

Minnesota Department of Education

1500 Highway 36 West, MN 55113-4266

651-582-8200 TTY: 651-582-8201 education.state.mn.us

Q & A: Part C Evaluations

The Minnesota Department of Education (MDE) Division of Compliance and Assistance has developed this document to address questions raised by parents and school districts regarding evaluations in Part C.

Question 1: Must districts include a description of the proposed evaluation in the Written Prior Notice before completing an eligibility determination?

Answer: Yes. The evaluation proposed must be described in the contents of the Written Prior Notice proposing evaluation. The Written Prior Notice must include sufficient detail to inform the parent of the proposed action and the reason for the proposal. See 34 C.F.R. § 303.403(b).

Question 2: What must the Written Prior Notice say if the child has a diagnosed physical or mental condition that has a high probability of resulting in Developmental Delay (DD)?

Answer: The plan must include any action proposed to determine the child's initial eligibility. If the team plans to administer an evaluation instrument, it must be described. If the team plans to review existing data to determine eligibility, the plan must reflect the proposal used to determine the child's level of functioning in each required developmental area. See 34 C.F.R. § 303.322(c)(3)(ii).

Question 3: Must the Family Directed Assessment be included on the evaluation plan?

Answer: No. The evaluation plan must include any procedures used by appropriately qualified personnel to determine a child's initial and continuing eligibility. See 34 C.F.R. § 303.322(b)(1). Assessments are intended to be utilized on an ongoing basis for establishing the strengths and needs of the child; the resources, priorities and concerns of the family; and the support and services required to facilitate the family's capacity to enhance the child's development. See 34 C.F.R. § 303.322(b)(2).

Question 4: Where must the Family Directed Assessment results be documented?

Answer: If the family agrees to participate in the Family Directed Assessment, results must be documented in the Individual Family Service Plan (IFSP), since the IFSP is to be based on the results of both the Family Directed Assessment and on the results of an evaluation of the child. See 34 C.F.R. § 303.340(b)(2).2

Question 5: Where must the results of the evaluation of child development be documented?

Answer: The IFSP must include a summary of the child's present developmental level in physical, cognitive, communication, social or emotional, and adaptive development, based on "professionally acceptable objective criteria." See 34 C.F.R. § 303.344(a).

Authority: 34 C.F.R. §§ 303.322(b)(1); 303.322(b)(2); 303.322(c)(3)(ii); 303.403(b); 303.340(b)(2); 303.344(a).

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