

Clarifying Child Find I

What You Might Hear	What You Might Want to Clarify
<p>“We don’t have to do general education interventions anymore.”</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • You don’t have to do a general education intervention to suspect a disability anymore. In fact you never had to. • Effective general education core instruction and supplemental assistance for all students not meeting the expectations or standards of the districts is still expected. • General education interventions are still a very important source of information on how students learn and what it will take to enable them to learn most effectively. • General education interventions may still be done as part of the full and individual evaluation, if needed, once consent is signed.
<p>“No one is interested in general education interventions anymore.”</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • General education interventions are still a very important source of information on how students learn and what it will take to enable them to learn. • General education interventions may still be done as part of the full and individual evaluation if that is needed once consent is signed. • The general education intervention during the full and individual evaluation is intended to collect needed data that are lacking.
<p>“What happens if general education staff refuses to pick up the responsibility for general education interventions”</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Meeting student needs through supplemental instruction in general education is expected through NCLB and IDEIA. AEA special education support and related service staff will be supportive to general education in the intervention process and provide consultative assistance and guidance on aspects of the process such as intervention matching, integrity checking, monitoring practices, and data based decision making. • Recent guidance from the U.S. Department of Education defined core instruction as something all students would expect to receive and indicated core instruction included whole group and small group instruction. The U.S. Department of Education also indicated that differentiated instruction was a general expectation. • If information from general education interventions is needed and not available, it will be generated during the 60 days of evaluation under consent for the full and individual evaluation. • Refusal to participate in the intervention process by the local school district may jeopardize the ability of the evaluation team to gain needed information for making an eligibility decision.
<p>“Special education support and related service staff won’t be helping with general education interventions anymore.”</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Special education and related service staff will be continuing to do child find activities. • Special education and related service staff may be consulting and working collaboratively with general education staff on students who are not performing well, not meeting expectations, are on interventions, are at risk, or may be suspected of having a disability. • Special education and related service staff will advise, support, help solve problems, and work consultatively with teachers who have student issues. They will not take primary responsibility for general education interventions.

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<p>“We’ve gone back 20 years to doing comprehensive assessment batteries.”</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Upon suspicion of a disability, all educational domains must be considered and consent obtained for any areas where a disability is suspected and there is a need for additional information. • Evaluation means that thoughtful review and consideration of all available information will occur in order to make a decision. It is not the same as “testing”. • Assessments should be functional in nature. This means they will be directly related to the concerns at hand, answer specific questions, provide information that is helpful in addressing instructional needs, provide direct measures of performance, and be highly related to the curriculum and instruction provided in the classroom. This is a very different process than administering test batteries. • This is a requirement to assure the US Department of Education that Iowa is meeting the breadth of the federal mandate to fully evaluate all students suspected of having a disability.
<p>“All we have to do to get a child tested is to say we suspect he/she has a disability and AEA staff has to evaluate.”</p> <p>“We’ll do nothing but evaluation after evaluation if all the teacher or parent has to do is suspect a disability and we have to test them.”</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The public agency (LEA and AEA) must suspect a disability not an individual. • The proposed changes to Chapter 41 state, “as a general rule, a public agency suspects a child is a child with a disability when the public agency is aware of facts and circumstances that, when considered as a whole, would cause a reasonably prudent public agency to believe that the child’s performance might be explained because the child is an eligible individual”. • For students where a suspicion of a disability needs to be considered, the Disability Suspected form is to be used no later than November 1, 2009. • To suspect a disability, outside of rare and unique medical issues, the student must be: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Persistently below expectations or standards, and ○ Be unique in comparison to peers, and ○ Not have a more plausible primary reason for exhibiting the performance they do.
<p>“Since you’ve lowered the bar for suspicion there will be a lot more students going into special education.”</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Suspicion, based on the Disability Suspected form, means the student will be evaluated. The full and individual evaluation will determine if the student has a disability and needs special education. • The standards for finding a student to have a disability and need in order to be eligible for special education have not substantively changed. • Exclusionary factors such as instruction, language, and opportunity to learn must be considered for all students and will exclude some students.
<p>“Special education support and related service staff will not be doing (e.g. FBA/BIPs, IDM, BAT meetings, behavior groups, etc.) anymore.”</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rather than ask if “this” or “that” activity is going to continue, think more about the purpose of the activity. • If the activity is targeted to students who are not on track, are engaged in supplemental support, are at risk, or are being considered for suspicion of a disability then the activity is likely something that a special education support and related service staff person will be assistive with. • If the activity is not targeted or would require the special education support or related staff person to be primarily responsible for conducting the intervention and the monitoring it is most likely not something that special education staff will do.

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<p>“This is all final and in place now, right?”</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • As of November 1, 2009, the Disability Suspected form is required to be used for students where a suspicion of a disability needs to be considered. • Special education staff who have been carrying students on intervention plans should transfer them by July 1, 2010. • This year will be a year of learning and change. There are continually issues, questions, and guidance that will need to be figured out.
<p>“Now it will be easier to identify students with things like ADHD and ODD even if academics are not a concern.”</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A mental health diagnosis may be enough to create the suspicion of a disability. • A mental health diagnosis is not enough to qualify a student for special education services. Educational progress, discrepancy, and need are required to be evaluated, as with any other student whose eligibility for special education services is being considered • Students being served under Section 504 are considered to have a disability for that statute. 504 students would only be suspected of having an educational disability if they meet the criteria on the Disability Suspected form. Again, even if suspected of having an educational disability, students on 504 plans would need to meet eligibility and need standards to receive special education services.
<p>“I’ve got a bunch of students that aren’t doing well and seem pretty unique to me. That means I should suspect they have a disability right?”</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Being unique is a data-based decision not a judgment based solely on opinion. • This means that data would need to be available that shows what is expected and what is typical performance. This is done through peer performance. These data are used to compare the skills of the student to those of peers. • Models across the country related to various types of concerns (e.g. mental health, behavior, academic performance) refer to the core program meeting the needs of at least 80% of the students. Holding to this concept, a student’s performance would have to be at least within the 20% of students not meeting core standards. However, 80% is a minimal threshold. There is nothing to say we would not want or could not have 100% of students meeting the standards or expectations. • That said, it is clear that the standard for uniqueness would infer that the student in question would be a clear outlier within the group not meeting the standard or expectation once the larger group has at least met the minimum standard of 80%.

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<p>“If a child has a unilateral hearing loss or a documented visual impairment it wouldn’t make sense to consider an intervention or even complete the Disability Suspected form.”</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Having a documented hearing or visual impairment might support a suspicion of a disability if the data available support the suspicion of a disability on the Disability Suspected form. • Many determinations in the area of hearing and vision are discrepancy related only and do not speak to other eligibility requirement areas • The criteria for determining if a child meets eligibility and need standards would require the substantiation, with data, of progress, discrepancy, and need just as it does with all other students suspected of having a disability. • In cases where clear standards of discrepancy are met, looking at intervention impact provides rich information about what enables the student to learn and demonstrate knowledge as well as what may be inhibitors or ineffective practices or supports. • Intervention information is also very directly related to finding the instructional needs of students in the Full and Individual evaluation. Knowing what instructional strategies and methods enhance learning, what specific curricular material and content is needed, and what environmental requirement might increase performance are all important aspects of the entitlement decision that are determined in many situations by carefully designed instruction and intervention.