

Guidance on Implementation

For the Identification of Students
Suspected of Having a

Specific Learning Disability Latest DOE Report Form



Developed by the
Maine Association of School Psychology
September 2008
Revised September 2012
Revised March 2015

- ☐ Welcome
- ☐ Update on SLD in Maine
 - Options for new criteria
 - Using what we have now - new SLD report form
 - DOE Webinar regarding SLD report
 - Proposed changes in LD language in Chapter 101
- ☐ Questions
 - What do you need to know, specifically?

Part A

- ☐ Foundational Considerations

#1 Academic Achievement

- ☐ Item #1 - Academic Achievement
- ☐ Does a convergence of the evidence from multiple valid and reliable sources demonstrate that the student is achieving adequately for the student's age, including meeting State-approved grade level standards in all of the areas below?

Academic Achievement

- ☐ Oral Expression
- ☐ Listening Comprehension
- ☐ Written Expression
- ☐ Basic Reading Skill
- ☐ Reading Fluency
- ☐ Reading Comprehension
- ☐ Mathematics Calculation
- ☐ Mathematics Problem Solving

Academic Achievement

- Item #1 LD document (Guidance, page 5):
- ☐ Achievement relative to age
 - Standardized assessment (Appendix VII, page 36)
 - ☐ Achievement relative to State-approved standards
 - Local and state-level assessment (Appendix VIII, page 42)
 - Districts must develop defensible means for measuring progress

Academic Achievement

- ▣ Remember – More than one measure...
- ▣ Appendix VII lists a variety of standardized instruments that can be used to assess the areas of achievement that are to be considered with suggestions for how to assess
- ▣ Appendix VIII gives some guidance on how to determine adequate achievement

Diversity

- ▣ *For students from diverse cultural and/or linguistic background that place them outside the cohort on which standardized achievement tests were normed, consider only age or grade equivalent scores, not standard scores. For such students, determinations in this section should be made using a multi-tiered problem-solving approaches such as analysis of work samples and other performance data*

English Language Learners

- ▣ No tests were standardized on populations that included ELL students
- ▣ Even tests with Spanish language versions were not normed for most ELL students

Testing Challenges

When a child's general background experiences differ from those of the children on whom a test was standardized, then the use of the norms of that test as an index for evaluating that child's current performance or for predicting future performances may be inappropriate."

Salvia & Ysseldyke, 1991

What Factors Most Threaten the Validity of Test Performance?

"Most studies compare the performance of students from different ethnic groups...rather than ELL and non-ELL children within those ethnic groups....A major difficulty with all of these studies is that the category Hispanic includes students from diverse cultural backgrounds with markedly different English-language skills....This reinforces the need to separate the influences of ethnicity and ELL status on observed score differences."

Courtesy of Samuel Ortiz, PhD

Appendix VI

- ▣ Recommendations for addressing Cultural and Linguistic Diversity (Guidance, page 31)
 - Christopher Kaufman PhD
 - Samuel Ortiz PhD – Westbrook Presentation
 - X Battery Assessment adaptations for Culturally & Linguistically diverse students
 - Essentials of Cross Battery Assessment – 3rd edition

#2 Appropriate Instruction

- ▣ If the student is not achieving adequately in all areas, is the underachievement due to the lack of **appropriate** instruction in reading or math?
- ▣ 2 Considerations required

Appropriate Instruction

- ▣ a. Consider whether the student, **prior to or as part of the referral process**, was provided **appropriate instruction in regular education settings**, delivered by **qualified personnel**

and

Diversity

- ▣ b. For culturally and linguistically diverse students and students from diverse educational backgrounds, consider the extent to which the student has been exposed to **culturally and linguistically appropriate instruction that is consistent with the knowledge and skills embedded in the measures used to assess performance and achievement.**

#3 Rule Outs

- ▣ If the student is not achieving adequately in all areas, is the student's lack of achievement primarily the result of:
 - a. Visual, hearing or motor disability?
 - b. Intellectual disability?
 - c. Emotional disturbance?
 - d. Environmental, cultural or economic disadvantage and/or limited English proficiency?

Part B:

- ▣ Additional Considerations.
- ▣ In accordance with 34CFR§300.304(b)(1)and(b)(2), the Team must **not** use a single measure of assessment as the sole criterion for determining whether a child is a child with a disability.

#4 Processing Disorder

- ▣ Is there evidence of a disorder in one or more of the basic psychological processes that **correlates to the student's lack of achievement as demonstrated by either;**
 - a. A score 1.5 SD below the mean in at least one area of psychological processing; or
 - b. A score 1 SD below the mean in two or more areas.

Cognitive Processes

- Item #4 LD document (Guidance page 3): A disorder in one or more of the basic psychological processes
- Two widely used/researched/recognized models
 - Not exclusive
 - Appendix I (Guidance, page 12)
 - School Neuropsychology - Integrated Model
 - Cattell-Horn-Carroll
 - No definitive list
 - Appendix II (Guidance, page 16)

Maine's Threshold

- ▣ Processing deficits are identified statistically
- ▣ A single deficit is sufficient for eligibility if the composite score is at least 1 ½ standard deviations below the mean of the test
- ▣ Two deficits are required for eligibility if composite scores are 1 standard deviation below the mean of the test

Diversity

- ▣ *Some students present with cultural, linguistic or physical characteristics that place them outside the cohort on which standardized achievement tests were normed. If you have determined that there are no standardized assessment available that are normed for the student's presenting characteristics or that can be administered using standardized procedures, check "N/A" and provide an explanation in the Verification box as to why those assessments are not valid for the student.*

#5 General Cognitive Ability

- ▣ For children in grades 4 – 12: Has the student obtained a composite standardized score no lower than 1.5 SD < Mean on at least 1 index or scale of cognitive functioning
- ▣ General Learning Disability
- ▣ Specific Learning Disability

- ▣ From a standardized measure of general cognitive ability
- ▣ At least 3 subtests
- ▣ Answers the Full Scale vs Index Score debate
- ▣ New WISC-V Indices with 4 subtests -
- ▣ Verbal/Crystalized & Nonverbal/Fluid
- ▣ Appendix V - Index Score Examples (Guidance, page 26-30)

#6 Pre-Referral Procedures

- Item #6 LD document (Guidance, page 7):
- ▣ Lack of Response to Intervention must be documented to determine eligibility as a student with SLD
 - ▣ Regular Education initiative
 - ▣ Pre-referral procedures in Chapter 101
 - ▣ Me State RTI/Pre-Referral Guide:
 - www.maine.gov/education/rti/index.shtml
 - Appendix IX (pages 44-47)

- ▣ For SLD eligibility, academic intervention is required
 - Lack of response
 - Positive response that requires an amount of intervention that replicates specialized instruction
 - Sufficient progress is described in Appendix X (Guidance, page 48)

#7 Pattern of Strengths/Weaknesses

- ▣ A Pattern of Strengths and Weaknesses in Performance, Achievement or Both

Reading Skills



Math Skills

• Guidance, Page 7 and Appendix XI (pages 50-53)

Relevant to SLD

- ▣ That is determined by the IEP Team to be relevant to the identification of a specific learning disability
- ▣ Maine Guidance – Required Research Based Correlation between Processing Disorder and Achievement Deficit
- ▣ Other research based patterns

#8 Observation

- ▣ Relevant behavior noted during the observation(s) and it's relationship to academic functioning.

#9 Medical Findings

- ▣ Educationally relevant medical findings:

#10 Valid & Reliable

- ▣ Are evaluations valid and reliable assessments and performed by qualified individuals?

Part C

- ▣ Conclusions

#11. SLD?

- ▣ Does a specific learning disability exist?

#12. Specialized Instruction?

- ▣ If there is a learning disability, does the student require special education and related services because of that disability?

Conclusion

- ▣ References (Guidance, page 54)
- ▣ MASP website: masponline.net

What's Next???

- ▣ DOE proposed language for changes in SLD identification
 - Submitted to Legislature - Oct. 23
 - Public Comment Period
 - Hearing

Presenters

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