

# Outside Agency Forms

## *Pertaining to Independent Education Evaluations*

There have been some questions regarding some Independent Evaluations, and as a result, we have revised our guidelines consistent with the regulations. I thought the following information might be helpful to you as a reference for the future.

**While there are parameters the school district must follow, our goal is to provide our parents/guardians with the most accurate and thorough picture of their child's performance and progress in school.**

When a parent disagrees with an initial evaluation or re-evaluation done by the school district, the parent may request an independent education evaluation (IEE). At times, outside agencies completing these evaluations will request information from classroom teachers, specialists and clinicians working with your child. It is important to recognize that any document completed by the school becomes part of your child's student record and as such, we are careful when responding.

When submitting your request, please let us know the name, address, phone number, and contact person to whom the completed report will be sent. In order to meet the copyright standards and those of authenticity, we require that any forms submitted for completion are original documents. Photocopied documents cannot be accepted.

You can expect that the outside agency form you have submitted to the school will be completed and sent back to the agency within three weeks of having received your request. A copy will be sent to you and also become part of your child's student record.

We have also initiated a new practice of sending you a letter acknowledging receipt of your request, as well as a release of information. A signed parent/guardian release often facilitates communication between the outside evaluator and the school; clarification and understanding regarding the perspective of both parties is achieved more efficiently. The letter further outlines the district's parameters and a timeline for responding. Most importantly, the letter lets you know who to call for any questions or concerns you may have, including what documents/assessments might best address your child's unique needs.

Please be aware that teachers, specialists and clinicians can only respond objectively to questionnaires and forms within their area of expertise. Thus, certain questions may not be able to be answered by the respective staff. In some cases, the outside agency may request information about attention, organizational skills and/or behavior. Please note that staff, including the counselor and/or the principal, will only rate observable behavior so that all team members (parent, outside agency, and school) will have a clear understanding of your child's educational needs. These are the situations where a signed release allows school staff to speak directly with the independent evaluator and

clarification and understanding regarding the perspectives of both parties is achieved more effectively and efficiently.

As we examine the unique and individual needs of your child, we rely upon the student record and if applicable, the special education record, to fully answer the questions being asked. As such, when answering narrative questions, it is our practice to use the actual documents from the student record, rather than rewording information. It is our experience that materials sent from the school, with written permission from the parent/guardian, usually answer both home and agency questions. Sometimes, asking school staff to complete a Teacher Assessment Form or to write a two to three paragraph report on your child is more useful than simply filling out a form. The school wants to be helpful in using the method that is most comprehensive to assist in educational planning.

**Please mail or drop off your written request to whoever is easier for you. That being said, please note that:**

- Forms for regular education students route from the classroom teacher to the school counselor, the Counseling Chairperson, and/or the Building Principal.
- Forms for special education students route from the classroom teacher/school counselor/specialist to the Pupil Services Coordinator. Specifically, all forms for special education students must be routed to the Pupil Services Coordinator in the Pupil Services office.
- Please see your Counseling Chairperson, the Pupil Services Coordinator, or the Director of Pupil Services should you have any questions.

Payment for an independent education evaluation is complex. A parent may obtain such an evaluation at private expense at any time when there is a disagreement with the school evaluation, as stated above. However, there are provisions set forth in the 766 regulations for public funding of such evaluations, based upon a sliding fee scale, the type of independent assessments sought, the timetable for both eligibility and completion, the responsibility of the school team to reconvene the TEAM including the parent to consider the new information, and the exceptions to the rule. Because of the complexity of the guidelines for the sliding scale, the Pupil Services Team is more than willing to discuss each parent's needs regarding such a request.