

## **Elements of a well-rounded Evaluation**

*An initial evaluation should include the following elements:*

### **Intelligence assessment:**

Either verbal or nonverbal assessment tools are used to establish a student's level of cognitive function. A student with language impairment would be able to demonstrate his/her cognitive abilities by pointing to indicate their responses. Standard scores are reported; these have a mean of 100 and a standard deviation of 15 points.

### **Academic achievement assessment:**

This assessment tool would be verbal and or nonverbal for a child at preschool to kindergarten level and verbal for kindergarten to high school level. All older students would participate in testing verbally and in writing. Standard scores are reported; these have a mean of 100 and a standard deviation of 15 points. Some assessment tools provide grade level score and/or age level scores and/or stanine scores.

### **Parent Input:**

This is often informal but there may be reason to include formal behavior rating scales, if there are behavioral concerns, self-help skill concerns or concerns about specific handicapping conditions, such as autism. Some formal assessment tools provide Standard scores are reported; these have a mean of 100 and a standard deviation of 15 points as well as age level scores.

### **Student Input:**

All students, capable of verbal communication, could be asked to respond to general questions to obtain their ideas and opinions. Older students could be asked to respond to formal self-rating scales. Older students responding to formal assessment tools would be informed that their responses would result in formal scores, such as Standard scores, which have a mean of 100 and a standard deviation of 15 points as well as age level scores.



## **Teacher Input:**

This input should be objective, based on measurable academic criteria and specific to the areas of concern, e.g. concerns about reading or math would warrant explicit teacher input; teachers might be asked to complete formal behavior rating scales similar to those asked of parents; these have a mean of 100 and a standard deviation of 15 points. Some assessment tools provide grade level score and/or age level scores and/or stanine scores.

## **Formal Observation:**

Observations should occur in multiple settings when possible but specifically in the area or subject of concern and conducted by a professional who is trained to accurately interpret observable behaviors across settings. Formal observations should reflect observable behaviors that can yield an understanding of a child's achievement and/or behavior.

\*Additional components may be included in an initial evaluation, however, these should be purposefully chosen and identified to parents/guardians as to the intent of such assessments. For example, if a psychiatric examination by a licensed provider is needed, the purpose of this evaluation should be discussed prior to the scheduling of this appointment and should be included to address a specific concern or need.

*\*\*Reevaluations are handled in various ways by school districts, ranging from a review of records of the prior school years all the way to formal re-testing of students. The parent/guardian and the district should be in agreement about which elements a re-evaluation should include.*

