What is Special Education?

The provision of special education and related services and other classroom supports are based on federal laws, the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act and related state laws. IDEA and Section 504 protect eligible students with disabilities and ensure they are provided with an Individualized Education Program (IEP) or 504 Plan designed to meet their unique needs. Both IDEA and Section 504 provide safeguards to ensure that students receive, as part of a team-based process, a comprehensive school-based evaluation before an IEP or 504 Plan is implemented.

COMMON MISPERSPECTIONS

A medical or mental health diagnosis always signals the need for special education and/or related services under the IDEA or Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act.

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A School Team May Suspect an Educational Disability when...

A student is not making academic progress despite being provided with intensive research-based inventions.

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When is a School Based Evaluation Warranted?

When the school district or a parent suspects a disability, a child’s abilities, academic achievement and educational functioning will be evaluated. Any medical diagnosis will also be considered, however, a medical diagnosis does not, in and of itself, mean that a child is eligible for special education services nor does a medical diagnosis necessarily mean that an evaluation for special education services is warranted in every circumstance.

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“The hub of our community; committed to a culture of caring! We innovate. We create. We personalize education for all!”
COMMON MISPERCEPTIONS (CONT.)
- Failing or low grades, lack of performance or behavioral concerns automatically indicate that a student has an educational disability. Many factors contribute to a student’s performance and achievement.

WHEN IS A SCHOOL BASED EVALUATION WARRANTED? (CONT.)
- When a struggling student is provided Response to Intervention (RtI) and does not make adequate progress after an appropriate period of time, a referral for evaluation will be made. Data generated from interventions is considered by the team to determine if an educational disability is suspected.
- Only the parent/legal guardian is able to give written consent to begin an evaluation.

A SCHOOL TEAM MAY SUSPECT AN EDUCATIONAL DISABILITY WHEN...
(CONT.)
- A student is not progressing despite the provision of social, emotional or behavioral supports and interventions.
- A student’s health is adversely impacting his or her educational performance.

What if a Disability is Not Suspected under IDEA?
- The student can be evaluated for a Section 504 Plan.
- Response to Intervention (RtI) can be implemented.
- If a community provider would like to visit or collaborate with our school teams, we are always open to input.
- Meet with the child’s teacher, counselor or principal to discuss additional supports for the student.

Cuyahoga Falls City Schools
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