

A PEATC

Do You Know....



Factsheet for Virginia's Parents—Preparing for the Eligibility Meeting

The evaluations are done. What's next?

So, the school is conducting an eligibility evaluation. The school division **has 65 business days** to complete your child's eligibility process for special education and related services unless the parent agrees to extend that timeline because more information is needed.

Once all the evaluations are completed, members of the eligibility team will gather to review the results and decide if your child is a student with a disability and if that disability impacts their ability to benefit from the education program. This is a very important meeting.

How do I prepare for the meeting?

- The school must make evaluation results available to you two days prior to the eligibility meeting. Call to find out how you will receive them.
- Review all of the reports. Take notes or highlight important sections. Some evaluation reports will be clear and easy to understand. Others will include information that is hard to understand.
- If you have reports from private evaluators, review those too to see if they have the same or different conclusions or recommendations.
- Write down questions about anything you don't understand, such as complicated testing terms, or numerical scores on tests.

Below are some of the terms you may see in your child's reports.

- **Age equivalent scores (AE).** This is your child's performance compared to age groups whose average scores are in the same range. So, if your child achieves a score for reading that is average for a 10-year-old, the AE score would be 10.
- **Grade equivalent scores (GE).** This compares your child's performance on grade-level material against the average performance of students at other grade levels on the same material. So, if your 15-year-old receives a GE 4 in math, they are performing at the 4th-grade level.

Resources

[PEATC: Eligibility Fact Sheet](#)

[PEATC - Requesting an Evaluation Fact Sheet](#)

[PEATC: Timelines Fact Sheet](#)

[VDOE Parents Guide to Special Education](#)

[VDOE Special Education Regulations](#)

[VDOE: Evaluation & Evaluation for Special Education & Related Services](#)



Contact Us:

800-869-6782 / 703-923-0010

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Hablamos Español



- **Standard scores (SS).** This is a score that is transformed to fill a normal curve with a mean (average) and standard deviation that are the same across ages. So, if 100 is the standard score with a standard deviation of 15, a score within 85 and 115 would be within normal limits.
- **Raw Score.** A raw score is based on the number of items answered correctly on a test. So, if there are 20 questions and 15 were answered correctly, 15 is the raw score.
- **Standard deviation (SD).** This measures how spread-out numbers are. By looking at the average (mean) and the variance from the mean, it provides a standard way of knowing what is “normal” and what is outside the range. So, for example, if the average IQ is 100 and the standard deviation is 24. A 76 would be low normal and 124 would be high normal. Below 76 would be below average and over 124 would be above average.
- **Percentile Rank.** These are usually a number between 1 and 99 with 50 being average. So, if your child has a percentile rank of 90, they are performing better than 90% of students in their norm group (the students for whom the test is intended).

What if I am emotional during the meeting?

It’s normal to be emotional when your child is being discussed. Especially when it seems to be all about test scores and what your child can’t do versus what they can do.

- If there are any negative relationships or existing conflict, try to put those aside for the meeting and focus on your child.
- It is normal to feel intimidated when others seem like the experts, but you know your child best. Ask questions and be sure you are heard.
- Bring someone with you who can help take notes or just be there to support you.
- Ask for a break if you need one and remember you can appeal a negative decision.

WHO IS ON THE ELIIGBILTY TEAM

- You – the parent
- The school special education administrator
- A special education teacher
- A general education teacher
- A person qualified to conduct testing
- School staff who work in the areas tested

OTHER MEETING TIPS

- Be **courteous and respectful** and expect the same.
- Ask that **plain, understandable language** be used.
- Be **open** to hearing from school staff and ask that they be open to you.
- Don’t **talk over others** and expect the same.
- If there are **disagreements**, try to stay calm. You can figure out next steps after the meeting.

PEATC’s mission focuses on building positive futures for Virginia's children by working collaboratively with families, schools, and communities to improve opportunities for excellence in education and success in school and community life. For more information about us, please contact:

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The contents of this factsheet were developed under a grant from the US Department of Education, #H328M200002. However, those contents do not necessarily represent the policy of the US Department of Education, and you should not assume endorsement by the Federal Government Project Officer. PEATC is not a legal services agency and cannot provide legal advice or legal representation. Any information contained in this factsheet is not intended as legal

