



Arc Guide to Requesting an Initial Special Education Evaluation

When you, the parent, are concerned about how your child is doing school, it may be helpful to think about and request a special education evaluation. Some situations when it may be beneficial to request an evaluation are when:

- Your child has a diagnosed disability
- You are concerned about your child's development
- There is a difference between what your child is doing and what other students his/her age are doing
- You think your child should be able to do better than he/she is doing
- You are concerned about your child's lack of progress
- Your child does not seem to be learning
- Your child seems to be really struggling
- You are concerned about some behaviors your child is doing

If your child is 5 or younger, contact Help Me Grow either on-line at <http://helpmegrowmn.org/HMG/Refer/index.html> or by phone at 1-866-963-4769. There will be a form for you to fill out. The completed form will be sent to the local school district. The school district will contact you within 7 to 10 days. (If the child is between 3 - 5 years old and the form is completed during the summer months, you may not hear back from the school until the fall.)

If your child is 5 or older:

- Send a dated, written request for a special education evaluation to your child's teacher and the school principal
- Describe your concerns about your child and include some examples about your concern(s)
- Include your contact information
- Ask that they respond to your request within 7 - 10 days

The school will probably want to meet with you. If the school seems to want to discuss your request either on the phone or in an email, ask for a meeting.

Before your child is referred for a special education evaluation, the school must try at least two alternatives (strategies, interventions) based on the child's needs and your concerns.



These are called pre-referral interventions. This is to have the school try some things that may help with your child before referring for special education. The school special education team may decide to not do the pre-referral interventions and immediately do a special education evaluation. The school must not use the requirement to do pre-referral interventions as a way to delay your request for a special education evaluation.

If the school decides not to evaluate, please call The Arc Minnesota.

For further information or advocacy services, contact The Arc Minnesota at 952-920-0855 or toll-free at 833.450.1494 or visit www.arcminnesota.org. (Please note: *This document is not legal advice, and should not be construed as such. Thus, no information herein should replace the sound advice of an attorney.*)

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August 2018