

Parent Instructions:

Sending a letter to request an initial evaluation for Special Education services

When you use the sample letter below, here are some important steps to follow:

1. Keep a copy for your records.

- Save a copy of the signed letter (printed or electronic).
- Create a folder or binder to keep all Special Education paperwork, emails, and notes in one place. Some parents like to create an email account just for the purpose of storing their students' records, like kaylas.documents@example.com.

2. Send the letter in a way that proves the school received it.

Best options:

- Email- send to the Principal, Special Education Director, and/or your child's teacher. It's a good idea to send it to all three, if possible. (Be sure to save the sent email and any replies to it.)
- Fax- keep the confirmation page.
- In person – bring the letter to the school office and ask the receptionist to date-stamp or sign a copy for you.
- U.S.P.S.- certified mail with return receipt will give you proof of delivery.

3. Track the timeline.

- District response deadline: 15 school days (or 30 calendar days if you sent the request within 15 school days before a long break of 14+ days).
- Evaluation (including evaluation report) completion: 60 calendar days after you sign the consent.
- Eligibility meeting: within 15 school days after the evaluation is done (you should receive the report at least 2 calendar days before the meeting).

Write these dates on a calendar so that you can follow up if deadlines are missed.

Has the school missed the deadlines, or have you made a previous written or oral request for evaluation that has been ignored?

Contact us:

Disability Rights New Mexico

(505) 256-3100

www.drnrm.org

Date: **[Today's date]**

To: **[Name of Principal, Special Education Director, and/or Teacher (often best to list all three)]**

District/School Name

Address

City, State, ZIP

Re: Request for Initial Special Education Evaluation for **[Student's Full Name, Date of Birth, School, and Grade]**

Dear **[Name of Principal, Special Education Director, or Teacher]**,

I am writing to request a full and individual initial evaluation of my child, **[student's name]** to determine eligibility for special education and related services under the Individuals with Education Act and the New Mexico Administrative Code.

I am requesting this evaluation because I believe that my student may require Special Education services and supports. I am particularly concerned about **[describe your concerns about academics such as reading, writing, math, social or behavioral issues, outside diagnoses or reports, and your observations]**.

[IF RELEVANT: I have previously raised my concern that my student needs to be evaluated on or around [date] [describe how it was raised—during an IEP meeting, in a meeting with a teacher, etc.] However, no evaluation has occurred, and I have not been provided prior written notice that the district is refusing to evaluate.]

Pursuant to **IDEA** and **New Mexico regulations**, please note the following timelines and obligations:

1. **District response deadline (NMAC):**

New Mexico requires the district to **respond to a parent's request for an initial evaluation within 15 school days** of receiving it (or **30 calendar days** if the request is received within 15 school days before a break of at least 14 calendar days). The response must either propose the evaluation and seek my consent or provide **prior written notice** explaining a refusal.

2. **Initial evaluation completion deadline (IDEA & NMAC):**

Once I provide **written informed consent**, the **initial evaluation and written report must be completed within 60 calendar days**.

3. **Eligibility meeting deadline (NMAC):**

After the evaluation is completed, the district must convene the **Eligibility**

Determination Team (including me) **within 15 school days** to decide eligibility (and if eligible, proceed to IEP development within 30 days). The written evaluation report must be provided to me **at least two calendar days before the Eligibility Determination Team meeting**.

Please treat this letter as my request for an initial evaluation under **34 C.F.R. § 300.301(b)** and **6.31.2.10 NMAC**. If the district agrees to evaluate, please send prior written notice identifying the areas to be assessed and a consent for evaluation form for me to sign without delay. If the district declines, please send prior written notice explaining the reasons, as required by **34 C.F.R. § 300.503**.

For scheduling and records, please communicate with me at **[your email/phone]**. I'm available on **[list days/times]**. Please provide confirmation that this request was received and a proposed timeline consistent with the deadlines above.

Thank you for your prompt attention to this request and for your support of **[Student's Name]**.

Sincerely,
[Your Name]
Parent/Guardian of **[Student's Name]**