Understanding Your Child’s Evaluations and Scores

A Workshop for Parents

2015 Parent Educational Advocacy Training Center www.peatc.org
WHAT IS PEATC?

PEATC is Virginia’s Parent Training and Information Center. We are the “go to place” for Virginia families of children with special education needs.
PEATC PROVIDES:

- Individual phone consultations
- Workshops throughout Virginia
- Webinars/On Demand Training
- Factsheets
- Blog
- Resources

To assist parents in securing educational plans for their children leading toward adult lives that include

- meaningful employment
- friendships
- community participation
History of Parent Centers

1975: Education of ALL Handicapped Children Act became Federal Law

1978: Five Parent Training and Information Centers (PTI) were funded and PEATC was one of the first!

1991: Community Parent Resource Centers (CPRC)

www.peatc.org
Parent Centers are also supported by a Technical Assistance Project

*Funded by the USDOE, OSEP*
OBJECTIVES

- Reason for Evaluations
- Timelines for Evaluations
- Re-evaluations
- Eligibility Meeting
- Independent Education Evaluation (IEE)
- Scores and Meanings
I/They say my child needs to be evaluated...

..but what does that mean?
REASONS FOR EVALUATIONS

- Concerns by parent, teacher, administrator, person of interest about the child’s educational performance

- Is the first step in the process of getting special education services for a child
THE PROCESS

● Request is made (preferably in writing) to LEA to have the child evaluated

● A Child Study team is assembled to discuss what types of evaluations are needed

● Parent/guardian signs consent for testing to begin
TYPES OF EVALUATIONS

- Psychological
- Psycho-educational
- Socio-cultural
- Occupational Therapy
- Speech
- Physical Therapy
- Auditory Processing

- Medical
- Hearing
- Vision
- Assistive Technology
- Functional Behavioral Assessment
- Classroom observation
- Review of educational records
VIRGINIA LAW

The evaluation is sufficiently comprehensive to identify all of the child’s special education and related services needs, whether or not commonly linked to the disability category in which the child has been classified.

The LEA has 65 business days from day you signed consent to complete the evaluations and hold an Eligibility meeting.
Ensure that all evaluations are completed and that decisions about eligibility are made within 65 business days of the receipt of the referral by the special education administrator or designee, including if the special education administrator or designee routes the referral to the school-based committee for review and action. (34 CFR 300.301 (d) and (e))

RE-EVALUATIONS

A re-evaluation can occur when:

- Requested by parent, teacher, administrator, or person of interest (provided it has been year since last tested for that specific evaluation)
- Every three years (triennial evaluation)
TIMELINES FOR RE-EVALUATIONS

- If requested for re-evaluation but not for triennial, must be completed and eligibility meeting held within 65 business days of parental consent.

- If for triennial, must be completed and meeting held prior to the 3rd anniversary of last eligibility meeting.
After the evaluations are completed, an Eligibility team must meet to discuss the results and determine if the child meets the criteria for eligibility.

(Including the parent!)
ALL DATA MUST BE CONSIDERED

No single measure or assessment is used as the sole criterion for determining whether a child is a child with a disability and for determining an appropriate educational program for a child.

This means Eligibility CANNOT be determined solely on:

- Grades
- Behaviors
- Attendance
ELIGIBILITY CATEGORIES

- Autism
- Deaf-blindness
- Deafness
- Emotional Disturbance
- Hearing Impairment
- Intellectual disability
- Multiple disabilities

- Orthopedic impairment
- Other Health Impairment
- Specific Learning Disability
- Speech or Language Impairment
- Traumatic Brain Injury
- Visual Impairment (including blindness)
Eligibility shows (generally)

- Medical diagnosis (or meets medical qualification by a physician)
- Has to show adverse impact on the child’s education

Medical disability is NOT the same as educational disability

1. Can have disability that is not impacting general education (i.e. asthma in classroom unless prevents from attending class, gym, etc.)
2. 504 can be done for accommodations if that is all that is needed (no goals needed)
   a. Broken leg-use of elevator versus stairs
EVALUATION REPORTS

The evaluation report(s) shall be available to the parent(s) no later than two business days before the meeting to determine eligibility. (34 CFR 300.306(a)(2))

HAVE YOU EVER BEEN TOLD….

“He has a score of 84….it’s ok, he’s just a little behind.”

“We don’t feel the need to test for (insert criteria) because we know she has (insert diagnosis). It shouldn’t impact her education.”

“Well for what she has deficits in (insert criteria of Reading, Spelling, Math, etc), she makes up for in (insert criteria of Reading, Spelling, Math, etc).”

“While his scores are a little below average (76), he’s not that far behind. Maybe he should apply himself more.”
THE NUMBERS HAVE MEANING

The Scores mean how well your child did as compared to the mean (average) of other students of same age.

Scores can be categorized into the following:
- Low average (standard scores of 80–89)
- Average (standard scores of 90–109)
- High average (110–119).

These classifications are used typically by school psychologists and other assessment specialists to describe a student’s ability compared to same-age peers from the general population.
THE BELL CURVE IS YOUR FRIEND

Despite the dreaded Statistics class you took in school, the Bell Curve can show you lots of information about your child’s abilities and where he/she stands with peers of the same age. It shows you the strengths and weakness areas so the IEP team can determine the correct accommodations, goals, and services.
SIMPLIFIED BELL CURVE
EVALUATION SCORES

Most psychological, educational, and other standardized evaluations report their scores in one of the following formats:

- Age equivalent scores (AE)
- Grade equivalent scores (GE)
- Standard Scores (SS)
- Standard deviation (SD)
- Percentile Ranks (PR)
PLOT THE DATA...SEE THE SCORE

By knowing where the number goes, we determine the strengths/weaknesses of the individual.
### EXAMPLE

#### WISC-IV (of 12 Year Old Boy)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Scale</th>
<th>Composite Score</th>
<th>Percentile Rank</th>
<th>Qualitative Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Verbal Comprehension</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>Average</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Perceptual Reasoning</td>
<td>115</td>
<td>84</td>
<td>High Average</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Working Memory</td>
<td>83</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>Low Average</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Processing Speed</td>
<td>97</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>Average</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
EASY WAY TO REMEMBER THE BELL CURVE

Amount of Help Needed Based on Scores
## WOODCOCK-JOHNSON SUBTEST

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Subtest</th>
<th>Standard Score</th>
<th>Percentile</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Broad Reading</td>
<td>80</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Broad Math</td>
<td>77</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Written Language</td>
<td>83</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
QUICK REFERENCE BELL CURVE

You can download PAR Toolkit for free for Android
BEFORE YOU MEET

- Ask for copies of the evaluation reports
- Read the scores and compare to Bell Curve to understand strengths and weaknesses
- Write down questions of what you don’t understand
- Review the Eligibility Criteria Worksheets from VDOE
  (www.doe.virginia.gov/special_ed/.../guidance_evaluation_eligibility_appendix_a.docx)
INDEPENDENT EDUCATIONAL EVALUATION

A parent has the right to get a 2nd opinion, known as an Independent Educational Evaluation, or IEE if he/she does not agree with the results of an evaluation performed by the LEA.
INDEPENDENT EDUCATIONAL EVALUATION (CON’T)

- Provided at no cost to the parents

- Must be performed by an independent evaluator but under the same criteria (i.e. must be same type of test administered)

- Does not have to be chosen from list provided by the LEA nor under certain cost limits

- LEA must file due process if refuse to pay for IEE
Questions?????