

LEARNING HANDICAPPED PROGRAM UPDATE
FOCUS - STATE ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA FOR PROGRAM PLACEMENT
JULY 1983

An interdisciplinary committee has been formed to 1) review the new state eligibility criteria/assessment procedures, and 2) identify key features, central issues and staff development needs. Based on committee recommendations, the following policies have been approved to ensure effective implementation.

FACT SHEET #1

1. *Are special education teachers allowed to use the Wide Range Achievement Test (WRAT) to determine program eligibility?*

No. In cases where the WRAT and Binet combination are used, the Woodcock-Johnson Psycho-Educational Battery, Part Two will also be administered to provide significant supplemental assessment data (sound/symbol relationships, math reasoning, written language) especially for younger students. In these cases, the psychologist will be the only person administering the WRAT.

2. *What achievement tests are the resource specialists allowed to use for determining eligibility?*

Resource specialists are allowed to administer the Peabody Individual Achievement Test (PIAT) and the Woodcock-Johnson Psycho-Educational Battery, Part Two. Test correlations are provided in the new state eligibility criteria to determine severe discrepancy. It's important to note, test selections are always determined in consultation with the psychologist.

3. *Do resource specialists develop ASSESSMENT REPORTS?*

No. The psychologist and the resource specialist will collaborate to develop a COMPOSITE REPORT. The COMPOSITE REPORT summarizes all the assessment data interpretations and provides general recommendations for consideration at the IEP meeting. The psychologist will coordinate this task.

4. *What is an appropriate instructional range when determining grade level skills?*

The Woodcock-Johnson Psycho-Educational Battery, Part Two provides GRADE PLACEMENT INSTRUCTIONAL RANGES. Use of these instructional ranges will provide a realistic way to screen students (consultation and record review) to determine the appropriateness of a referral for special education. A subcommittee is currently working with evaluation services to determine how the GRADE PLACEMENT INSTRUCTIONAL RANGES correlates with the California Test of Basic Skills. This information will be available in the near future.

5. *Do we use the new state eligibility criteria for exit criteria?*

Originally it was suggested to use the new state eligibility criteria as guidelines for determining exit criteria. It has since been determined that a student will meet exit criteria when all the following occur:

- IEP goals and objectives have been met,
- The student demonstrates proficiency within 1) grade level instructional range or 2) measured ability range which has been documented by criterion and/or standardized tests.
- Successful mainstreaming, when possible.

These exit criteria guidelines will apply to all students currently being served in the resource specialist program (RSP), small group instruction (SGI) and special day classes (SDC).

6. *Can students eligible for any handicapped program be placed in the resource specialist program?*

Yes. Students in the resource specialist program can be eligible for special education service in accordance with the new state eligibility criteria for any handicapping classification. This means the resource specialist program is not program specific; however, it still serves:

- mildly handicapped students in need of instructional support,
- assigned to the regular classroom for the majority of the school day.

Program goals continue to include the development, implementation and review of the IEP to ensure maximum success in the regular classroom in basic skills achievement.

7. *Do psychologists have to attend IEP meetings?*

Although it is desirable, the psychologist's attendance at the IEP meeting will be decided on a case-by-case basis. In the event there isn't consensus about eligibility/placement, it is recommended that the psychologist will attend the IEP meeting. In all cases, psychologists are required to review the assessment findings with the parent, either prior to or during the IEP meeting.

8. *When a student is eligible for a learning handicapped program, how is program placement determined?*

Program placement (RS, SGI, SDC) will be determined by time and curriculum needs. Students will be placed in a learning handicapped program to receive instruction only in the basic skill areas where there is an identified discrepancy.

9. *How do resource specialists contact the psychologist?*

All psychologists will be assigned to a cluster of schools within each region. Principals will be notified of the specific assignments. It is anticipated that resource specialists will be able to directly call the assigned psychologist to consult and coordinate testing and meeting schedules.

10. *Who is responsible for special education annual review procedures?*

The resource specialist is responsible for determining eligibility at all review meetings for students in the resource specialist program and small group instruction. The resource specialist assists the small group instruction teacher with monitoring pupil progress annually, as needed.

The special day teacher consults with the diagnostic teacher or other IEP team member to determine ongoing program eligibility. The special day class teacher monitors pupil progress and reviews the IEP annually.

Psychologists are available for consultation as needed. (Specific procedures for three-year reviews are still being developed.)

11. *Are psychologists required to use the test combinations and correlations provided in the eligibility criteria or are they allowed to make decisions based on clinical judgment?*

Psychologists are expected to use the test combinations and correlations provided in the new state eligibility criteria when determining a severe discrepancy. In the event it is determined the test data is not valid or reliable, additional testing may be administered to support any decision based on clinical judgment. Use of other tests administered in lieu of the recommended combinations will be monitored and supervised by the assessment coordinator/designee qualified to interpret psychological testing.

12. *Who develops the ASSESSMENT PLAN?*

The resource specialist and the psychologist will consult to 1) determine if the referral is appropriate and 2) develop the ASSESSMENT PLAN.

13. *Whom to call for help?*

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| Jack Fleck | Special Education Supervisor (LH) | 293-8339 |
| Odia Ellison | Special Education Supervisor (Assessment) | 293-8462 |
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Eligibility and Assessment Committee - See next page

ELIGIBILITY AND ASSESSMENT COMMITTEE

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