

Equity in Special Education Placement: A School Self-Assessment

FORM B
(ASSESSMENT ONLY)

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I. SCHOOL GOVERNANCE, ORGANIZATION, POLICY AND CLIMATE

The overall administration and organization of the school provide the structure for delivering instruction and programming that meet the needs of students. Effective governance requires distributed leadership (Elmore, 2000) that (a) works to improve instructional practice and

performance by providing opportunities for building knowledge and skills; (b) creates conditions that value learning as both an individual and a collective good, such that continuous learning occurs; (c) models the values and behaviors that represent fairness and equity for all regardless of cultural, linguistic or economic background; (d) acknowledges and utilizes

differences in expertise at all levels so that everyone contributes to a culturally responsive environment; and (e) operates on the premise of mutual accountability for achieving goals and objectives. The items listed under School Governance, Organization, Policy and Climate are designed to assist in evaluating the extent to which these criteria for effective leadership are met.

A. SCHOOL GOVERNANCE AND ORGANIZATION RECOMMENDATIONS		ALMOST ALWAYS	FREQUENTLY	SOMETIMES	ALMOST NEVER	NOT APPLICABLE
1	Administration, faculty and support personnel are well informed of the influence of culture, language, and ethnicity on school achievement.	3	2	1	0	n/a
2	The administration works collaboratively with all the members of the school community to ensure equitable treatment for all students.	3	2	1	0	n/a
3	The administration provides opportunities for professional development of faculty and support personnel on issues of cultural, language, and ethnic diversity.	3	2	1	0	n/a
4	The administration ensures that the special education assessment process is conducted fairly and appropriately.	3	2	1	0	n/a
5	The administration employs faculty and support personnel who demonstrate the ability to meaningfully and respectfully interact with individuals from diverse cultural backgrounds.	3	2	1	0	n/a
6	The administration creates a school culture in which students from diverse cultural and linguistic backgrounds feel they are listened to, their opinions valued, and they are involved in decision-making.	3	2	1	0	n/a
7	The administration instills an ethic of care, respect, and responsibility.	3	2	1	0	n/a
8	The administration exemplifies a positive attitude towards the school, teachers, students, and families.	3	2	1	0	n/a
9	The administration provides support and encouragement for participation in extra-curricular activities by students from diverse cultural, language, ethnic, and ability groups.	3	2	1	0	n/a

PLEASE NOTE EVIDENCE SUPPORTING THE RATING OF ANY ITEM(S) ABOVE (OPTIONAL):



B. SCHOOL POLICIES AND REFORMS RECOMMENDATIONS

		ALMOST ALWAYS	FREQUENTLY	SOMETIMES	ALMOST NEVER	NOT APPLICABLE
1	Administration, faculty and support personnel remain informed about current school policies and reforms that impact the delivery of services to students from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds.	3	2	1	0	n/a
2	The school ensures that all policies and reforms are explained to parents in their language through written communication and various meetings held at times convenient to parents (with childcare, and translators provided, and parents involved in the planning).	3	2	1	0	n/a
3	The school involves families and the community in the formation of new school policies.	3	2	1	0	n/a
4	New reforms are implemented with sensitivity toward the diverse learning needs of students from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds.	3	2	1	0	n/a

PLEASE NOTE EVIDENCE SUPPORTING THE RATING OF ANY ITEM(S) ABOVE (OPTIONAL):



C. SCHOOL CLIMATE RECOMMENDATIONS

		ALMOST ALWAYS	FREQUENTLY	SOMETIMES	ALMOST NEVER	NOT APPLICABLE
1	The school accepts the responsibility for the achievement of all students.	3	2	1	0	n/a
2	The school obtains membership in organizations that promote equitable education and provide instructional strategies for all students.	3	2	1	0	n/a
3	The school obtains materials from professional organizations and makes them available to faculty and support personnel.	3	2	1	0	n/a
4	The school sponsors professionally conducted workshops where faculty and support personnel can identify their cultural and/or linguistic biases and work to address them.	3	2	1	0	n/a
5	The school informs staff members that disrespectful responses to any child or family member regardless of cultural background, ethnicity, and/or socioeconomic status will not be tolerated on the school campus, including teachers' lounge, office, or other area.	3	2	1	0	n/a
6	The school establishes school and district-wide professional development training in cultural competence (i.e., the ability to interact meaningfully and respectfully with individuals from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds).	3	2	1	0	n/a
7	The school remains knowledgeable about their students' culture and community by visiting students in their home environment.	3	2	1	0	n/a
8	The school provides professional development to employees to provide them with necessary skills to objectively and respectfully visit students' homes and communities.	3	2	1	0	n/a
9	The school collaborates with the community, universities and other relevant institutions to assist in developing standards for addressing the needs of students from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds and their families.	3	2	1	0	n/a
10	The school lobbies the state licensing agency to include course requirements (e.g., diversity education, adaptive instructional methods) that will improve the educational outcome of all students, including those from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds.	3	2	1	0	n/a

PLEASE NOTE EVIDENCE SUPPORTING THE RATING OF ANY ITEM(S) ABOVE (OPTIONAL):



II. FAMILY INVOLVEMENT

The importance of family involvement for the achievement of children in the school system is well documented. Schools must actively work to ensure that parents remain informed and

involved. Additionally, schools must create a hospitable environment for parents to feel welcome when they visit school. The less parents feel threatened by the school, the more likely parents will view school as an ally in their

children's educational experience. The Family Involvement inventory identifies areas for review that will assist the school in evaluating its effectiveness in this area.

II. FAMILY INVOLVEMENT RECOMMENDATIONS		ALMOST ALWAYS	FREQUENTLY	SOMETIMES	ALMOST NEVER	NOT APPLICABLE
1	The school has developed an effective ongoing communication system with families.	3	2	1	0	n/a
2	The school provides professional development to staff and teachers on effective communication with parents from diverse cultural, language, and ethnic groups.	3	2	1	0	n/a
3	The school is a welcoming environment for families from diverse backgrounds, for example, with front office personnel who speak the same language as parents, and security and other personnel who are friendly and welcoming, greeting parents with a smile.	3	2	1	0	n/a
4	The school surveys families from diverse backgrounds to gather suggestions on ways to involve parents in their children's education.	3	2	1	0	n/a
5	The school provides adequate information to parents about pre-referral intervention in the language of the home.	3	2	1	0	n/a
6	The school recruits and maintains a resource list of culturally competent staff and community contacts who can communicate effectively with parents from diverse cultural, ethnic, and language groups.	3	2	1	0	n/a
7	The school assists families in accessing medical and community resources as well as other support services by directing the families to the appropriate agency(ies).	3	2	1	0	n/a
8	The school involves families in the pre-referral intervention process as respected partners and ensures they are well-informed at all times.	3	2	1	0	n/a
9	The school assists families in understanding their rights and available services under IDEA by providing one-on-one counseling, as well as workshops and/or referrals to advocates.	3	2	1	0	n/a
10	The school has an established plan for following up on parent conferences regarding request for services or other parental concerns.	3	2	1	0	n/a
11	The school utilizes parent liaisons to help parents and students navigate the school system.	3	2	1	0	n/a
12	The school involves parents in the governance of the school.	3	2	1	0	n/a
13	The school provides childcare, transportation, or alternate meeting days and times if needed.	3	2	1	0	n/a

PLEASE NOTE EVIDENCE SUPPORTING THE RATING OF ANY ITEM(S) ABOVE (OPTIONAL):



III. CURRICULUM

What is taught in the school reflects the values and disposition of the school system. The curriculum may be monocultural or

multicultural in its scope, reflecting history, contributions and perspectives of one group in society or that of many. To facilitate achievement for all students, the curriculum

should be inclusive and culturally responsive. The items included in this section provide a framework for determining the cultural responsiveness of the curriculum.

III. CURRICULUM RECOMMENDATIONS		ALMOST ALWAYS	FREQUENTLY	SOMETIMES	ALMOST NEVER	NOT APPLICABLE
1	The curriculum reflects an integration of ethnic and cultural content throughout programming, rather than assigning the study of diverse cultural groups to a single unit or one month.	3	2	1	0	n/a
2	The curriculum provides opportunities for students to investigate and understand how cultural assumptions and biases influence subject areas.	3	2	1	0	n/a
3	The curriculum fosters respect and understanding for diverse cultures by providing materials that help students develop positive attitudes toward different racial, ethnic, cultural, language, and ability groups.	3	2	1	0	n/a
4	The curriculum supports and values the experiences and information students have learned within their cultural groups.	3	2	1	0	n/a
5	The curriculum helps students make connections between what they are learning in school and their personal experiences.	3	2	1	0	n/a
6	The curriculum situates specific cultural and local knowledge in a global context.	3	2	1	0	n/a
7	The curriculum is made interesting and challenging for all students (not focused on rote learning activities).	3	2	1	0	n/a
8	The curriculum explicitly teaches cultural capital (the norms, behaviors, and attitudes) that provides access to achievement.	3	2	1	0	n/a
9	The curriculum uses the local language and cultural knowledge (funds of knowledge) as a foundation for the rest of the curriculum.	3	2	1	0	n/a

PLEASE NOTE EVIDENCE SUPPORTING THE RATING OF ANY ITEM(S) ABOVE (OPTIONAL):



IV. ORGANIZATION OF LEARNING

What occurs in the classroom is crucial to the achievement of students. This includes all the activities involved in the exchange of learning in the classroom. Teachers play a major role in

establishing the classroom setting and determining what knowledge is important and how it will be taught. Criteria for achievement and methods of assessing that achievement are an integral part of this process. Finally, classroom

behavior management is key to creating an environment conducive to teaching and learning. All are part of the organization of learning and must be evaluated in order to determine the cultural responsiveness of the classroom.

A. TEACHING AND LEARNING RECOMMENDATIONS		ALMOST ALWAYS	FREQUENTLY	SOMETIMES	ALMOST NEVER	NOT APPLICABLE
1	Teachers understand the ways in which race, ethnicity, culture, language and social class interact to influence student behavior.	3	2	1	0	n/a
2	Teachers are knowledgeable about the history and cultures of diverse ethnic, racial, and cultural groups.	3	2	1	0	n/a
3	Teachers are knowledgeable about individual learning styles.	3	2	1	0	n/a
4	Teachers are knowledgeable about the second language acquisition process and how to support students who are English language learners.	3	2	1	0	n/a
5	Teachers modify their instruction so that students from diverse ethnic, racial, cultural, language, and ability groups will have an equal opportunity to learn.	3	2	1	0	n/a
6	Teachers keep accurate records of each student's progress.	3	2	1	0	n/a
7	Teachers relate content and instructional strategies to the cultural background of their students.	3	2	1	0	n/a
8	Teachers utilize instructional materials that reflect images and perspectives from diverse groups.	3	2	1	0	n/a
9	Teachers help students to appreciate current and historical events from multiple perspectives.	3	2	1	0	n/a
10	Teachers help to organize activities and projects that enable students from diverse racial, ethnic, cultural, and language groups work together.	3	2	1	0	n/a
11	Teachers inform students about stereotyping and other related biases that have negative effects on racial and ethnic relations.	3	2	1	0	n/a
12	Teachers have high expectations for all students regardless of their background or differences.	3	2	1	0	n/a
13	Teachers work from the premise that "all children can learn" and continue to attempt different instructional approaches until each child is reached.	3	2	1	0	n/a
14	Teachers feel a strong sense of responsibility for all students, including students referred for or already placed in special education.	3	2	1	0	n/a
15	Teachers are experts in instruction and management and know how to effectively challenge and support their students.	3	2	1	0	n/a
16	Teachers are knowledgeable about and skilled in using strategies for teaching English language learners (including sheltered English techniques).	3	2	1	0	n/a

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B. CLASSROOM ACHIEVEMENT AND ASSESSMENT RECOMMENDATIONS

		ALMOST ALWAYS	FREQUENTLY	SOMETIMES	ALMOST NEVER	NOT APPLICABLE
1	Classroom assessment is conducted with fairness and sensitivity towards students from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds.	3	2	1	0	n/a
2	Teachers use a range of assessment strategies that provide students from diverse backgrounds opportunities to demonstrate their mastery and skills, including the opportunity to share what they know in their native language if they wish.	3	2	1	0	n/a
3	Administrators and teachers use a variety of instruments and strategies to assist students from diverse racial, ethnic, cultural, and language groups in meeting State standards and other mandated requirements (e.g., No Child Left Behind Act).	3	2	1	0	n/a
4	Teachers utilize information from several sources, including families, in assessing students' achievement.	3	2	1	0	n/a
5	The school identifies and uses multiple assessment tools and strategies that are research-based and culturally valid.	3	2	1	0	n/a
6	The school provides school and district-wide training in the administration of assessment tools and methods that consider the student's cultural background.	3	2	1	0	n/a
7	The school knows when and how to provide accommodations to students with special needs and English language learners.	3	2	1	0	n/a
8	The school ensures that high stakes tests have been validated for the purpose for which they are used and have been standardized on populations of students similar to their students.	3	2	1	0	n/a

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C. BEHAVIOR MANAGEMENT RECOMMENDATIONS

		ALMOST ALWAYS	FREQUENTLY	SOMETIMES	ALMOST NEVER	NOT APPLICABLE
1	Administration, teachers, and support personnel are knowledgeable about differences in cultural practices that might impact on student behavior.	3	2	1	0	n/a
2	Administration, teachers, and support personnel discipline students with a sensitivity towards students' cultural and linguistic differences.	3	2	1	0	n/a
3	Classroom rules and procedures are written and explained in language that is clear to students from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds.	3	2	1	0	n/a
4	Teachers are knowledgeable about certain behaviors that are consistent with students' cultural background so as not to consider them deviant.	3	2	1	0	n/a
5	Teachers utilize resource persons belonging to or familiar with a students' cultural and linguistic background to assist in planning behavioral interventions.	3	2	1	0	n/a
6	Students are taught school-sanctioned behaviors, particularly as they might conflict with culturally specific behaviors.	3	2	1	0	n/a
7	Students are made aware of behaviors that might be culturally specific so they can learn how to interact appropriately with students from cultures other than their own.	3	2	1	0	n/a

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V. SPECIAL EDUCATION PRE-REFERRAL AND REFERRAL PROCESSES AND PROGRAMS

The special education process is complex. To determine whether a school provides effective

and culturally appropriate services requires a multi-level analysis. Adequate and appropriate programming and instruction must be initiated even before the referral process begins, and

culturally responsive practices must be implemented throughout assessment and intervention. This section assists in evaluation of this process and programming.

A. PRE-REFERRAL AND REFERRAL PROCEDURES RECOMMENDATIONS		ALMOST ALWAYS	FREQUENTLY	SOMETIMES	ALMOST NEVER	NOT APPLICABLE
1	The Child Study Team uses a flow chart to help with decision-making during the referral process.	3	2	1	0	n/a
2	The flowchart ensures that students have been provided with meaningful, appropriate pre-referral strategies, adequate opportunities to learn, and validation of their difficulties across time and settings.	3	2	1	0	n/a
3	Participants in Child Study Teams are knowledgeable about and able to facilitate a range of meaningful pre-referral strategies.	3	2	1	0	n/a
4	Sufficient time is devoted at team meetings to selecting the best strategies for individual students based on data collected by teachers and others prior to the meeting.	3	2	1	0	n/a
5	Pre-referral strategies are varied and substantive, such as transferring a student to another teacher's class or providing individual tutoring through an after-school program.	3	2	1	0	n/a
6	Classes are taught by certified teachers who speak the child's first language.	3	2	1	0	n/a
7	Classroom room size is controlled to ensure an optimal learning environment that addresses the needs of all the students.	3	2	1	0	n/a
8	Specific instructional objectives are developed for each child, and teams specify who is responsible for addressing these objectives and the timeframe in which they are to be monitored.	3	2	1	0	n/a
9	The classroom context (e.g., teaching style, classroom arrangement and management, and peer relationships) from which a child is referred is carefully considered.	3	2	1	0	n/a
10	School personnel knowledgeable about cultural and linguistic diversity, including differentiating between second language acquisition and disabilities in the case of English language learners, should be present at the Child Study Team meeting.	3	2	1	0	n/a
11	Parents/Caregivers should be involved as respected, valued partners at every stage of the process.	3	2	1	0	n/a

PLEASE NOTE EVIDENCE SUPPORTING THE RATING OF ANY ITEM(S) ABOVE (OPTIONAL):

**B.ASSESSMENT AND INTERVENTION
RECOMMENDATIONS**

		ALMOST ALWAYS	FREQUENTLY	SOMETIMES	ALMOST NEVER	NOT APPLICABLE
1	Administrators, teachers, and related support personnel are knowledgeable about the special education process.	3	2	1	0	n/a
2	Administrators, teachers, and support personnel are knowledgeable about the evaluation guidelines outlined in the Individual with Disabilities Education Act. (IDEA)	3	2	1	0	n/a
3	Instruction is modified appropriately to facilitate achievement before students are referred for special education evaluation.	3	2	1	0	n/a
4	The student is assessed by someone who speaks his/her native language and who is knowledgeable about the impact of second language acquisition on IQ and achievement.	3	2	1	0	n/a
5	English language learners are assessed in their native language as well as English.	3	2	1	0	n/a
6	In assessment the student is observed in his or her classroom as well as in other contexts and settings.	3	2	1	0	n/a
7	The assessment team uses alternative assessments (e.g., curriculum based assessment, portfolio assessment) to assist in determining eligibility for special education.	3	2	1	0	n/a
8	The administration ensures that the assessment team includes a resource person familiar with the student's cultural background.	3	2	1	0	n/a
9	The assessment team utilizes culturally appropriate and culturally valid assessment tools.	3	2	1	0	n/a
10	The school assigns personnel who are knowledgeable about student's cultures to conduct assessments.	3	2	1	0	n/a
11	Individualized Education Plans take into consideration the student's cultural and linguistic background.	3	2	1	0	n/a
12	A resource person familiar with the student's cultural and linguistic background assists in the development of interventions and in the monitoring of the student's progress.	3	2	1	0	n/a

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