

Psychoeducational Assessment of Students Who are Culturally and Linguistically Diverse:

A Plan Etched In Granite

Granite School District is the second largest school district in the state of Utah with a total student population of 69,660 in the fall of 2002. The number of ethnic minority students in the district continues to increase rapidly. Eleven years ago, in the fall of 1991, 10 percent of Granite's students came from ethnic minority groups. By the fall of 2002, that figure has increased to nearly 27 percent. Approximately 17,000 students are identified as having a "Primary Home Language Other Than English" (PHLOTE). Of this number, 13,341 students are served in the Alternative Language Program (ALP). There are 62 different languages spoken by students within the district. As the number of ethnic minority groups has increased in Granite School District, so have the number of referrals to special education.

With the assistance of the Office of Civil Rights (OCR), Granite School District began implementing a plan to provide appropriate psychoeducational assessment to students who are culturally and linguistically diverse. District personnel were needed to devise a plan, so the Special Education/Limited English Proficient (SPED/LEP) committee was created. The committee consists of district level supervisors in Special Education, Educational Equity (alternative language program), Social Work, and Speech/Hearing. In addition, committee members include

an associate director, coordinator, principal, speech/language pathologists, school psychologist, special education teacher, and an elementary teacher trainer specialist (alternative language program). The committee meets monthly to discuss policy, review cases, and coordinate efforts among different departments.

Assessment of culturally and linguistically diverse students is a time-consuming process that attempts to explore language and cultural issues while gathering data from numerous sources, in different contexts, and through a variety of techniques. Due to the size of the district and the number of special education referrals submitted, it was not feasible to have any one "specialist" conduct a thorough evaluation. The SPED/LEP committee opted for a collaborative approach which involved members from school teams and members from the SPED/LEP committee to complete an evaluation. The process of evaluation is outlined in the SPED/LEP School Tracking Form.

The SPED/LEP School Tracking Form has eight steps. Steps one through four are completed by regular education and educational equity personnel. Steps five through eight are completed by staff in Special Education. The front page of the form has an area at the top for identifying information, such as

name, teacher, school, language, grade, date, language, and case manager. It is important to identify a case manager. This person is responsible to see that information gathered is kept in one location and is easily accessible to district and school personnel. The case manager is also the person who sees that the evaluation is conducted in a proper and timely manner.

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**Special Education Limited English Proficient (SPEDLEP)
School Tracking Form**

Student: _____ Teacher: _____ ALP Teacher: _____

School: _____ Grade: _____ Date: _____ Year Round Track: _____

Language: _____ Case Manager: _____

The following steps must be completed:

At Risk Intervention Procedures to be completed by Regular Ed. and Education Equity

STEP I

IPT Administered by ALP teacher

		<i>(circle applicable level)</i>		
oral:	date _____	Non-English speaker	Limited English speaker	Fluent English speaker
reading:	date _____	Non-English reader	Limited English reader	Competent English reader
writing:	date _____	Non-English writer	Limited English writer	Competent English writer

STEP II

Alternative Language Program (ALP)
Beginning date _____ Exit date _____

STEP III

Multiple accommodations/interventions in ALP and classroom attempted (a minimum of two weeks for each intervention)
 Data to show results attached to At Risk Intervention Documentation form
Please call Educational Equity at 685-6205 for assistance.

STEP IV

Referral for Special Education Evaluation (based on history of failed interventions)
 Parent notified in preferred language that a referral is being submitted
(interpreter obtained from school's volunteer list of interpreters, OCR plan, p.21)
 Reason for Referral _____

 Notified by _____

*See reverse for special education procedures
Note: (See Special Ed. Memorandum A-1, Section A-4 for exceptions.)*

Documentation form. The Educational Equity department is available for assistance with accommodations/interventions.

Step IV is when the referral to special education is made based on a history of failed accommodations/interventions. The parent is notified in his/her preferred language that a referral is being submitted and for what reason by an interpreter from the school's volunteer list of interpreters.

In **Step V**, consent for the evaluation is obtained. Explanation of the evaluation procedures, Prior Notice, and Procedural Safeguards are given in the parent's preferred language by a trained special education interpreter. In this step, a case manager is assigned.

Step VI starts the evaluation process. A language evaluation is completed in English by the school speech/language pathologist. Tests include the Peabody Picture Vocabulary Test, Expressive One Word Picture Vocabulary Test, a broad language measure such as the Test of Oral Language Development, and the Woodcock-Munoz Language Survey. If the student scores within 1 1/2 standard deviation (about a Standard score of 78) on the oral and

Step I states that the IDEA Proficiency Test (IPT) is administered to determine a student's level of English speaking, reading, and writing. If the student is a non-English speaker, the reading and writing portion are not administered.

Step II asks whether the student is in the Alternative Language Program (ALP). If the student is in ALP, a beginning date is recorded and an exit date is recorded. The majority of students continue in ALP.

In **Step III**, multiple accommodations/interventions are implemented in the regular classroom and ALP. Data to show results must be attached to show the results of the accommodations/interventions. This data is attached to the At Risk

reading and writing evaluations, the school team completes the evaluation in English. If the student scores lower than 1 1/2 standard deviation, copies of the At Risk Documentation and supporting data, Referral, Consent for Evaluation, language tests, and SPED/LEP School Tracking Form are sent into the committee. The classroom teacher fills out the Bilingual Classroom Communication Profile. Parent report and language testing are completed by a SPED/LEP Specialist. Based on these results, a specialized evaluation plan is designed. Further testing may be needed which may include academic testing, nonverbal cognitive testing, adaptive testing, and/or behavioral testing. Or, based on results of language testing, recommendations may include classroom accommodations, continuing in ALP with accommodations, and/or language therapy.

Once all the testing is complete, it is time to determine eligibility in Step VII. A notice of meeting is sent in the parent's preferred language. Documentation of evaluation is reported on the SPED/LEP Evaluation Summary form. **The estimator disk is not used to determine eligibility. It does not account for ethnic and language differences. The school team determines if a student then qualifies for special education.**

Step VIII is simply the outcome. A student can be Limited English Proficient (LEP) and qualify or not qualify for special education services. If a student qualifies, a notice of meeting is sent in the parent's preferred language, an IEP is developed and parent consent for placement is obtained. If a student does not qualify, a notice of meeting is sent in the parent's preferred

language, results of the evaluation and reasons for non-eligibility are explained, the student continues in ALP and regular education with accommodations, and a new Individualized Language Development Plan is designed by the ALP teacher. Consultation is also available through the Educational Equity department.

This eight step evaluation has been approved by the Office of Civil Rights. Our SPED/LEP evaluation system is a work in progress. We are continually trying to improve on what we have started. Interested readers can contact me at:

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Procedures in accordance with IDEA (Special Ed.)

STEP V

- Consent for evaluation obtained by school
- Explanation of evaluation procedures, Prior Notice and Procedural Safeguards given in parent's preferred language by _____
(Call Special Services at 685-4633 for trained special ed. interpreter.)
- Case manager assigned

STEP VI

Oral language and reading/writing evaluation completed in English by school's speech-language pathologist (SLP)

- A. Language evaluation completed by school SLP (minimum of four tests: 1. PPVT; 2. EOWPVT; 3. a broad test-e.g., TOLD, CELF; and 4. Woodcock-Munoz Language Survey-English Edition)
- B. If student scores within 1 1/4 SDs of the mean on the oral and the reading and writing evaluations, team completes the regular evaluation process in English **(Do not use Estimator disk!)**
- C. If student scores 1 1/4 SDs or more below mean on oral or reading and writing evaluation, then:
 1. Send copies of At Risk Documentation and supporting data, Referral, Consent for Evaluation, language tests and tracking sheet to SPEDLEP Specialist, Lincoln Elementary School, Room C-5.
 2. Consultation is provided and/or language evaluation is conducted in the student's preferred language by SPEDLEP Specialist
 3. Classroom teacher completes classroom checklist
 4. SPEDLEP Specialist shares results of evaluation with case manager
 5. Specialized evaluation plan is designed
 6. Specialized evaluation plan is completed

STEP VII

Eligibility Determination

- Notice of Meeting given in parent's preferred language by _____
- Documentation of evaluation instruments and methods are reported on SPEDLEP Evaluation Summary and attached to Prior Notice for Determination of Eligibility form **(Do not use estimator disk!)**
- Determination of eligibility made by Team (including parent), ALP Teacher and SPEDLEP Specialist (interpreter present)

STEP VIII

OUTCOME

LEP and qualifies:

- Notice of Meeting given in parent's preferred language by _____
- IEP developed and parent consent for placement obtained (interpreter present)
(ALP teacher signature required on IEP)
- Alternative Language Program continued (noted on IEP) unless documented otherwise

Note: See Special Ed. Memorandum A-1, Section E.2.

LEP but does not qualify:

- Notice of meeting given in parent's preferred language by _____
- Results of evaluation and reasons for nonelegibility explained to parents
- Alternative Language Program and Regular Ed. with accommodations
- New Individualized Language Development Plan developed by ALP teacher