

Policy

BOARD OF EDUCATION
HORTONVILLE AREA SCHOOL DISTRICT

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INDEPENDENT EDUCATIONAL EVALUATION

It is the policy of the School District of Hortonville to evaluate a child to determine whether the child has a disability and the nature and extent of the special education and related services the child needs. An Independent Educational Evaluation (IEE) is an activity conducted pursuant to federal and state laws, which establish certain procedures to ensure that children with disabilities and their parents are guaranteed procedural safeguards with respect to the provision of a free appropriate public education under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA).

An independent education evaluation (IEE) is an evaluation conducted by a qualified examiner who is not an employee of the School District of Hortonville. A parent has the right to an IEE at public expense if the parent disagrees with an evaluation conducted by the School District of Hortonville. For purposes of this policy, "evaluation" means the procedure used to determine whether a child has a disability and the nature and extent of the special education and related services the child needs.

A parent's right to an IEE is available each time the School District of Hortonville conducts an educational evaluation, including the child's placement evaluation, the triennial evaluation, or more frequent reevaluations conducted at the request of the child's parent or teacher or if conditions warrant it. An IEE may be provided at public expense if the parents disagree with the evaluation because they believe that the child has not been assessed in all areas related to the suspected disability.

Implementation:

In the event the School District of Hortonville receives a parent request for an IEE, the School District of Hortonville must, without unnecessary delay, either provide the IEE at public expense per this policy or a due process hearing to challenge the parent's request and show that its evaluation is appropriate. If the final decision in the due process hearing is that the School District of Hortonville's evaluation is appropriate, the parent still has the right to an IEE, but not at public expense. Parents are entitled to only one publicly-funded IEE for each evaluation completed by the District. IEEs at public expense are to be conducted pursuant to the same criteria that apply to evaluations conducted by the School District of Hortonville.

The results of an IEE obtained by a parent at public or private expense will be considered by the School District of Hortonville in any decision made with respect to the provision of a free, appropriate, public education to the child if it meets the School District of Hortonville's criteria. However, because no single assessment or procedure may be used as the sole criteria for determining whether a child is a child with a disability and for determining an appropriate education program for the child, the results of an IEE cannot be the sole determining factor for eligibility and individualized education programs.

Procedure to Obtain an IEE at Public Expense:

1. The District may request that parents submit to the School District of Hortonville a written request for an IEE and may include in such request an explanation of their reasons for objecting to the evaluation by the School District of Hortonville. However, the School District of

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Hortonville cannot deny parents a publicly-funded IEE because they fail to provide the District with such a written request or fail to provide reasons for requesting an IEE. Parents are not required to provide this information. However, without this information schools cannot provide resources for the parent to select an IEE provider.

2. Upon receipt of a parental request for an IEE, the School District of Hortonville will determine whether it will initiate a due process hearing to establish the appropriateness of its evaluation or proceed with ensuring that an IEE is provided at public expense. The School District of Hortonville will respond in writing to a parent request for an IEE within fifteen (15) school days from the date that the District receives the request, or as soon as the request is reviewed and a determination made, but no later than fifteen (15) days.
3. If the School District of Hortonville decides that an IEE will be made available at public expense, the District's written response to the parents will contain the following information:
 - a. A list of the names and address of IEE Examiners located within the Cooperative Educational Service Agency (CESA) 6 area. The list will identify those IEE Examiners who, in the School District of Hortonville's judgment, meet the same criteria that the District uses when it initiates an evaluation and selects an examiner. If the District cannot identify a qualified examiner within the CESA #6 area, it will identify an individual located in the State of Wisconsin who is qualified to perform the evaluation. Parents shall be given the opportunity to provide information to the District that demonstrates that unique circumstances justify selection of an IEE Examiner who does not meet the School District of Hortonville's qualification criteria.
 - b. The location of the evaluation. IEEs are to be conducted in the general geographic location of the School District of Hortonville. However, parents shall be given the opportunity to provide information to the District that demonstrates that unique circumstances may warrant the necessity of evaluating the child at a location out of the District.
 - c. A description of the School District of Hortonville's criteria for selection of IEE Examiners.
4. Minimum Qualifications for IEE Examiners. The following minimum qualifications for IEE Examiners are consistent with the School District of Hortonville's criteria for selecting examiners when initiating an evaluation. Examiners with credentials or characteristics other than those listed below may not be provided by the School District of Hortonville at public expense.
 - a. An examiner (the Examiner") must be licensed by the Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction in the appropriate field when the area of evaluation is governed by state licensure, or hold a college or university degree and training in the appropriate field of expertise where no applicable license exists, such as rehabilitation engineering or sensory deprivation therapy. Physicians, nurses, psychiatrists and non-school psychologists must be licensed by the State of Wisconsin.

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- b. The Examiner must be located within the CESA #6 geographic area.
 - c. The Examiner must charge fees for educational evaluation services that, in the judgment of the School District of Hortonville, are reasonable.
 - d. The Examiner shall not be an employee of the School District of Hortonville.
 - e. The Examiner must be permitted to directly communicate and share information with members of the IEP Team. The Examiner must also be allowed to conduct in-class observations if the school district's examiner observed the child as part of his or her assessment, or as a required component of the evaluation of a learning disability. The Examiner must also agree to release the assessment and results, including parent and teacher surveys, prior to receipt of payment for services.
5. The maximum allowable cost for an examiner will be the average cost per day or hour for a similarly qualified staff member employed by District during the current school year as determined by the Director of Special Education (not to exceed \$400.00). In the unusual event the examiner is one (1) not typically employed by the District, such as a medical doctor, psychiatrist, clinical psychologist, or other similar professional, reimbursement of costs will be limited to reasonable and customary charges as determined by the District and the District's insurance carrier. The District shall not be responsible for reimbursement of travel costs or other related costs incurred by the parents in connection with their arrangement of, or their attendance at the IEE, unless the parent can demonstrate that necessary services are not available in the community.

The School District of Hortonville may choose not to provide a cash advance for the cost of an IEE. If the parent requests advance funding for IEE-related expenses and the District denies that request, the parent can request a due process hearing if he or she believes that denial of advance funding would effectively deny his or her right to a publicly-funded IEE.

6. Parents may submit information for the School District of Hortonville to consider that demonstrates unique circumstances justifying an IEE Examiner whose credentials or characteristics are different than the criteria used by the District and explains why expenses exceed the maximum allowable cost.

When private insurance will cover all or partial costs of the IEE, the School District of Hortonville will request that the parent have their private insurance pay the IEE costs covered by their insurance. The District may access a parent's private insurance proceeds only if the parent provides informed consent each time the public agency proposes to access the parent's private insurance. Parents may refuse such consent. Parents need not ask their insurer to cover the IEE costs if such action would result in a financial cost to the parents, such as an increase in premiums or the discontinuance of the policy. The School District of Hortonville may use public

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insurance benefits in which a child participates to provide or pay for services, such as Medicaid, when consistent with federal law.

Federal Regulations for the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA Federal Register/vol. 64. No. 48

115.792(3)(b) and 115.80(1)(b), Wis. Stats.

20 U.S.C. 1415(a) (2001)

34 C.F.R. 300.502, 300.532 (2001)

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