

School-Age Child Find

For school-age children, K-12, Child Find consists of a 45-day (calendar days, not school days) screening tool. The 45-day screener is completed for every child who is new to the school whether he/she is beginning kindergarten or transferring into the school.

The 45-day screening form must include the areas of vision and hearing; cognitive or academic development; communication; motor; social or behavioral development and adaptive development. Completing the 45-day screener enables school personnel to identify concerns early. If a concern is noted, the parent must be notified within 10 school days. School administration is responsible for ensuring that all new students are screened within 45 calendar days and that any recommended actions from the screening occur. Training on the state and District's child find procedures must occur annually and is provided to all staff by school administration and/or the school psychologist.

The recommended actions will consist of interventions within the classroom. If those interventions do not elicit positive data supported results, the Response to Intervention (RTI) process should begin.

The RTI process is utilized when a student is having difficulties within the classroom setting that are not likely to work themselves out or diminish without added support. This could be a difficulty in math, self-control/behavior, and/or attention. Reading difficulties in grade K-3 are handled through the Move On When Reading process. For areas other than K-3 ELA, the referring teacher has the responsibility to collect data and summarize the educational and environmental history of the student through the RTI process. This team typically consists of gen ed teacher(s), counselor, pedagogical director, principal, and special education staff. In conjunction with the RTI process are the procedures for systematically providing K-12 interventions based on ongoing norm-referenced assessments like, but not limited to, Galileo tests.

The Counselor is automatically notified when an RTI form is submitted. The RTI team will meet to discuss interventions based on the data that the teacher has shared. The process typically takes 4-6 weeks; however, it can be shorter or longer depending on how the student responds to interventions. Students responding, i.e., demonstrating improvement, will continue using interventions. Students who are not responding will be referred on to the special education team through the RTI team.

*Exception – As a Charter school we do not have a preschool special needs program. Desert Marigold does have an on-site private tuition-based preschool. If a preschool teacher has concerns about the development of a preschooler in the class, that teacher would contact the parent. The parent would contact the district office of the school District that serves their home address. The parent would request a preschool screening. The District would then work with the parent to get the preschooler screened and if needed, evaluated for possible special education eligibility and /or services. If a parent needed help with this process they could contact Desert Marigold's Director of Student Support/Special Education for help in answering questions and navigating the process with the District school of residence.

Special Education Process

Once a student has been through the RTI process and continues to struggle with grade level work, the counselor, on behalf of the RTI team, will request that the special education process begin.

The special education process starts with a meeting called the Multidisciplinary Team meeting, the MET1. The team consists of the parent(s) or guardian(s) of the student, the teacher(s) of the student, the special education teacher serving the grade level of the student, and the school psychologist. Also possibly included would be a speech-language pathologist, occupational and/or physical therapist.

After the team discusses how the student is performing, they will decide if further evaluations are needed to determine if the student qualifies for special education. Most often evaluations are needed. Once the parent gives permission (in writing) the school team has 60 calendar days to evaluate and come back together with the parent and the rest of the team to discuss results. That meeting is the MET2. It is at the MET2 when all of the evaluation results are shared, and the team determines if the student meets eligibility for special education. If the decision is yes, then the special education team has 30 calendar days to hold the Individual Education Plan (IEP) with the parent(s)/guardian(s) for the student to begin receiving the needed services. If the student does not meet the criteria of a student with special education needs, he/she/they are referred back to the RTI team to create more specific interventions that may have been suggested by the evaluators.