Specific Learning Disabilities:

Guidelines for Determining Eligibility Effective July 1, 2022

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Contents

Purpose

The purpose of this document is to provide guidelines for adopting consistent state-wide practices of determining whether a student has a specific learning disability (SLD) and to provide practical resources to educators as we move away from a discrepancy model to scientific, research-based intervention/instruction models that are in accordance with changes to State Board of Education Rule (SBE Rule) 2362.2.5, as well as alignment with IDEA Regulation 34 CFR §§300.307-300.311 to be in effect July 1, 2022.

Background and Context

The reauthorization of IDEA in 2004 allowed school teams more flexibility in the models used to find students eligible for the category of Specific Learning Disability (SLD). The use of a system of interventions and a robust Local Comprehensive Assessment System (LCAS) should provide the needed data needed to support an SLD eligibility conversation, and alert teams to the potential needs of a student who has not yet been identified. In early 2015, the Vermont Agency of Education convened a stakeholder committee to inform the development of SLD guidance for the state. The group consisted of a broad array of experts in the area of special education identification. The Agency, with support from this original document and more recently from community partners' input, reviewed various methods for identifying SLD, including a review of other states' guidance documents and approaches to SLD identification in the absence of a discrepancy model.

Specific Learning Disability

Overview

The Vermont State Board of Education Special Education Rules (SBE Rules) refer to the federal definition for Specific Learning Disability as defined in the IDEA 2004: "specific learning disability" as "a disorder in one or more of the basic psychological processes involved in understanding or in using language, spoken or written, that may manifest itself in the imperfect ability to listen, think, speak, read, write, spell, or to do mathematical calculations. Congress enacted the Education for All Handicapped Children Act (Public Law 94-142), also known as the EHA, in 1975 to support states and localities in protecting the rights of, meeting the individual needs of, and improving the results for infants, toddlers, children, and youth with disabilities and their families. This landmark law's name changed to the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act, or IDEA, in a 1990 reauthorization. The law was last reauthorized in 2004, and the department has periodically issued new or revised regulations to address the implementation and interpretation of the IDEA. This definition has been unchanged since the initial legislation that is now IDEA 2004. When regulations for Public Law 94-142 were released in 1977, SLD was identified by a significant discrepancy between an intelligence quotient (IQ) and achievement (IQ-achievement discrepancy method). Additional criteria were designed to ensure that low achievement was not primarily due to another factor: sensory or motor

disabilities, intellectual disabilities, emotional or behavioral disorders, economic disadvantage, cultural factors, or limited English proficiency. Each state then defined its own specific criteria for SLD identification following this guidance. Specific learning disability (SLD) is the most common eligibility category through which students receive special education services under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA). Students who qualify for special education under the SLD category require and should receive specially designed instruction, and related services as needed, to participate and make progress in the general education curriculum.

Rules and Regulations

Federal rules require (34 CFR §300.307) the state to adopt statewide criteria for determining specific learning disabilities with the following language:

(a) A State must adopt, consistent with §300.309, criteria for determining whether a child has a specific learning disability as defined in §300.8(c)(10). In addition, the criteria adopted by the State—

(1) Must not require the use of a severe discrepancy between intellectual ability and achievement for determining whether a child has a specific learning disability, as defined in §300.8(c)(10);

(2) Must permit the use of a process based on the child's response to scientific, research-based intervention; and

(3) May permit the use of other alternative research-based procedures for determining whether a child has a specific learning disability, as defined in § 300.8(c)(10).

(b) Consistency with State criteria. A public agency [LEA] must use the State criteria adopted pursuant to paragraph (a) of this section in determining whether a child has a specific learning disability.

> **The rules and procedures by which students are identified with SLD affect an even greater number of students. As a result, the validity of these rules and procedures for identification must be considered as not just a legal and scientific question, but also as a question of fairness and access. These tools cannot reflect every fact or point of law contained within this resource.

Revised Vermont Procedures for Identifying Children with Specific Learning Disabilities (SBE 2362.2.5):

Series 2360 - Special Education Rules *(effective until June 30, 2022)*

Series 2360- Special Education Rules *(effective as of July 1, 2022)*

Common Language – Key Concepts

Multi-tiered systems of support (**MTSS):** a continuum of increasingly intense research-based interventions; a systemic, continuous-improvement framework in which data-based problem solving and decision-making is practiced across all levels of the educational system for supporting students.

Response to Intervention (RTI): is a multi-tier approach to the early identification and support of students with learning and behavior needs. Educational decisions about the intensity and duration of interventions are based on individual student response to instruction.

Patterns of Strengths and Weaknesses: is a process that uses data to determine why a student is performing poorly, rather than if a student is performing more poorly than expected. The key to this process is for school teams to establish a pattern within various cognitive processes. It examines patterns of cognitive strengths and weaknesses in relation to specific academic weaknesses. Although there are varied methods of implementation, the essential steps in the process include (a) the identifying an academic need in one of the areas found in federal guidelines for SLD, (b) determining if there is an area or areas of cognitive weakness that have a research-based link to problems in the identified academic area, (c) establishing whether there are other cognitive areas which are average or above, and (d) analyzing these findings for a pattern that will rule out or confirm the presence of SLD. Within this framework, multiple data sources are used.

Scientific research-based interventions (SRBI): instructional practices and interventions in a school or district that have been researched and determined to be effective for improved student outcomes or proven to excel student learning as evidenced by data. Emphasize successful instruction for all students through high-quality core general education practices, as well as targeted interventions for students experiencing learning, social-emotional or behavioral difficulties.

Evidence-Based Interventions (EBI): practices or programs that have evidence to show that they are effective at producing results and improving outcomes when implemented with integrity and fidelity. Interventions need to be tested and found to be significantly more effective than standard practice.

Functional Skills SBE Rule 2362(g)(1)(ix) (34 CFR §300.306): Means the acquisition of essential and critical skills needed for a child with disabilities to learn specific daily living, personal, social, and employment skills or the skills needed to increase performance and independence at work, in school, in the home, in the community, for leisure time, and for post-secondary and other life-long opportunities. Recent AOE Guidance and Webinar.

Vermont Multi-Tiered System of Supports (VTmtss): is a systemic approach to decision-making for excellence and equity within a culture of continuous improvement that focuses on successful outcomes for all students. This systemic approach:

- Supports the collaboration of all adults to meet the academic, behavioral, social, and emotional needs of all students,
- Provides a layered system of high-quality, evidence-based instruction, intervention, and assessment practices that are matched to student strengths and needs,
- Relies on the effective and timely use of meaningful data,
- Helps districts and their schools organize resources to accelerate the learning of every student, and
- Engages and develops the collective expertise of educators, students, family, and community partnerships.

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Early MTSS: framework that supports program wide/school wide implementation and sustainability of Evidence-Based Practices (EBP) to fidelity in early childhood.

Fidelity: refers to how closely prescribed procedures are followed and, in the context of schools, the degree to which educators implement programs, assessments, and implementation plans the way they were intended. There are five elements of fidelity that include student engagement, adherence, program specificity, quality of delivery and exposure/duration. For more information see [Considerations for Effective Implementation: 5 Elements of Fidelity.](#)

Special Education ([Section 300.39](#))

(1) Special education means specially designed instruction, at no cost to the parents, to meet the unique needs of a child with a disability, including—

> (i) Instruction conducted in the classroom, in the home, in hospitals and institutions, and in other settings; and

> (ii) Instruction in physical education.

[Special Education: Definition Webinar](#) Federal Definition recently presented.

[Specially Designed Instruction](#) (34 CFR §300.39(b)(3); USBE SER I.E.43.). Handout describing SDI, Federal Law, and definition.

Universal Screening: To identify students who require a closer look or additional support, or both. Used for initial decisions about universal instruction and personalized learning plans based on common pattern and to identify or flag students who are struggling and may need closer monitoring.

Formative Assessment and Progress Monitoring: To promote student learning and inform instruction, determine if student is making progress towards goals, develop a history of patterns of strengths and areas of improvement. Progress monitoring is a form of assessment in which student learning is evaluated on a regular basis (e.g., weekly, every two weeks) to provide useful feedback about performance to both students and teachers. The primary purpose of progress monitoring in RTI is to determine which students are not responding adequately to instruction. Progress monitoring also allows teachers to track students' academic progress or growth across the entire school year.

Outcome or Summative Assessment: To verify learning and evaluate the effectiveness of universal instruction and/or curriculum. This assessment is supplemental data to consider student performance across multiple platforms.

Note: For evaluation purposes, IDEA requires response to SRBI and does not specify RTI. SRBI is now referred to as EBI under ESSA. Vermont uses EBI within VTmtss Framework.

Specific Learning Disability Eligibility Process

A student may be determined eligible for special education and related services if:

> 1. The Evaluation Planning Team (EPT) has addressed each of the following:

> The child's performance is not:

- due to a lack of appropriate instruction/intervention (delivered in a manner that is highly consistent with the design, closely aligned to student need, culturally appropriate and includes the essential components of core instruction)

- due to limited English proficiency

- primarily the result of Intellectual Disability

- primarily the result of a Serious Emotional Disability

- primarily the result of a Visual Impairment, including Blindness

- primarily the result of a Hearing Impairment, including Deafness

- primarily the result of an Orthopedic Impairment

- primarily the result of Cultural Factors

- primarily the result of Environmental or Economic Disadvantage

- due to a lack of educational opportunity (e.g., attendance/access issues)

2. The EPT may determine that a student has a specific learning disability if when provided with learning experiences and instruction appropriate for the student's age or State approved grade-level standards, the student does not achieve adequately in one or more of the following areas: oral expression, listening comprehension, written expression, basic reading skill, reading fluency skills, reading comprehension, mathematics calculation, and mathematical problem solving.

3. The evaluation is sufficiently comprehensive to appropriately identify all the student's special education and related service needs, whether commonly linked to the disability category.

4. A Specific Learning Disability prevents a student from progressing adequately in / accessing general education/core instruction according to a body of evidence demonstrating the following criteria:

- The student does not achieve adequately for their age or to meet state-approved grade-level standards and exhibits significant academic skill deficit(s) in one or more of the areas identified below when provided with learning experiences and instruction appropriate for the student's age or state-approved grade-level standards, and

- The student does not make sufficient progress to meet age or state-approved grade-level standards in the area(s) identified when using a process based on the student's response to evidence-based intervention

5. An evaluation report will contain documentation of:

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- A body of evidence from class-wide screeners and progress monitoring that demonstrate patterns of

  - Academic Skill deficits, and

  - Insufficient progress in response to evidence-based intervention in the area(s) of Basic Reading Skills; Reading Comprehension, Mathematical Calculation, Oral Expression, Reading Fluency Skills, Written Expression, Mathematical Problem Solving, Listening Comprehension.

- An observation of the student's academic performance in the area(s) of difficulty in the learning environment, including the relevant behavior and relationship of that behavior to the student's academic functioning.

- The instructional strategies used

- The student-centered data collected including documentation of repeated assessments or achievement at reasonable intervals

- The educationally relevant medical findings:

  exist and are described, or do not exist

- The documentation that the parents were notified about:

  - Student performance data collected, and general education services provided (what was collected, its purpose, and if the LEA has rules about collection of data (i.e., frequency, interventions used, EST, MTSS). Strategies for increasing the student's rate of learning

  - Results of repeated assessments of student's progress

  - The right to request an evaluation

See [SLD Determination Worksheet](#) to help guide and document your eligibility process.

Specific Learning Disability Eligibility Guidance

The process for determining SLD eligibility can be more easily understood through the lens of five elements. Each of these elements is represented throughout the process outlined above. See [IDEA: Identification of SLD](#).

Five Key Elements:

- The student **demonstrates a lack of adequate achievement** in one of the eight basic skill areas when provided with learning experiences and instruction appropriate for the student's age or State-approved grade-level standards. **E1**
- The student **demonstrates a lack of progress** when provided with scientific research-based instruction and interventions. **E2**
- Underachievement is not the result of **exclusionary factors**, including visual, hearing or motor disability, intellectual disability, emotional disturbance, cultural factors environmental or economic disadvantage, limited English Proficiency, or lack of instruction in reading or math. **E3**

- **Observational data** reflect academic and behavioral performance within the classroom reflects area(s) of concern. **E4**
- Documented **parental notifications** and participation throughout the process. **E5**

If a student is receiving instruction and interventions(s) in grade-level standards from qualified staff and is still not making adequate progress, and a disability is suspected, the Child Find

mandate of IDEA is activated. Under this law, local education agencies (LEAs) have a duty to identify and evaluate students they suspect may need special education and related services (between the ages of 3 and 21) regardless of the severity of the disability. This includes students suspected of being students with a disability even though they are advancing from grade to grade. The determination that a student is a "student with a disability" must be made on an individual basis, by a team consisting of the parent, legal guardian, or adult student and school personnel determined by the student's LEA. (34 CFR §300.111)

Families and school personnel may refer a student for a special education evaluation at any time, including prior to completion of any evidence-based interventions (EBI). The EPT must respond to all referrals by following all pertinent notification rules and holding a meeting to determine if a comprehensive evaluation is warranted, review existing documents that can demonstrate a lack of appropriate achievement (E1), and ensure the elements two and three are met; that EBI and/or other alternative research-based procedures were used in general education setting (E3), and that challenges were not due to lack of appropriate instruction (E2).

Demonstrating Lack of Achievement and Progress: (E1, 2)

As part of the school's Local Comprehensive Assessment System, students' current levels of performance are documented and then repeatedly assessed over time to provide the evidence that educators use to make decisions about students. The assessments should be reliable, valid measures that reflect the area/focus for of intervention/instruction and examine the same construct/skill over time. Similarly, progress monitoring provides data to assess students' academic and/or behavioral performance and evaluate the effectiveness of instruction and intervention. It can be implemented with all students, or with individuals and groups. Embedded assessments within evidence-based intervention programs can also be an important source of progress monitoring data for students that are performing well below grade level. Students who are performing far below expected levels may require the more frequent progress monitoring with these types of measures, but a general outcome measure (periodic benchmark assessments) should also be used periodically to determine whether they are approaching grade-level expectations.

A school district's process to determine if a student responds to instruction shall include screenings applied to all students to identify those students who are not making academic progress at expected rates.

Quality Indicators for School-Wide Screening (E1) Universal Screening Assessment Recommendations

- School-wide screenings occur at least three times during an academic year (fall, winter, spring).

- Screening instrument items are aligned with the curriculum based on learning standards for student's grade level.

- Each screening instrument meets reliability and validity standards associated with psychometrically sound measurements.

- Professional development is provided to ensure fidelity of implementation, scoring and interpretation of results.

- Screening is administered school-wide or at least to 95 percent of all students.

- Criteria are established that identify students who are performing at benchmark, at-risk and seriously at-risk levels. (e.g., defined cut score at or below the 25th percentile received tiered intervention support)

- Results of screenings are used to determine which students are considered at-risk and need further monitoring and assessment.

- Screening results may be used to determine effectiveness of core curriculum and instruction and can be used to identify students at risk for poor learning outcomes.

High-Quality Core/First Instruction Guidelines: (E1, 2)

- Curriculum is aligned to the Vermont state learning standards and grade level performance indicators and includes Vermont's Transferable Skills.

- Instruction is provided by qualified personnel and trained staff.

- Differentiated instruction is used to meet a wide range of student needs.

- Instructional strategies/programs are implemented with fidelity, and staff are provided the professional development needed ensure this fidelity.

- Instruction is culturally and linguistically responsive to the language and learning needs of students whose first language is not English.

Guidelines for Research-based Instruction and Interventions: (E2)

- Research/evidence-based intervention that has shown to be effective is provided to all students within a tiered framework. See: What Works Clearinghouse and Use of Levels of Evidence

- Scientific, research-based reading intervention should include explicit and systematic instruction in phonemic awareness, phonics, vocabulary development, reading fluency (including oral reading skills) and reading comprehension strategies.

- Scientific, research-based math intervention should include explicit and systematic instruction in problem-solving, arithmetic skills and computational fluency, precise use and teaching of mathematical vocabulary, conceptual knowledge through multiple representations and number lines, reasoning ability.

- Intervention is provided by qualified/trained personnel and staff.

- Intervention is implemented with fidelity.

- Intervention is selected that is culturally and linguistically responsive to the language and learning needs of students whose first language is not English.

Documentation should include:

- Evidence-based intervention(s) that have been provided. Specifically include:
  - the type, duration, and frequency
  - evidence that the intervention is appropriate to student's assessed needs
  - the educator providing the intervention has received appropriate training to do so
  - intervening factors did not threaten the integrity of the intervention
- The student's rate of progress, including a comparison of student's progress in relation to other students receiving the same intervention
- A monitoring schedule that:
  - allows comparisons with the performance of peers receiving the same intervention or instruction
  - is appropriate to the child's age and grade placement
  - is appropriate to the content being monitored
  - permits interpretations of the effectiveness of the intervention

Exclusionary Factors: (E3)

In considering unexpected underachievement, a team must consider exclusionary factors. That requires the team has determined that visual, hearing or motor disability, intellectual disability, emotional disturbance, cultural factors, environmental or economic disadvantage, limited English Proficiency, or lack of instruction in reading or math are not singularly accounting for the student's performance. In this case the emphasis is on singularly. There may be cases, particularly where environmental factors, such as homelessness or economic disadvantage and poor nutrition, do adversely affect student performance without being the primary factor in the student's underachievement. In this case, the team should consider the degree to which each factor may adversely affect the student's achievement. For example, for a student with an emotional disability, the team should consider whether the unexpected underachievement is a result of the emotional disability or if the student's underachievement triggers the behavioral challenges resulting in a loss of instructional time and lack of progress

In order to ensure that exclusionary factors are not responsible for the student's performance schools should consider student outcome data in the context of the larger group of students. Consideration must also be given to the number and percentage of age peers or classmates achieving satisfactorily on measures of the State-approved grade-level standards. Specific attention should be directed to examine the appropriateness of the instruction in relation to students' primary language, and cultural identity. Environment factors such as attendance, transitions or other disruptions can affect students' ability to access instruction.

Observation: (E4)

Observation of a student in his/her learning environment is mandated by IDEA (34 CFR 300.306(a)(1) and 34 CFR 300.300(a).   At least two observations are required: 1) a routine classroom observation prior to the child's referral for evaluation and, 2) an observation focused on the child's academic performance in the regular classroom that is conducted after referral (and with parental consent) by trained observers.

The observation should establish the relationship between academic functioning and behavior within the classroom relative to the identified area of concern and should capture factors critical to the learning/instructional environmental.   These observations can and should be used to gain information about the other required elements and offer insight into the root causes of the student's difficulties.   Consideration must be given to:

- teaching practices and opportunities for student engagement
- student work within the learning environment
- student's approach to and completion of work
- accuracy
- observed supports
- physical and/or emotional structures and routines

Observations done across a variety of settings may provide the best information. Observation detail should be empirical and objective.

Parental Involvement: (E5)

Parents are partners in providing input on their child's educational and functional performance. LEAs need to engage parents throughout their educational experience. On a school wide level, parent involvement should occur naturally throughout the course of a student's educational experience. In the event of a student needing additional support, parent-school communication should be evident throughout instruction and intervention. In a school that has a comprehensive VTMTSS implemented, data will be generated at all layers of instruction and intervention. These data should be used in communicating the needs of the students with the structural supports offered by the school. By the time any student is recommended for intensive interventions, or a comprehensive evaluation, families and educators will have positive and engaged relationships to support student learning. LEAs should prioritize the seven core principals from the [Family Engagement Toolkit and Self-Assessment](#):

- Creating a welcoming environment
- Building effective two-way communication
- Supporting the success of students
- Sharing power and responsibility
- Partnering with the community
- Providing equity and access
- Ensuring sustainability

Special considerations should be given during the evaluation process to:

- Explaining EBI process and reports; providing reports three days in advance

- Explaining data: the why, how, value for educational programming
- Providing training to ensure understanding of resources and avenues for support and advocates ([Vermont Family Network](#))

Additionally, the comprehensive evaluation process this engagement should involve, is not limited to, a report made available to the parent. This evaluation report needs to include the following documentation:

- the instructional strategies used and the student-centered data collected;
- documentation that the student's parents were notified about the amount and nature of the student's performance data that would be collected;
- the general education services provided;
- strategies for increasing the student's rate of learning;
- and the parent's right to request an evaluation. (2362.2.6)

Additional Considerations

Team Roles and Responsibilities

Make clear the responsibilities of different professionals within the Evaluation Planning Team. Be sure to include all relevant partners including general education members, Educational Support Team members, special educators, parents, and the student where appropriate. School Psychologists support general education through evaluation, evidence-based intervention, and co-teaching, to support learning and may be valuable members as well.

[Sample team responsibilities](#)

Evaluation and Assessment

Eight components of a comprehensive evaluation:

- Use a variety of assessment tools and strategies to gather relevant functional, developmental, and academic information about the child, including information provided by the parent (comprehensive data-gathering process)
- May not use any single measure or assessment as the sole criterion
- Must use technically sound instruments that are:
  - racially and culturally fair,
  - administered in native language;
  - used for purposes for which they are reliable and valid;
  - administered as designed by trained and knowledgeable personnel; and
  - tailored to area of educational need, adapted to physical and sensory disabilities
- The child is assessed in all areas related to the suspected disability
- The evaluation is coordinated with assessments of other LEAs (e.g., when the student comes to a new school district with a previous evaluation and IEP, these data must be considered)

- The evaluation is sufficiently comprehensive to identify the child's special education and related service needs, whether commonly linked to the identified disability category (i.e., interventions may be provided that reflect the child's individual needs regardless of the eligibility category)
- Assessment data directly assist persons in determining the educational needs of the child
- Additional requirements: Review existing relevant evaluations and data and determine what additional data are needed

Intelligence Testing:

- IDEA does not prohibit or make mandatory the use of intelligence testing for SLD evaluations. However, Vermont State Board of Education no longer permits a discrepancy model for SLD eligibility determination.
- May be utilized as part of a combination of multiple measures and data points to inform EPT decisions.

Intelligence and achievement testing

- Leads to cut scores (major component of discrepancy)
- Reduces the comprehensive evaluations, discussion, and teamwork
- Will not be utilized in Vermont to solely use a discrepancy to make an eligibility determination.

Appendices

AOE Resources

The purpose of this section is to provide Vermont Local Education Agencies (LEAs) with AOE and general resources to draw from in preparing and implementing a system and practices for identifying and evaluating students with disabilities when the suspected disability is Specific Learning Disability (SLD) when not utilizing the IQ discrepancy model. While not an exhaustive list, the resources contained within have been vetted by the Agency of Education (AOE) professional staff. The AOE does not endorse a particular approach, professional consultant, or vendor. The AOE encourages LEAs to network with each other and share resources, approaches, and best practices. LEAs are welcome to contact the AOE Special Education Team for more targeted, individualized support by completing our TA [request form](#).

Specific Learning Disability Worksheet

This worksheet guides EPTs through the process of SLD eligibility determination.

Specific Learning Disability FAQs

Answers several questions regarding the eligibility process.

Specific Learning Disability/Dyslexia FAQs - coming soon

Answers specific questions related to Dyslexia and SLD determination.

Mathematics Worksheet - coming soon

Used to document that a student has received appropriate instruction and intervention in mathematics.

Reading Worksheet - coming soon

Used to document that a student has received appropriate instruction and intervention in reading.

Written Expression Worksheet - coming soon

Used to document that a student has received appropriate instruction and intervention in written expression.

Core Instruction Observation Worksheet - coming soon

Used to systematically document core instruction, engagement to task.

[Vermont Multi-Tiered System of Supports](#)

Is a systemic approach to decision-making for excellence and equity within a culture of continuous improvement that focuses on successful outcomes for all students.

General Resources

Systems and Approaches

This section provides a short list of systems and approaches to identifying and evaluating students suspected of experiencing a specific learning disability. LEAs should consider their broader VTmtss Framework in selecting the system or approach that aligns with existing structures and resources. These links lead to systems-level considerations in designing or enhancing the approach that meets the needs of your LEA.

[RtI Network](#)

[Intervention Central](#)

[PATTAN](#)

[Center on MTSS](#)

[Example of District Guidelines Identifying SLD Using RtI](#)

[Best Evidence Encyclopedia](#)

[Center on Instruction](#)

Patterns of Strengths and Weaknesses

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- [SLD Determination Utilizing PSW](#)
- [PSW Methods](#)
- [PSW Tools](#)
- [PSW Model In Practice: CA](#)

Eligibility in an Instructional Model of Evaluation: Review, Interview, Observe, Test (R.I.O.T.)

[Data Teaming Tools](#)

Assessments/Tools

Assessment is critical in making decisions, applying judgement, and communicating results or performance. These links lead you to a variety of measures to review as you consider the approach your LEA will use to make eligibility determinations.

[Tool and Assessment Charts](#)

[Progress Monitoring](#)

[Progress Monitoring](#)

[Implementation and Fidelity Tools](#)

[Assessment Inventories (under Tools)](#)

[Curriculum Based Measurement](#)

[Easy CBM](#)

[Checklists and Forms](#)

Assessment Examples from Connecticut

- [Assessment Elementary](#)

- [Assessment Secondary](#)

Organizations

There is a plethora of organizations to draw from in terms of research, guidance, models, innovative practices, and networking opportunities as you prepare or strengthen your systems for the July 1, 2022, rule change regarding SLD determination. Connecting research to practice, these organization provide resources and supports in professional development, technical assistance, resources with a strong library of EBI/RTI resources.

[Office of Special Education Program National Technical Assistance Centers](#)

[Center for Response to Intervention in Early Childhood](#)

[National Center on Intensive Intervention](#)

[Positive Behavior Intervention & Supports](#)

[Research Institute on Progress Monitoring](#)

[Florida Center for Reading Research](#)

[WestEd](#)

LD Online for [Educators](#) and for [Parents](#).

Consultants/Vendors

While the AOE does not endorse a particular consultant or vendor, there are professionals who will work with LEAs virtually or on site. The listing below includes individuals or groups with the expertise to consult with you on preparing for the July 1, 2022 rule changes, particularly SLD identification should the need arise.

[Integrated Multi-Tiered Systems of Support – UConn – Dr. Devin Kearns](#)

[Individual Advocacy Solutions: Maureen Tracey](#)

[State Education Resource Center - CT](#)

[Dr. Dale Boyle, Franklin Pierce University](#)

[Dr. Patricia Anderson, retired Connecticut State Department of Education](#)

[Dr. Natasha Limones](#) (PSW)

[Psyched Services](#) - Kara Levy (PSW)

[Institute on Disability - UNH](#)

[TIES Center](#)

[John Hosp, UMass](#)

[Vermont Interdisciplinary Team (I-Team)](#)

[District Management Group](#)

[Special Education Consultants of Massachusetts](#)

[Panorama Education](#)

[Jenny Ponzuric Courses](#) (PSW)

Literature/Articles

LEAs may find it helpful to share information on the foundation of the changes underway. This list consists of brief instructional and informational resources to prepare faculty, staff, and families with the rationale behind the approach to the upcoming rule changes. The AOE welcomes the opportunity for community partners to

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add to this brief collection as we navigate a statewide change in our approach to SLD identification.

[IRIS](#)

The IRIS Center, in collaboration with the Tennessee State Board of Education and the Tennessee State Improvement Grant, hosts four online modules on response to intervention (RTI).

- [RTI Part 1: An Overview](#)

- [RTI Part 2: Assessment](#)

- [RTI Part 3: Reading Instruction](#)

- [RTI Part 4: Putting It All Together](#)

- [RTI Part 5: A Closer Look at Tier 3](#)

[Reading Rockets on RtI](#)

[Wrightslaw](#)

[What Works Clearinghouse](#)

[NCLD White Paper](#)

[LDA Paper on RtI](#)

[Response to Intervention and SLD Identification (PowerPoint)](#)

[State of Learning Disabilities (2014](#))

Hale, James B. (2008). [Response to Intervention: Guidelines for Parents and Practitioners.](#)

Hehir, Thomas, with Lauren Katzman (2012). *Effective Inclusive Schools: Designing Successful Schoolwide Programs.* San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.

U.S. Department of Education (2007). *[Q and A: Questions and Answers On Response to Intervention (RTI) and Early Intervening Services (EIS).](#)*

[Guidelines for Determining Patterns of Strengths/Weaknesses](#)

[Patterns of Strengths/Weaknesses](#)

[Establishing Cut Points Within Universal Screening/RtI](#)

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AOE Example: Visual Graphic for SLD Data Collection

Evidence - Data needed for meeting Specific Learning Disability Eligibility Criteria under Response to Intervention Model

SLD Eligibility Criteria

Data collected from multidisciplinary team

Criterion 1

Rule out as determinant factors:

- Lack of appropriate instruction delivered by qualified personnel

- Limited English proficiency

Criterion 2

Rule out as primary factors:

- Visual, hearing, motor disability

- Intellectual disability

- Emotional disturbance

- Environmental, cultural, economic disadvantage

- Loss of instructional time

Criterion 3

Rule out Inadequate achievement:

- Does not meet age or grade level standards

- When provided age and grade level learning experiences and instruction

Criterion 4

Rule out Insufficient progress:

- Demonstrates a lack of response to evidence-based instruction/ intervention

OR

- Responds at a rate insufficient to reduce risk over time

Criterion 5: Observation
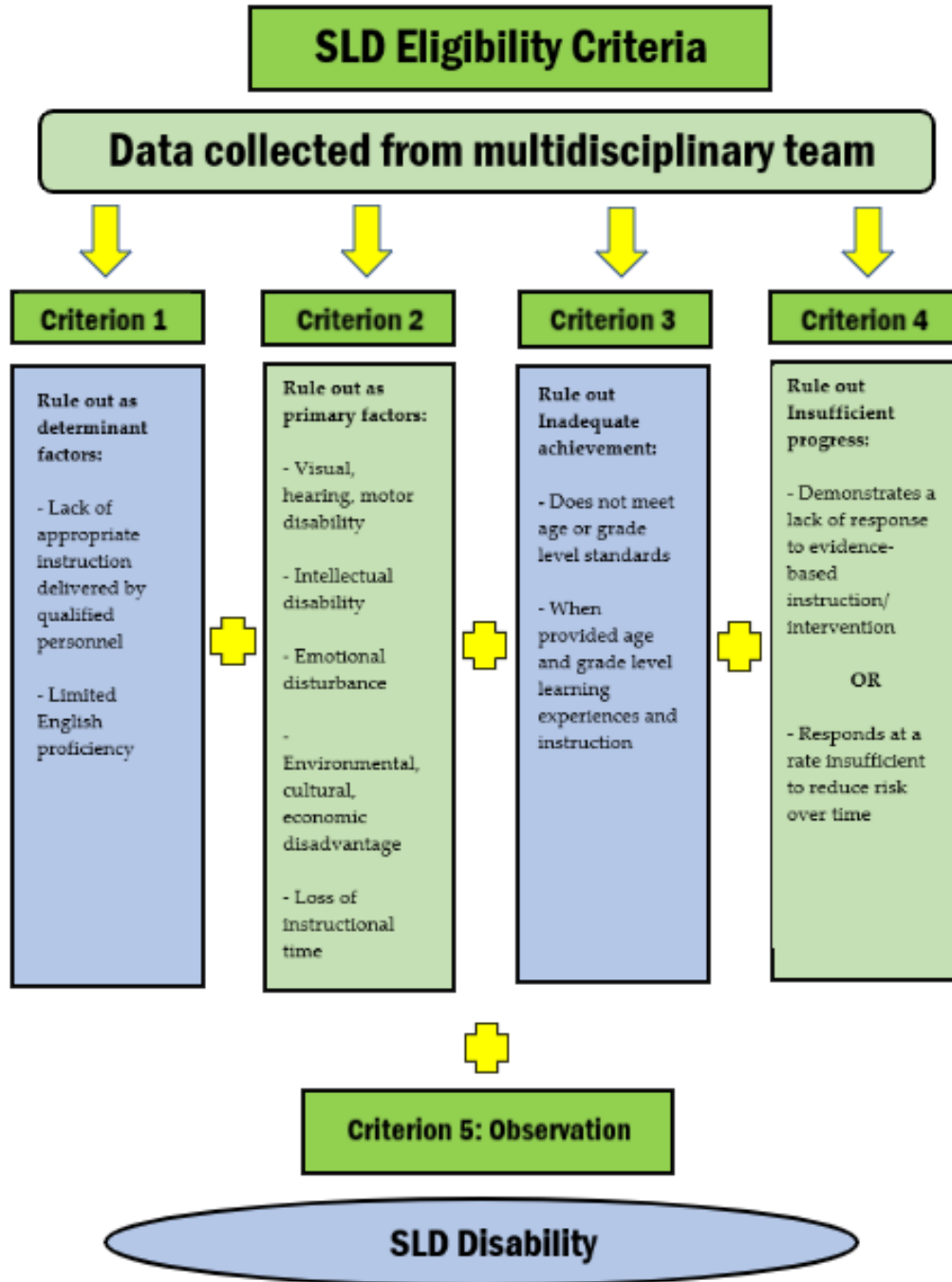
SLD Disability

Figure adapted from "The RTI Approach to Evaluating Learning Disabilities." Kovaleski, VanDerHeyden, and Shapiro.

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