



Referral Process for Consideration of Placement in a Specialized Program for Preschool Students

The following process is for pre-k students enrolled in a general education classroom, an inclusive program as a typically developing peer or for walk-in services. School teams should follow the SST process for preschool age students before considering a referral for special education services to be provided in a specialized program.

Please note that school teams may pursue the special education process for students at the building level if placement in a specialized program (inclusive special ed pre k, Challenges, Rock Creek) is not a consideration.

A referral for additional testing and consideration for special education services may be pursued following the steps below when determining initial eligibility:

1. Hold an IEP meeting at your school to discuss student concerns.
 - a. *If appropriate, recommend assessments in the areas of need. Developmental, psychological and speech/language assessments are typically recommended. Additional assessments would be recommended in any other areas of concern, as determined by the IEP team.*
 - b. *Please alert the Child Find Coordinator (terri.ridenour@fcps.org) to the situation.*
 - c. *Assessments are to be completed by school team.*
 - d. *Initial eligibility meeting is scheduled at the school within 60 days.*
2. If at that meeting, and based upon collected data, it appears that placement in the general education setting may not be appropriate, document in the Prior Written Notice:
 - a. *The educational disability that the team determined was most appropriate.*
 - b. *And based upon the reviewed information, a referral will be sent to Child Find for the development of an initial IEP and appropriate services and placement.*
3. Immediately following the meeting, complete the Child Find referral form.
4. Return the referral form to the Child Find Office (Lincoln A, 250 Madison St.) with the IEP notes, assessment reports and any other collected data.
5. A Child Find IEP meeting will convene within 30 days. Child Find staff will develop a draft IEP and send it home to the family prior to the IEP meeting. The draft IEP will be developed/reviewed, services and school placement determined at that meeting. School staff from the referring school and if appropriate, to the placement school where services may be considered will be invited.

It is critical that you are in contact with the Child Find Coordinator as early in this process as possible so that the appropriate meeting may be scheduled within compliance guidelines.

A referral for additional testing and consideration for direct special education services and/or placement in a specialized program, may be pursued following the steps below when the child is already identified (typically receiving walk-in type speech services):

1. Hold an IEP meeting at your school to discuss student concerns.
 - a. *If appropriate, recommend assessments in the areas of need. Developmental, psychological and speech/language assessments are typically recommended. Update*

previously completed assessments as appropriate upon recommendation of the IEP team. Please alert the Child Find Coordinator (terri.ridenour@fcps.org) to the situation.

b. Assessments are to be completed by school team.

2. At that meeting, document in the Prior Written Notice that:
 - a. *a referral will be sent to Child Find.*
 - b. *assessments will be reviewed and the need for additional IEP goals considered and change in services will be considered.*
3. Immediately complete the Child Find referral form.
4. Return the referral form to the Child Find Office (Lincoln A, 250 Madison St.) with the IEP notes, permission to test form and any other appropriate data.
5. Forward assessment reports, as well as therapy progress reports, to the Child Find office as soon as completed.
6. A Child Find IEP meeting will convene within 90 days. Child Find staff will develop additional IEP goals as appropriate. Child Find will send assessment reports and the draft IEP to the family prior to the meeting.

In preparation for the Child Find meeting:

- Send a copy of all updated assessment reports, as well as therapy progress reports, to the Child Find office as soon as completed. **These should be received prior to the meeting.**
- As the child is already receiving services:
 - Open an addendum or a work on next within OIEP to update present levels based on assessment information and observations for the areas in which you are the service provider.
 - Update goals in the areas **for which you are the service provider**, if appropriate.

It is critical that you are in contact with the Child Find Coordinator as early in this process as possible so that the appropriate meeting may be scheduled within compliance guidelines.