

CHILD FIND AND SPECIAL EDUCATION REFERRAL PROCESSES

ESKO SCHOOL DISTRICT

Child Find

Esko Public Schools identifies students ages birth-21 years of age who are suspected of having a disability through a comprehensive child find process.

Referrals are accepted by a variety of sources; parents, caregivers, preschool or child care teachers, ECFE staff, MN Parents Know/Help Me Grow website, classroom teachers, social workers, doctors or other physical or mental health care providers. Although there is a general process to refer students older than 3 years of age to the district's administration staff, Child Find accepts referrals on any child, public or non public school, ages birth-21 years of age.

Birth-2: Children ages birth through 2 years of age are generally referred to the Northern Lights Special Education Cooperative, who then contact Esko's Early Childhood Special Education staff to begin the process of determining the evaluation process and/or eligibility for special education services through the Help Me Grow! Early intervention program.

3-5: Children ages 3 to 5 years (or kindergarten entrance) are generally referred directly to the district's Early Childhood Special Education staff.

Kindergarten-12th grade: Students who are considered to be "school aged" are generally referred by the building principal, classroom teacher, or parents, and information is brought to the district's Child Study Team (CST).

Pre-Referral/School Problem-Solving Team Processes

Elementary Level

Grade-level teams are required to meet bi-monthly, but typically meet weekly to discuss student progress and identify any student who may be struggling academically, socially, emotionally, or behaviorally. The team notifies parents of concerns and the team proceeds to use all available information to develop, implement, and revise interventions for a minimum six-week period. A thirty-minute time period is built in to each school teacher's daily schedule to allow for intervention programming. Teachers also have access to consult with the district's Special Education Child Study Team (CST) during the problem-solving process and intervention implementation process. If the student does not demonstrate adequate progress despite intervention, if all regular education staff and resources have been exhausted, and if a disability is suspected, an administrator or teacher will then complete the CST Referral form as part of the Special Education referral process.

High School Level

Special Education /Child Study Team (CST) Referral Process

1. CST meetings are held weekly at the High School and Elementary levels. Team members include the school Principal, Nurse, Family-School Social Worker, School Psychologist, Guidance Counselor, Speech and Language Therapist, and Special Education Teachers. The CST discusses students who are experiencing significant academic, social, emotional, or behavioral struggles as requested by grade-level teams or teachers, as well as new requests for Special Education evaluation. The status of annual plan reviews and in-progress evaluations are also discussed.
2. Teachers are informed of the CST process for requesting Special Education assessment via building faculty meetings. Teachers and administrators have access to CST Referral forms in designated locations in the school mailrooms.
3. Once a teacher has completed a referral form, it will be submitted to the Principal who will review the information and, upon determining the information provided is sufficient, will forward the referral to the school Special Education Due Process Secretary.
4. The Due Process Secretary will disseminate copies of the referral form to appropriate CST members, based on the area of concern related to teacher expertise. The due process secretary will also invite the referring teacher and any other necessary staff to the next scheduled CST meeting.
5. The CST will consider and review the referral and, based upon all existing information, will determine if a Special Education evaluation is warranted or if more information is needed for making such a determination. The CST will provide written notification to parents of the team's decision.
6. The CST will follow timelines and procedures for conducting Special Education evaluation as outlined by the Federal Individual's with Disabilities Education Improvement Act (IDEIA 2004) and the MN Federal Regulation Law 34, Part 300.