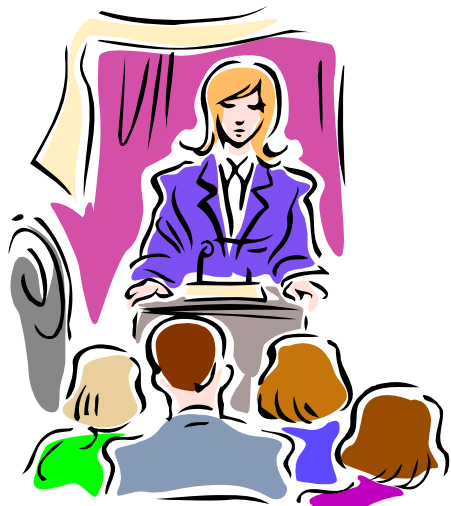


Module 9

Introduction to *E*valuation



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for Children with Disabilities

A Product of...

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We have a tremendous amount of information available on our Web site, in our library, and in the combined expertise of our staff. Please feel free to contact NICHCY for the latest information and connections in research and disabilities. We'd also love for you to visit our Web site and help yourself to all that's there.

Background and Discussion

There are three modules under the umbrella topic of **Evaluating Children for Disability** (Part 3 of this training curriculum), as follows:

- *Introduction to Evaluation* presents the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) 2004's requirements to ensure that evaluations of children are technically sound, nondiscriminatory, and effective in gathering the information needed to determine if the child has a disability and to plan an appropriate educational program for the child;
- *Initial Evaluation/Reevaluation* examines the definition of "child with a disability" and the evaluation process the IDEA requires to determine if a child is, in fact, a "child with a disability." Also examined in this module are: parent consent, review of existing evaluation data, and requirements for gathering additional data, if needed.
- *Identification of Children with Specific Learning Disabilities (SLD)* focuses exclusively on the process the IDEA requires for determining if a child has a specific learning disability, including the use of Response to Intervention (RtI) strategies in evaluation.

How This Discussion Section is Organized

As with the other modules in this curriculum, this discussion section is organized by overhead. A thumbnail picture of each overhead is presented, along with brief instructions as to how the slide operates. This is followed by a discussion intended to provide trainers with background information about what's on the slide. Any or all of this information might be appropriate to share with an audience, but that decision is left up to trainers.



You'll note the "New in IDEA" icon that periodically appears in these pages as an easy tool for identifying new aspects of the regulations.

All of these modules are intended for general audiences. The background materials (what you're reading right now) and *Resources for Trainers* include substantial additional information that trainers can use to adapt training sessions to specific audience needs and the amount of time available for training.

You are currently reading the background section and discussion in the module on *Introduction to Evaluation*, the first module in the **Evaluating Children for Disability** series.



References for This Module

Covarrubias v. San Diego Unified School District (Southern California), No. 70-394-T, (S.D., Cal. February, 1971).

Diana v. California State Board of Education. No. C-70 37 RFP, District Court of Northern California (February, 1970).

Larry P. v. Riles, 495 F. Supp. 926 (N.D. Cal. 1979), *aff'd* in part and *rev'd* in part, 793 F.2d 969 (9th Cir. 1984).

Waterman, B. (1994). Assessing children for the presence of a disability. *NICHCY News Digest* 23, 1-28. (Available online at: www.nichcy.org/pubs/newsdig/nd23txt.htm)

Looking for IDEA 2004?

The Statute:

- www.nichcy.org/reauth/PL108-446.pdf
- <http://idea.ed.gov>

Final Part B Regulations:

- www.nichcy.org/reauth/IDEA2004regulations.pdf
- <http://idea.ed.gov>

Finding Specific Sections of the Regulations: 34 CFR

As you read the explanations about the final regulations, you will find references to specific sections, such as §300.173. (The symbol § means “Section.”) These references can be used to locate the precise sections in the federal regulations that address the issue being discussed. In most instances, we’ve also provided the verbatim text of the IDEA regulations so that you don’t have to go looking for them.

The final Part B regulations are codified in Title 34 of the *Code of Federal Regulations*. This is more commonly referred to as 34 CFR or 34 C.F.R. It’s not unusual to see references to specific sections of IDEA’s regulations include this—such as 34 CFR §300.173. We have omitted the 34 CFR in this training curriculum for ease of reading.

Citing the Regulations in This Training Curriculum

You’ll be seeing a lot of citations in this module—and all the other modules, too!—that look like this: 71 Fed. Reg. at 46738

This means that whatever is being quoted may be found in the *Federal Register* published on August 14, 2006—Volume 71, Number 156, to be precise. The number at the end of the citation (in our example, 46738) refers to the page number on which the quotation appears in that volume. Where can you find Volume 71 of the *Federal Register*? NICHCY is pleased to offer it online at:

www.nichcy.org/reauth/IDEA2004regulations.pdf



*How to Operate
the Slide:*

No clicks necessary.
Slide self-presents.

CLICK to advance to next slide.

Use Slide 1 (above) to orient your audience to what this training will be about: An introduction to what the law requires with respect to evaluation.

Introduction

To jumpstart this session, and to quickly activate participants' prior knowledge, you might ask the audience a round of questions, such as the following:

- Do you have any ideas why evaluation is such an important topic in this law?
- What do you think the general purpose of evaluation is?
- What is usually going on that leads to a child being referred for evaluation? (Child is having academic, behavioral, or other difficulties in school.)

- What are we trying to accomplish when we evaluate a child under IDEA?
- How many of you have ever been involved somehow in the evaluation of a child under IDEA? As an administrator? Parent of the child? Family member? Teacher? Evaluation specialist?
- Can you state a reason why you need to know more about evaluation under IDEA?

Record individual contributions on white board, flip chart, or other surface so that the whole group can see the responses.

View 1

Evaluation series..

- **Intro to evaluation**
- Initial evaluation and reevaluation
- Identification of children with specific learning disabilities

Slide loads with this view, intended to show that this module leads off a 3-part series on evaluation.

Click 1

This module answers these questions:

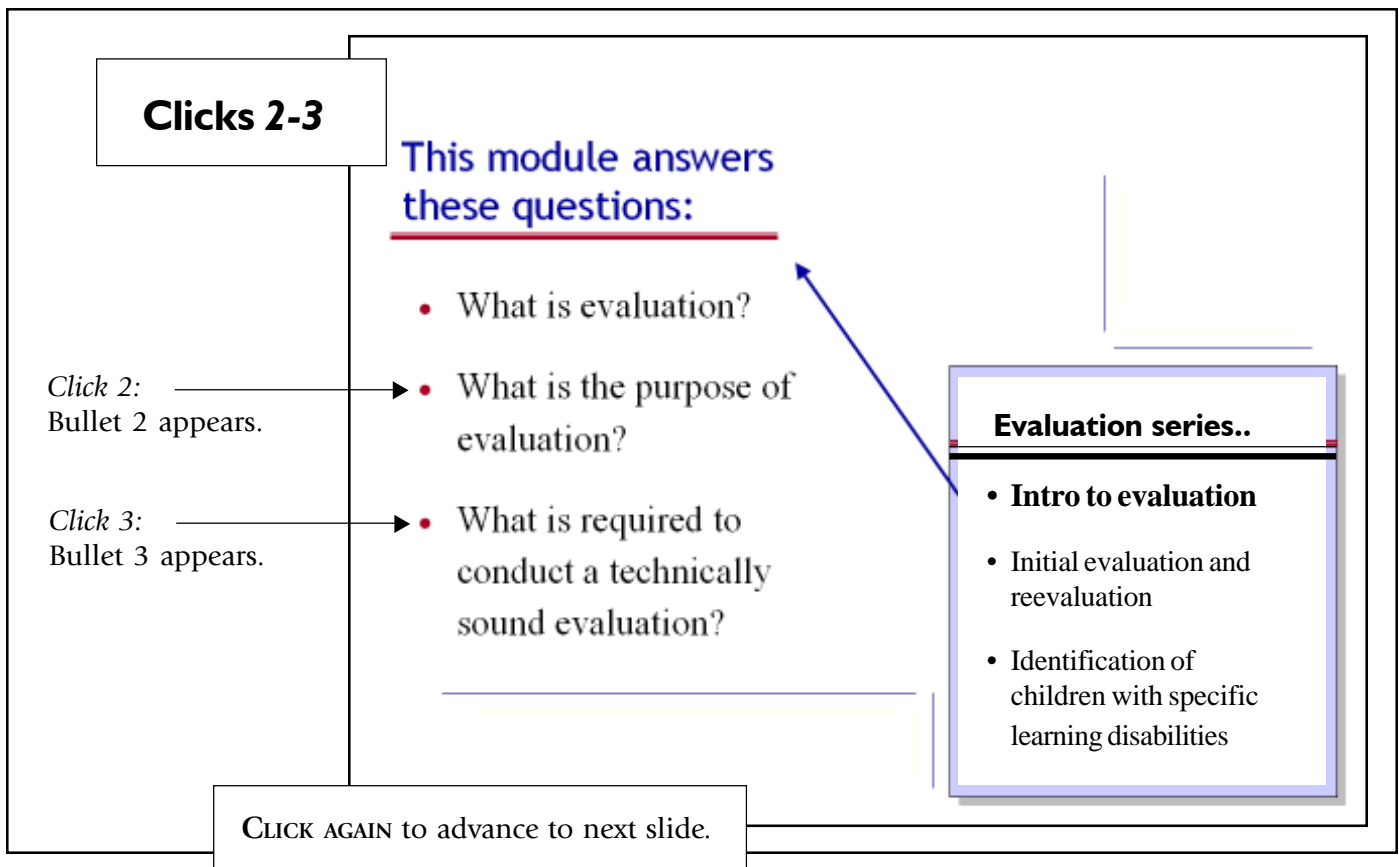
- What is evaluation?

Evaluation series..

- **Intro to evaluation**
- Initial evaluation and reevaluation
- Identification of children with specific learning disabilities

Click 1: Red background disappears, an arrow emerges from the "Intro to evaluation" bullet and travels to the appearing agenda, Bullet 1 shown.

(continued on next page) 



Slide 2: Background and Discussion

Slide 2 is an advance organizer for the audience regarding the content they're going to hear and discuss in this module.

The slide loads only the "Evaluation" series box listing the three modules focused on evaluation issues, the umbrella topic for the curriculum's **Theme C**. The title *Introduction to Evaluation* appears in **bold**, to indicate to the audience that this is the current module.

Theme C, Among Other Themes

Just as the module exists within a series of modules addressing evaluation issues, Theme C exists within a curriculum of multiple themes. Those themes represent critical compo-

nents and organizing elements within IDEA. You may wish to make participants aware that there are other themes around which important IDEA-related issues can be (and are!) meaningfully grouped. A list of themes in this training curriculum is provided in the box on the next page. If participants want to learn more on their own (or share information with their family or colleagues), they're welcome to visit NICHCY's Web site and download any and all modules they wish.

Agenda for Today's Training

Having established that more modules are available to learn about IDEA and that these address multiple themes, you can move on to what will be

3 Clicks



covered, broadly, in *this* module. Agenda items are formulated as questions.

As you move through the bullets, you can elaborate as time allows, referring back to the opening discussion and participants' prior knowledge as identified there, as well as their stated reasons for needing the information to be presented in the next slides and applied in their own lives. You may also wish to tell the audience what will **not be covered in this training session**, as follows:

- IDEA's regulations governing *requesting an evaluation* and what happens next (covered in detail in the 2nd module in this series of three, *Initial Evaluation and Reevaluation*)
- *Parent consent* (which will be mentioned here but also covered in detail in *Initial Evaluation and Reevaluation*)
- The actual process IDEA specifies for *initial evaluation*, including review of existing evaluation data on the child (also to be covered in *Initial Evaluation and Reevaluation*)
- IDEA's definition of a "child with a disability" (covered in *Initial Evaluation and Reevaluation*)
- How *eligibility* is determined (covered in *Initial Evaluation and Reevaluation*)
- *Reevaluation* under IDEA (covered in *Initial Evaluation and Reevaluation*)
- Additional procedures for evaluating a child suspected of having a learning disability (covered in the 3rd module in the series, *Identification of Children with Specific Learning Disabilities*)

IDEA's evaluation provisions are found from §300.300 (Parental Consent) through §300.311 (Specific documentation for the eligibility determination).¹ This module focuses on the specific set of provisions called "Evaluation Procedures" found at §300.304, which have not changed much from previous law. By and large, these provisions are intended to ensure that any evaluation conducted under IDEA is technically sound. By

Themes in
Building the Legacy

Theme A
Welcome to IDEA

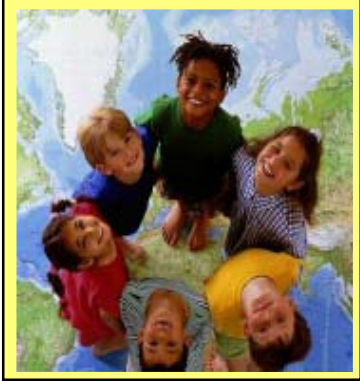
Theme B
IDEA
and General Education

Theme C
Evaluating Children
for Disability

Theme D
Individualized Education
Programs (IEPs)

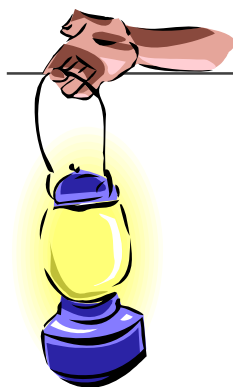
Theme E
Procedural Safeguards

Available online at:
www.nichcy.org/training/contents.asp



"technically sound," we mean, among other things, that the instruments or procedures that are used are valid and reliable for their purposes and that they are administered or conducted by a person who knows how to administer those instruments or procedures. No beginners here! This is important. The information expected to emerge from the evaluation will not be accurate or reliable if the way the

evaluation was conducted was faulty, if the tests were off-target, or if the person involved in giving the test, observing the child, or using some other strategy didn't know what they were doing. So the module series begins by looking at the considerations of technical soundness that must apply to all evaluations under IDEA—initial evaluations and reevaluations alike.



¹ Assistance to States for the Education of Children with Disabilities and Preschool Grants for Children with Disabilities, Final Rule, 71 Fed. Reg. 46540 (August 14, 2006) (to be codified at 34 C.F.R. pt.300). Available online at:

- www.nichcy.org/reauth/IDEA2004regulations.pdf
- <http://idea.ed.gov>



Slide loads, and automatically fills itself in. No clicks are necessary except to advance the slide.

CLICK to advance to next slide.

Using this slide you can introduce three children and their stories, as described below.

Richard is a first-grader, as you can probably tell by his missing front teeth. He's as cute as the dickens, and smart and eager to learn. Everyone is very surprised when he can't seem to learn to read. He struggles all year, his parents work with him at home, but by the end of the first grade he is appreciably behind the skill level of his classmates. Richard's teacher meets with his parents and they decide that Richard should be evaluated to see if he perhaps he might have a learning disability.

Susana is in danger of failing fourth grade. She's only been in the country a few years so her spoken English can sometimes be hard to understand. Her

reading and writing skills in English are even harder to understand, but her teacher is also worried about how Susana drifts off in class, paying no attention, sometimes not even hearing when she's called on to participate. Her teacher isn't sure what's going on. Is it Susana's English that's causing the problem, or something more?

Kevin has become severely withdrawn in the last year. His grades have been declining steadily, he is starting to skip school, and when the teacher calls on him in class, he responds rudely or not at all. The teacher is worried that Kevin may have an emotional disorder. She makes a referral to special education.

While these children are different from each other in many ways, they may also share something in common. Each may be a student who has a disability that will require special education services in the school setting. Before decisions may be made about whether they need special education and related services, each child will require an evaluation conducted by trained educational personnel, which may include a school psychologist, a speech/language pathologist, special education and regular education teachers, social workers, and/or, when appropriate, medical personnel. This is true for any child suspected of having a disability.

Discussing the Slide

Use the stories of these different children to illustrate that when a child demonstrates academic or behavioral problems, especially when these problems continue over time, it's important to investigate what's causing the problems. The audience may have experiences they can share about their own concerns over how a child was doing in school or what behaviors lead to an evaluation under IDEA. Contrast the array of symptoms that Richard, Susana, and Kevin (and your audience's

examples) have, and how investigating each one via evaluation would necessarily be different. Finding out why Richard isn't learning to read, for example, would involve different tools than learning more about why Kevin has become so withdrawn. However, regardless of how evaluation may vary depending on what disability is suspected or what worrisome signs a child may be showing, there are specific central similarities of process that an evaluation under IDEA must have. This module will examine those considerations and the process that IDEA

requires in order to ensure that evaluations are technically sound and provide the information sought: Why is the child having difficulties, and what is the appropriate way to address those difficulties?

—Space for Notes—

View 1

Purposes of Evaluation

- ❑ To see if the child is a “child with a disability ” as defined by IDEA 2004

Slide loads with this view, with the header “Purposes of Evaluation” and Bullet 1.

Clicks 1-2


Purposes of Evaluation

- ❑ To see if the child is a “child with a disability ” as defined by IDEA 2004
- ❑ To gather information that will help determine child’s educational needs
- ❑ To guide decision making about appropriate educational program for the child

Click 1: Bullet 2 appears.

Click 2: Bullet 3 appears.

CLICK AGAIN to advance to next slide.

(discussion on next page) 

Slide 4: Background and Discussion

2 Clicks



Slide 4 launches into the content of this module by looking at the purposes of evaluation. As participants will see, evaluation is not conducted only to find out if the child in question has a disability as defined under IDEA. The information that is collected will be used in many other critical ways, as we shall see.

Background

Evaluation is an essential beginning step in the special education process for a child with a disability. How, then, do IDEA 2004 and the final regulations define evaluation? Do they define evaluation? Yes, they do. Refer your audience to **Handout C-1**, where they will find the definition in the final regulations implementing IDEA 2004.

§300.15 Evaluation.

Evaluation means procedures used in accordance with §§300.304 through 300.311 to determine whether a child has a disability and the nature and extent of the special education and related services that the child needs.

The definition of evaluation also reflects the two top purposes listed on the slide. Turning these purposes into questions is a useful way to understand the type of information an evaluation is expected to produce. For example, the evaluation should answer these questions:

- Does the child have a disability that requires the provision of special education and

related services in order for the child to receive a free appropriate public education (FAPE)?

- What are the child's specific educational needs?
- What special education services and related services, then, would be appropriate for addressing those needs?

Information gathered during the evaluation process is used to fully understand the educational needs of the child and to guide decision making about the kind of educational program that is appropriate for the child. From evaluation, it is possible—no, it is imperative—to *fully learn* the *nature* and *extent* of the special education and related services the child needs, so that a comprehensive and appropriate individualized education program (IEP) can be developed and implemented. The underlying standards to be used and the multiple ways in which schools are to learn this vital information about each child with a disability is the focus of this introductory module.

Although this module is looking primarily at provisions in IDEA and the final regulations at §300.304, it is useful to point out to the audience that IDEA's detailed regulatory language describing the evaluation process actually begins at §300.300 with **Parental consent**, followed by §300.301 **Initial evaluations**, both of which are included in their handouts. Direct their attention to §300.301 on Handout C-2, where a very important

requirement sets the scope for evaluation. That requirement is:

Each public agency must conduct a full and individual initial evaluation, ...before the initial provision of special education and related services to a child with a disability.... [§300.301(a)]

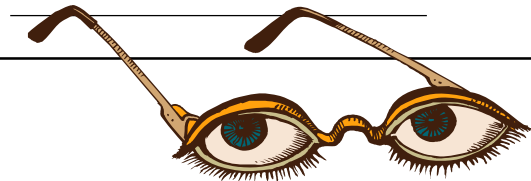
It is clear that the IDEA requires individual and comprehensive evaluation of a child suspected of having a disability.

What is a full evaluation? A comprehensive one? An *individualized* one? These are all important questions to pose and to let participants know that they'll be learning more about how full and comprehensive an evaluation needs to be as we go through the slides in this training. Here, make sure you state that an "individual" evaluation is just that—*individual*. Focused on that child and that child alone. An evaluation of a child under IDEA means much more than the child sitting in a room with the rest of his or her class taking an exam for that class, that school, that district, or that State. How the child performs on such exams will contribute useful information to an IDEA-related evaluation, but large-scale tests or group-administered instruments are not enough to diagnose a disability or determine what, if any, special education or related services the child might need, let alone plan an appropri-

ate educational program for the child.

Thus, the purpose of evaluation goes beyond identifying the disability to determine a child's eligibility for special education and related services, and encompasses a comprehensive understanding of the impact of the disability on the child, so that a

full and comprehensive IEP—that addresses the child's needs—may be developed and implemented. Evaluation is the foundation for the IEP, which is, in turn, the cornerstone for providing FAPE to a child with a disability.



Trainer Notes

You may want to make the following two points for your audience before proceeding with this module.

1—The complete definition of “child with a disability” can be found in **Handout C-3** and will be covered in detail in the module *Initial Evaluation and Reevaluation*. However, to provide a context for this introduction to the topic of evaluation, the first paragraph of the definition is referenced below.

§300.8 Child with a disability.

(a) *General.* (1) *Child with a disability* means a child evaluated in accordance with §§300.304 through 300.311 as having mental retardation, a hearing impairment (including deafness), a speech or language impairment, a visual impairment (including blindness), a serious emotional disturbance (referred to in this part as “emotional disturbance”), an orthopedic impairment, autism, traumatic brain injury, an other health impairment, a specific learning disability, deafblindness, or multiple disabilities, *and who, by reason thereof, needs special education and related services.*

(§300.8, emphasis added)

2—The IEP is covered in great detail in five separate modules and will not be discussed here, but again, for context, the term is defined below.

§300.22 Individualized education program.

Individualized education program or IEP means a written statement for a child with a disability that is developed, reviewed, and revised in accordance with §§300.320 through 300.324.

View 1

Before Any Initial Evaluation

Slide loads with this view—the title of the slide and the lead-in phrase “Public agency must....”

Public agency must:



Click 1

Before Any Initial Evaluation

Click 1: Bullet 1 appears.

Public agency must:

- Provide parent(s) with **notice**




(continued on next page) 

Click 2

Before Any Initial Evaluation

Public agency must:

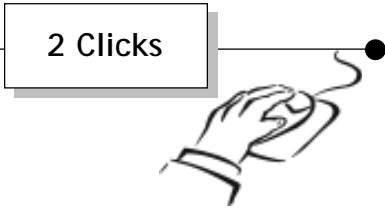
- Provide parent(s) with **notice**
- Obtain parent's **informed consent**



Click 2:
Bullet 2 appears.

CLICK AGAIN to advance to next slide.

Slide 5: Background and Discussion



Slide 5 opens the regulations to the page where §300.304 begins. And the very first entry in those provisions is:

(a) *Notice.* The public agency must provide notice to the parents of a child with a disability, in accordance with §300.503, that describes any evaluation procedures the agency proposes to conduct.

Parental notification and parental consent are critical elements in IDEA and have been since its earliest days. It's not surprising that the block of provisions governing evaluation of children suspected of having a disability begins with **Parental consent** at §300.300 in the final

regulations implementing IDEA 2004 and that the lead-in requirement for §300.304 **Evaluation procedures** begins with parental notification.

These actual topics (parental consent and parental notification), however, are covered in detail in other modules. Parental consent is studied closely in the upcoming module *Initial Evaluation and Reevaluation*. Parental notification is touched upon in that module, with a much lengthier look coming in *Introduction to Procedural Safeguards*. Depending on how much time you have available for your session, and what other training sessions you plan, you may or may not wish to delve into either topic in more detail. Borrow the

background discussions from those other modules and use them here, as you deem appropriate.

Parental notification and parental consent are mentioned here as well (but briefly), because they are so central to ensuring parental involvement across the spectrum of their child's education and acknowledging parental authority and responsibility for their child's well-being. No discussion of evaluation would be complete without mentioning their importance in the process.

View I

The “How” of Evaluation

Must use of a variety of assessment tools and strategies to...



← Slide loads with this view, the first “How” of evaluation.

Click I

The “How” of Evaluation

Must use of a variety of assessment tools and strategies to...



The “What” of Evaluation


...gather information about the child, including information provided by parents.

← Click 1: The corresponding “What” of evaluation appears.

(continued on next page) 

The “How” of Evaluation

Must use of a variety of assessment tools and strategies to...



Click 2

The “What” of Evaluation

... gather information about the child, including information provided by parents.

↓

Relevant...

- ✓functional
- ✓developmental
- ✓academic information.

Click 2: Details appear about what type of information needs to be collected about the child.

CLICK AGAIN to advance to next slide.

Slide 6: Background and Discussion

Slide 6 corresponds to §300.304(b)(1), which reads:

(b) *Conduct of evaluation.*
In conducting the evaluation, the public agency must—

(1) Use a variety of assessment tools and strategies to gather relevant functional, developmental, and academic information about the child, including information provided by the parent, that may assist in determining...

The completion of the phrase will come on the next slide, which gives the “Why of Evaluation.” Here the “how” refers to what the public agency must do—use a variety of assessments

tools and strategies. What type of information is expected to emerge from having done so? This is the “What” of Evaluation noted on the slide. Relevant functional, developmental, and academic information about the child, that’s what, including what the parents contribute.

Assessment Tools and Strategies

How does the school gather all the necessary information so

that appropriate decisions related to a child’s eligibility and the provision of special education and related services can be made? As one can well imagine, this is a tall and vitally important order to fill, especially considering that there are literally thousands of formal, standardized assessment tools and methods schools can use to evaluate

Note to Trainer

Pulling from the regulatory language, the slides and discussion in this module are framed in a “How/What” format, e.g., “How is evaluation to be conducted?” paired with “What is to be obtained from appropriate, comprehensive evaluation?”

children. Some of these are considered psychological assessment tools for assessing a child's developmental, behavioral, or cognitive abilities. When conducting an initial evaluation, it is necessary to examine all areas of a child's functioning (intelligence, language, speech, hearing, vision, fine and gross motor skills, social/emotional behavior) to establish baseline information on the child and to recognize areas of impairment. Other assessments measure a child's educational achievement in basic content areas, such as reading, writing, and math—with detailed assessment (called sub-tests) within each of these areas.

Because of the convenient and plentiful nature of standardized tests, it is perhaps tempting to administer a battery (group) of tests to a child and make an eligibility determination or write the child's IEP based on the results. However, tests alone will not give a comprehensive picture of how a child performs or what he or she knows or does not know. Evaluators need to use a variety of tools and approaches to assess a child. These may include observing the child in different settings to see how he or she functions in those environments, interviewing individuals who know the child to gain their insights, and testing the child to evaluate his or her

competence in whatever skill areas appear affected by the suspected disability, as well as those that may be areas of strength. There are also a number of other approaches being used to collect information about children: curriculum-based assessment, ecological assessment, task analysis, dynamic assessment, and assessment of learning style. These approaches yield rich information about children, are especially important when assessing students who are from culturally or linguistically diverse backgrounds, and, therefore, are critical methods in the overall approach to assessment. Children with medical or mental health problems may also have assessment information from sources outside of the school, or such evaluations may be an appropriate part of the school's evaluation plan for a child. Such information would need to be considered along with assessment information from the evaluation in making appropriate diagnoses, placement decisions, and instructional plans.

Only by collecting data through a *variety of approaches* (e.g., observations, interviews, tests, curriculum-based assess-



ment, and so on) and from a *variety of sources* (parents, teachers, specialists, peers, child) can an adequate picture be obtained of the child's strengths and weaknesses. Synthesized, this information can be used to determine whether the child has a disability under IDEA, the specific nature of the child's special needs, whether the child needs special education and related services and, if so, to design an appropriate program.

View I

The “Why” of Evaluation

To assist in determining:

- ✓ Whether the child is a “child with a disability”



← Slide loads with Bullet 1 of “Why” in view.

Click I

The “Why” of Evaluation

To assist in determining:

- ✓ Whether the child is a “child with a disability”
- ✓ Content of the child’s IEP

← Picture disappears, and Bullet 2 appears.

(continued on next page) 

The “Why” of Evaluation

To assist in determining:

- ✓ Whether the child is a “child with a disability”
- ✓ Content of the child’s IEP

→ Including info related to enabling the child...

- to be involved in and progress in the general education curriculum
- for a preschool child, to participate in appropriate activities

Clicks 2-3

Click 2:
Details (up to first bullet) appear about what type of information needs to be collected to help determine the content of the child’s IEP.

Click 3:
The 2nd bullet (re: preschool children) appears.

CLICK AGAIN to advance to next slide.

Slide 7: Background and Discussion

3 Clicks



Slide 7 concludes the phrase begun on the last slide, giving the reason “why” the data gathered are important and what purpose they will serve. Refer participants to §300.304(b)(1)(i) and (ii), which are the provisions pertaining to this slide. They also appear in the box on the next page for your convenience.

Discussing the Slide

The audience should recognize that determining whether the child is a child with a disability (Checkmark 1 on the slide) is one of the purposes of evaluation already discussed. “Content of the child’s IEP” also relates to a purpose they discussed—“to guide decision making about

appropriate educational programming for the child” (Slide 4). What’s added, then, is that the information collected about the child must include information related to enabling the child to be involved in and progress in the general education curriculum (or, for preschoolers, to participate in appropriate activities). This phrasing comes directly from provisions in IDEA and the final regulations on IEP content, where, among other things, statements must be made regarding:

- “how the child’s disability affects the child’s involvement and progress in the general education curriculum” [§300.320(a)(1)(i)];

- annual goals designed to meet the child’s needs and “enable the child to be involved in and make progress in the general education curriculum” [§300.320(a)(2)(i)(A)]; and
- the special education and related services needed to enable the child to attain the annual goals and “be involved in and make progress in the general education curriculum” [§300.320(a)(4)(i) and (ii)].

The precise and complete language of IDEA and the final regulations regarding IEP content is found at §300.320 and on **Handout D-3**, in the umbrella topic of **Individualized Education Programs** (Theme D of this training curriculum). The above are excerpts from those provisions and are cited to illustrate how the language in evaluation aligns with the language in IEPs. That makes perfect sense, since evaluations are meant to gather data to *inform* IEP development.

§300.304 Evaluation procedures.

(a) *Notice.* The public agency must provide notice...

(b) *Conduct of evaluation.* In conducting the evaluation, the public agency must—

(1) Use a variety of assessment tools and strategies to gather relevant functional, developmental, and academic information about the child, including information provided by the parent, that may assist in determining—

(i) Whether the child is a child with a disability under §300.8; and

(ii) The content of the child's IEP, including information related to enabling the child to be involved in and progress in the general education curriculum (or for a preschool child, to participate in appropriate activities);...

—Space for Notes—

View I

The "How" of Evaluation

Slide loads with this view.

Is sufficiently comprehensive...

... to identify all of the child's special education and related services needs



Click I

The "How" of Evaluation

Is sufficiently comprehensive...

... to identify all of the child's special education and related services needs

Click1:
The "What of Evaluation" appears.

The "What" of Evaluation

✓ whether or not those needs are commonly linked to the disability category in which the child has been classified

CLICK AGAIN to advance to next slide.

Slide 8: Background and Discussion

1 Click



Slide 8 corresponds to the provision in the final regulations at §300.304(c)(6), which appears in the box below and on **Hand-out C-2**.

Although this provision appears somewhat toward the end of §300.304, it is emphasized early in this training session because it speaks directly to one of the central tenets governing evaluation under IDEA—that the evaluation must be *sufficiently comprehensive* to ensure that the “What” on the slide can be fully realized. Identifying “all of the child’s special education and related services needs” points to the potential magnitude of any evaluation.

To illustrate:

A first-grader with suspected hearing and vision impairments is referred for an initial evaluation. In order to *fully* “gather relevant functional, developmental, and academic information” (see Slide 6) and “identify *all* of the child’s special education and related services needs,” evaluation of this child will obviously need to focus on hearing and vision, *as well as* cognitive, speech, language, motor, and social/behavioral skills, to

determine not only the degree of impairment in vision and hearing and related educational needs, but also:

- the impact of these impairments (if any) on the child in other areas of functioning, *and*
- if there are additional impairments in any other areas of functioning (including those not commonly linked to hearing and/or vision impairment).

Further support for a comprehensive approach to evaluation is found in the Analysis of Comments and Changes:

Section 300.304(c)(4) requires the public agency to ensure that the child is assessed in all areas related to the suspected disability. This could include, if appropriate, health, vision, hearing, social and emotional status, general intelligence, academic performance,

communicative status, and motor abilities. *This is not an exhaustive list of areas that must be assessed. Decisions regarding the areas to be assessed are determined by the suspected needs of the child.* (71 Fed. Reg. at 46643, emphasis added)

The slides that follow provide additional detail on the “How” of evaluation with emphasis on the details of the “What.”



§300.304 Evaluation procedures.

(a)...

(b)...

(c) *Other evaluation procedures.* Each public agency must ensure that—

(6) In evaluating each child with a disability under §§300.304 through 300.306, the evaluation is sufficiently comprehensive to identify all of the child’s special education and related services needs, whether or not commonly linked to the disability category in which the child has been classified.

The “How” of Evaluation

May not use any single measure or assessment as the sole criterion for determining ...

The “What” of Evaluation

✓ Whether the child is a “child with a disability”

✓ An appropriate educational program for the child

← Slide loads with this view. No clicks are necessary, except to advance the slide.

CLICK to advance to next slide.

Slide 9 corresponds to the provision in IDEA and the final regulations at §300.304(b)(2), which appears in the box at the right and on **Handout C-2**.

This provision is not new in IDEA 2004. In fact, one of the cornerstones of the IDEA’s evaluation requirements is that it is inappropriate and unacceptable to base any eligibility or placement decision upon the results of only one procedure. If your audience is already familiar with IDEA’s process for evaluation, then participants will recognize this provision readily. It effectively prohibits basing eligibility determination or special education programming upon the results of only one test, measure, or assessment procedure. A *variety* of tools and strategies must be used. Among other things, this is intended to prevent inappropriate identification of children as “children with disabilities” (or its converse, *not*

identifying a child who, indeed, is a “child with a disability”). It also addresses the secondary purpose of evaluation, which is to gather comprehensive information about the child, so that educational decisions will be informed and appropriate to the child’s needs. All that is known about a child’s performance, abilities, and difficulties prior to evaluation (including informa-

tion the parents provide) is considered in determining the types of assessments to use and areas of the child’s functioning to be examined. These formal assessments contribute to a fuller understanding of a child’s school performance, strengths and weaknesses, and are a part of the big picture in the “How” and “What” of evaluation.

§300.304 Evaluation procedures.

(a)...

(b) Conduct of evaluation. In conducting the evaluation, the public agency must—

(1)...

(2) Not use any single measure or assessment as the sole criterion for determining whether a child is a child with a disability and for determining an appropriate educational program for the child; and ...

The “How” of Evaluation

Must use technically sound instruments ...



... that assess the relative contribution of:

- ✓ cognitive and behavioral factors
- ✓ physical or developmental factors

The “What” of Evaluation

← Slide loads with this view. No clicks are necessary, except to advance the slide.

CLICK to advance to next slide.

Slide 10 corresponds to the provision in IDEA and the final regulations at §300.304(b)(3), which appears in the box at the right and on **Handout C-2**.

This provision is not new to IDEA 2004 either; as in prior law, it requires public agencies to use technically sound instruments in evaluation. These must be designed to reveal the impact and interplay of all potential factors when determining a child’s disability and educational needs. What are “technically sound instruments”? The Analysis of Comments and Changes addresses this question and says:

“Technically sound instruments” generally refers to assessments that have been shown through research to be valid and reliable. (71 Fed. Reg. at 46642)

To define or explain the meaning of “relative contribution,” as it applies to this section, the Department states:

The phrase “relative contribution” ...generally means that assessment instruments that allow the examiner to determine the extent to which a child’s behavior is a result of cognitive, behavioral, physical, or developmental

factors may be used in evaluating a child in accordance with §300.304. (*Id.*)

One of the questions that follows is: How do separate areas of development or functioning contribute—positively or negatively—to the overall picture of the child in terms of disability and educational needs? Evaluation needs to answer this question.

§300.304 Evaluation procedures.

- (a)...
- (b) *Conduct of evaluation.* In conducting the evaluation, the public agency must—
- (1)...
- (2)...
- (3) Use technically sound instruments that may assess the relative contribution of cognitive and behavioral factors, in addition to physical or developmental factors.

The “How” of Evaluation

Assessments and other evaluation procedures must be administered:

- ✓ by trained and knowledgeable personnel
- ✓ in accordance with documented instructions
- ✓ for the purposes for which the assessments or measures are valid and reliable

The “What” of Evaluation

← Slide loads with this view. No clicks are necessary, except to advance the slide.

CLICK to advance to next slide.

Slide 11 corresponds to the provisions in IDEA and the final regulations at §300.304(c)(1)(iii)-(v), which appear in the box on the next page and on **Handout C-2**.

These provisions are not new to IDEA 2004 either; as in prior law, they require attention to the details of how a measure or assessment is to be administered and for what purpose. Public agencies are prohibited from using a measure or assessment for purposes different from the purpose for which the measure or assessment was designed. They must also administer each measure or assessment according to the instructions provided by the producer of that measure or assessment. Also critical are the professional qualifications and know-how of the person charged with administering such measures or assessments. Accordingly, assessments must be:

- administered by personnel who are *trained* to do so, such as psychologists, clinical social workers, or teachers;
 - given in accordance with the formal instructions provided by the test maker or publisher;
 - valid and reliable for their designed purposes—for example, when assessing a child’s expressive language skills, a legitimate tool(s) designed to assess *expressive language* skills must be used, not one designed to assess *receptive language* skills or solely articulation (which is but one component of expressive language). Another way to think of this requirement is with an “apples to apples” analogy. Whatever area is to be assessed must be done by using an appropriate assessment tool that is valid, reliable, *and* designed to assess that area.
 - comprehensive and multi-dimensional—maximum information must be used when determining a child’s disability and/or educational needs. Decisions cannot be based on a single score or area of assessment.
- The reason for this is so that assessment reveals information on:
- all areas related to a child’s suspected disability; and
 - the specifics of the child’s educational needs, including relevant information to assist in addressing those needs through the IEP process.

As you can see from the slide, there wasn't enough room for "The What of Evaluation" attendant to this "How." That will be covered in the next slide.

Discussion: Practice and Perspectives from the Field

Standardized tests are very much a part of the education scene, as we all know. Most of us have taken many such tests in our lifetime. Tests may be informal — meaning a measure developed locally — or they may be commercially developed, formal measures, commonly called standardized tests. Unlike informal tests, standardized tests have detailed procedures for administration, timing, and scoring. There is a wide variety of tests available to assess different skill areas.

Some tests are known as *criterion-referenced tests*. This means that they are scored according to a standard, or criterion, that the teacher, school, or test publisher decides represents an acceptable level of mastery. An example of a criterion-referenced test might be a teacher-made spelling test where there are 20 words to be spelled and where the teacher has defined an "acceptable level of mastery" as 16 correct (or 80%). These tests, sometimes called content-referenced tests,



§300.304 Evaluation procedures.

(a)...

(b)...

(c) *Other evaluation procedures.* Each public agency must ensure that—

(1) Assessments and other evaluation materials used to assess a child under this part—

(i) ...

(ii) ...

(iii) Are used for the purposes for which the assessments or measures are valid and reliable;

(iv) Are administered by trained and knowledgeable personnel; and

(v) Are administered in accordance with any instructions provided by the producer of the assessments.

are concerned with the mastery of specific, defined skills. The child's performance on the test indicates whether or not he or she has mastered those skills.

Other tests are known as *norm-referenced tests*. Scores on these tests are not interpreted according to an absolute standard or criterion (such as 8 out of 10 correct) but, rather, according to how the child's performance compares with that of a particular group of individuals. In order for this comparison to be meaningful, a valid comparison group—called a norm group—must be defined. A *norm group* is a large number of children who are representative of all the children in a particular group such as age or grade. Such a group can be obtained by selecting a group of children that have the characteristics of children across the

United States—that is, a certain percentage must be from each gender, from various ethnic backgrounds (e.g., Caucasian, African-American, American Indian, Asian, Hispanic), from each geographic area (e.g., Southeast, Midwest), and from each socioeconomic class. By having all types of children take the test, the test publisher can provide information about how various types of children perform on the test. (This information — what type of individuals comprised the norm group and how each type performed on the test — is generally given in the manuals that accompany the test.) The school will compare the scores of the child being evaluated to the scores obtained by the norm group. This helps evaluators determine whether the child is performing at a level

typical for, below, or above that expected for children of a given ethnicity, socioeconomic status, age, or grade.

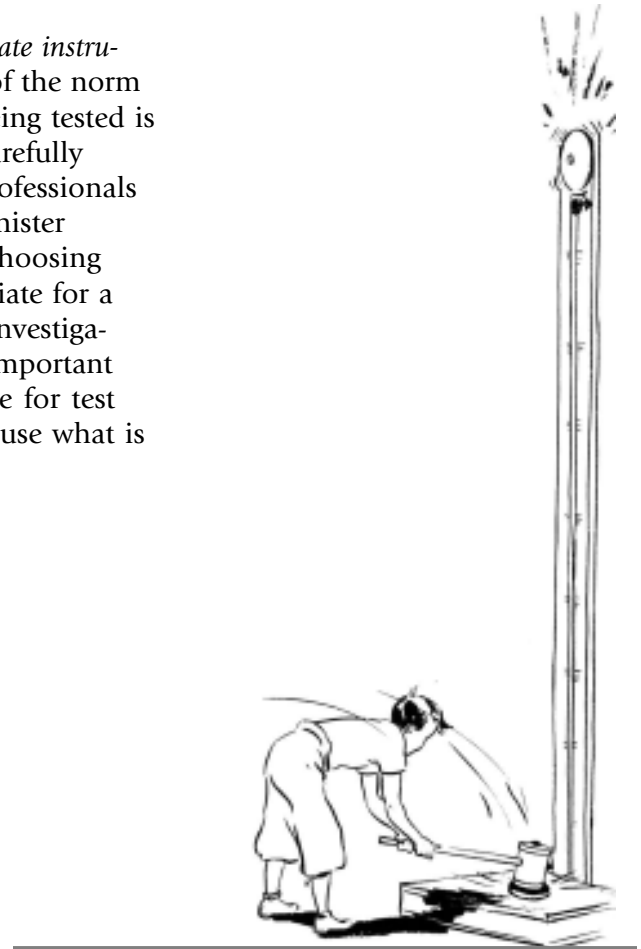
Not all tests use large, representative norm groups. This means that such tests were normed using a group of individuals who were *not* representative of the population in general. For example, on one such test, the norm group may have included few or no African-American, Hispanic, or Asian children. Because it is not known how such children typically perform on the test, there is nothing to which an individual child's scores can be compared, which has serious implications for interpretation of results.

Thus, before making assumptions about a child's abilities based upon test results, it is important to know something about the group to which the child is being compared — particularly whether or not the child is being compared to children who are similar in ethnicity, socioeconomic status, and so on. The more unlike the child the norm group is, the less

valuable the testing results will generally be. This is one of the areas in which standardized testing has been criticized. Often, test administrators do not use the norm group information appropriately, or there may not be children in the norm group who are similar to the child being tested. Furthermore, many tests were originally developed some time ago, and the norm groups reported in the test manual are not similar at all to the children being tested today.

Selecting an appropriate instrument. The similarity of the norm group to the child being tested is just one area to be carefully considered by the professionals who select and administer standardized tests. Choosing which test is appropriate for a given child requires investigation; it is extremely important that those responsible for test selection do not just use what is

available to or "always used by" the school or district. The child's test results will certainly influence eligibility decisions, instructional decisions, and placement decisions, all of which have enormous consequences for the child. If the child is assessed with an instrument that is not appropriate for him or her, the data gathered are likely to be inaccurate and misleading, which in turn results in faulty decisions regarding that child's educational program.



View I



All areas related to the suspected disability, including (if appropriate):

Slide loads with this view.

The “What” of Evaluation

Click I



All areas related to the suspected disability, including (if appropriate):

- ✓ health
- ✓ vision
- ✓ hearing
- ✓ social and emotional status

Click 1: Bullets 1-4 appear automatically, one after another.

The “What” of Evaluation

(continued on next page) 



The “What” of Evaluation

All areas related to the suspected disability, including *(if appropriate)*:

- ✓ health
- ✓ vision
- ✓ hearing
- ✓ social and emotional status
- ✓ general intelligence
- ✓ academic performance
- ✓ communicative status
- ✓ motor abilities

Click 2

Click 2:
Bullets 5-8 appear automatically, one after another.

CLICK AGAIN to advance to next slide.

Slide 12: Background and Discussion

2 Clicks



Slide 12 corresponds to the provision in IDEA and the final regulations at §300.304(c)(4), which appears in the box at the right and on **Handout C-2**.

These provisions may be very familiar to some in your audience; they are not new to IDEA 2004 and, as in prior law, truly speak to the comprehensiveness of evaluation under IDEA. Go through each of the bulleted items and discuss. These areas, taken together, cover a lot of ground, don't they? And investigating a child's abilities in these areas will yield considerable information and, hopefully, insight into the nature of the child's difficulties and the nature and extent of the special educa-

§300.304 Evaluation procedures.

- (a)...
- (b)
- (c) *Other evaluation procedures.* Each public agency must ensure that—
 - (1) ...
 - (2)...
 - (3)...
 - (4) **The child is assessed in all areas related to the suspected disability, including, if appropriate, health, vision, hearing, social and emotional status, general intelligence, academic performance, communicative status, and motor abilities;**

tion and related services the child needs, if found eligible as a "child with a disability" under IDEA.

Consider with the audience for a moment all of the areas that need to be investigated through evaluation, given the evaluation procedures at §300.304. The areas noted on this slide already make for an impressive list. There's more on that list, as the content presented in Slides 6-10 makes clear. This is a good opportunity to reiterate that content and combine it with the information on the current slide.

Can the audience make a quick list (in pairs or in the large group) of the areas that evaluation needs to investigate, as discussed in Slides 6-10? These would include:

- cognitive and behavioral factors;
- physical or developmental factors;
- all of the child's special education and related services needs (whether or not those needs are commonly linked to the disability category in which the child has been classified);

- information related to enabling the child to be involved in and progress in the general education curriculum (or appropriate activities, for preschool children); and
- relevant functional, developmental, academic information.

—Space for Notes—

View I

The “How” of Evaluation

Assessments and other evaluation procedures must be:

- ✓ Selected and administered so as *not* to be discriminatory on a racial or cultural basis



← Slide loads with this view, the lead-in and Bullet 1.

Click I

The “How” of Evaluation

Assessments and other evaluation procedures must be:

- ✓ Selected and administered so as *not* to be discriminatory on a racial or cultural basis
- ✓ Provided and administered in child’s native language or other mode of communication,* and in the form most likely to yield...

** unless it is clearly not feasible*

← Click 1: Bullet 2 appears, including the asterisk (*) qualifier.

(continued on next page) 

The “How” of Evaluation

Assessments and other evaluation procedures must be:

- ✓ Selected and administered so as *not* to be discriminatory on a racial or cultural basis
- ✓ Provided and administered in child’s native language or other mode of communication,* and in the form most likely to yield...

* unless it is clearly not feasible

... Accurate information on what child knows and can do

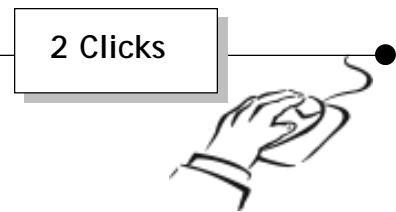
- Academically
- Developmentally
- Functionally

Click 2

Click 2:
The “What” of Evaluation appears.

CLICK AGAIN to advance to next slide.

Slide 13: Background and Discussion



Slide 13 corresponds to the provision in IDEA and the final regulations at §300.304(c)(1)(i) and (ii), which appear in the box at the right and on Handout C-2.

These provisions may also be familiar to some participants and illustrate the care that must be taken to produce accurate and useful information when evaluating children who come from a nondominant culture or primarily speak a language other than English. These provisions apply when evaluating children:

§300.304 Evaluation procedures.

(a)...

(b)

(c) *Other evaluation procedures.* Each public agency must ensure that—

(1) Assessments and other evaluation materials used ...

(i) Are selected and administered so as not to be discriminatory on a racial or cultural basis;

(ii) Are provided and administered in the child’s native language or other mode of communication and in the form most likely to yield accurate information on what the child knows and can do academically, developmentally, and functionally, unless it is clearly not feasible to so provide or administer;

- for whom English is not the native language,
- who communicate by signing,
- who use alternative augmentative communication, or
- who use other means to communicate.

Assessments of such children must be conducted in accordance with their typical, accustomed mode of communication (unless it is clearly not feasible to do so) and in a form that will yield accurate information.

Why is this important? Check out the “What.” What is the accurate information evaluation should yield? “...information on *what the child knows and can do* academically, developmentally, and functionally...”

How can accurate information be obtained when assessing a child:

- who is deaf and communicates using ASL?
- whose native language is Spanish, Korean, Farsi, Hmong, or any other non-English language?
- who is blind and uses Braille to read and write?
- who uses a simple picture symbol or alphabet board to communicate?
- who uses sophisticated, high-end assistive technology to communicate?

There is only one correct answer that applies for each of these children and that is to use the means and manner of

communication/response mode the child commonly uses, unless it is clearly not feasible to do so. To assess the child using a means of communication or response not highly familiar to the child raises the probability that the evaluation results will yield minimal, if any, information about what the child knows and can do. And its accuracy would be as highly questionable.



Additional language in support of these two requirements comes from the discussion in the Analysis of Comments and Changes.

The Act and these regulations recognize that some assessments may be biased and discriminatory for children with differences in language and socialization practices. ...the Act requires that assessments and other evaluation materials used to assess a child under the Act are selected and administered so as not to be discriminatory on a racial or cultural basis. Additionally, in interpreting evaluation data for the purpose of determining eligibility of a child for special education and related services, §300.306(c) requires each public agency to draw

upon information from a variety of sources, including aptitude and achievement tests, parent input, teacher recommendations, as well as information regarding a child’s physical condition, social or cultural background, and adaptive behavior. (71 Fed. Reg. at 46642)

In responding to an expressed concern that a public agency not use the “not clearly feasible” exception in §300.304(c)(1)(ii) to improperly limit a child’s right to be evaluated in the child’s native language or other mode of communication, the Department of Education states the following:

The Act requires that assessments and other evaluation materials used to assess a child be provided and administered in the child’s native language or other mode of communication and in the form most likely to yield accurate information on what the child knows and can do, unless it is clearly not feasible to so provide or administer. We agree that this provision should not be improperly used to limit evaluations in a child’s native language, but we do not believe that a change to the regulations is necessary or that it would prevent inappropriate application of the existing rule. (*Id.*)

Considering the Impact of Linguistic and Cultural Difference

It is a well-known fact that the demographics of American schools are changing. IDEA 2004 itself, and many of its predecessors, comments upon this trend in its Findings (see section 601 of IDEA, cited in the module on *Disproportionality and Overrepresentation*). Many children come from ethnic, racial, or linguistic backgrounds that are different from the dominant culture, and this number is steadily increasing. Concern has been expressed in recent years about the overrepresentation of minority children in special education programs, particularly in programs for children with mild disabilities, and a great deal of research has been conducted to identify the reasons why. This is much more fully addressed in the module on *Disproportionality and Overrepresentation*, but briefly, here, many factors appear to contribute, including bias against children from different cultural and linguistic backgrounds, particularly those who are poor. The style and emphasis of the school may also be very different from those found in the cultures of children who are racially or linguistically different. Because culture and language affect learning and behavior, the school system may misinterpret what children know, how they behave, or how they learn. Children may appear less competent than they are,



leading educators to inappropriately refer them for assessment. Once referred, inappropriate methods may then be used to assess the children, leading to inappropriate conclusions and placement into special education.

There is also a great deal of research and numerous court decisions (e.g., *Larry P. v. Riles*, 495 F. Supp. 926 (N.D. Cal. 1979), *aff'd in part and rev'd in part*, 793 F.2d 969 (9th Cir. 1984) to support the fact that standardized tests (particularly intelligence and achievement tests) are often culturally and linguistically biased against children from backgrounds different from the dominant culture. On many tests, being able to answer questions correctly too often depends upon having specific culturally-based information or knowledge. If children have not been exposed to that information through their culture, or have not had the experiences that lead to gaining specific knowledge, then they will not be able to answer certain questions at all or will answer them in a way that is considered "incorrect" within the dominant culture. This can lead to inappropriate conclusions about children's ability to function within the school setting.

Therefore, when children come from a nondominant culture or speak a language other than English, care must be taken in how they are evaluated. Because



most cognitive, language, and academic measures are developed using standards of the dominant English-speaking culture, their use with children who are not from that culture may be inappropriate.

Before conducting any formal testing of a child who is a non-native speaker of English, it is critical to determine the child's preferred language and to conduct a comprehensive language assessment in both English and the native language. Examiners need to be aware that it is highly inappropriate to evaluate children in English when that is not their dominant language (unless the purpose of the testing is to assess the student's English language proficiency). If possible, the evaluator in any testing situation or interview should be familiar to the child and speak the child's language.

When tests or evaluation materials are not available in the child's native language, examiners may find it necessary to use English-language instruments. Because this practice is fraught with the possibility of misinterpretation, examiners need to be cautious in how they administer the test and interpret results. Alterations may need to be made to the standardized procedures used to administer tests. These can include paraphrasing instructions, providing a demonstration of how test tasks are to be performed, reading test items to the child, allowing the child to respond verbally rather than in writing, or allowing the child to use a dictionary. However, if any

such alterations are made, it is important to recognize that standardization has been broken, limiting the usefulness and applicability of test norms. Results should be cautiously interpreted, and all alterations made to the testing procedures should be fully detailed in the report describing the child's test performance. It is also essential that other assessment approaches be an integral part of collecting information about the child, such as interviews and observations.

Considering the Impact of Alternate Means of Communicating

Language and cultural difference is not the only factor that can confound effective evaluation. As IDEA recognizes, so can having another mode of communicating—such as sign, augmentative communication devices, or



Braille. It should be readily apparent that using speech or the written word to evaluate a child who uses another mode of communication would produce inaccurate and misleading results. Such

results could not be used to determine if the child were a "child with a disability" or to plan an appropriate educational program for that child. Therefore, unless it is clearly not feasible to do so, the child's mode of communication must be the mode through which evaluation is conducted—only in that way can the child accurately demonstrate what he or she knows or can do. If not feasible to do so, then results must be interpreted cautiously and all modifications described thoroughly in the evaluation report, along with their implications for the test results.

—Space for Notes—

View I

The "How" of Evaluation

Assessments and other evaluation procedures:

Yes.

Those tailored to assess specific areas of educational need



The "What" of Evaluation

Slide loads with this view, indicating that assessments and other evaluation procedures must be tailored to assess specific areas of educational need.

The "How" of Evaluation

Assessments and other evaluation procedures:

Yes.

Those tailored to assess specific areas of educational need



The "What" of Evaluation

No.

Not merely those designed to provide a single general intelligence quotient

Click I

Click 1: And here's an evaluation "no-no."

CLICK AGAIN to advance to next slide.

(discussion on next page)





Slide 14 corresponds to the provision in the final regulations at §300.304(c)(2), which appears in the box below and on **Hand-out C-2**.

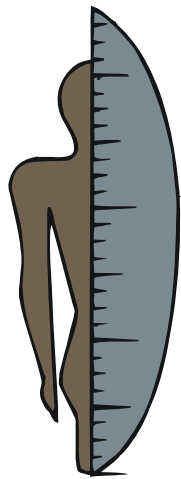
This provision also existed previously in Part B regulations. It reiterates the need for multiple sources of information, a variety of instruments, and the impermissibility of using one sole criterion to determine whether the child is a “child with a disability” and what would be an appropriate education program for that child. Evaluations may not use *only* assessments or other evaluation materials that yield “a single general intelligent quotient”—a reference to IQ scores.

Considering IQ Tests

While a person’s intelligence is typically measured by an intelligence test, there is considerable controversy over what, precisely, is meant by the term “intelligence.” As a result, different intelligence tests may be based upon different definitions of what constitutes intelligence.

The theory underlying intelligence tests (e.g., how does one define intelligence or develop tests of intelligence?) is not the only controversy surrounding their use. How fairly they assess certain populations (e.g., minority children, persons with limited

experience, children with severe language deficits), and whether or not such tests are reliable and valid are also areas of debate. In the past, intelligence measures have been misused, particularly with African-American, American Indian, and non-English speaking children, who, based upon their scores, were placed in classes for those with mental retardation or with learning disabilities. However, given the



many court cases involving standardized intelligence testing as a means of assessing minority children (e.g., *Larry P. v. Riles*, 495 F. Supp. 926 (N.D. Cal. 1979), *aff’d in part and rev’d in part*, 793 F.2d 969 (9th Cir. 1984); *Diana v. State Board of Education*, 1970; *Covarrubias v. San Diego Unified School District*, 1971), evaluators are now becoming more sensitive to issues

of test bias, the importance of testing in a child’s native language, the need for specialized training when administering and interpreting standardized tests, and the importance of combining any test scores with information gathered in other ways. And that is IDEA’s point. It is not acceptable or sound evaluation practice to use only tests yielding “a single general intelligent quotient” when evaluating children for disability and eligibility under IDEA.

§300.304 Evaluation procedures.

- (a)...
- (b)...
- (c) *Other evaluation procedures.* Each public agency must ensure that—
 - (1)...
 - (2) **Assessments and other evaluation materials include those tailored to assess specific areas of educational need and not merely those that are designed to provide a single general intelligence quotient.**

View I

Slide loads with this view—the lead-in phrase.

The “How” of Evaluation

→ If an assessment is administered to a child with impaired sensory, manual, or speaking skills, the **assessment results...**

The “What” of Evaluation

Click I

The “How” of Evaluation

If an assessment is administered to a child with impaired sensory, manual, or speaking skills, the **assessment results...**

Click 1: → Another “yes” in evaluation.

Yes.
Accurately reflect child’s aptitude or achievement level
(or whatever other factors the test purports to measure)

The “What” of Evaluation

(continued on next page) 

The “How” of Evaluation

If an assessment is administered to a child with impaired sensory, manual, or speaking skills, the **assessment results...**

Yes.

Accurately reflect child’s aptitude or achievement level
(or whatever other factors the test purports to measure)

No.

Do *not* just reflect child’s impaired skills
(unless those are the factors test purports to measure)

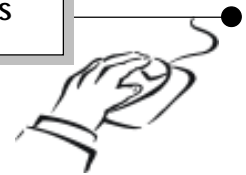
Click 2:
Another evaluation
“no-no.”

The “What” of Evaluation

CLICK AGAIN to advance to next slide.

Slide 15: Background and Discussion

2 Clicks



Slide 15 corresponds to the provision in the final regulations at §300.304(c)(3), which appears in the box on the next page and on **Handout C-2**.

Also not new to the Part B regulations, the provision referenced on this slide complements the previous ones and further illustrates the value of and necessity for appropriate and comprehensive evaluation—to fully understand a child’s abilities, knowledge, strengths, and needs—sufficient to make educational decisions and to develop an appropriate educational program. In consideration of educational decision making and programming, it’s not

enough to conduct a thorough examination of what a child cannot do (due to impairment in vision, hearing, speaking, or motor skills), unless there is just as thorough an examination of what a child knows, can do, how the child learns and demonstrates knowledge—in spite of impairment(s).

The broad picture of evaluation is essentially one that is revealed as the result of a huge fact-finding mission. This introductory module has merely touched upon the qualities and essential components of this mission. One more thing needs to be said before we close the session with a review.



§300.304 Evaluation procedures.

(a)...

(b)...

(c) *Other evaluation procedures.* Each public agency must ensure that—

(1)...

(2)...

(3) Assessments are selected and administered so as best to ensure that if an assessment is administered to a child with impaired sensory, manual, or speaking skills, the assessment results accurately reflect the child's aptitude or achievement level or whatever other factors the test purports to measure, rather than reflecting the child's impaired sensory, manual, or speaking skills (unless those skills are the factors that the test purports to measure).

—Space for Notes—

View I

When Students Transfer*



* Between 2 public agencies,
in same school year

Slide loads with this view, introducing a new topic: Evaluation for students who transfer between 2 public agencies in the same school year.

Click I

When Students Transfer*

Assessments are coordinated between old and new public agencies—



* Between 2 public agencies,
in same school year

Click 1: The lead-in loads.

(continued on next page) 


Click 2

When Students Transfer*

Assessments are coordinated between old and new public agencies—

- As necessary
- As swiftly as possible
- To ensure prompt completion of full evaluations

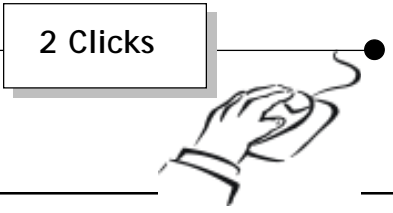
* Between 2 public agencies, in same school year




Click 2: Details appear about coordinating assessments between old and new public agencies.

CLICK AGAIN to advance to next slide.

Slide 16: Background and Discussion



 Slide 16 introduces a new element in IDEA's evaluation procedures and also addresses a challenge that has nagged the field for some time: What happens when a child is referred for evaluation in public agency A and, before the evaluation is complete and an eligibility determination made, the child moves to public agency B? During the same year? What happens?

The provision in IDEA and the final regulations for this circumstance is found at §300.304(c)(5), which appears in the box at the right and on Handout C-2.

§300.304 Evaluation procedures.

- (a)...
- (b)...
- (c) *Other evaluation procedures.* Each public agency must ensure that—
 - (1)...
 - (2)...
 - (3)...
 - (4)...
 - (5) **Assessments of children with disabilities who transfer from one public agency to another public agency in the same school year are coordinated with those children's prior and subsequent schools, as necessary and as expeditiously as possible, consistent with §300.301(d)(2) and (e), to ensure prompt completion of full evaluations.**

IDEA 2004 has added other, similar provisions to address situations where children move during the same school year; the most prominent one addresses children who already have an IEP. Here, we're looking at the circumstance of evaluation not yet completed in Place A. When the child gets to Place B, presu-

ably his or her academic or behavioral challenges come along, too. Regardless of place, the child will require an evaluation to identify whether or not he or she is a "child with a disability" and what his or her educational needs are. If Place A has already gathered some evaluation data, then Place B

may wish to use it, rather than administer those assessments. As can be seen on this slide and in the provision itself, IDEA requires that the two public agencies coordinate as necessary and as expeditiously as possible, so that a prompt and full evaluation of the child can be completed.

Slide 17

Question and Answer Period / Round-Up

Roundup Time!



Slide loads with this view. No clicks are necessary, except to END the slide show.

CLICK to END the slide show.

Time for a review. Go back to the initial questions and add a few you feel are appropriate and lead participants in a large-group discussion in which the audience answers these to reiterate the content of this session. Suggestions:

- What is the purpose of an evaluation?
- What is required when conducting a technically sound evaluation?
- What's a no-no in evaluation, under IDEA? Why?
- What are some of the assessment tools and strategies that a public agency might use to gather information about the child for an evaluation?
- How are you going to apply this information when you leave here today?

The module *Initial Evaluation and Reevaluation*—which follows this one—will examine these components and more in detail as they apply to initial evaluations and reevaluations.