

Seeking An Evaluation :

Do you have concerns about your child's ability to succeed in school? Are you wondering if your child's unique needs meet qualification standards for special education? The following steps will determine whether your child qualifies for special education:

Request an Educational Evaluation. Submit a written request to the school for your child to be evaluated. Sometimes a teacher or other school staff will initiate this process, however you must give consent for this evaluation to occur. If your child has a diagnosis that interferes with his/her learning, it can be helpful to share this documentation with the school. They will still complete an evaluation to gather more information about your child's learning skills.



Educational Evaluation: A multi-disciplinary evaluation will take place, which will include standardized assessments, a review of school records, and often observation in the classroom setting. The written report will summarize your child's skills.

Qualifications for Special Education: Public schools follow federal regulations for determining eligibility for special education. To qualify for special education, your child must have one or more of the 13 listed disabilities covered under IDEA (Individuals with Disabilities Education Act):

- Autism
- Deaf-blindness
- Deafness
- Emotional Disturbance
- Hearing Impairment
- Intellectual Disability
- Multiple Disabilities
- Orthopedic Impairment
- Other Health Impairment (includes ADHD)
- Specific Learning Disability (includes dyslexia, dyscalculia, dysgraphia, and other learning differences)
- Speech or Language Impairment
- Traumatic Brain Injury
- Visual Impairment, including blindness

In addition to needing to fall into one or more of these categories, your child must also have a need for special education in order to adequately learn from a general education curriculum.

Eligibility Meeting: You and the child's team will meet and discuss whether your child is eligible for special education. If your child is eligible, you will start to discuss the Individualized Education Plan (IEP) that will be created.

If eligible: Your child will have an Individualized Education Plan (IEP) developed. The IEP team must meet at least once a year and you must be informed with any changes to the plan. Caregivers can request to meet more frequently than once a year to addend the IEP.

If not eligible: This does not mean a "dead end" for your child. You may consider one of these options:

- Seek support from the [Arc of King County's Parent Partner Program](#): This is a program that has customized support to help you navigate your child's unique circumstances. You can ask questions and consult with an IEP Parent Partner.

If not eligible: Continued

- Request a 504 plan for your child: This is an accommodation(s) to help your child succeed in the classroom (such as extra testing time or preferential seating in the classroom)
- Get help outside of school: Explore local learning centers or tutoring options in your area. This will mean out-of-pocket costs.
- Consider an Independent Education Evaluation (IEE): This is an option you may consider if you are challenging the school district's evaluation and denial of services for your child.

IEP and 504 Plan Tips and Resources:

If your child is receiving specialized services under an Individual Education Plan (IEP) or accommodation(s) under a 504 plan, keep the following tips in mind:

- **Communication:** Communicate regularly with your child's team, including teachers, therapists, and the case manager. Regular communication will allow for the team to proactively support your child throughout the school year and to address small concerns before they become big concerns.
- **Record Keeping:** Maintain written correspondence to help you refer to during the year. This will help you feel prepared to discuss your child during the annual IEP meeting or other informal meetings.
- **Ask Questions:** No question is too small, don't feel silly asking when you don't understand. Meeting in-person can be helpful to maintain positive relationships and to increase your capacity to help generalize new skills your child is learning in the home environment.
- **Familiarize yourself with resources:** Become familiar with resources around IEP's/504 plans so that you feel informed and know where to turn when you have a question or need more support.

Additional Resources:

- [IEP Parent Partner Program through The Arc of King County](#)
- For families in the Snoqualmie Valley School District: Special Education and Disability Committee, Snoqualmie Valley PTSA Council. [Facebook page](#) & [Email Address](#)
- [Inclusion for ALL](#): Local grass-roots advocacy group.
- [OSPI's Special Education](#): Least Restrictive Environment guidelines, Behavior and Discipline guidelines & more
- [Office of the Education Ombuds](#)
- [WAAA](#) (Washington Autism Alliance and Advocacy): Aim to expand access to healthcare, education and services for people with autism and other intellectual and developmental disabilities in Washington State.
- [TIES Center](#): TIES Center is the national technical assistance center on inclusive practices and policies
- [COPAA](#) (Council of Parent Attorney and Advocates)