

Overview of EC Process



Child Find

According to federal guidelines, states are responsible for locating, identifying and evaluating all children with disabilities in a state who need special education. The process for these actions is outlined below.

Referral or Request for Evaluation

A school professional may identify students suspected of having a disability. Additionally, parents may contact the student's teacher or EC Director and request evaluations. An IEP team, which includes the parent, would meet in either case and complete a *Special Educational Referral* (DEC 1). During this meeting, the team will review information about the student's strengths and weaknesses, results of any interventions, information about educational history and daily classroom performance, state testing results (if available), etc. Based on a review of the information the team will decide if further data is needed to determine eligibility. If further data is needed, parental consent is required (Informed Consent for Evaluation DEC 2). Evaluations requested by the team will be completed and an IEP team, of which the parent is a part, will meet to review results and determine if the student meets the requirements for one or more of the 14 disability categories recognized within North Carolina (Eligibility Determination – DEC 3). If the disability has an adverse effect on educational performance and requires specially designed instruction, the student is found eligible for special education.

An *Individualized Education Program* (IEP/DEC 4) will be developed which outlines the student's strengths and weaknesses and the services, supplemental aids, modifications and accommodations required to meet the student's needs to progress in the general education curriculum.

The IEP Team's decisions and the rationale for those decisions are outlined on the Prior Written Notice (DEC 5). Parents are provided this document that explains the team's decisions before any of those decisions are implemented.

Informed Consent for Initial Provision of Services (Dec 6) must be signed by the parent before the IEP can be implemented.

Reevaluation

At least once every three years (and no more than once per calendar year unless agreed on by the team) a student must be reevaluated to determine if eligibility requirements continue to be met and to determine if the student continues to be in need of special education. This is done via the *Reevaluation Determination* (DEC 7) process.

Transfer Information (In-State or Out-of-State)

When EC students transfer from another district, Socrates Academy begins providing services comparable to those provided in the previous school system. A copy of the IEP from the previous school or verification of EC service via an email or phone call with the previous school is needed. Once requests are received and reviewed, the IEP Team will meet and develop an IEP based on a review of the records from the previous school and the student's daily performance since enrolling in Socrates Academy. If the student is transferring from out-of-state, the team will also review formal and informal assessment data and determine if additional data is needed to determine eligibility in the state of NC.

Discipline

A student with a disability who violates the student code of conduct may be treated the same as a child without a disability if the removal from school is for 10 school days or less. Extra protections (through the manifestation determination process) are in place if a student with a disability is removed for more than 10 school days in a single school year.

Local Dispute Resolution

Occasionally, members of the IEP Team will not agree about how to meet a student's needs or about exactly what should be included in an IEP. When challenges arise, first communicate with the person closest to the issues. Discuss your concerns with your child's teacher, the IEP Team, or the EC Director. If additional support is needed, informal and formal processes are available from the North Carolina Department of Instruction.

Facilitation: When an IEP meeting is expected to be very complex or when the parties are apprehensive about the meeting, an impartial facilitator can be requested from DPI. The facilitator will help the IEP Team members communicate effectively, focus on the student's needs and develop a compliant IEP.

Mediation: Mediation is a process designed to resolve disagreements and work toward a solution that is agreeable to all parties. Parents and/or the school system may request mediation anytime disputes cannot be resolved without outside support. There is no charge for mediation.

State Compliant: If a parent disagrees with a decision made by the IEP team or believes the district is not appropriately serving the student, the parent has a right, within one calendar year of the alleged violation, to file a state complaint with the EC Division of the NC Department of Public Instruction (NCDPI).

More information concerning mediation and state complaints can be found in the [Parent of Rights and Responsibilities in Special Education Notice of Procedural Safeguards](#).

More information concerning facilitation, mediation and state complaints can be found on the NC DPI EC website: <https://ec.ncpublicschools.gov/parent-resources/dispute-resolution>