TIMELINE DECISION TREE: The Child-Centered Special Education Process
How to Use the Timeline

This **timeline** is an interactive tool designed to help users understand the legal requirements of the special education process.

**Colored boxes** link to frequently asked timeline questions.

**Underlined text** not within a box links to a publication.

Text not within a box or not underlined is not linked.
How to Navigate Questions and Answers

• Click the box or publication on the timeline that you want to know more about.

• Click Question to review the answer to that question.

• Click on an underlined word or phrase within a slide for further information on the topic.

• Click below the Legal Framework icon for legal references pertaining to each slide.

The green home button indicates there is more to come on this topic.

The red home button indicates the end of an answer sequence.

Clicking either button returns you to the timeline.
**Question:** When a prior written notice is given, what is the timeline for initiating or changing the:

- **Identification**
- **Evaluation**
- **Provision of FAPE**
- **Placement**

PRIOR WRITTEN NOTICE
34 CFR § 300.504(a)(1)
19 TAC § 89.1011(b)(1)
Answer: A prior written notice must be given to the parent **five school days** before initiating or changing the evaluation, identification or placement of the student, and before initiating or changing provision of a free appropriate public education (FAPE) to the student.

Fewer than **five school days** with parent’s agreement

PRIOR WRITTEN NOTICE
19 TAC § 89.1050(h)
**Question:** What is the timeline for giving the *Notice of Procedural Safeguards*?
Answer: The school must give the *Notice of Procedural Safeguards* annually and:

- At an initial referral;
- When refusing to evaluate;
- Upon a parent’s request;
- When proposing a change of placement; and
- Upon receipt of the first special education complaint filed with the TEA or the first due process hearing complaint filed during a school year.
Question: When a parent submits a written request for an initial evaluation, what is the timeline for the school to respond?

REFERRAL FOR POSSIBLE SPECIAL EDUCATION SERVICES
34 CFR § 300.301(b)
19 TAC § 89.1011(a)
Answer: If a parent submits a written request for an initial evaluation, the school must provide the parent with a notice of proposal or refusal to evaluate the student not later than **15 school days** after the date of the request.

**Additional information to consider**

**PRIOR WRITTEN NOTICE**
19 TAC § 89.1011(b)
When the parent submits a written request for an evaluation, or when the school suspects a disability and a need for special education, the school must:

**Review how the student has responded to intervention and proceed with evaluation**
Does the school suspect a disability?

**YES**

**NO**
Does the school suspect a need for special education?

**YES**

**NO**
The school must provide:

- A prior written notice of proposal to provide an initial evaluation;
- The *Notice of Procedural Safeguards*; and

Provide opportunity to parent to give written consent for evaluation.
The school must provide:

• A prior written notice of its refusal to provide an initial evaluation; and
• The Notice of Procedural Safeguards.

If the parent submits a written request for an evaluation, the school must, not later than 15 school days after the date of receipt, provide the parent with a notice of proposal to evaluate or a notice of refusal to evaluate.
**Question:** After consent is received, how long must a school wait before beginning a reevaluation?

PRIOR WRITTEN NOTICE
19 TAC § 89.1050(h)
Answer: When the consent is received, the school must provide a prior written notice and wait **five school days** before the evaluation or reevaluation begins.

Fewer than five school days with parent’s agreement

PRIOR WRITTEN NOTICE
19 TAC § 89.1050(h)
**Question:** When the parent signs the written consent for initial evaluation, what is the timeline for the completion of the full individual and initial evaluation?
How many days are left in the school year?

- Fewer than 35
- 45 or more
- 35 or more and fewer than 45

EVALUATION PROCEDURES
19 TAC § 89.1011(e)
TEC § 29.004(a-1)
How many days has the student been absent?

- **Three or more**
- **Fewer than three**

EVALUATION PROCEDURES
- 19 TAC § 89.1011(e)
- 19 TAC § 89.1011(c)(1)
- TEC § 29.004(a)(1)
How many days has the student been absent?

- **Three or more**
- **Fewer than three**
**Answer:** The full individual and initial evaluation report must be completed, signed, and dated no later than **45 school days** following the date on which the written consent was received.
Answer: The full individual and initial evaluation report must be completed, signed, and dated no later than 45 school days following the date on which the written consent was received plus the number of days the student was absent.

EVALUATION PROCEDURES
19 TAC § 89.1011(e)
19 TAC § 89.1011(c)(1)
TEC § 29.004(a)(1)
**Answer:** The full individual and initial evaluation report must be completed, signed, and dated and a copy provided to student’s parent not later than June 30th of that year.
Question: When the full individual and initial evaluation is completed, what is the timeline from the date of the written report to hold an admission, review, and dismissal (ARD) committee meeting to determine eligibility?
Was the consent received at least 35 but less than 45 school days before the last instructional day of the school year?

**YES**

**NO**
How many days has the student been absent?

Three or more

Fewer than three

EVALUATION PROCEDURES
19 TAC § 89.1011(e)
19 TAC § 89.1011(c)(1)
TEC § 29.004(a)(1)
Answer: The admission, review, and dismissal (ARD) committee must meet within 30 calendar days of completion of the written full individual and initial evaluation.

When does the 30th calendar day occur?

19 TAC § 89.1011(d)
When does the 30th calendar day occur?

- During the regular school year when school is in session
- Summer when school is not in session
If the 30th calendar day is:

- **On a Saturday or Sunday**
- **On a holiday, winter break, or spring break**
- **On a teacher workday**

19 TAC § 89.1011(d)
Answer: The ARD committee meeting must be held before the 30th calendar day.

Did the ARD committee find the student eligible for special education services?
Answer: If the 30th calendar day falls during the summer and school is not in session, the ARD committee must meet by the first day of classes in the fall.

- If the full individual and initial evaluation indicates a need for an extended school year, then the ARD committee must meet as soon as possible.

**Did the ARD committee find the student eligible for special education services?**
Answer: When the consent was received at least 35 but less than 45 school days before the last instructional day, and the student was not absent 3 or more days between receipt of the consent and the last instructional day, the ARD committee must meet not later than the 15th school day of the following school year.

- If the full individual and initial evaluation indicates a need for an extended school year, then the ARD committee must meet as soon as possible.

Did the ARD committee find the student eligible for special education services?
Question:
Did the admission, review, and dismissal (ARD) committee determine the student is eligible for special education services?

Yes

No
Answer:
The ARD committee **must**:

- Obtain a consent for initial services
- Develop an individualized education program (IEP); **and**
- Provide a prior written notice for the identification, placement and provision of a free appropriate public education (FAPE).
Answer: The ARD committee must:

- Provide a prior written notice to refuse to identify a student as one in need of special education services; and
- Provide the *Notice of Procedural Safeguards*. 

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**Notice of Procedural Safeguards**

PRIOR WRITTEN NOTICE

34 CFR § 300.503(a)
19 TAC § 89.1050(h)
**Question:** When a student with a disability transfers, what is the timeline to hold an annual admission, review, and dismissal (ARD) committee meeting?

In consultation with the parent, the school must provide a free appropriate public education (FAPE), including services comparable to those described from the previous school upon verification from the parent or the previous school that the student was receiving special education services.

CHILDREN WHO TRANSFER
19 TAC § 89.1050(j)
From where is the student transferring?

- **Within the state**
- **Outside the state**

CHILDREN WHO TRANSFER
19 TAC § 89.1050(j)
**Answer:** The school has **30 school days** from the date the student is verified as being eligible for special education services to:

- Adopt the individualized education program (IEP) from the previous school; **or**
- Develop, adopt, and implement a new IEP.

In the interim, in consultation with the parent, the school must provide a free appropriate public education (FAPE), including services comparable to those described in the IEP from the previous school.

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CHILDREN WHO TRANSFER
34 CFR § 300.323(e)(1-2)
19 TAC § 89.1050(j)(1)
Does school personnel see the need for an evaluation?

**YES**

**NO**

CHILDREN WHO TRANSFER
34 CFR § 300.323(f)(1-2)
19 TAC § 89.1050(j)(2)
Answer: The school has **30 school days**, from the date the student is verified as being eligible for special education services, to hold an annual ARD committee meeting to develop a new individualized education program (IEP).
**Answer:** If the school determines an evaluation is necessary, the evaluation is considered a full individual and initial evaluation and must follow the initial referral timeline.
Question: What is the timeline to convene an admission, review, and dismissal (ARD) committee meeting to determine whether the annual goals are being achieved?
**Answer:** The ARD committee must meet periodically, but not less often than **annually**.

What areas might prompt an ARD committee to meet more often than annually?
Answer: The ARD committee must meet periodically to address:

- Lack of expected progress
- Results of any reevaluation
- Additional needs of the student

Information provided in the review of existing evaluation data
Question: What is the timeline for a reevaluation of a student with a disability?

EVALUATION PROCEDURES
34 CFR § 300.303(a)
Do the student’s educational or related service needs, including academic achievement and functional performance, warrant a reevaluation?

- YES
- NO

EVALUATION PROCEDURES
34 CFR § 300.303(a)(1-2)
34 CFR § 300.305(e)
Answer: Reevaluation must not occur more frequently than once a year, unless the parent and the school agree otherwise.
Answer: Reevaluation must occur at least once every three years, unless the parent and the school agree otherwise.
**Question:** What is the timeline to address transition for a student with a disability?
How old is the student?

- 14 years of age or younger
- 16 years of age or younger

TRANSITION SERVICES
19 TAC § 89.1055(h)
TEC § 29.011
TEC § 29.0111
Answer: Not later than 14 years of age, the ARD committee must consider transition planning, and if appropriate, address the student’s transition to life outside the public school system.
Answer: Transition services are to begin not later than the first IEP to be in effect when the child turns 16, or younger if determined appropriate by the ARD committee.