

## **Information for:** **Letter to Request Special Education Evaluation for Eligibility**

In order to obtain an evaluation from your child's school, you MUST request this in writing for them to proceed. Below are the steps you should take to complete this process.

- Address to school principal.
- Copies to Special Education Director, Coordinator, etc. (Liaison between school and district administration), and to your advocate. Note cc's (carbon copy) on the letter.
- Send letter registered mail, return receipt requested.
- Indicate the situation that prompts your letter/concern, as my son is failing two classes or below grade level in three classes or has been diagnosed with ADHD or bipolar that I believe interferes with learning, or spends three hours on homework he/she cannot finish when he/she is only in second grade, or has sensory integration issues...etc.
- You believe that his/her grades will continue to decline without additional educational assistance.
- Request that the child is evaluated immediately for special education eligibility.
- State that you are NOT interested in a student or building level review, which is the school's prerogative but that is not sufficient to satisfy your request.
- You are making this as a "direct" written request, as stated in the Exceptional Children's Education Act (ECEA) regulations at 4.01 (2) (c) (ii) for special education evaluation.
- You should add that you want to sign off on the "permission to evaluate" as soon as possible to avoid additional delays or you can take advantage of the Prior Notice and Consent for Evaluation form available on the Colorado Department of Education website, [www.cde.state.co.us/cdesped/iep\\_forms](http://www.cde.state.co.us/cdesped/iep_forms), if you prefer. On the website, scroll down to Eligibility and click on Prior Notice and Consent for Evaluation. (You can download the form and send it along with your letter, already signed.)
- Include that you understand that the 60 calendar days that the school district has to complete the evaluation does not start until after you have signed the Prior Notice and Consent for Evaluation form, so you want to sign that quickly, or as indicated above, include a signed form with your letter.
- Then the usual "thank you" and so forth.
- Make a copy of the letter for your child's file at home.
- It is a good idea to send a copy of the letter to your advocate and the district's special education coordinator. Document that you have copied those people at the end of your letter.

Parents can make any additions/deletions/changes, etc., as long as some of the important phrasing remains. See the yellow highlights.

Parents should be aware that the school district may invite them to a meeting to discuss other options. The school might be able to implement a student or building level review or Response to Intervention (RTI) strategies that may alleviate the problem *instead* of an evaluation for special education eligibility. If the parent is adamant that they want the testing, then they need to advise the school that the parent is willing to sign off on the permission to assess but does not need to attend a meeting other than the initial IEP, where test results and eligibility are discussed. The school psychologist is usually the first person that the parent will speak with to learn about parent rights, to sign the permission and to answer some questions about the child's gestational growth, mother's pregnancy, child's birth, and developmental milestones, as well as school concerns, parent effort to address concerns, etc.

The educational advocate should be certain to explain parent rights, provide information related to IDEA and ECEA, the evaluation process, the results for determining eligibility, and the initial IEP and subsequent annuals, triennials, etc., offer information and referral that may be helpful. Educate and empower!

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