

## Requesting an Evaluation from the School

If you feel your child needs a special education plan (usually called a Section 504 Plan or an Individualized Educational Program or IEP), be sure to request that from the school *in writing*.

### Steps in the IEP Process

1. Parent submits a written request for an evaluation to the school. To get you started, we have copied a sample letter below. Doctors cannot start the process with the school. Only a parent or school staff can do that. This can be a good time to submit a copy of the neuropsychological evaluation report, too.
2. Within **30** days of the parent request, the school must:
  - Determine whether school staff suspects an educational disability. The school has rules for what can be called a disability and what cannot. Those may be different from what doctors think. Staff often meets with parents at this point, but not always.
  - Tell the parent in writing whether they suspect such a disability. This is officially done with a Prior Written Notice (also called PR-01). The PR-01 in effect says “Yes, we suspect an educational disability because...” or “No, we do not suspect an educational disability because...”. The PR-01 must happen regardless of whether staff met with parents.
3. If the school does not suspect an official educational disability, then the school district is not legally bound to do more evaluation. Even so, it is considered “best practice” to offer some form of help if there is an educational problem, even if it does not qualify as a disability. When there is a problem, interventions can (and should) be provided extensively without an IEP
4. If the school does suspect an educational disability, the district begins a formal process known as an Evaluation Team Response (ETR). The district has **60** days from the PR-01 to complete the ETR.
5. If the ETR determines the child has an educational disability, the school has **30** days to set up an IEP.

### Sample Written Request for Evaluation (you should fill in the parts that are in parentheses)

(Today's Date)

Dear Mr. or Ms. (School Contact),

I am writing to request that my child, (child's name), be assessed for special education and related services. I am concerned that he/she is having problems in school and believe that he/she needs special services in order to succeed and learn in school. (Child's name) is in (number) grade, (teacher's name) is his/her teacher.

I am concerned because (child's name) is having trouble in these areas: (list your concerns). We have tried the following interventions and supports to help: (list the interventions and supports that have already been attempted).

This letter serves as my formal written request and consent for the educational evaluation of my child. Please provide me with the names and phone numbers of the people who will be forwarded this letter. I would also like the name and the number of the individual who will be coordinating the evaluation team.

I can be contacted by phone or email

(Your name)

(Your email address)

(Your phone number)

Thank you, and I look forward to working collaboratively with you for (child's name).

Best regards,

(Signature and date)