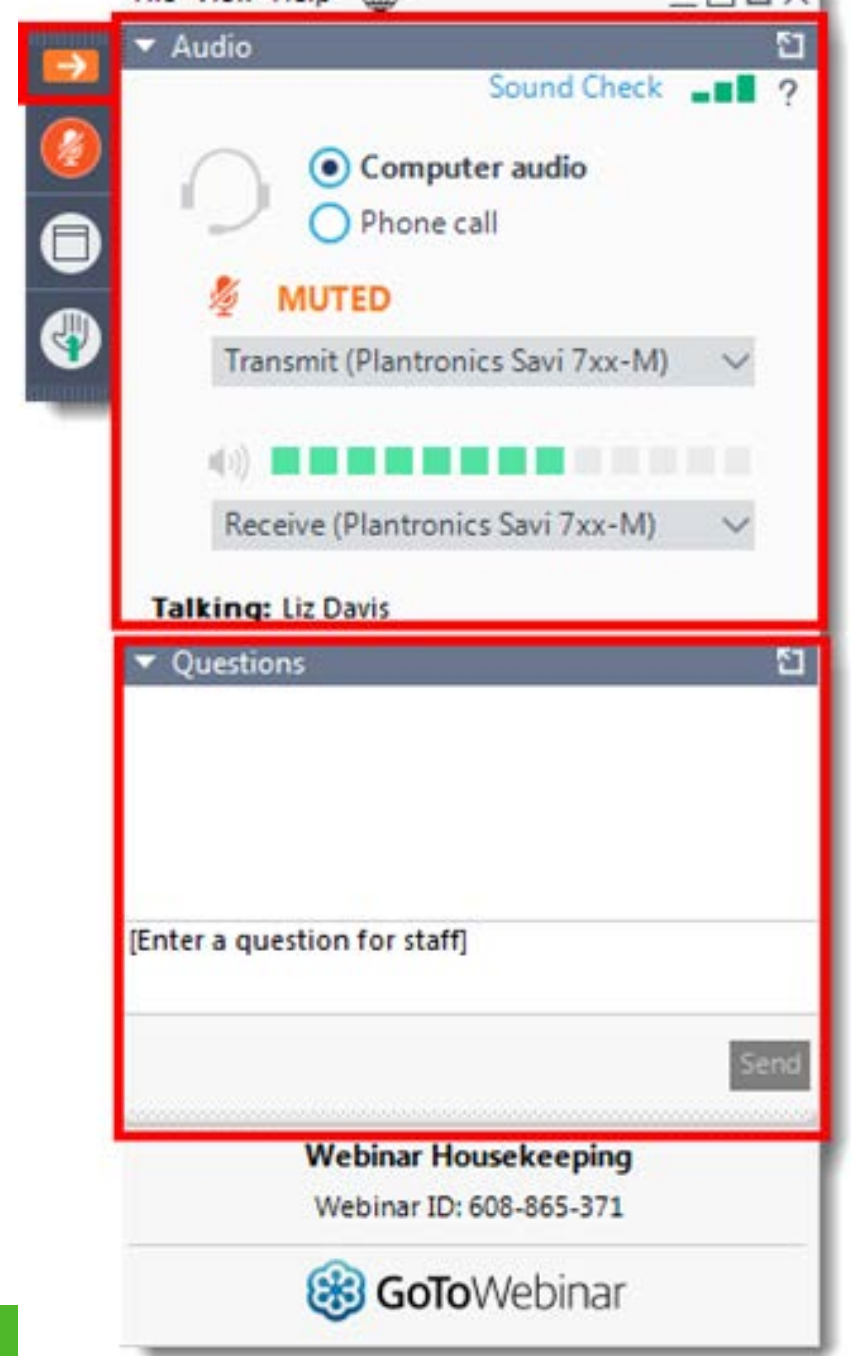


March 18th, 7 PM

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Housekeeping

- Use **Questions** pod to pose questions and comment; others will not see your questions/comments.
- Download handouts from HANDOUTS pod.
- All recordings, slides and handouts will be on FFF website under RESOURCES: WEBINARS by Thursday.
- Email info@formedfamiliesforward.org if you need certificate of attendance



The screenshot displays the GoToWebinar interface. On the left, a vertical sidebar contains icons for navigation: a right-pointing arrow (highlighted with a red box), a microphone, a document, and a hand. The main area features two pods: the 'Audio' pod at the top and the 'Questions' pod below it. The 'Audio' pod shows 'Computer audio' selected, a 'MUTED' status, and a volume slider. The 'Questions' pod has a text input field with the placeholder '[Enter a question for staff]' and a 'Send' button. At the bottom, the webinar title 'Webinar Housekeeping' and ID '608-865-371' are shown, along with the GoToWebinar logo.

Formed Families Forward - who we are...

- A family-led resource center in Northern Virginia supporting foster, adoptive and kinship families who are raising children, youth & young adults with special needs, and professionals who work with our families.
- We offer free training, consultations to families, events, resources, and systems navigation. Also - peer support groups; webinars; virtual trainings; child care program; videos and other resources.
- Family partner to Virginia Tiered Systems of Supports (VTSS; a VDOE project)

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POLL

What's your role(s):

- Adoptive parent
- Kinship caregiver
- Foster or resource parent
- Professional
- Birth parent

Chat in any additional roles (in Q & A box)

What is Special Education?

Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA)

- Specially designed instruction
- At no cost to parents
- To meet the unique needs of a child with disabilities



IDEA Guarantee:

- A free, appropriate public education for all children (FAPE)
- Placement in the least restrictive environment
- Protection for the rights of children and their ‘parents’
- ‘Parent’ participation in educational planning

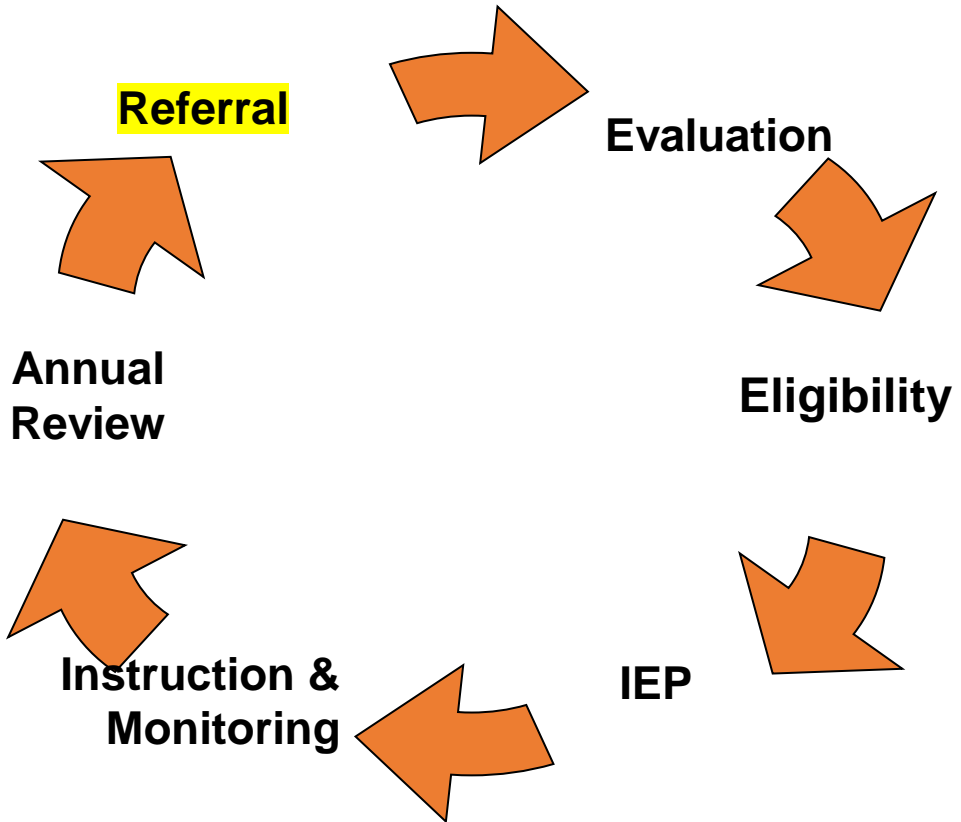


Your experience with specialized services:

Mark all that apply:

- Am concerned about a child but no referral yet.
- Referred a child for evaluation but was not found eligible.
- Have now or in past a child with an IEP.
- Have now or in past a child with a 504 plan.

The Special Education Cycle



From the beginning, there are steps to getting a program for a child with disabilities.

Referral

- Children may be referred through a screening process, or by school staff, the parent(s), or other individuals.
 - may be written, electronic, or oral
 - a paper or electronic trail is recommended!
 - Divisions may have a form online to complete
- Within 3 days, the school administrator or designee must:
 - initiate the evaluation process (this is unusual); OR
 - require the school based team to review and respond; OR
 - deny the request (if denied, prior written notice must be given to the parents, including the right to appeal)
- Referral starts the clock- All evaluations are to be completed and eligibility decisions made within 65 business days

When a Referral is Received by School

- Special educator administrator determines need for a team review and respond to the referral request.
- The team is comprised of the same individuals as an IEP team and other qualified individuals as appropriate (8VAC 20-80-70).
- Summary of discussion and decision of the group is documented.
- IF group determines that a disability is suspected and an evaluation is warranted, school proceeds with evaluation
- IF a disability is not suspected and an evaluation is not warranted, school provides family with prior written notice, including information regarding the determination and the reasons for it.

Evaluation

- An **Evaluation** is the process of collecting information about a referred student's learning needs through a series of individual tests, observations, and talks with the student, the family and others.
- This information is used to determine whether the child has a disability as well as the nature and extent of the special education and related services that the child needs.
- Conducted at no cost to parents.
- Parents are members of the team reviewing evaluation data and deciding whether information is needed.



If Disability is Suspected, Evaluation:

- Team = IEP team and other qualified professionals
- Team reviews:
 - Evaluations and information provided by the parent(s) of the child;
 - Current classroom-based, local, or state assessments and classroom-based observations;
 - Observations by teachers and related services providers

Then, team identifies what additional data, if any, are needed to determine:

- (1) Whether the child is, or continues to be, a child with a disability;
- (2) The present educational needs of the child;
- (3) The child's present level of academic achievement and related developmental needs;
- (4) Whether the child needs or continues to need special education and related services; and
- (5) Whether any additions or modifications to the special education and related services are needed to enable the child to meet goals.

Document the summary of discussion and decision.

The group determines that:

- Additional data are needed to determine whether the child is or continues to be a child with a disability and to determine the child's educational needs and the other matters set forth above. Family must give consent. OR
- No additional data are needed to determine whether the child is or continues to be a child with a disability and to determine the child's educational needs and the other matters set forth above. School gives family prior written notice, including information regarding the determination and the reasons for it.

Areas of Evaluation

- An **Educational** Assessment to determine level of academic achievement and the nature of any problems related to learning
 - special educator
 - individually administered, standardized tests of reading, writing, & math (ie. Woodcock Johnson Tests of Achievement)
 - classroom based assessments
 - school/system wide measures (i.e., SOLs, PALS)

- A **Sociocultural** Assessment to obtain social, developmental, adaptive and health history information and any possible effect on learning
 - school social worker
 - interviews, record review
 - adaptive behavior scales (i.e., Vineland)

Areas of Evaluation

- A **Psychological** Assessment to determine strengths and weaknesses in areas that may include: social, motor, emotional, adaptive and intellectual ability
 - school psychologist
 - individually administered, standardized test of intelligence (i.e., WISC-V, WAIS, WPPSI; Stanford-Binet; WJ Tests of Cognitive Abilities; DAS)
 - social-emotional & behavioral functioning (i.e., BASC)
 - processing skills (visual-motor integration, phonological processing, visual-perceptual skills)
- A **Speech/Language** Assessment to determine current level of functioning in voice, fluency, articulation and/or language
- A **Developmental** Assessment to determine cognitive, perceptual, motor, and social functioning

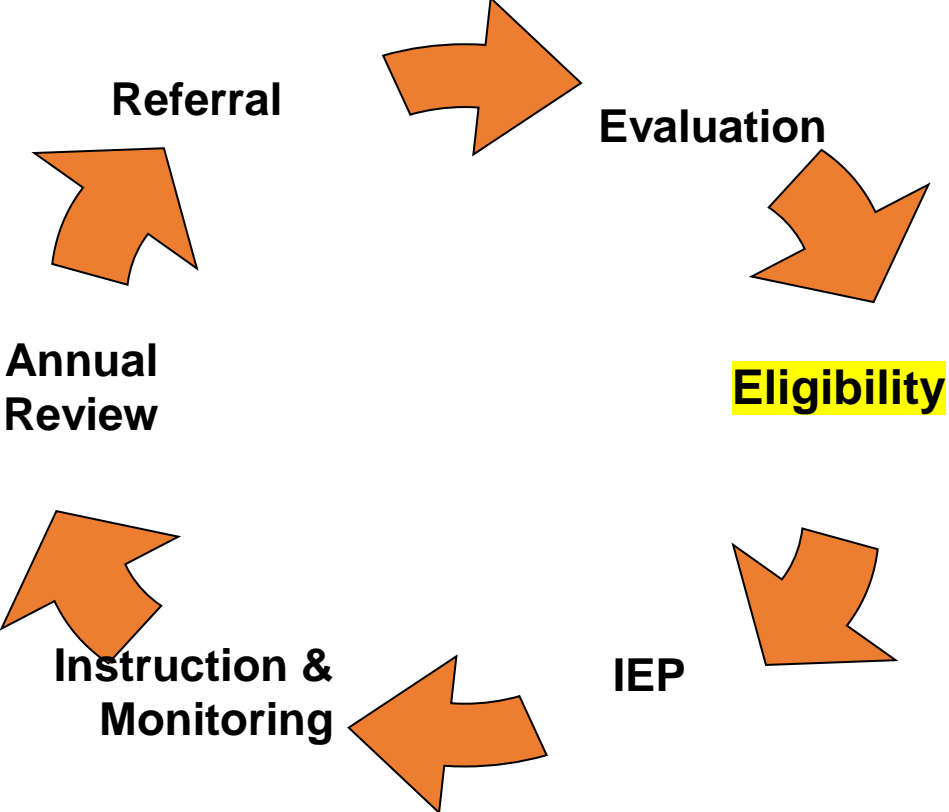
More Areas of Evaluation

- A **Hearing Screening**- This is a required component of all initial referrals for students suspected of a disability.
- A **Vision Screening**
- A **Medical Report** completed by a licensed physician to rule out and/or identify any medical problems related to the suspected disability.
- An **Occupational Therapy** Assessment
- A **Physical Therapy** Assessment
- A **Functional Vision** Assessment
- **Observation** (consent required for initial evaluations only)
- **Other**

Independent Educational Evaluation

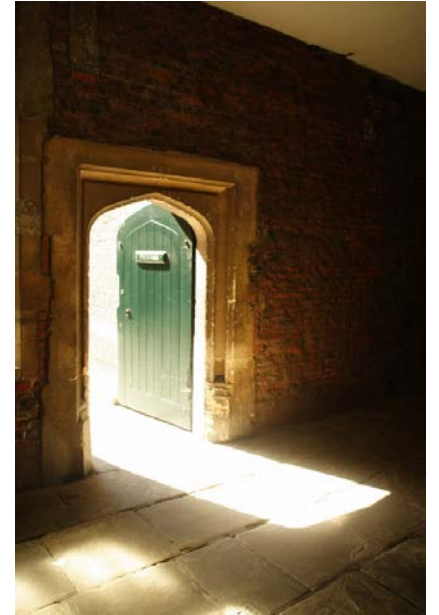
- If parents disagree with a test given during their child's evaluation process, they have the right to request an **independent educational evaluation (IEE)** conducted by a qualified person who does not work for the school.
- Parents may request that the school pay for the IEE. However, the school may ask for a due process hearing to show that its initial evaluation is appropriate.
- Even if it is decided that the school does not have to pay for it, parents have the right to an IEE.
- If parents pay for the IEE, they determine whether or not to share the information in the IEE with the school.

Eligibility



Eligibility – Making it Through the Gate

- Child must be identified under one or more categories to receive special education and related services under IDEA (IEP)
- But categories don't determine goals, services, or placement!
- Present level of performance and goals should guide decisions about instruction and placement.



Who is Eligible?

Children with:

- Autism
- Deafness
- Deaf-blindness
- Developmental delay *
- Emotional disability
- Hearing impairment, including deafness
- Intellectual disability
- Multiple disability
- Orthopedic impairment
- Other health impairment, including ADHD
- Specific learning disability
- Speech or language impairment
- Traumatic brain injury
- Visual impairment, including blindness



* Use of DD for children age 3 through 9 is at discretion of state and local school systems.

Before the Eligibility Meeting

- Definitions of **each category** are available in regulations: *8VAC20-81-80. Eligibility (J) through (W)*
- Request an **interpretive conference or other consultation/information** that allows team to determine eligibility.

At the Eligibility Meeting

- Parents/caregivers are members of the eligibility team and receive documentation of the determination of eligibility at no cost.
- The eligibility group shall work toward **consensus**. If the group does not reach consensus and the decision does not reflect a particular member's conclusion, then the group member shall submit a written statement presenting that member's conclusions.

8VAC20-81-80. Eligibility (D)(7)

Formed Families Forward – Stay in Touch!

PLEASE COMPLETE EVALUATION right after we end.

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