**Evaluation Process**

***Updated 2022***

**New Referrals**

Following the intake process conducted by the Early Intervention Secretary, the assigned Service Coordinator will contract the family within ten (10) days of receiving the intake. The Service Coordinator will schedule a time/date for the family to come in for an initial screening which may result in an evaluation.

**Issuing a Permission to Evaluate (PTE)**

When the family reports for the initial screening, the Service Coordinator will issue the PTE pending results of the screening. At this time, the evaluation team including the Service Coordinator will explain to the parents that the evaluation report (ER) must be presented to the parents within sixty (60) days of the receipt of the signed PTE. A PTE form must be signed to obtain permission to conduct the initial evaluation of the child to determine eligibility of services (Chapter 14 Regulations).

**Cancellations/No Shows**

As per the Luzerne/Wyoming County Early Intervention Family Engagement Policy, cancelling or failure to show will result in rescheduling to the next available appointment date. The assigned Service Coordinators will complete three efforts for an appointment. After the third failed attempt, referral will be sent back to central office for exiting.

**Completing the PTE Form**

The PTE will explain the reason for the evaluation, who initiated the referral, and specific information on the areas of concern. At the discretion of the assigned Service Coordinator, multiple team members (related services) may be required to participate in the initial evaluation. The PTE should describe all the assessments to be used. If parents agree to the proposed evaluation, they may check the consent to evaluate box, sign, and date the PTE. They must also include their phone number for future contact. If the parent does not give consent the Service Coordinator should contact the Early Intervention Supervisor as soon as possible to discuss the parents’ concerns and determine appropriate course of action. Failure to sign the PTE will result in a delay of services.

**Procedural Safeguard Notice (PSG)**

The PSG notice will be given to the parent(s) at the following times. PSG are also located on the Hazleton Area School District’s Early Intervention website for view.

1. With the initial PTE or any subsequent PTRE
2. Yearly at the annual IEP meeting
3. Whenever there is a change in placement.
4. Upon request.
5. If a parent declines to initiate an evaluation.
6. Upon request of the parent(s) filing a state complaint (mediation or due process complaint).

Explain to parents that the PSG notice outlines their educational rights, defines terms, explains confidentiality and the steps to take if a disagreement cannot be resolved locally. Point out the resources at the end of the document.

**Required Components of the Evaluation**

Sufficient information must be gathered on the child’s suspected disability to ensure that relevant data is examined related to the child's:

1. Cognitive Development – this section refers to how the brain functions and includes the development of thinking, learning, awareness, judgement, and information processing/
2. Communication Development – this section includes early development of the communication and language children use to express themselves including the child’s ability to understand (receptive) and communicate (expressive) wants, needs, and ideas within everyday routines.
3. Social and Emotional Development – this section includes the child’s ability to engage others including play, responding to adult, and other children expressing their emotions.
4. Physical Development – this section includes the child’s ability to move their own body including control of muscles, ability to sit, stand, move from place to place, and manipulate toys using large and small muscle development.
5. Adaptive Development – this section includes the child’s self-help skills such as feeding, dressing, and toileting.
6. Current health status and medical history including vision and hearing.

Information must come from a variety of sources specific to the child’s typical environment. Conduct the evaluation using appropriate standardized tools, depending on the child's needs.

During the evaluation, review the Parent Input Form with the parent. Identify the child’s strengths and needs, the parent’s concerns and priorities, cultural preferences, and the family’s resources and routine. This information should be reflected throughout the evaluation report.

**Summary of Evaluation Results**

The evaluation report should include a summary of all evaluation procedures, date of the evaluations, age of the child, result of standardized assessments, the name and role of the evaluator, and the location.

**Determining Eligibility**

The evaluation team must include the parent and a group of qualified professionals for both initial and reevaluations.

The team will utilize all the information gathered from multiple sources, tools, and assessments to determine whether the child has a disability or developmental delay and whether he or she needs special education and related services.

To qualify for Early Intervention services, the child must demonstrate a delay of at least 1.5 standard deviation below the mean in one or more areas of development and require specially designed instruction in order to participate in typical activities and routines.

**OR**

The child must meet eligibility for an IDEA disability category that results in the need for specially designed instruction in order to participate in typical activities and routines.

Qualified professional should understand the specific eligibility criteria applicable to the preschool child being evaluated and keep up with any new regulations and OCDEL announcements.

**Recommendations**

The evaluation should include a description of how the delay or disability effects the child’s participation in appropriate activities.

The recommendations should assist in the development of the IEP based on the family and team concerns.

The recommendations should reflect on the information gathered throughout the process such as family assessment information, health/vision/hearing/information and functional information from the development domains.

All recommendations should reflect the family’s resources, concerns, and priorities and address the child’s strengths, needs, and level of functioning.

If the child in not eligible, describe non early intervention supports and services that may assist the family in addressing their concerns, for informational purposes ONLY.

**Timelines for Evaluation**

The evaluation must be completed and copy of the ER presented to the parents(s) no later than sixty (60) calendar days after the PTE is signed.

**Explaining the Evaluation Process**

The evaluation and results should be explained to the parents in a way they can understand. The team should verify all the demographic information and the parent understands the content of the report including recommendations and eligibility.

If the child is found non-eligibility due to data and scoring, the Service Coordinator will issue a Notice of Recommended Placement (NOREP).

If the child is eligible, an IEP meeting will be schedule within thirty (30) days from the date of the evaluation report.

Reevaluation Procedures

A reevaluation may be conducted at the request of a parent or team member at any time. The Permission to Reevaluation (PTRE) form is issued by the Service Coordinator to obtain written consent to conduct the reevaluation. The PTRE will be issued within ten (10) calendar days of the parents’ oral or written request for the reevaluation. The PTRE explains the reason for the evaluation and the types of the assessment tools, tests, and procedures that may be used. In addition, reevaluations are considered by the IEP team on a 2-year cycle. The following options may be considered for a 2-year reevaluation.

**Option 1: Perform the reevaluation using existing evaluation or assessment information about the child.**

1. Issue the PTRE.
2. Review of records, observation, staff input, parent input
3. Complete a reevaluation (using the same form you would use for a reevaluation with new testing) within the timelines and hold an IEP meeting within 30 days of the date of the RR.
4. Do not issue the Agreement to Waive the Reevaluation form.
5. Obtain prior approval before conducting a reevaluation without new evaluation/assessment from Service Coordinator.

**Option 2: Perform the reevaluation using new evaluation/assessment information about the child.**

1. Issue the PTRE at least 60 days prior to the date the previous ER expires with the following box checked: the Individualized Education Program (IEP) team has reviewed and considered existing evaluation data concerning your child. The IEP team is making the recommendation that there is a need for more information about your child because the existing data is not sufficient in determining continued need of, and eligibility for, preschool early intervention and related services.
2. Complete the reevaluation report within timelines and hold an IEP meeting within thirty (30) days of the date of RR.

**Reevaluation Guidelines:**

* Reevaluations may NOT be waived.
* Most student should receive a reevaluation with new evaluation/assessment information.
* Option 1 may be considered if the team has a specific reason new testing would be problematic.
* You must obtain prior approval before choosing option 1 from the Service Coordinator or EI Supervisor.