



STATE OF HAWAII  
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

P.O. BOX 2360  
HONOLULU, HAWAII 96804

OFFICE OF STUDENT SUPPORT SERVICES

July 9, 2020

TO: Complex Area Superintendents, Principals (All), District Educational Specialists, Public Charter School Executive Director, Public Charter School Directors, Teachers, Related Services Personnel

FROM: Heidi Armstrong   
Assistant Superintendent

SUBJECT: **Evaluations and Assessments**

The COVID-19 school closure and health and safety regulations have restricted schools' ability to conduct initial evaluations and eligibility meetings. However, the U.S. Department of Education did not allow states to relax timelines for evaluations which are required to be conducted within sixty (60) days of receiving parental consent. The purpose of this memo is to clarify the evaluation and assessment procedures needed to complete the evaluations.

**Evaluation Procedures**

In conducting the evaluation of the team:

- Identifies the Concern: The evaluation process always begins with the identification of the concern of the suspicion of a disability.
- Review of Data: Based upon the review of data, the team determines the additional information needed to assist in determining if the student is a student with a disability and the content of the individualized education program.
- Assessment: The purpose of conducting an assessment is to obtain additional information.

Chapter 60 requirement (§8-60-36 Evaluation Procedures explains the procedures teams should follow to gather relevant functional, developmental and academic information. The Assessments, Evaluation and Eligibility Guide<sup>1</sup> located in the electronic Comprehensive Student

<sup>1</sup>[https://www.ecsss.k12.hi.us/eCSSS/eCSSSfaq.nsf/ac5f11ce585d73a90a25758d00782f97/1f5c7b8016c2b6ea0a257aec0083bc20/\\$FILE/Referral,%20Evaluation%20and%20Eligibility%20Guide%20R%203.13.doc](https://www.ecsss.k12.hi.us/eCSSS/eCSSSfaq.nsf/ac5f11ce585d73a90a25758d00782f97/1f5c7b8016c2b6ea0a257aec0083bc20/$FILE/Referral,%20Evaluation%20and%20Eligibility%20Guide%20R%203.13.doc)

Support System provides information regarding administration of assessments. Assessors should refer to this document in its entirety which states on page 10, "*Assessments should be much more than the administration of standardized tests...*" Administration of a standardized test is NOT required to gather relevant functional, developmental and academic information. This is in line with evaluation procedures spelled out in the Hawaii Administrative Rules which further states that eligibility determination cannot be based on any single criterion – meaning a single test, assessment, observation or report.

### **Clarification on the Use of Eligibility Worksheets**

School teams are given options to determine the presence of a disability without the use of a standardized test. The eligibility worksheets provide guidance with the differing ways of determining the presence of a disability (i.e., Developmental Delay "C" Identify areas in which patterns of learning...; Specific Learning Disability Not achieving adequately OR 1.5 standard deviation or patterns of strengths and weaknesses). Teams need to use the guide which instructs teams on reviewing data and student performance and make decisions in a manner that is relevant to instruction and barriers to learning. To reiterate, formal test scores should not be used in isolation.

### **Qualified Professionals**

It is inherent upon the evaluation team to carefully review and consider all information brought forth on a student who is suspected of having a disability. Should there be questions regarding the interpretation of data, appropriate personnel participating in the decision making process can and should assist the team (§ 8-60-40 Additional Group Members "the qualified professionals such as the school psychologist, speech-language pathologist or remedial reading teacher are participating in the review of data and assisting the team in making sound eligibility decisions). These individuals may vary depending on the nature of the student's suspected disability.

If you have any questions, please contact the District Educational Specialist assigned to your complex area and/or school.

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c: Superintendent  
Deputy Superintendent  
Assistant Superintendents  
State Public Charter School Commission