

## Special Ed 101 for parents:

1. Referrals: if you have a concern about your child's ability to learn and really feel something needs to happen, here are the guidelines:
  - a. Talk to your child's teacher. Teachers are trained to provide accommodations and interventions to see if those things can address the problem without special education.
  - b. If you still feel there is something that hasn't been addressed, call the Special Education Director. She will listen to your problem and help determine a plan of action, whether that is more intensive intervention or testing for special education services.
  - c. You also have the right to request a multi-factored evaluation by writing a letter to the Director or the Superintendent requesting such an evaluation.
2. Legal rights: You have the right to request an evaluation. We have the right to refuse to do it if we do not see any evidence that there is a legitimate reason for doing it. At that point, if you still feel strongly that testing is needed, tell the Director that you insist on an evaluation. The majority of the time an agreement can be reached about the next step. However, if you feel you are not being heard, you can call the Ohio Department of Exceptional Children for guidance on how to proceed. The parent's handbook of rights in relation to special education is *Whose IDEA is This?* which can be found at the ODE website at: <http://education.ohio.gov/Topics/Special-Education/Whose-IDEA-Is-This-A-Parent-s-Guide-to-the-Individ>
  - a. In that document, you will find out that we cannot test your child without your permission.
  - b. You will also find out that we cannot initially place your child in any special education services or program without your consent.
  - c. A request for testing starts a legal procedure, in which we have 30 days to respond to your request. If testing goes forward, we have 30 days to get your consent, and 60 (calendar) days from receiving your consent to completing the evaluation.
  - d. At the end of the evaluation, there will be a meeting to review the Evaluation Team Report (ETR).
  - e. If your child is found eligible for services (and you agree), we then have 30 days to get together with you to write an Individualized Education Plan (IEP), which outlines the goals and services that the school will provide.
  - f. IEP's are reviewed at least once per year. ETR's are repeated once every 3 years to maintain eligibility.
3. Special Education Services: schools are required to have a continuum of services available to meet the needs of students. This can range from services in the regular classroom, pull-out services to address specific areas of need, and self-contained placements, as the most common. However, we are required to provide services as close to the regular classroom as possible.
4. Related Services: In addition to the specialized instruction that is provided by Intervention Specialists (i.e., special education teachers), schools can provide Speech/Language Therapy, Occupational Therapy, and Physical Therapy. There are many less common related services, such as audiology or orientation & mobility training. A full list can be found in the *Whose Idea Is This?* booklet.