

Beginning with the 2017 school year, the Texas Education Agency (TEA) changed the way it reports special education enrollment in school districts and charter schools. TEA no longer counts the district's or charter school's total number of students in special education as part of state monitoring. For special education representation, TEA only reports on over-representation within certain race, ethnicity and disability categories, as required by federal law. School districts and charter schools cannot use this reporting data to delay, deny or prevent a referral for an evaluation for special education services.

Special Education Referrals:

The Individuals with Disabilities Education Act, also known as IDEA, is a federal law that gives eligible students with disabilities the right to receive special education services and assistance in school. To be eligible for special education services, a student with a disability must need instruction that is specially designed to meet the student's unique needs.

If the school knows or has reason to suspect that the student has a disability and that because of the disability the student needs special education, the school must refer the student for a special education evaluation. The school starts the evaluation process by asking the parent or guardian for written consent to evaluate the student.

In addition, a parent or guardian has the right to request a special education evaluation at any time. While it is not required that the request be made in writing, it's best to submit a written request for evaluation to your child's school. If your child is pre-school age and not enrolled in school yet, direct the letter to the school district's special education director. Otherwise, address the letter to your school's principal. A written request will trigger the start of specific timelines that the school must follow. One way to remember these timelines is 15 - 45 - 30:

- The school has 15 school days to respond to a written request for evaluation. The school will provide you with written notice to let you know if it will evaluate your child and the reasons for its decision. The school will also give you a document called, "[Notice of Procedural Safeguards](#)," that explains your rights under the law. If the school agrees to evaluate your child, it will provide you with an opportunity to give written consent for the evaluation.
- In most cases, the school has 45 school days to conduct the evaluation after receiving your signed consent for the evaluation.
- In most cases, the school district has 30 calendar days after completing the evaluation to hold an ARD committee meeting to review the results of the evaluation and determine whether your child is eligible for special education services. If your child is eligible for special education services, the ARD committee will also develop an IEP for your child at that time. An IEP is the written individualized education program that explains the special education and related services your child will receive. As the parent or guardian,

you are a member of the ARD committee and have the right to participate at ARD committee meetings.

Students may be able to receive support through intervention programs at the school regardless if they have a disability or not. More information about special education processes is available from the district or charter school in a document titled [Parent's Guide to the Admission, Review, and Dismissal Process](#). In addition, TEA provides information to families through a project known as SpEdTex. Family members can call 1-855-SPEDTEX (1-855-773-3839) or log on to www.spedtex.org to find answers to their questions as well as general information about special education.

Contact Person for Special Education Referrals:

Contact Person:

Phone Number:

Information Regarding
a Special Education Referral can be Found at

Procedures and Processes for Making