

ASSESSMENTS

WHY THEY ARE A
KEY TO YOUR IEP

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REQUEST ALL REPORTS
PRIOR TO MEETING

SEVERAL DAYS IS GREAT

I DAY IS OKAY

DAY OF THE MEETING NOT OK

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YOU MUST UNDERSTAND THE REPORTS TO GIVE
INFORMED CONSENT TO THE OFFER OF F.A.P.E.
FREE APPROPRIATE PUBLIC EDUCATION

Assessment of needs
leads to the Goals

Goals lead to the
*offer of placement and
related services*

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**DISTRICT IS NOT REQUIRED BY LAW TO GIVE
YOU THE REPORTS IN ADVANCE**

- BUT MANY WILL IF YOU ASK
- SEND WRITTEN REQUEST TO
ADMINISTRATOR OF YOUR IEP
- ADMINISTRATOR'S NAME IS ON THE IEP
NOTICE

WHY WE WANT REPORTS IN ADVANCE

TIME to STUDY the INFORMATION

TIME to REQUEST CLARIFICATION

TIME to VIEW TEST PROTOCOLS

TIME to FIX MISTAKES

TIME to ISSUE CORRECTED REPORT

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SPEND MEETING TIME USING INFORMATION TO CREATE THE IEP

YOU CAN SAY THIS

We appreciate getting the reports for the team to read before the meeting. And we understand how busy all of you are. So we suggest that the best use of our limited time today is to present a summary, focusing on emerging skills, continued areas of need and strengths that can be used to teach skills.

FIRST QUESTIONS

WHAT SKILLS ARE
EMERGING?

WHAT AREAS OF NEED
REMAIN

WHAT ARE THE
STRENGTHS?

BEHAVIORIAL
PRINCIPLES AT
WORK

SO...
YOU LIVE IN A DISTRICT
THAT WILL NOT SEND
REPORTS PRIOR TO THE IEP

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3 PLANS

CHOOSE THE PLAN THAT
FITS YOUR SITUATION

NOT PLAN D

TAKE A FRIEND , MENTOR
OR ADVOCATE TO HELP
YOU FOLLOW THROUGH

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OUTNUMBERED?

A PLAN FOR WHEN

NOT A TRIENNIAL
REPORTS ARE SHORT
COLLABORATIVE TEAM

THANK THE TEAM FOR THEIR REPORTS
POLITELY SAY THAT YOU WILL NEED TIME
TO REVIEW REPORTS/ ASSESSMENTS
SILENTLY, CAREFULLY READ EACH REPORT
AS IF THERE AREN'T 5 PEOPLE WATCHING
INVITE THE REST OF TEAM TO JOIN IN THE
FUN IF THEY AREN'T ALREADY

NOTE DISCREPANCIES IN TEST DATA,
NARRATIVE AND MISTAKES TO CORRECT
IN REPORTS

MAKE A LIST OF QUESTIONS REGARDING
THE RESULTS

**DO NOT RUSH-YOU ASKED FOR
THE REPORTS IN ADVANCE TO
PREVENT THIS SITUATION**

A PLAN FOR WHEN

A TRIENNIAL
REPORTS ARE COMPLEX
RESULTS OF IEE

THE TEAM FOR THEIR REPORTS
POLITELY SAY THAT YOU WILL NEED
MORE TIME TO REVIEW REPORTS/
ASSESSMENTS THAN IS AVAILABLE FOR
THIS MEETING

YOU CANNOT MAKE A FULLY INFORMED
DECISION ABOUT ANY OFFER OF F.A.P.E.
WITHOUT UNDERSTANDING THE
REPORTS

REQUEST A DATE TO RECONVENE THE
MEETING

AFTER ANY MISTAKES IN THE REPORTS
HAVE BEEN CORRECTED

REQUEST A COPY OF THE CORRECTED
REPORT IN ADVANCE OF MEETING

DON'T DO

ALLOWING THE DISTRICT TO WITHHOLD
REPORTS UNTIL THE MEETING PLACES
YOU AT A DISADVANTAGE

YOU CANNOT MAKE AN INFORMED
DECISION WHEN YOU HAVEN'T
CAREFULLY STUDIED THE REPORTS

MEETINGS ARE UNPRODUCTIVE IF THE
INFORMATION ISN'T USED TO CRAFT A
TRULY INDIVIDUALIZED IEP

AVOID THIS

MISTAKES IN ASSESSMENTS COULD BE
MISSED IN A RUSHED REVIEW

YOU DON'T HAVE TIME TO CONSIDER
THE CONNECTIONS BETWEEN THE
TESTING, STUDENT OUTPUT AND
BEHAVIORS

THE TEAM HAS ALREADY WRITTEN
DRAFT GOALS BASED ON THEIR
ASSESSMENTS BUT YOU DON'T HAVE
THE INFORMATION TO WRITE YOUR
OWN GOAL SUGGESTIONS

IEP

HOW YOU SHAPE BEHAVIORS OF THE IEP TEAM

BEHAVIOR CAN BE MAINTAINED OR CHANGED BY THE ADDITION OF A REINFORCER OR REMOVAL OF AN AVERSIVE

YOU WANT REPORTS AT LEAST A DAY BEFORE THE MEETING

WHEN THE DISTRICT TEAM SITS FOR AN HOUR WHILE YOU SILENTLY READ REPORTS - YOU HAVE INTRODUCED AN AVERSIVE - WATCHING YOU READ IS A BORING TIME -WASTE

WHEN YOU ASK TO RESCHEDULE THE MEETING SO YOU READ THE REPORTS JUST DUMPED ON THE TABLE , YOU HAVE INTRODUCED AN AVERSIVE -

THE IEP TEAM ALREADY HAS PLENTY OF MEETINGS AND RESCHEDULING IS CHALLENGING

IN THE FUTURE , REMOVING THE AVERSIVE IS LIKELY TO BE MORE REINFORCING THAN WITHHOLDING REPORTS (NEGATIVE REINFORCEMENT)

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YOU WANT REPORTS AT LEAST A DAY BEFORE THE MEETING

WHEN YOU ALLOW REPORTS TO BE PRESENTED FOR FIRST TIME AT THE MEETING YOU HAVE REINFORCED THE DISTRICT'S PRACTICE OF NOT SENDING REPORTS IN ADVANCE

WHEN YOU SIT THROUGH HOURS OF REPORTS BEING READ VERBATIM OR QUICKLY SUMMARIZED YOU HAVE REINFORCED THE DISTRICT'S PRACTICE OF NOT SENDING REPORTS IN ADVANCE

TOO LITTLE TIME IS LEFT FOR YOUR INPUT IN DEVELOPING GOALS BASED ON THE INFORMATION IN THE REPORTS

IN THE FUTURE, THE DISTRICT IS LIKELY TO CONTINUE WITHHOLDING REPORTS PRIOR TO THE MEETING

YOU HAVE THE REPORTS-NOW WHAT?

HOW TO READ AND USE AN ASSESSMENT
TEST PROTOCOLS - WHAT ARE THEY
STATISTICS – WAY MORE FUN THAN WORD PROBLEMS

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HOW TO READ, UNDERSTAND AND USE AN ASSESSMENT/ REPORT

– AN OVERVIEW

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KNOW YOUR TERMS

Standard Score

Composite score

Subtest scores

T-score

Percentile vs. percent

Normed test

Criteria- referenced tests

Curriculum-based

Confidence levels

Mean

Standard deviation

Test Protocols

Narrative vs. numeric scores

Descriptions of score RANGES such as

Very Low Low Borderline

Low Average Average High Average

Above Average

Subjective vs. objective scoring

Interfering behavior

Replacement behavior

Prompt levels

Positive Reinforcement

Peer reviewed

Standardized Test

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**MISTAKES
HAPPEN**

**THE IEP IS BASED
ON INFORMATION
IN THESE
ASSESSMENT
REPORTS**

READ EVERY LINE

DO NOT SKIM

**YOU ARE AUDITING THE
REPORT FOR ACCURACY**

MARK ANY MISTAKES

NOTIFY THE ASSESSOR

**REQUEST TEST PROTOCOLS
WHEN MISTAKES FOUND IN
CALCULATING TEST SCORES**

A PATTERN OF MISTAKES INDICATES A POSSIBLE:

- transposition error when entering data from the test booklet
- error saving the current information when writing report
- error when cutting and pasting of reports
- sloppy proofreading

LOOK FOR OBVIOUS
MISTAKES

WRONG KID'S NAME IN REPORT

WHAT ELSE IS WRONG?

WHAT TO DO

REVIEW EVERY TEST TO MAKE CERTAIN THE RESULTS MAKE SENSE

DOES THIS SOUND LIKE YOUR CHILD?

IF NOT – ASK FOR THE TEST MATERIALS

PAY EXTRA CLOSE
ATTENTION IF ANOTHER
CHILD'S NAME IS IN
YOUR REPORT

DOES THE PERCENTILE DESCRIPTION MATCH THE NUMERIC SCORES

DOES THE NARRATIVE DESCRIPTION MATCH THE NUMERIC SCORES

DO THE SUBTESTS AND COMPOSITE SCORES MATCH

TEST PROTOCOLS ARE THE ANSWERS YOUR CHILD GAVE FOR THE TEST and “explanations and interpretations of test questions even if the answers are integrated with the test question”(SpecialEdLawBlog)

Case law supports the right of parents to obtain test protocols as part of the student record

WHEN TO ASK FOR TEST PROTOCOLS

if your child's standard scores are on the borderline between two percentiles you **MUST** look at the protocols

- When there are discrepancies in the scoring of the tests
- When the assessor is new and you haven't developed trust yet
- When it isn't clear that the test results are even for your child
- When there is a pattern of mistakes
- When the assessor reports that the answers are very close to correct but not what the test can accept, or the child self corrected but it doesn't count. (HELPFUL)

HOW TO ASK FOR TEST PROTOCOLS

You can write this on the
assessment plan

“protocols, answer sheets and
other test related
documentation are to be
maintained and not to be
discarded or destroyed.”

(Special Ed Law Blog)

You can request test protocols in
writing or verbally at the IEP
meeting if you have concerns about
the validity of the data

You can request the test protocols
as a matter of
practice at the same time you agree
to the assessment plan

Clinicians and assessors often bring
the test booklets to show examples

USING ASSESSMENTS

You have pages of charts graphs and narratives to make your case for the IEP that is appropriate for your child. Learn what they mean.

Ask the clinicians to explain what specific skill or learning process is being tested and how that relates to the child's learning profile

ASSESSMENTS- STANDARDIZED

“The majority of standardized tests...are not conducive to behavioral assessments because the results cannot be translated directly into target behaviors for instruction or treatment...Such information might be useful in determining how the student performs in these subjects compared to students in general, but it neither indicates the specific math or reading skills the student has mastered nor provides sufficient direct content with which to launch an enrichment or remedial program. (*Applied Behavior Analysis; Cooper, Heron, Heward, 2nd Edition*)

Tests are most useful as behavioral assessment devices when they provide a direct measure of the person's performance of the behaviors of interest...criterion-referenced and curriculum-based assessments to indicate exactly which skills students need to learn and, equally important, which skills they have mastered (*Browder, 2001; Howell, 1998*)

ASSESSMENTS

CRITERION REFERENCED

CURRICULUM REFERENCED

CRITERION-REFERENCED TEST

Measures student performance to evaluate knowledge learned from the classroom/taught content.

Measures whether the student has met established criteria such as grade level standards – using fixed standards

Teachers use these often

CURRICULUM-REFERENCED TESTS

Assessments measure student mastery of targeted skills taught in the classroom curriculum

Teachers use these often

Standardized tests generate COMPOSITE SCORES -
- the average of SUBTESTS

Composite scores ignore the extremes that are common among persons with autism and do not reflect the needs

Always look at the SUBTESTS because that is where the specific learning process is measured. Scores on the extremes get lost in the averaging

START by looking for wide variance in subtest scores within each test:
ie. in the 1st percentile for subtest 1 and in 100th percentile for subtest 2 of the SAME test

COMPARE TESTING

Tests can be repeated within frequency limits

Clinicians should reference prior testing for comparison

Not all tests or test versions are available for all ages

The test might change but it should measure same skills or learning process

WHAT AM I LOOKING FOR

CHANGES IN TEST SCORES–

GROWTH IN SKILLS

REGRESSION

NO PROGRESS

SKILLS ARE EXPECTED TO INCREASE WITH CHRONOLOGICAL AGE

GRAPH SCORES FOR COMPARISON IF AVAILABLE

STATISTICS ARE YOUR FRIEND

LEARN TO GRAPH

Visually powerful way to show trends

Visually show extremes in skill levels where the composite scores are average range

You have already verified that the test scores appear valid and any discrepancies have been corrected

Look for connections and patterns between the various tests that look at learning and language processes in different ways - can we teach to this?

Make a chart that lists subtest results by those that are needs, those that are strengths – show trends with your graph

Focus on the tests that show deficits of below low average in the descriptive range- these are what your goals should address

Write down questions to ask the clinicians either before or at the IEP

CONNECT BEHAVIORAL ASSESSMENTS TO ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE

PATTERNS OF BEHAVIOR

- Look for patterns of behavior related to academic demands and current services
- ie. - the child always has a tantrum during activities involving handwriting yet hasn't been assessed for OT or has OT but no goal for handwriting
- Are the behaviors interfering with learning?
- Is a behavior plan in place, being followed and effective?
- Is a functional behavior assessment (FBA) needed?

ONGOING PROBLEMS

- **You will ask why strategies** that fail to address your child's needs continue to be used
- **You will use the assessments** to show how your child best learns – visual, auditory, tactile, combo
- **You can show the linkage** from the testing to prove your point
- **You have the graphs or data** to prove your point

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WHAT'S LEFT?

USE THE INFORMATION YOU HAVE STUDIED TO
SHAPE THE GOALS

GOALS SHOULD REFLECT THE KNOWLEDGE WE
GAINED THROUGH THE ASSESSMENTS

GOALS SHOULD ADDRESS LACK OF PROGRESS BY
TRYING NEW STRATEGIES, INFORMED BY THE
ASSESSMENTS

GOALS SHOULD BENEFIT YOUR CHILD'S NEEDS AND
NOT BE WRITTEN TO FIT INTO A CLASSROOM
SCHEDULE

GOALS SHOULD BE MEASURABLE, REASONABLY
ACHIEVABLE, AND BEHAVIORAL TERMS
OPERATIONALLY DEFINED

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WHAT YOU WILL HAVE ACCOMPLISHED

- **Verified** that the **assessment information is correct**
- **Developed** **conclusions that will guide the goals and ultimately the placement and services**
- **Shaped the outcome of the IEP**
- **Insured that the information that goes into the student record is correct**
- **Been an equal participant in the IEP**