

# Stambaugh Charter Academy

## *Child Find and Special Education Evaluation Policy & Procedures*

### **Purpose & Scope**

Stambaugh will identify, evaluate, and determine eligibility for students suspected of having a disability in compliance with Ohio Operating Standards and IDEA. Initial evaluations must be completed within 60 calendar days of receiving parental consent.

### **Child Find Policy**

[Ohio Administrative Code 3301-51-03]

### **Policy Statement**

Stambaugh Charter Academy is responsible for ensuring that all children from **birth through age 21** who are **suspected of having a disability** and in need of special education services are **identified, located, and evaluated**. This obligation applies to all children, including but not limited to:

- Children who are homeless or wards of the state
- Highly mobile children, including migrant children
- Children who are advancing from grade to grade
- Children with disabilities attending nonpublic schools, regardless of the severity of the disability

These requirements are in accordance with the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA).

# Evaluation Policy

[Ohio Administrative Code 3301-51-06]

## Policy Statement

Stambaugh Charter Academy ensures that a **referral process is in place** to determine whether a student is a child with a disability. The **school district of residence** must ensure that all **initial evaluations** and **reevaluations** are completed using the **Ohio Department of Education's Evaluation Team Report (ETR) form (PR-06)**.

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## Roles & Responsibilities

- Principal / Special Education Supervisor: Oversees Child Find, approves evaluation requests, assigns evaluators, monitors timelines, and ensures staffing/contracting as needed.
  - School Psychologist / Related Service Evaluators: Conduct assessments per plan; communicate scheduling; complete reports before day 60.
  - Intervention Specialists / General Education Teachers: Provide MTSS/RTI data, work samples, and classroom input promptly.
  - Registrar / Records: For transfer students, request/receive records immediately and notify SPED supervisor the same day.
  - Case Manager (assigned at consent): Owns the 60-day tracker, schedules meetings (offering alternative means), and maintains documentation.
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## Evaluation Procedures

### Interventions Prior to or During Evaluation

Stambaugh Charter Academy:

- Uses a **multi-disciplinary team** to determine and implement appropriate interventions for any child performing below grade-level standards.
  - Will not delay an evaluation unnecessarily due to interventions. Interventions and evaluations may occur **concurrently**.
  - Ensures that if interventions were not implemented before the referral, they are provided **during the 60-day evaluation timeline**.
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## Request or Referral for Evaluation

A referral may be initiated by:

- A **parent** of the child (either verbally or in writing)
- Stambaugh Charter Academy staff

Within **30 calendar days** of receiving a referral:

- The school must either **obtain written parental consent** for evaluation or
- Provide **prior written notice** explaining why the school **does not suspect a disability** and will not evaluate.

**Note:** Screening for instructional purposes is **not** considered an evaluation.

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## Evaluation Planning

The evaluation team must:

- Complete the **Evaluation Planning Form** to guide the evaluation process
  - Summarize findings in the **Evaluation Team Report (ETR)**
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## Composition of the Evaluation Team

The team must include:

- The **parent(s)** of the child
- A group of **qualified professionals** based on the student's needs
- For Specific Learning Disability (SLD) determinations, the team must also include:
  - The child's **regular education teacher** (or a qualified age-appropriate teacher)
  - At least one individual qualified to conduct **diagnostic evaluations** (e.g., school psychologist)
  - A **representative** of the school district who is:
    - Qualified to oversee specially designed instruction
    - Authorized to allocate resources
    - Able to interpret evaluation results

Meetings must be scheduled at a mutually agreed-upon time that is convenient for both the parent and school team members. Team members may participate either in person at the designated meeting location or virtually through an approved remote platform.

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## Conducting the Evaluation

The school must:

- Use a **variety of technically sound assessments and tools**
- Ensure tools are:
  - Non-discriminatory
  - Administered in the child's **native language**
  - Used for valid, reliable purposes
  - Conducted by **qualified personnel**

Evaluations must assess all areas of suspected disability, including academic, functional, developmental, and—when appropriate—motor, vision, hearing, and adaptive functioning.

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## Initial Evaluation Timeline

After obtaining consent:

- The evaluation must be completed within **60 calendar days**

**Exceptions to the 60-day timeline** include:

- The child's parent repeatedly fails to produce the child for evaluation
  - The child enrolls in a new district during the evaluation window and both districts coordinate the process.
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## Transfers and Out-of-State Evaluations

If a child transfers **within the state**, the school must, within 30 days:

- Accept the prior evaluation or
- Obtain consent and conduct a reevaluation within **60 days**

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## Eligibility Determination

Following the evaluation:

- The school schedules a meeting with the parent at a mutually agreeable time and location, providing adequate notice to the parent (unless the parent waves such notice period) with a formal invitation.
- The team, including the parent, determines eligibility
- A copy of the **ETR** must be provided at least **14 days prior** to the IEP meeting

Eligibility decisions must:

- Be based on **multiple data sources**
- Include documentation from all team members
- Follow timelines and procedural safeguards

**Important:** A child cannot be determined eligible if the primary reason is:

- Lack of instruction in reading or math
- Limited English proficiency

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## Specific Learning Disability (SLD)

The team must follow state criteria and complete **PR-06 Part 3**.

The SLD determination team includes:

- Parent(s)
- Qualified professionals
- Regular teacher or age-appropriate equivalent
- Diagnostic examiner (e.g., psychologist or SLP)

Determination options include:

- Response to intervention
- Patterns of strengths/weaknesses
- Performance discrepancy (not required)

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## Reevaluation Requirements

A reevaluation must be conducted:

- If requested by parent or teacher
- At least every **3 years**
- No more than once a year unless agreed upon
- May be waived in writing using **Agreement to Waive Reevaluation (OP-4)**

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## Medical Consultation Requirements

- A medical consultation is suggested for preschool or school-age children on a continuing basis, especially when school authorities observe that there has been a change in the child's behavior or educational functioning, or when new symptoms are detected.

*If the school requests the exam, the school is responsible for the cost.*

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## Additional Requirements for Evaluations

### Review of Existing Evaluation Data

The evaluation team must review multiple sources of data, including:

- Evaluations and information provided by the **parents**
- Classroom-based, local, or state assessments and **observations in multiple settings**
- Observations by teachers or related service providers (must be conducted by someone **other than the child's teacher**)
- Data on the child's **progress in the general curriculum** or, for preschoolers, developmental progress
- Data from **previous interventions**, including:
  - Targeted supports addressing student needs
  - Early intervention, community, or preschool provider data
- **Trend data** from the past 12 months or longer, including current and prior IEPs

The team will identify whether additional data are needed to:

- Determine if the child has a disability and the **educational needs**
- Assess **present levels of academic achievement and related developmental needs**
- Evaluate whether the child needs or continues to need **special education services**
- Identify any necessary additions or modifications to support:
  - Progress toward IEP goals
  - Participation in the general education curriculum

If **no additional data** are needed, the agency must provide parents with:

- Written notification of this determination and its rationale
  - Notice of the parent's **right to request further assessment**
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## **Determination of Eligibility**

After the evaluation:

- The **evaluation team and parent** jointly determine if the student qualifies as a child with a disability and the student's educational needs
  - A copy of the **Evaluation Team Report (ETR)** must be provided at least **14 days before** the IEP meeting and **at no cost** to the parent
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## **Evaluation Team Report (ETR)**

The written ETR must include:

- Each evaluator's **individual assessment**
  - The team's **summary and eligibility determination**
  - Specific documentation for SLD (if applicable)
  - Signatures, titles, and agreement status for all team members
  - A written **statement of disagreement** if any member disagrees with the team's determination
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## ***Procedures for Determining Eligibility and Educational Need***

The team must:

- Use **multiple sources** of information, including test scores, parent input, and teacher recommendations
- Consider the student's physical condition, adaptive behavior, and sociocultural context
- Ensure all data sources are **documented and carefully reviewed**

If eligible, an **IEP must be developed within 30 days** of eligibility determination.

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### ***Special Rule for Eligibility Determination***

A child may **not** be deemed a child with a disability if the primary reason is:

- Lack of instruction in **reading** or **math**
  - **Limited English proficiency**
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### ***Change in Eligibility***

A reevaluation is required **before** changing or terminating a child's eligibility unless the child is:

- **Graduating** with a regular diploma, or
- **Aging out** of eligibility for FAPE

In such cases, the district must provide a **summary of academic achievement and functional performance** with recommendations for postsecondary support.

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## ***Specific Learning Disability (SLD) Determination***

### ***SLD Criteria and Procedures***

The district must use the **state-defined criteria** and complete Part 3 of the **PR-06 form** when an SLD is suspected. The team:

- ***Must not require*** a severe discrepancy model
- ***May use:***
  - ***A response to intervention (RTI) model***
  - ***An alternative research-based procedure***

### ***SLD Team Composition***

The team must include:

- *Parent(s)*
- *Qualified professionals*
- *A diagnostic examiner (e.g., school psychologist, SLP, remedial reading teacher)*
- *The child's regular education teacher or an age-appropriate educator*

### ***SLD Eligibility Conditions***

A child may be identified with an SLD if:

- The child **does not achieve adequately** for age or grade-level standards despite appropriate instruction in one or more areas:
  - *Oral expression*
  - *Listening comprehension*
  - *Written expression*
  - *Basic reading skills*
  - *Reading fluency*
  - *Reading comprehension*
  - *Math calculation*

- *Math problem solving*
- *The child **does not make sufficient progress** in response to scientifically based interventions*
- *The child shows a **pattern of strengths and weaknesses** in performance and achievement*
- *The **exclusionary factors** are ruled out:*
  - *Vision, hearing, or motor disability*
  - *Intellectual disability*
  - *Emotional disturbance*
  - *Cultural factors*
  - *Environmental/economic disadvantage*
  - *Limited English proficiency*

### ***Evidence of Appropriate Instruction***

*The evaluation must include data that:*

- *Shows appropriate instruction was provided by qualified personnel*
  - *Includes **documented, repeated progress monitoring** shared with parents*
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### ***Observation Requirements for SLD***

*The agency must ensure that:*

- *A child is **observed in the learning environment***
- *The team uses either:*
  - *Observations conducted **prior to referral**, or*
  - *New observations completed **after referral** with **parental consent***

*Preschool-aged children must be observed in an **age-appropriate setting**.*

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## **Required SLD Documentation**

Documentation for SLD eligibility must include:

- *A statement confirming or denying that the child has an SLD*
- *Justification that eligibility was determined following required procedures*
- *Relevant behavioral observations and their academic impact*
- *Educationally relevant medical findings (if any)*
- *If using RTI:*
  - *Instructional strategies and progress-monitoring data*
  - *Documentation that parents were informed of:*
    - *The nature and frequency of data collection*
    - *Services provided*
    - *Strategies to improve progress*
    - *The right to request an evaluation*

Each team member must **certify in writing** whether they agree with the eligibility decision. Dissenting members must submit a **separate written statement**.

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## **Additional Procedures for Multiple Disabilities**

The team (including the parent) may identify a student as having **multiple disabilities** if:

- *The child has **two or more** disabilities, **excluding SLD**, and*
  - *There is a **severe or profound deficit** in communication or adaptive behavior, as measured by **validated, standardized tools***
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# Evaluation Quick Review Guide: Step-by-Step Procedures

## Child Find (Universal & Ongoing)

1. Screen referrals from staff/parents/community and MTSS data reviews each grading period.
2. When suspicion exists, convene a review team within **10 school days** to outline needed data and draft an Evaluation Plan.
3. Provide PWN + Consent to Evaluate in the parent's language. Upon receipt of **signed consent (Day 0)**, start the **60-day clock**.

## Requests for Initial Evaluation (Any Source)

### Within 30 days of request:

- **If suspect disability:** issue PWN + Consent and open the evaluation; or
- **If do not suspect:** issue PWN explaining reasons and procedural safeguards. Document the decision and date.

## Parental Consent

1. Use district consent forms that describe procedures and assessments in understandable language; provide interpreter as needed.
2. Reasonable efforts: minimum three documented attempts (e.g., phone logs, emails, certified mail).
3. Clarify: consent to evaluate **does not authorize services**; separate consent required if eligible.

## Conducting the Evaluation

1. Assign a case manager and lead evaluator the day consent is received.
2. Schedule parent/student availability for assessments.
3. Collect classroom/behavior/attendance data; conduct observations; complete standardized measures.
4. Hold the **Evaluation Team Report (ETR)** meeting by **Day 60** (or earlier).
5. If eligible, draft IEP within state/federal timelines following the ETR (within 30 days).

## Alternative Participation Options

- Offer parents **video** or **phone** participation for planning, consent review, and ETR meetings; record the method used and the parent's agreement in the meeting notice.

## Managing Timeline Exceptions (IDEA Only)

- **Parent repeatedly fails/refuses to produce the child:** Document attempts; consult legal if needed; the 60-day requirement may not apply under this exception.
- **Student transfers to a new district during evaluation:** New and former districts coordinate; if the new district is making **sufficient progress** and **parent agrees to a specific completion date**, the 60-day requirement may not apply. Get the agreement **in writing**.

## Monitoring & Internal Controls

- **Evaluation Tracking Spreadsheet:** Case manager and psychologist update weekly; Dean over Special Education reviews weekly.
- **Procedures at Day 30/45:**
  - Day 30: confirm remaining assessments and meeting date.
  - Day 45: admin check-in with evaluators; case manager sends meeting notice.

## Staff Training & Communication

- Annual Child Find refresher for all staff (including MTSS referral pathways and 30-day response rule).
- Beginning-of-year briefing for evaluators on documentation standards, consent rules, and offering phone/video options.