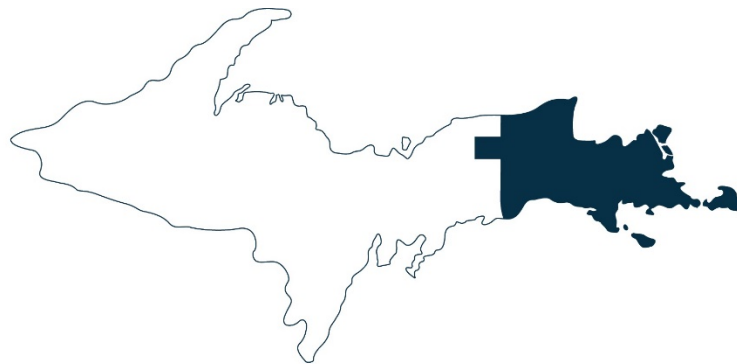

EASTERN UPPER PENINSULA INTERMEDIATE SCHOOL DISTRICT

Specific Learning Disabilities Evaluation Procedures



EASTERN UPPER PENINSULA INTERMEDIATE SCHOOL DISTRICT

December 2018

Adapted from Kalamazoo RESA Procedures/March 2009 and
the Michigan Criteria for Determining the Existence of a Specific Learning Disability/November 2009

This manual is has been adopted by the Tri-County Superintendents group of the EUPISD in cooperation with the EUPEPA, EUPSPA, AC and CRTs groups as a guidance document designed to assist in the planning and implementation of eligibility determinations for students suspected of having a Specific Learning Disability (SLD).

Table of Contents

Introduction and Background.....	2
Who Evaluates?	3
Evaluation Process	3
Response to Intervention (RTI).....	3
Pattern of Strengths and Weaknesses (PSW).....	4
Selecting the Evaluation Process	4
Evaluation Plan	5
Documentation of Eligibility	6
SLD Evaluation Resources	7
Suggested Questions for Parent Input for Initial Evaluation	7
Teacher Input for Student Assistance Team Worksheet	10
Student Assistance Team Referral Form	10
Worksheet for Charting Patterns of Strengths and Weaknesses	15
Suggested Guidelines for Determining Strengths and Weakness	16
Examples of Published Assessments	16
Worksheet to Determine Appropriate Instruction.....	17
Exclusionary Factors Worksheet for SLD	18
Technical Assistance.....	19
PLAAFP.....	19
OBSERVATION	19
Local Guidance Regarding Selections of RtI/PSW	20

Introduction and Background

Evaluation for Specific Learning Disabilities (SLD)

INTRODUCTION:

The EUPISD is committed to the provision of a quality education for all students and the continuous improvement of local educational systems. The EUPISD strives to assist and empower districts to provide high-quality teaching and learning experiences for all students, in all grades, in all classrooms in Michigan. The EUPISD believes that effective core instructional programs, services, evidence-based interventions, data-driven decision-making, and positive behavioral approaches should be available to all students, and intervention resources should be accessible, based on each individual student's intensity of need. To ensure the provision of a quality education for all of EUP students, schools need the guidance and the tools necessary to identify individual student needs.

BACKGROUND:

The Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) of 2001 changed the landscape of education in the United States. The ESEA of 2001 established a heightened emphasis on the immediate and continuous improvement of our educational systems and focused improvement efforts on state and local accountability, student outcomes, parent involvement, data-driven planning and systems, and the use of scientific, research-based methods and interventions. The reauthorization of the IDEA (Individuals with Disabilities Education Act) in 2004 introduced a new and deliberate effort to connect federal special education legislation with federal general education legislation the ESEA. This deliberate effort has resulted in an IDEA that embraces the used of data-driven decision-making processes and new educational methods based on scientific research. The use of data-driven decision-making processes includes the IDEA requirements for determining a student's eligibility for special education programs and services.

In Michigan, prior to the 2004 reauthorization of the IDEA, the identification of a student suspected to have an SLD was based on a single specific method as defined in the MARSE (Michigan Administrative Rules for Special Education). That method was the severe discrepancy model. The 2004 reauthorization of the IDEA expressly prohibits all states from requiring the use of the severe discrepancy model. As a result, the MARSE were revised in 2006. The new MARSE for determining SLD eligibility provides schools with choices. Those choices include the use of methods for determining SLD eligibility based on the use of scientific, research-based interventions and patterns of strengths and weaknesses. The need to develop new methods for determining SLD eligibility is the driving force behind development of these new criteria.

WHAT IS A SLD?

A specific learning disability is "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, writing, spell, or do mathematical calculations, including conditions such as perceptual disabilities, brain injury, minimal brain dysfunction, dyslexia, and developmental aphasia that adversely affects a student's educational performance. A SLD does not include learning problems that are primarily the result of visual, hearing, or motor disabilities; mental retardation; emotional disturbance; or of environmental, cultural, or economic disadvantage." (34 CFR § 300.8(c)(10).

Who Evaluates?

WHO EVALUATES FOR DETERMINATION OF SLD ELIGIBILITY?

In compliance with the MARSE, a Multidisciplinary Evaluation Team (MET) conducts a full and individual evaluation of a student suspected to have an SLD. The MET, based upon its evaluation of the student, then makes its recommendation of eligibility to the Individualized Education Plan (IEP) team. The student's IEP team then determines SLD eligibility (R 340.1713).

Evaluation Process

WHAT PROCESS OF EVALUATION WILL BE USED TO DETERMINE SLD ELIGIBILITY?

The revised MARSE allows the following two processes for determining eligibility:

- 1) **Response to scientific, research based intervention.** *Depending on the local district's practice, this process may have a variety of names; e.g., Instructional Consultation Team, Response to Intervention, Michigan's Integrated Behavior and Learning Support Initiative (MiBLSi). The Michigan Department of Education (MDE) does not mandate any specific scientific, research-based intervention process.*

Response to Intervention (RTI)

Response to scientific, research-based intervention (RtI):

The federal regulations do not specify what research based interventions must be used, and leave the State with flexibility to determine criteria to best meet local needs. Resources such as the Florida Center for Reading Research, at: www.fcrr.org, provide a listing of current research based interventions. Guidance on research based practices may also be found in Response to Intervention: Enhancing the Learning of All Children, published by the Michigan Assoc. of Administrators of Special Education.

MiBLSi

Michigan's Integrated Behavior and Learning Support Initiative (MiBLSi) is an initiative through the Michigan Department of Education's Office of Special Education and Early Intervention Services and helps schools create a "culture" where staff teaches academic success and behavior success. EUPISD staffs in MiBLSi Schools are trained to:

1. Monitor student reading and behavior performance
 - Access dynamic data collection systems that provide staff with performance indicators in reading and behavior that are accurate and timely – for example, the School Wide Information System (SWIS™) and the Dynamic Indicators of Basic Early Literacy Skills (DIBELS™).
2. Make decisions based on data
 - Develop and implement reading and behavior interventions using student performance indicators
 - Evaluate intervention effectiveness through ongoing data collection and progress monitoring

The use of a fully implemented MiBLSi process meets the standard for SLD evaluation utilizing the RTI option in the area of Basic Reading Skills

- 2) **Pattern of strengths and weaknesses.** "The MDE does not mandate any specific process to determine a pattern of strengths and weaknesses. Any determination of SLD requires a full

comprehensive evaluation according to the evaluation procedures in the federal regulations at §300.301 – §300.311, including those particular to a student suspected of having a SLD in §300.307 – §300.311.”

Pattern of Strengths and Weaknesses (PSW)

Pattern of strengths and weaknesses:

Determining a pattern of strengths and weaknesses is the second option described by federal regulations. This option, although not required, may be used in districts when an RtI option is not appropriate or feasible. RtI often requires that the district systematically implement the methodology over a period of time, establish district norms and determine procedures for providing Tier 2 and 3 interventions. At this time, RtI is not possible for all areas included in the SLD definition. Also, there may be students arriving in the district in need of evaluation who have not had the opportunity to be evaluated with reference to a systematic intervention process. The pattern of strengths and weaknesses alternative is based on assessment and a review of achievement scores and performance in a variety of academic areas, with documentation of patterns of strength as compared to other areas where the student demonstrates a pattern of significant academic concerns, relative to the child’s expected abilities. Assessment documents the student’s performance and achievement related to Michigan standards and benchmarks either at the student’s age level, or assigned grade level. As with RtI, assessment includes review of research based interventions and student achievement on State approved content. Districts must establish local standards for implementing either an RtI process or establishing a pattern of strengths and weaknesses (PSW). The EUPISD has provided a decision making structure, as defined in this manual. Parameters for assessment results are provided as a way of standardizing PSW decision making within and among school districts.

Note regarding consideration of a severe discrepancy:

Severe discrepancy may be used a consideration of eligibility utilizing the PSW model, however, the continued use of severe discrepancy as the primary factor in determining eligibility is not in compliance with the MARSE or IDEA.

Selecting the Evaluation Process

Selecting Response to Intervention (RtI) or Patterns of Strengths and Weaknesses (PSW)

As noted above, decision-making on which process to use to document achievement and learning needs will depend on district policies, status of RtI implementation; staff training, specific areas of concern, length of time the child has attended district programming, and grade level interventions. The following rules are suggested in determining whether to use RtI or PSW in establishing achievement levels and documenting interventions:

Rule #1: If you have the ability to use the RtI option, this is the default approach

- District policies support the use of the RtI as an intervention approach; and,
- District implementation reflects the 8 core principles (see manual introduction).

Rule #2: Use PSW if:

- RtI is not being used or is not fully implemented in the skill area of suspected disability
- RtI is not being used or is not fully implemented at the child’s grade level
- The parent requests a special education evaluation and will not extend timelines to accommodate recommended implementation of tier interventions and timelines.

Once a decision has been made as to which process to use, this choice by the IEP team should be reflected on the Review of Existing Evaluation Data (REED) form.

The following criteria apply to all methods used to determine SLD eligibility:

- A student must not be determined to be a student with a disability if the determinant factor for that determination is:
 - lack of appropriate instruction in reading, including the essential components of reading instruction (as defined in section 1208(3) of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act). [including explicit and systematic instruction in phonemic awareness, phonics, vocabulary development, reading fluency and oral reading skills, and reading comprehension strategies];
 - lack of appropriate instruction in math; or limited English proficiency.

In interpreting evaluation data for the purpose of determining if a student is a student with a disability as defined in 34 CFR § 300.8, and the educational needs of the student, each public agency must:

- draw upon information from a variety of sources, including aptitude and achievement tests, parent input, teacher recommendations, as well as, information about the student's physical condition, social or cultural background, and adaptive behavior; and
- ensure that information obtained from all of these sources is documented and carefully considered.

The process of evaluation requires a synthesis of all available assessment information. A student's parents are an integral part of the evaluation process, including providing information about the student. Parents are members of the IEP team meeting held for the purpose of determining eligibility, determining the educational needs of the student, and development of the student's IEP. Parents provide valuable insight and information to teams who conduct assessments in order to complete full and individual evaluations.

Evaluation Plan

THE EVALUATION PLAN

Use the Review of Existing Evaluation Data (REED) document to develop and implement the evaluation plan for a student suspected to have a SLD. The REED document provides guidance and a general framework for the development of both initial evaluations and reevaluations, and can be used with both the response to scientific, research-based interventions and the pattern of strengths and weaknesses processes.

Note-Evaluation of current data and further evaluation must establish and document:

- *Inadequate achievement relative either to age level or grade level standards.*
- *Appropriate instruction*

Federal rule specifies that eligibility evaluation must address the age appropriate instruction that the student has received and the achievement of the student related to grade level standards. Although age is one variable, the emphasis on state approved grade level standards reflects the priority that all instruction for students address grade level content standards.

Although the federal regulations do not define standards for “appropriate instruction”, the USDOE does note that such instruction has the following characteristics:

- *Scientifically research based*
- *Provided by qualified personnel*
- *Student progress data is systematically collected and analyzed*

Within a systemic plan, it is essential to include a data-driven, decision-making process based on each individual student's needs.

Begin the development of an evaluation plan for determining SLD eligibility by collecting all pertinent data. The data used will be dependent upon the process (or processes) currently used in the district (and specific schools) for determining the existence of a SLD:

Note regarding Initiation of Evaluations and Timelines:

Michigan rules, which specify 30 school days from consent for evaluation to holding an IEP meeting, must be followed unless the parent and district mutually agree to extend the timeline. This request can be made in the event that the evaluation will address response to intervention after the request for an evaluation.

Although extended evaluation timelines may be requested in order to implement appropriate interventions and collect data on the student's response, if a parent does not agree to extending the timeline, then the evaluation must proceed and an IEP team meeting convened within the 30 school days allowed under state rules. Whether eligibility can be determined will depend on whether the IEP team has the necessary rule-in, rule-out, and documentation data required for SLD identification.

Documentation of Eligibility

§ 300.311 Documentation for Specific Learning Disability Determination

§ 300.311 provides a checklist for required elements of a written report documenting the evaluation team's decision regarding eligibility of SLD.

Documentation must include:

1. Statement of eligibility, or lack of eligibility, for specific learning disability
2. Basis for the determination of eligibility
3. Assurance that during the determination process the district:
 - a. Collected information from a variety of sources, including aptitude and achievement tests, parent input and teacher recommendations, information about the child's physical condition, social or cultural background and adaptive behavior.
 - b. Documented and carefully considered information obtained from a variety of sources.
4. Relevant behavior noted in observations, and the relationship of the behavior to the child's academic functioning.
5. Relevant medical findings.
6. Achievement measured to age expectations or state-approved grade level standards.
7. Progress monitoring related to age or grade level standards.

Or

8. Determination of a pattern of strengths and weaknesses in performance, achievement or both, relative to age, State-approved grade level standards or intellectual development.
9. Determination of exclusionary factors
10. If the child participated in a process that assesses the child's response to scientific, research-based (or, if necessary, best practice) interventions, documentation of:
 - a. Instructional strategies utilized
 - b. Student-centered data collected
 - c. Parent notification about:
 - i. State policies regarding RtI criteria- data and services requirements (Note: the SLD rule, R 340.1713, is Michigan's policy.)
 - ii. Strategies used for increasing the student's rate of learning
 - iii. Parent right to request an evaluation.
11. Evaluation team members and parent must certify whether the report reflects the members' conclusion.
 - a. Members in disagreement must submit a separate statement presenting dissenting conclusions.

SLD Evaluation Resources

Suggested Questions for Parent Input for Initial Evaluation

Student's Name: _____ Parent/Guardian Name: _____ Date: _____

Method of Interview (Check one): Personal Interview Telephone Written

1. What are some of your child's strengths, interests, and/or favorite activities?

2. Do you have any concerns about your child's progress in school? Yes No
If yes, what are they when did you first notice these concerns?

3. Have you seen any recent changes in your child's behavior or school performance? Yes No
If yes, please explain:

4. Was your child born prematurely? Yes No
If yes, how early?

5. Did you experience any complications during your pregnancy or during delivery? Yes No
If yes, please explain:

6. Did your child have any health problems or other medical conditions at birth? Yes No
If yes, please explain:

7. Please list all substances used one or more times during pregnancy:
 Alcohol Cigarettes Marijuana Cocaine Heroin Opiates LSD
 Ecstasy PCP Meth Prescription Painkillers
 Other: _____

8. Did your child's doctors express any concerns about developmental delays (including delays in crawling, walking, toileting, talking, or language use)? Yes No
If yes, which developmental milestones were delayed?

9. Does your child have any history of vision problems? Yes No
If yes, please explain:

Does your child wear glasses? Yes No

10. Does your child have any history of hearing problems? Yes No
If yes, please explain:

Does your child have a hearing aid? Yes No

11. Does your child have any history of seizures? Yes No
If yes, please explain:

12. Does your child have any history of head injuries? Yes No
If yes, please explain:

13. Does your child have any history of ear infections? Yes No
If yes, at what age did they begin? _____ At what age did they end? _____
How many times per year did he or she have ear infections? _____

14. Does your child take medication? Yes No
If yes, what medications does he or she take (please include the dosage as well)?

15. Any other medical/health concerns?

16. Is there a history of learning problems/academic difficulty in your family (such as dyslexia, learning disabilities, or difficulty in certain subjects in school)? Yes No
If yes, please explain:

17. Is there a history of mental illness in your family (such as ADHD, Depression, Bipolar Disorder, Schizophrenia, Anxiety, etc.)? Yes No
If yes, please explain:

18. Has your child had a psychological or education evaluation from outside of the school?
 Yes No
If yes, who did it, when was it done, and what were the results?

19. Has your child had additional community services in the last 3 years (tutoring, counseling, residential care)?
 Yes No
If yes, please explain:

20. What schools has your child attended? For which grades did your child attend that school?

School: _____	Grade: _____
School: _____	Grade: _____
School: _____	Grade: _____
School: _____	Grade: _____

21. Has your child missed more than 10 days of school in a single year? Yes No

If yes, which years and why?

22. Does your child have any sleeping problems? Yes No

If yes, please explain:

23. Does your child have any problems with his or her diet or appetite? Yes No

If yes, please explain:

24. Have there been any significant changes in your home or family relationships recently?

Yes No If yes, please explain:

25. Has your child had any history of trauma? Traumatic events that may affect learning and development include but are not limited to witnessing or experiencing physical abuse, sexual abuse, neglect, violence, or the death of a friend or family member.

Yes No If yes, please explain:

26. Is there any other information about your child that you think may be helpful to your child's evaluation?

Yes No

If yes, what? _____

Teacher Input for Student Assistance Team Worksheet

Student Assistance Team Referral Form



EASTERN UPPER PENINSULA INTERMEDIATE SCHOOL DISTRICT STUDENT ASSISTANCE TEAM REFERRAL FORM

Complete the following worksheet prior to initial Student Assistance Team meeting.
*Areas identified with (**) are required for an Individual Reading Improvement Plan.*

Student's Name: _____ **Grade:** _____
Referred by: _____ **Date:** _____
Teacher(s): _____

Background Information

Is there a history of excessive absences? _____ If yes, total absences _____
total tardies _____

Has the student been retained? _____ If yes, what year(s)? _____

Most recent vision exam: Date _____ Results _____

Most recent hearing exam: Date _____ Results _____

Does the student wear glasses? _____

If there are medical or mental health diagnoses, please cite diagnoses and date diagnosed:

ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENT REGARDING GRADE-LEVEL EXPECTATIONS

	DATE	CONTENT AREA	SCORE	PERCENTILE
**State Assessment Name:				
**Benchmark and/or <u>MDE Initial</u> Assessment: <input type="checkbox"/> NWEA-MAP <input type="checkbox"/> DIBELS <input type="checkbox"/> AIMSWEB <input type="checkbox"/> Other Initial Assessment:				
Progress Monitoring: <input type="checkbox"/> NWEA-MAP <input type="checkbox"/> DIBELS <input type="checkbox"/> AIMSWEB				
**Curriculum Assessments: <input type="checkbox"/> DRA <input type="checkbox"/> STAR <input type="checkbox"/> PLAN <input type="checkbox"/> SAT <input type="checkbox"/> P-SAT <input type="checkbox"/> GLAD <input type="checkbox"/> EXPLORE <input type="checkbox"/> NWEA-MAP <input type="checkbox"/> F&P				
**<u>MDE Extensive</u> Assessments: <input type="checkbox"/> Observation Survey of Early Literacy Achievement <input type="checkbox"/> DRA2 <input type="checkbox"/> F&P BAS <input type="checkbox"/> Other MDE Extensive Assessment:				
Progress Monitoring: Running Records				

Current Grades as of _____ (date) *within 2 weeks
 Standards Based Key: _____ Proficient (Strength) _____ Partially Proficient (Neutral) _____
 Not Proficient (Weakness)
 Reading _____ Writing _____ Math _____ Social Studies _____ Science _____

Academic Strengths and Weaknesses

Please provide data to demonstrate the student's skill in each area as compared to the age/grade level expectation and as compared to his/her peers.

Note: Data from the Fall of kindergarten may be below the target level and not considered deficient due to a lack of exposure to education and instruction. Fall Kindergarten data will be used as a baseline for growth data and is important to collect.

	Assessment Used and Date Administered	Target Performance Level (age/grade level expectation)	Student Performance Level	Peer Performance Level (average class performance on same assessment)	Target Performance Gap (difference between target and student)	Peer Performance Gap (difference between peer and student)
Basic Reading Skills						
Reading Fluency						
Reading Comprehension						
Mathematics Calculations						
Mathematical Problem-Solving						
Written Expression						
Oral Expression						
Listening Comprehension						

****Date Reading Deficiency was Identified:** _____

**Area(s) of Concern:		Comments:
	Phonemic Awareness	
	Phonics	
	Vocabulary/Oral Language	
	Reading Fluency	
	Reading Comprehension	

Area(s) of Non-Academic Concern	Description of the Problem	Supporting Data: (e.g., # of office referrals, % of homework completed, # of prompts required to initiate a task, etc.)
Inattention		
Organization		
Verbally Inappropriate		
Physically Inappropriate		
Disruptive		
Internalized Behaviors (sad, anxious, etc.)		

Parent Contact (Two contacts required):

1. Date: _____ Method: _____ Outcome: _____
2. Date: _____ Method: _____ Outcome: _____

Interventions Utilized (Reading Recovery, Math Recovery, SIMS Strategies, check-in check-out, break system, time away, etc.)

Intervention Attempted	Baseline (include specific data)	Frequency of Intervention (# of weeks, minutes per session)	Duration (start and end date - <i>minimum of 4 weeks</i>)	Results (include specific data)

Accommodations Provided (e.g., reformatted worksheets, changed task size, extended time, visual prompts, increase time, visual timer, etc.)

Accommodation	Baseline (include specific data)	Frequency of Use (daily, all assessments, etc.)	Duration (start and end date - <i>minimum of 4 weeks</i>)	Results (include specific data)

Number of Discipline Referrals during the current year _____ (attach copies/summary to form)

Existing ABC [antecedent - behavior - consequence] data - **SAMPLE BELOW** - **DO NOT** complete here - utilize ABC data collection sheets that are available at www.eupschools.org.

Date:	Time:	<i>Antecedent: What happens just before the behavior?</i>	<i>Setting Event (Mark only one)</i>	<i>Behavior Type: What does the behavior look like—in measurable terms?</i>	<i>Behavior Intensity: To what extent is the behavior disruptive to learning? *</i>	<i>Consequence: What happens immediately after the behavior? What is maintaining the behavior?</i>
		<input type="checkbox"/> Adult made a request/gave a direction <input type="checkbox"/> Peer interaction <input type="checkbox"/> Required task <input type="checkbox"/> Transition from one activity to another <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____	<input type="checkbox"/> Group instruction - seats <input type="checkbox"/> Group instruction - carpet <input type="checkbox"/> Independent Work <input type="checkbox"/> Special (Art, Music, PE) <input type="checkbox"/> Computer lab <input type="checkbox"/> Library <input type="checkbox"/> Hallway <input type="checkbox"/> Breakfast <input type="checkbox"/> Lunch <input type="checkbox"/> Recess <input type="checkbox"/> Bus <input type="checkbox"/> Other (sleep, medication, illness, etc.): _____	<input type="checkbox"/> Physically aggressive (hitting, kicking, biting, etc.) <input type="checkbox"/> Physically inappropriate movement (on tables, etc.) <input type="checkbox"/> Refuses to follow adult directions <input type="checkbox"/> Disruptive/loud/interruptive <input type="checkbox"/> Destroying/Damaging property <input type="checkbox"/> Swearing <input type="checkbox"/> Passive refusal (ignoring, etc.) <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____	<input type="checkbox"/> mild due to noises (words or sounds) or attention required by adults (no physical) <input type="checkbox"/> moderate due to physical threat to self or others including throwing objects/ things towards others, spitting towards others, leaving classroom or running away <input type="checkbox"/> high due to causing physical harm to others or self, including hitting, biting, kicking <input type="checkbox"/> severe due to repeatedly physically harming others or self, including hitting repeatedly, kicking repeatedly, etc., during this incident	<input type="checkbox"/> Avoid task (objects/activities) <input type="checkbox"/> Avoid attention (peer/adult) <input type="checkbox"/> Gain attention (peer/adult) <input type="checkbox"/> Escape setting/activity <input type="checkbox"/> Sensory need

Worksheet for Charting Patterns of Strengths and Weaknesses

	Academic achievement with respect to grade-level expectations.		Academic achievement with respect to age-level expectations.	Classroom performance with respect to grade-level expectations.				Age-appropriate functional/intellectual skills
	Progress monitoring, CBM screening or criterion-referenced assessments	M-STEP	Norm-referenced achievement tests	Curriculum assessments	Grades	Teacher report	Classroom observation	Observation, interviews, IQ assessment
Basic Reading	S N W	S N W	S N W	S N W	S N W	S N W	S N W	S N W
Reading Fluency	S N W	S N W	S N W	S N W	S N W	S N W	S N W	
Reading Comp.	S N W	S N W	S N W	S N W	S N W	S N W	S N W	
Math Calc.	S N W	S N W	S N W	S N W	S N W	S N W	S N W	
Math Prob. Solving	S N W	S N W	S N W	S N W	S N W	S N W	S N W	
Written Express.	S N W	S N W	S N W	S N W	S N W	S N W	S N W	
Oral Express.	S N W	S N W	S N W	S N W	S N W	S N W	S N W	
Listening Comp.	S N W	S N W	S N W	S N W	S N W	S N W	S N W	

S = Strength

Area(s) of Strength (at least 3 'S' checks for each area): _____

N = Neither Strength/Weakness

Area(s) of Weakness (at least 4 'W' checks for each area): _____

W = Weakness

Suggested Guidelines for Determining Strengths and Weakness

Assessment Type	Strength	Weakness
Progress monitoring	At 30 th percentile or above compared to national norms.	Below 10 th percentile compared to national norms.
CBM (Benchmark) screening	At 30 th percentile or above compared to national norms.	Below 10 th percentile compared to national norms.
Criterion-referenced assessment	Skills at or above grade level	Skills well below grade level
M-STEP	At 30 th percentile or above compared to regional norms.	Below 10 th percentile compared to regional norms.
Norm-referenced tests (Achievement, IQ)	At 30 th percentile or above compared to national norms.	Below 10 th percentile compared to national norms.
Curriculum assessments	At 30 th percentile or above compared to local or national norms.	Below 10 th percentile compared to local or national norms.
Grades	A / B or 'meets / exceeds' expectations	D / E or 'does not meet' expectations
Teacher report	Based upon professional judgment of teacher in comparing student to others in classroom; class rank \geq 30 th percentile	Based upon professional judgment of teacher in comparing student to others in classroom; class rank \leq 9 th percentile
Observations – Academic	Student demonstrates average understanding of academic content in comparison to other students in classroom.	Student demonstrates that s/he does not understand the academic content.
Observations/Interviews/Scales - Functional	Student demonstrates typical functional skills in comparison to other students the same age or in the same grade. Percentile rank on scale \geq 30.	Most of the student's functional skills appear to be well below average in comparison to other students the same age or in the same grade. Percentile rank on scale \leq 9.

Examples of Published Assessments

Examples of Published Assessments

(This is not a complete list)

Assessment Type	Examples:
Progress monitoring, Benchmark screening	DIBELS, AIMSweb, NWEA MAP/CPAA
Criterion-referenced assessments/curriculum assessments	Observation Survey, GLAD, DRA, TerraNova, STAR, ASVAB, SAT, PSAT, ACT, Achieve 3000, NWEA MAP/CPAA, BAS
Norm-referenced achievement tests	WRMT-3, KeyMath 3, KTEA-3, WIAT-3, WJ-IV Ach, GORT-5, TERA-3, TEMA-3, TOWL-4
IQ tests	WISC-5, WAIS-4, KABC-2, CTONI-2, KBIT-2, WASI-2, DP-3, UNIT-2, WJ-IV Cog
Adaptive/functional behavior scales	ABAS-3, Vineland-3, BASC-3, DP-3

Worksheet to Determine Appropriate Instruction

	Elements of Instruction	Evidence of Effectiveness	Other Evidence of Effectiveness
What	Documented curriculum	School district has a written curriculum that is aligned with State content expectations.	<p>At least 80% of all of the school district's students within a grade are meeting district or state standards after being instructed with the district's core instructional program.</p> <p>At least 80% of students using an intervention within the school have showed improved progress.</p> <p>Observations of interventions during the evaluation period indicate that they are being implemented with fidelity.</p>
	Core/intervention curriculum materials	Materials systematically teach and review skills and have scientific-research evidence of effectiveness. (See Worksheet for Evaluating Explicit Instruction and Systematic Curriculum)	
	Reading	Instruction emphasizes the following big ideas: phonemic awareness, phonics, fluency, vocabulary and comprehension.	
	Math	Instruction emphasizes the following big ideas: conceptual understanding, computational and procedural fluency, fact fluency and problem-solving skills.	
	Writing	Instruction emphasizes the following areas: basic mechanics and conventions, the content aspects of writing that convey meaning, and higher-level cognitive processes involved in planning and revising.	
	Oral Expression	Instruction emphasizes the use of syntax, semantics and morphology.	
	Listening Comprehension	Instruction emphasizes the understanding of syntax, semantics and morphology.	
Who	Teacher Qualifications	Teacher meets NCLB highly qualified standards and has been trained to use the curriculum materials.	
How	Instructional techniques/strategies	When teaching new skills, teacher uses explicit instructional techniques. (See Worksheet for Evaluating Explicit Instruction and Systematic Curriculum)	
	Differentiated/tiered instruction	Students are provided with the appropriate intensity of instruction to meet their individual needs. All students receive core instruction, some students receive targeted, strategic instruction, and a few students receive targeted intensive instruction.	
	Fidelity of instructional implementation	There is documentation that the core and intervention programs are implemented with fidelity. (See Program/Instruction Fidelity Checklist)	
	Assessments/Use of data	School screens all students three times a year to assess their progress. Students receiving strategic interventions are assessed weekly/monthly with formative assessments (e.g., progress monitoring tests) and students receiving intensive interventions (through general or special education) are assessed weekly. Schools regularly use assessment data to evaluate their instructional programs and modify accordingly.	

Exclusionary Factors Worksheet for SLD

EXCLUSIONARY FACTORS WORKSHEET

Specific Learning Disability

Mark each exclusionary factor. Each factor must be ruled out as the PRIMARY FACTOR for the student's inability to progress in the general education curriculum.	Yes	No
1. Lack of instruction in essential components of reading and math		
Does information obtained during assessment indicate lack of appropriate instruction in reading and math as the determinant factor in this student's inability to progress in the general education curriculum? Report Page _____		
2. Limited English Proficiency		
Answer the following questions		
• Is there a language other than English spoken by this student?		
• Is there a language other than English spoken by the student's home?		
• Are there any specific dialect or cultural influences that would affect the student's ability to speak or understand English?		
Is limited English proficiency the primary reason for the student's deficit scores? Rpt. Page _____		
3. Cognitive Impairment		
<i>Document all information gathered in assessment that would exclude cognitive impairment as the determinant factor for this student's academic deficits.</i>		
• Do you have evidence, through interviews, observations and/or testing that the student has a cognitive impairment? Report Page _____		
4. Emotional Impairment		
<i>Document all information gathered in assessment that would exclude emotional impairment as the determinant factor for this student's academic deficits.</i>		
• Does the student exhibit emotional difficulties that interfere with learning?		
• Does the student have a medical history and/or school history of emotional difficulties?		
Is emotional disturbance the primary reason for the student's deficit scores? Rpt. Page _____		
5. Vision, Hearing, or Motor Impairments		
<i>Document all information gathered in assessment that would exclude vision, hearing, or motor impairments as the determinant factor for this student's academic deficits.</i>		
• Do vision screening results indicate concern?		
• Do hearing screening results indicate concern?		
• Does the student have a history of significantly delayed motor development?		
Is visual, hearing or motor disability the primary reason for the student's deficit scores? Rpt. Pg. ____		
6. Environmental, Cultural, or Economic Disadvantage		
<i>Document all information gathered in assessment that would exclude environmental, cultural, or economic disadvantage as the determinant factor for this student's academic deficits.</i>		
a. Lack of Opportunity		
• Does the assessment data indicate that lack of opportunity to learn due to environmental, cultural or economic disadvantage is not the cause of the student's academic deficits?		
b. Motivational Factors		
• Does the student attempt classroom assignments and/or homework?		
• If no, is the student's performance on grade level during classroom activities?		
• Are group achievement scores consistent with the student's grades?		
• Does information gathered indicate lack of motivation is the determinant factor?		
c. Situational Trauma		
• Has the student's academic performance fallen dramatically within the last 6-12 months?		
• Is there knowledge of any situations within the student's family that would contribute to a drop in academic performance?		
• Does information gathered indicate situational trauma is the determinant factor?		
d. Attendance		
• Does the student have a high absentee rate either due to illness, disciplinary issues or other factors?		
• Does information gathered indicate that absences are the determinant factor?		
Are environmental, cultural or economic disadvantage the primary reason for the student's academic deficits? Report page _____		

Technical Assistance

PLAAFP

PLAAFP

The evaluation provides the basis for further instruction by establishing the **present level of academic achievement and functional performance (PLAAFP)**, which includes:

1. Data and other specific descriptive information on the student's current academic performance, indicating both strengths and areas of need.
2. Data and other specific descriptive information on functional skills, including behavior, communication, motor, daily living or other skills related to school and age appropriate activities.
3. Defining specific needs that are a priority for the student's learning or support in the general education program.
4. Describing the impact of the characteristics of the student's disability on his/her performance and access to the general education curriculum and setting which will lead to decisions on supports, accommodations and modifications that are necessary for the student's participation in general education instruction and activities.

OBSERVATION

An observation conducted during any early intervening period may be used and must be properly documented by the evaluation team. If, however, an observation has not been conducted prior to the referral and request for evaluation or additional observation data is needed, the evaluation team must conduct an observation and must properly document the observation.

An observation:

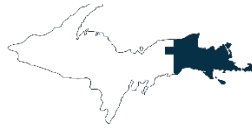
- must address academic performance and behavior;
- must be conducted in the child's learning environment as determined by the evaluation team;
- must be conducted in the general education setting unless the child is less than school age or out of school

The observation must be scheduled at a time when the child is engaged in the specific area of need identified in the evaluation plan. Existing observations must have been conducted while the child was engaged in the specific area of need identified in the evaluation plan.

The federal regulations and the MARSE do not prescribe the type of observation to be conducted; the following methods may be appropriate:

- behavioral observation procedures that result in quantifiable results (e.g., event recording, the sampling, interval recording);
- methods that relate student's classroom behavior to instructional conditions;
- informal or anecdotal recordings that address referral questions, instructional practice, and instructional fidelity.

These observations may also help to document that appropriated instruction was provided, and will assist in recommending instructional changes. Observations across instructional settings (e.g., different classes) are especially valuable, as are observations by different team members.



EASTERN UPPER PENINSULA INTERMEDIATE SCHOOL DISTRICT

Local Guidance for Determining SLD Eligibility Using Patterns of Strengths and Weaknesses

1. The new regulations (300.309(a)(2)(ii)) state: “The child exhibits a pattern of strengths and weaknesses in performance, achievement, or both, related to age, State approved grade-level standards, or intellectual development, that is determined by the group to be relevant to the identification of a specific learning disability, using appropriate assessments, consistent with 300.304 and 300.305.” (300.304) describes assessments and 300.305 describes the evaluation planning process.)
2. Definitions:
 - Performance – actual performance in the classroom, as assessed by the student’s in-class assessment results, grades, teacher anecdotes and observations.
 - Curriculum-based measurement (CBM) – direct assessment of requisite academic skills needed to access the curriculum (e.g., DIBELS, AIMSweb).
 - Progress monitoring data – data collected from a curriculum-based measurement tool (e.g., DIBELS, AIMSweb) over the course of weeks or months to track change in student performance.
 - Criterion-references assessment – assessment of mastery of content. Unlike curriculum-based measurement, criterion-referenced assessments measure how well students have learned subject material that they were taught (e.g., GLAS, M-STEP, NWEA, MME, classroom tests).
 - Curriculum Assessments – assessment of mastery of content (may be used interchangeably with criterion-referenced assessment).
 - Norm-referenced achievement tests – diagnostic assessments of academic skills that provide normative comparisons to other students throughout the country (e.g., Kaufman Test of Educational Achievement, Woodcock Johnson Tests of Achievement, TerraNova, Brigance).
 - Intellectual development – the student’s cognitive and functional skills, as assessed by IQ tests, functional skill surveys, interviews, and observations.
3. When to use ‘patterns of strengths and weaknesses’ to determine eligibility:
 - When a school does not have the capacity to implement Tier 2 or Tier 3 interventions.
 - In learning disability areas in which the school does not have a 3-tier intervention process. For example, a school may use the 3-tier intervention process for reading and math, but not for writing, oral expression or listening comprehension.
 - In grades in which the school does not use a 3-tier interventions process. For example, a school may use a 3-tier process in grades K-6 but not in grades 7-12.
4. Eligibility assurances for using ‘patterns of strengths and weaknesses’ to determine SLD eligibility:
 - The information for determination was drawn from a variety of sources, and determination of impairment is not due to limited English proficiency or lack of instruction in reading and math.
 - The student was provided appropriate instruction by qualified personnel in the general education setting.
 - The student was provided repeated assessments of achievement at reasonable intervals with data-based documentation available and provided to parents.
 - This student exhibits a pattern of strengths and weaknesses in performance, achievement, or both relative to his/her age, intellectual development or state approved grade level standards.

- This student has a suspected disability in at least one of the following areas (Check all that apply):

<input type="checkbox"/> Oral Expression	<input type="checkbox"/> Reading comprehension	<input type="checkbox"/> Math calculation
<input type="checkbox"/> Listening comprehension	<input type="checkbox"/> Basic reading skills	<input type="checkbox"/> Math problem-solving
<input type="checkbox"/> Written expression	<input type="checkbox"/> Reading fluency	
 - The eligibility of a Specific Learning Disability (SLD) is NOT PRIMARILY the result of any of the following: A visual, hearing, or motor handicap or cognitive impairment, emotional impairment, or autism spectrum disorder, environment, cultural, or economic disadvantage.
 - The suspected disability adversely affects this student’s educational performance and requires special education.
5. Other Notes:
- When using the ‘Charting the Patterns of Strengths and Weaknesses’ page, a student shall have at least 4 weak boxes checked and at least one other academic area considered a strength (with at least 3 boxes checked as being a strength) and/or the intellectual/functional box checked as a strength to be considered eligible for special education services. The IEP team shall determine if the student’s weaknesses warrant special education services.
 - When determining age-based achievement and performance, the evaluator should consider whether or not the student has received appropriate instruction for those age-based skills. For example, can a student retained in second grade be compared with third grade student if that student never received third grade instruction?
 - If the student’s weak areas are primarily in performance rather than in achievement (i.e., the student has the academic skill, but does not do the work in the classroom), then the school should consider different types of interventions other than academic (e.g., motivation).

300.311 Documentation for Specific Learning Disability Determination:

300.311 provides a checklist for required elements of a written report documenting the evaluation team’s decision regarding eligibility of SLD.

Documentation must include:

1. Statement of eligibility, or lack of eligibility, for specific learning disability.
 2. Basis for the determination of eligibility.
 3. Assurance that during the determination process the district:
 - a. Collected information from a variety of sources, including aptitude and achievement tests, parent input and teacher recommendations, information about the child’s physical condition, social or cultural background and adaptive behavior.
 - b. Documentation and carefully considered information obtained from a variety of sources.
 4. Relevant behavior noted in observations, and the relationship of the behavior to the child’s academic functioning.
 5. Relevant medical findings.
 6. Achievement measured to age expectations or state-approved grade level standards.
 7. Progress monitoring related to age or grade level standards.
- OR
8. Determination of a pattern of strengths and weaknesses in performance, achievement or both, relative to age, state-approved grade level standards or intellectual development.
 9. Determination of exclusionary factors.
 10. If the child participated in a process that assesses the child’s response to scientific, research-based (or, if necessary, best practice) interventions, documentation of:
 - a. Instructional strategies utilized
 - b. Student-centered data collection
 - c. Parent notification about:

- i. State policies regarding RtI criteria-data and services requirements (Note: the SLD rule, R340.1713 is Michigan's policy)
 - ii. Strategies used for increasing the student's rate of learning
 - iii. Parent right to request an evaluation
11. Evaluation team members and parent must certify whether the report reflects the members' conclusion.
 - a. Members in disagreement must submit a separate statement presenting dissenting conclusions.