



Reviewing Evaluations Through a Parent Lens

Developing Better Questions

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Develop better questions by learning how to review your child's evaluation.

You don't need to understand every test score or become an expert in educational evaluations. Your goal is to understand enough to ask thoughtful questions.

Step 1: Start with the summary

Don't start with the scores. Read the evaluator's summary first. As you read, ask:

- ☐ What strengths were identified?
- ☐ What needs were identified?
- ☐ Were recommendations made?
- ☐ Do the recommendations logically connect to the identified needs?
- ☐ What questions do I have?

Step 2: Was the evaluation comprehensive

When you gave your written consent to evaluate, the district would have provided you with an Assessment Plan – a one-page document that indicates all the domains (areas) they agreed to assess. Compare the Assessment Plan with the completed evaluation. Ask yourself:

- ☐ Did the district complete assessments to address each domain listed in the Assessment Plan?
- ☐ If something wasn't completed, was an explanation provided?
- ☐ Were additional assessments completed that were not listed? Are these explained?
- ☐ Did the evaluation answer the referral questions?
- ☐ Do I understand why each assessment was selected?
- ☐ What questions do I have?



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Step 3: Peel back another layer

Don't stop with the conclusions. Look for data that supports them. Ask:

- ☐ Which assessment supports this conclusion?
- ☐ Does the data support the recommendation?
- ☐ Were conflicting results explained?
- ☐ Are there findings that don't seem to fit?
- ☐ Are important questions left unanswered?

Step 4: Does this sound like your child?

Ask yourself:

- ☐ Does this describe my child at home?
- ☐ Were my concerns reflected?
- ☐ Does anything surprise me?
- ☐ Is anything missing?

Ask Yourself

If someone who had never met my child read this report, would they understand my child's strengths and needs?

Build your question list

Don't ask yourself: What did I learn?

Instead, ask yourself: What questions do I still have?

Examples:

- ☐ I don't understand...
- ☐ Can you explain...
- ☐ What data supports...
- ☐ How was that conclusion reached...
- ☐ Why wasn't...
- ☐ What would have happened if...



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What if I disagree?

Sometimes an evaluation doesn't tell the whole story—or it may not accurately reflect your child's strengths, needs, or educational performance.. Under IDEA you have the right to request an Independent Educational Evaluation whenever you disagree with a district's eval.

An IEE is not appropriate simply because you don't like the outcome of the evaluation. It is intended for situations where you disagree with the district's evaluation itself.

What is an IEE?

An IEE is a private evaluation, conducted by a provider(s) of your choice at district expense. The right to request an IEE is detailed in your procedural safeguards. In NV these are titled *Special Education Rights of Parents and Students*.

An IEE can be requested for any assessment the district conducts, but it cannot be obtained instead of a district assessment. You have the right to obtain a private evaluation/assessment at any time at your own expense. The district must consider any evaluation data you bring to the table, but they are not obligated to act on it or implement your provider's suggestions.

When you request an IEE, the district has only two options

1 – **Provide you with the information you need to obtain an IEE.** This includes criteria providers must meet and any geographic or financial parameters. They may provide you with a list of providers who meet the criteria, but you are not obligated to choose from their list.

2 – **File due process to defend their evaluation.** If the district believes their evaluation is appropriate, they have the right to defend it. **You do not have to explain to the district why you are requesting an IEE, only that you disagree with its evaluation.** However, you should be prepared to share your reasoning. While the burden of proof is on the district to defend their evaluation, the hearing officer will likely ask for your reasons. Do not request an IEE without a reason.

Advocate Tip

In advocate slang we call these options “fund or file”. There are no other options. They cannot verbally deny your request or issue PWN without also filing due process. If the district acknowledges deficiencies in its evaluation after you request an IEE, you are not required to agree to additional district testing in lieu of your request. When you request your IEE in writing and the district does not fund or file, you may pursue dispute resolution and ask that the district fund the IEE as your desired remedy.