

## ASSESSMENT PLANS

An assessment plan (AP) is a document that outlines the assessment tools and methods used to determine eligibility for special education services as well as the student's present levels of performance. Assessments will include data from multiple sources and may require a multidisciplinary team of specialists to gather and interpret the data.

An AP can be initiated for several reasons. Some examples may include:

- Upon parent/guardian request;
- To initiate an assessment for an initial evaluation;
- To initiate an assessment to exit a student from special education; and/or
- To initiate an assessment for an eligibility review evaluation; and/or, if a student is identified as having a possible new area of need, such as behavior or speech and language.

Parent/guardian consent is not required before:

- Reviewing existing data; and/or
- Administering a test or other assessment that is administered to all students (unless parents have opted-out of this assessment).

### *Parent/Guardian Request for Assessment*

When receiving an assessment request, the District may either grant or deny this request. The District may deny the parent/guardian request for an assessment using a Prior Written Notice (PWN) if the team feels that the student is receiving a free, appropriate public education (FAPE) in the least restrictive environment (LRE). The District shall include data in the PWN to support the decision that the student does not require assessment. Careful consideration is strongly encouraged prior to pursuing this option. For information regarding PWNs, please see the Procedural Guide section on Prior Written Notice.

### *Assessment Timelines*

1. **Initial Referral.** The AP will be developed and sent to the parent/guardian for review within 15 calendar days<sup>1</sup> of receipt of referral for initial assessment for special education

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<sup>1</sup> The 30 days does not include days between the student's regular school sessions, terms, or days of school vacation in excess of five schooldays.

eligibility. The assessment team has 60 days<sup>2</sup> to conduct assessments and hold an IEP meeting to determine initial eligibility for services.

2. **Eligibility Review Evaluation.** The AP will be developed and sent to the parent/guardian for review, giving the evaluation team enough time to complete the assessments prior to the triennial due date. The IEP team has 60 days to conduct assessments and hold an IEP meeting to determine if the student continues to qualify for special education services. It should be noted that the triennial IEP due date, as listed on the “Information/Eligibility” section of the current IEP, is the date by which the IEP must be held, regardless of the 60-day assessment timeline.
3. **Transition Evaluation.** The AP will be developed and sent to the parent/guardian for review, allowing enough time to complete and review the transition assessments, but no later than by the date of the first IEP to be in effect when the student reaches age 16.
4. **Other Requests for Evaluation.** Upon request for assessment by the parent/guardian or other interested parties, the AP will be developed and sent to the parent/guardian for review within 15 calendar days of receipt of referral.

When a referral has been made within 10 calendar days or less of the end of the academic school year, the assessment plan must be developed (and provided to parent/guardian) within the first 10 calendar days of the following school year.

The parent/guardian shall have at least 15 calendar days from the receipt of the proposed AP to arrive at a decision to consent or not consent to the AP.

(Ed. Code § 56043(a); 56321(a)-(b).)

### ***Assessment Plan Content Guidelines***

The proposed AP (along with a PWN) provided to parent/guardian shall meet all the following requirements:

1. Be individualized to reflect the concerns of the referring entity as well as concerns from any other party involved in the student’s learning.
2. Be provided in the primary language of the parent/guardian or another mode of communication used by the parent/guardian, unless to do so is clearly not feasible.

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<sup>2</sup> The 60 days does not include days between the student’s regular school sessions, terms, or days of school vacation in excess of five schooldays.

3. Explain the types of assessments to be conducted and the professional personnel responsible for the administration and interpretation of the assessments. Assessors should be listed by title rather than by name.
4. Address all areas of suspected disability.
5. State that no educational placement will result from the assessment without the consent of the parent/guardian.

(Ed. Code § 56321(b).)

### ***Areas of Assessment***

The AP must be comprehensive and allow for assessing the student in all areas related to the suspected disability, including, if appropriate:

1. Health and developmental history.
2. Vision, including low vision, and hearing (to be completed within the past year).
3. Motor abilities.
4. Speech and language function.
5. General intelligence or cognitive level.
6. Processing skills.
7. Academic achievement.
8. Adaptive skills.
9. Orientation and mobility skills.
10. Career and vocational interests (transition planning).
11. Social and emotional and behavioral status.
12. Any other area of suspected disability.

**Note:** Because of the *Larry P.* litigation, the use of cognitive tests is prohibited for African American students, even with informed parent/guardian consent. For further information on selecting appropriate tests for African American students, please see the Procedural Guide section entitled Assessment, Test Selection and Reports.

### ***Obtaining Parent/Guardian Consent to Assess***

An assessment shall not be conducted unless the written consent of the parent/guardian is obtained. Assessment may begin immediately upon receipt of parent/guardian consent.

An AP will need to be presented to the parent/guardian in person, emailed, sent home with the student, and/or mailed to the student/parent/guardian address on file. In some cases, the District may need to require a return receipt to provide documentation that the parent/guardian received the AP.

When the AP is presented to the parent/guardian for review, the following should be attached:

1. A copy of the notice of Parental Rights and Procedural Safeguards.
2. A Prior Written Notice.

If a parent/guardian is not identified or the location of the parent/guardian is unknown, a surrogate parent must be appointed to represent the individual with exceptional needs. For more information on processes involved with surrogate parents, please see the Procedural Guide section entitled Surrogate Parent. If the child is a ward of the state and is not residing with his or her parent/guardian, the District shall make reasonable efforts to obtain the informed consent from the parent/guardian or legal rights holder.

Consent for initial assessment shall not be construed as consent for initial placement or initial provision of special education and related services to the student.