



Special Education Advocates League  
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### Bulletin Three

**Topic: Child Find**

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A school district has a duty to identify all students residing in their district who might need special education services. This duty is called **Child Find**. Child Find is from birth through age 21.

A school district, or any person knowledgeable about a student, can ask for a student to be evaluated for special education services at any time. This means daycare teacher, parent, classroom teacher, medical provider, etc.

The Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) requires all states to have policies and procedures in place to ensure that all children with disabilities who are in need of Special Education Services and Related Services are:

- Identified
- Located
- Evaluated

An evaluation is a process to determine whether a student has a disability and the nature and extent of the Special Education Services and Related Services the student needs. A disability is an impairment that interferes with a child's ability to learn. A disability is described as a child who has a mental, physical, or emotional impairment

Referral and timelines for initial evaluations in the State of Washington are found under **Washington Administrative Code (WAC) 392-172A-03005 Referral and timelines for initial evaluations.**

Federal rules are found under **Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) 34 CFR 301 Initial evaluations.**

- In the State of Washington, after a request is made for an initial evaluation, the school, including the family, makes a determination whether or not to evaluate the student. This decision must be made within twenty-five (25) school days after a request has been made for an evaluation.
- A Prior Written Notice must be provided to the parent, before the school district proposes to initiate an evaluation of the student, or if the school district decides not to evaluate the student. The Prior Written Notice must be provided within the twenty-five (25) school days.
- The Prior Written Notice must be provided in the parent's native language or other forms of communication used by the parent.
- If it is determined the student will be evaluated, the student is to be evaluated in all areas of suspected disability, with an eligibility meeting held, within thirty-five (35) schools from the date consent was signed for the evaluation.
- In the State of Washington, Disability Categories (Qualifying Categories) can be found at Washington Administrative Code (WAC) 392-172A-01035 Child with a disability or student eligible for special education.

### Do You Know?

- How do we inform community members who they contact for Child Find?
- How do we inform the community of the disability categories (qualifying categories)?

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Please contact Helen Caldart at [sealk12.helen@outlook.com](mailto:sealk12.helen@outlook.com) or call and leave a message at 253-312-2760 with any questions. Thank you.