



# Special Education Guidance for Eligibility Report

## Introduction

The Implementation Manual will provide additional guidance for preschool. Additional examples will be provided for various sections of the eligibility report. Sample eligibility reports will be available on the GaDOE website for all disability areas.

### **Section 1 Student Information**

Complete the child's identifying information.

### **Section 2 Case History**

This section gives an overview picture of the child.

Complete all sections for a reevaluation since information may change over time.

Hearing and vision screenings are necessary prior to administration of assessments. The screenings should be completed within a year of the evaluation.

### **Section 3 Summary of interventions PRIOR to referral**

This section gives the committee a quick look at the interventions and adaption of content, methodology, and/or instructional delivery that have already occurred.

The data from these interventions will be documented in Section 4.

*Initial eligibility* – The committee will need to list the interventions provided for the child.

*Reevaluation* - The committee will need to list the specially designed instruction which includes: Adaption of Content, Methodology (specialized program), or Instructional Delivery. It will also be important to list any additional areas of concern that have developed since the previous eligibility.



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*Immediate consideration of special education eligibility* - The committee must review the information presented by the parents and school to determine if the intensity of the rare, unique situation warrants referral for immediate comprehensive special education evaluation and eligibility consideration.

This means there are occasional situations that are so compellingly appropriate for Special Education consideration that it would be unacceptable to delay needed services by having to go through Response to Intervention (RtI)/Student Support Team (SST) processes.

## **Section 4 Summary of Progress Monitoring Data toward achieving standards**

This is the section where the committee shares the specific scientific, research or evidence based intervention(s) and provides accurate information on the progress monitoring data results for the intervention(s) implemented for an initial evaluation or the specially designed instruction for reevaluation.

- Area(s) of Difficulty

Initial evaluation - The “Area” field is where the committee will identify the area(s) of concern [such as academic (reading, mathematics, writing); behavioral; functional; or developmental]

Reevaluation -The “Area” field is where the committee will list the identified deficit areas based on the Individualized Education Program (IEP) goal(s) and additional areas of concern that have manifested since previous eligibility.

- Scientific, research, evidence based interventions

Initial eligibility – Identify (name) the specific intervention(s) implemented.

The scientific, research or evidence based intervention(s) will be implemented as designed for the appropriate period of time to show effect.

Reevaluation – Identify the specific specially designed instruction/intervention (specialized programs, methodology, or instructional delivery) implemented.



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- Baseline Performance

Initial eligibility – Record baseline data for the intervention(s) implemented for Tiers 2, and 3. This will include the date, starting data point, and performance summary of that starting point.

Reevaluation – This will include the date the specially designed instruction/intervention was implemented from the IEP, the starting data point, and a performance summary of the starting point.

- Intervention Data

Initial eligibility - The progress monitoring data presented will show the child's RtI (positive effect or lack of response) that demonstrates that the child is not making sufficient rate of progress to meet age or State-approved grade-level standards within a reasonable time frame. The summary will provide information on the impact of the intervention on educational performance and discuss/address the **rate of learning**. A child whose rate of learning is comparable to grade level peers cannot be determined to have a disability that impacts educational performance even though the child may be below grade level performance. However, a child whose **rate of learning** is not comparable with grade level peers may be considered a child with a disability that impacts educational performance. Trend lines or other projections for attaining grade level standards are appropriate to include in this data analysis

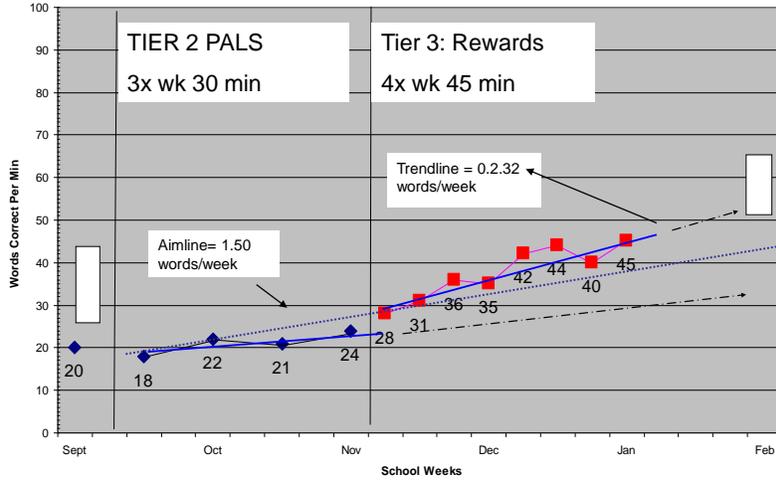


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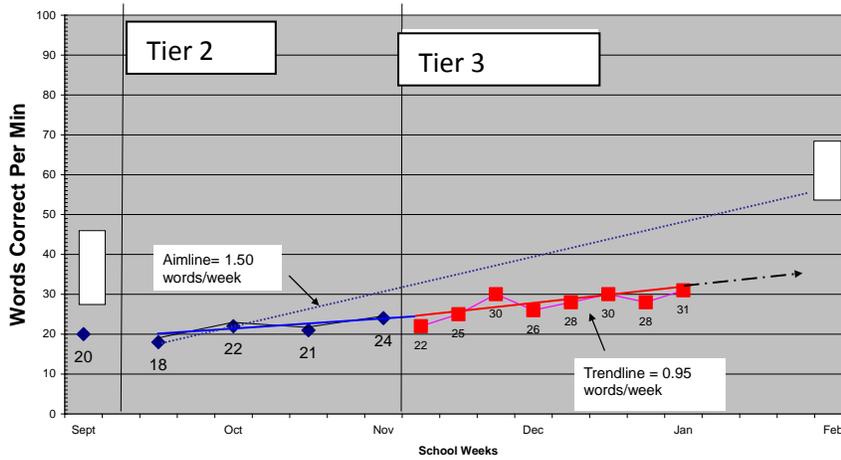
Batsche 2005

## Progress Monitoring

Steven



## Progress Monitoring (Batsche 2005)





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Reevaluation – The progress monitoring data will show present levels of academic achievement, behavioral needs and related developmental or functional needs of the child. The data will guide needs for any additional accommodation and/or modification to the special education and related services to meet the measurable annual goals set in the IEP. Because special education is included in Tier 4 there is an expectation of greater frequency of progress monitoring of child's RtI/intervention to guide decision making.

## **Section 5 Results of District, State, and Benchmark assessments**

The academic assessment history is one source of information to combine with multiple sources to assist in the decision making. This section must include all district and state assessments the child has taken in the last calendar year but could include previous years if the assessment results are relevant to support the needs of the student. In addition to district and state assessments, benchmark assessments may also be included. Benchmark assessments will only be accepted as the sole support for this eligibility section if there are no results available on state and district level assessments (i.e. Kindergarten students who have not completed the GKIDS assessment, or transfer students). Include the student results along with the passing standard for the test (such as 800) to make it easier for individuals who are not directly involved in district, state and benchmark assessments to interpret results.

## **Section 6 Individual student data**

***Note:** As one completes this section it may help you to determine what additional information/assessments are needed prior to eligibility team meeting .*

This section is a collection of assessments (formal/informal), observations, interviews, reports, and work samples completed by a multidisciplinary team. It is organized into domains to prompt the team to consider the whole child. The team is responsible for assessing the student in all areas either formally or informally.



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A more in depth assessment must be completed in all areas related to any suspected disabilities and in any other area deemed relevant.

It is imperative when completing this form to make sure the team addresses **all** domains. If the child exhibits no concerns in a specific domain then the team needs to document the evidence available to support that no formal assessment is needed for the domain. The domain area needs to include the source providing the information and the date the decision was made:

Examples:

**Social Domain: Report/Assessment:** Classroom teacher observation; **Date:** 10/8/2009; **Results-Strengths:** Teacher reports that Johnny has many friends and works well in collaborative settings therefore no social problems noted.).

**Sensory Processing: Report/Assessment:** Parent and teacher report; **Date:** 10/8/2009; **Results-Weaknesses:** Parents and teacher reports that Johnny exhibits tactile defensiveness when he eats soft foods. He refuses to eat foods that are soft and white. If he accidentally eats a soft food he will gag and throw up. Both teachers and parents report that loud noises bother Johnny. This is observed during lunch in the cafeteria, on the bus, in the gym, and when the fire alarm rings. At the beginning of the year he would hide under desk and hold his hands tightly over his ears.

*(Based on this example, the team has information that should guide the decision to investigate further through formal assessments.)*

This section must be written from the perspective that anyone can interpret the information included in the chart.

- **Report(s)/Assessment(s) & Scores** – Give the name and measurement scale for scores. Teachers and parents need to be able to interpret what that score means. If gathered through informal assessment such as teacher observation or input, include the source.



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- **Date** – This is the date the assessments (formal/informal), observations, interviews, reports, work samples, etc. were administered.
- **Results Strengths/Weaknesses** – Results are analyzed and interpreted in these sections.

## Section 7 Exclusionary factors

The exclusion factors should have been discussed at length during the SST (Tier 3) process on whether the factor had an impact on the child's educational progress.

Exclusionary factors must be considered in eligibility determinations. Each factor should be considered for its impact or lack of impact on educational progress.

The explanation should describe why or why not a factor has influenced educational progress. Once the factors have been addressed, the team needs to refer to the responses and refer to the eligibility criteria for each disability category

The following is guidance on addressing each exclusionary factor.

- Lack of appropriate instruction in reading, math and written expression. Need to discuss: Did the child have access to quality instruction and research-based curricula?
- Limited English Proficiency. It is very important to include an English Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) staff member who is familiar with the child suspected of having a disability. It will be necessary to include a language profile for this child that specifically investigates the language proficiency in both the primary language and English.
- Cultural Factors. A child's culture should not be a determinant factor of a disability. An important method of obtaining pertinent cultural information is by interviewing key family members. All results obtained must be interpreted in relation to the child's dominant cultural influences.



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- Environmental or economic disadvantage. A child's environment or economic disadvantage should not be a determinant factor for determination of a disability. The committee will need to thoroughly examine family stressors that may be impacting educational progress to include homelessness, unemployment, extended illnesses, death in the family, divorce, pre-school experiences, lack of books in the home or expectations of the family for the child.
- Atypical education history. The team must discuss if the child has high levels of mobility and/or absenteeism which may have influenced the educational progress of the child.
- Visual, hearing or motor disability. The committee will need to analyze information in order to rule out as source of difficulty when determining specific disabilities.
- Mutism, tongue thrust and dialectic. Mutism, tongue thrust behavior without associated speech sound impairment, and dialectic differences cannot be a speech language disorder. The committee will need to analyze information in order to rule out as source of difficulty when determining specific disabilities.

## Section 8 Decision making for eligibility

The team will make a determination to continue with eligibility consideration by using the convergence of data from multiple sources to document each of the following:

- Grade level difference, such as large performance difference compared to peers and benchmark expectations in specific areas (data from State-wide testing, system level benchmarks, etc.) (**For preschool:** Differences in age appropriate skills will be used in comparison to peers)



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- Rate of learning difference, such as a large difference in rate of learning compared to the trajectory toward the benchmarks when provided with high-quality interventions implemented over a significant period (CBM, progress monitoring, tiered support)
- Adverse educational impact, such as a review of the individual student qualitative and quantitative data that indicates the need for specially designed instruction.

The Committee Rationale is a summary of the specific reasons for the committee's decision. The rationale should clearly state why or why not the child has been determined in need of special education.

## Section 9 Summary of considerations

In this section the committee has completed the discussion and agreed that the results of the data indicate there is an adverse impact on educational performance in specific area(s). The committee will use the chart to document those areas. Keep in mind educational performance refers to functional, developmental and/or academic areas. Checks in the chart must correlate with the data and assessment results collected. The committee should list the area(s) of disabilities being considered.

The committee should use the **Eligibility Quick Reference Guide** for guidance.

## Section 10 Eligibility determination

Based on the review of the collection of data, assessments, observations, and interviews, the committee will determine which specific category(ies) the child meets eligibility criteria and if appropriate, the related services needed. The eligibility determination will be noted in the space available.

The committee will summarize the data and information collected on the child that causes the committee to determine the specific eligibility. This explanation will document the reasons the committee made their decision.



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## Section 11 Eligibility team information

This section includes the title, position, and name of the members present.

For Specific Learning Disability (SLD) eligibility in accordance with Federal 34 CRF 300.311(b) and State law, each eligibility team member must certify in writing whether the report reflects the member's conclusions. If it does not reflect the member's conclusion, the eligibility team member must submit a separate statement presenting the member's conclusions. A space is provided on the last page for that entry or the member may send in or attach a separate response. This is not to be used as a vote.