



# PATHWAYS IN EDUCATION

ARIZONA

## CHILD FIND POLICY AND PROCEDURES MANUAL PIE-Arizona

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## **INTRODUCTION**

Pathways In Education (“PIE”) will provide students a continuum of educational opportunities, including those students with special education needs, in compliance with their Individualized Education Program (“IEP”), with the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (“IDEA”) (20 U.S.C. § 1400 et seq.), and with all applicable state laws and requirements.

In addition to students who enter PIE with an IEP, students with a suspected disability will be identified in accordance with Child Find. Child Find involves identifying, locating, and evaluating eligible students who are either currently enrolled at PIE or who may be potential students. PIE will comply with Child Find by making public awareness literature regarding the availability of services for special populations accessible to potential students through a variety of means, including posting information to PIE’s website and networking within the community. Parent requests for an evaluation will be responded to within 15 days of receiving the request.

## **UNIVERSAL SCREENING**

PIE assesses all students upon enrolling to determine academic levels using a computer based assessment program. Additional assessments are conducted no less than every 3 months. The screening process may also include data from statewide assessments, observations, work samples, and vision and hearing screenings. When a school’s screening process reveals that a student or groups of students are at risk of not meeting the state Content Standards or state Core Standards, a general education problem-solving team shall consider the students’ need for “supported” instructional and/or behavioral interventions in order to help the students succeed.

A general education problem-solving team addresses student learning needs and ensures that referrals to consider special education are appropriate. The general education problem-solving team is comprised of both general education staff and parent, student, teacher, special education staff, and outside experts for the following purposes: (1) identifying data-based student needs; (2) developing a set of program support alternatives; and (3) selecting alternative accommodations and adaptations most appropriate to the individual student. It is designed to systematically problem-solve difficulties encountered by a variety of students and use a collaborative approach to assist students who are not demonstrating satisfactory progress. The team offers suggestions, organizes resources, develops remediation plans, clarifies issues and problems, establishes accountability, and/or makes direct referrals to other support services. The general education problem-solving process may include comprehensive early intervening services based on a whole-school approach such as: a three-tiered model using evidence-based interventions, positive behavior supports, and a response-to-intervention system.

### **Referrals to the Problem-Solving Team**

Referrals to the problem-solving team may come from a variety of sources including parents, students, other family members, public or private school personnel, agencies, screening programs, or as a result of annual public notice.

Referrals may be made for a variety of reasons dealing with academic and behavioral concerns and may involve, but are not limited to, teaching strategies, material accommodations, social skills training, cooperative learning concepts, classroom organization, and scheduling.

### **Interventions**

- a) Interventions in general education or an early childhood environment shall be attempted before a student is referred to an evaluation team, unless the student's performance indicates an evaluation is warranted or a parent makes a request for a referral for a special education evaluation.
- b) Interventions shall be of sufficient scope and duration to determine the effects on the student's educational performance and should be clearly documented.
- c) Documentation of the success or failure of accommodations and interventions shall be reviewed and discussed by the problem-solving team.

### **Problem-Solving Team Decisions Following General Education Intervention**

Based on a review of data and information presented by the referring party and others, the team has several decision options. Following an intervention, the problem-solving team shall review progress monitoring data from the intervention and other relevant information to determine what action is warranted. The team considers a variety of options, including whether to:

- a) continue the general education intervention because the student is making adequate progress but needs more time to reach goals;
- b) continue the intervention in a modified form;
- c) explore services or programs outside of special education (such as Title I of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act, including English language programs; Section 504 accommodations; counseling); or
- d) make a referral to consider a special education evaluation.

Although problem-solving activities are an important part of the system, they cannot be used to delay processing a referral for consideration of a special education evaluation where immediate action is warranted. Either a parent or a public agency may initiate a request for an initial evaluation. If a parent initiates a referral for a special education evaluation, the evaluation cannot be delayed or denied due to the child not completing the general education intervention process.

## **CHILD FIND**

### **POLICY**

Each local education agency will ensure that all children with disabilities within the boundaries of the local education agency, including children with disabilities who are homeless or wards of the State, and children with disabilities attending private schools or home schools, regardless of the severity of their disability, and who are in need of special education and related services are identified, located, and evaluated.

It is PIE-Arizona's responsibility to inform the general public and all parents within our boundaries of our responsibility to make available special education services for students with disabilities aged 3 through 21 years and how to access those services. In addition, we have a responsibility to provide information regarding early intervention services for children from birth through 2 years.

We are responsible for identifying, locating, and evaluating all children with disabilities including children aged 3 through 21 and for referring children from birth through 2 years of age to the [Arizona Early Intervention Program \(AzEIP\)](#) for evaluation and appropriate services.

For non-enrolled PIE-Arizona students from 2.9 years to 5 years, PIE-Arizona will assist the parent in making a Child Find referral to the family's district of residence.

#### **AZ Find Brochure:**

[English Version](#)

[Spanish Version](#)

#### **AZ Find Flyer:**

[English Version](#)

[Spanish Version](#)

### **PROCEDURES**

#### **Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA '04)**

##### **34 CFR §300.111 Child Find**

- 1) PATHWAYS-Arizona (PIE-Arizona) will identify, locate, and evaluate all children with disabilities within their population who are in need of special education and related services.

This must include:

- a) Children who are homeless;
  - b) Children who are highly mobile, including migrant children;
  - c) Children who are wards of the state; and,
  - d) Children who are attending private schools or home schools.
- 2) Child find must also include children who are suspected of being children with a disability and are in need of special education, even though:
    - a) They are advancing from grade to grade; or

- b) They are highly mobile children, including those who are migrant children.
- 3) PIE-Arizona will maintain a record of children who are receiving special education and related services.

**Public Awareness**

PIE-Arizona shall inform the general public and all parents within its boundaries of responsibility of the availability of special education services for students aged 3 through 21 years and how to access those services, including information regarding early intervention services for children aged birth through 2 years.

This information may be provided through a variety of methods such as distributing brochures or flyers, including information in school or district publications, disseminating articles and announcements to newspapers, arranging for radio and television messages and appearances, speaking at faculty meetings or district in-services, social media and making presentations.

- 1) PIE-Arizona shall establish, implement, and disseminate to its school-based personnel and all parents written procedures for the identification and referral of all children with disabilities aged birth through 21 years. The written procedures will include the following:
  - a. The availability of special education services;
  - b. A student’s right to a free appropriate public education (FAPE);
  - c. Confidentiality protections; and
  - d. The referral process

**Child Identification and Referral**

- 1) PIE-Arizona will require all school-based staff to review the written procedures related to child identification and referral on an annual basis and will maintain documentation of the staff review.
- 2) Identification (screening for possible disabilities) shall be completed within 45 calendar days after:
  - a) Any student enrolling without appropriate records of screening, evaluation, and progress in school; or
  - b) Parent notification of concern regarding developmental or educational progress by their child aged 3 through 21 years.
- 3) Screening procedures (e.g., statewide assessments, curriculum-based measures, daily work in the classroom, teacher observations) shall include vision and hearing status and consideration of the following areas:
  - a) Cognitive or academic;
  - b) Communication;
  - c) Motor;
  - d) Social or behavioral; and
  - e) Adaptive development.

**[45 Day Screening Form](#)**

- 4) For a student transferring into a school, PIE-Arizona shall review enrollment data and educational performance in the prior school. If there is a history of special education for a student not currently

eligible for special education or of poor progress, the name of the student shall be submitted to the administrator for consideration of the need for a referral for a full and individual evaluation or other services such as general education problem solving team referral.

- 6) If a concern about a student is identified through screening procedures or review of records, PIE-Arizona shall notify the parents of the student of the concern within 10 school days and inform them of PIE-Arizona's procedures to follow up on the student's needs.
- 7) PIE-Arizona shall maintain documentation of the identification procedures utilized, the dates of entry into school or notification by parents of a concern, and the dates of screening. The dates shall be maintained in students' permanent records.
- 8) If the screening indicates a possible disability, the name of the student shall be submitted to the administrator for consideration of the need for a referral for a full and individual evaluation or other services such as a general education problem solving team referral. A parent or a student may request an evaluation of the student.
- 9) Unless immediate action is warranted and documented, a referral to consider a special education evaluation is sent to the evaluation team **after** the problem-solving team has determined:
  - a. the student's response to research-based interventions in general education (or age-appropriate activities for preschool) has not resulted in adequate progress; and
  - b. Language and cultural issues are not the main source of the student's academic or behavioral discrepancy from peers.
- 10) A *Referral to Consider a Special Education Evaluation/Reevaluation* form shall be completed.
- 11) Procedural safeguards are activated when a referral is made to consider a special education evaluation. If the referral came from someone other than the parent/adult student, the parent/adult student shall be notified. In either case, the parent/adult student shall be provided with a copy of the *Procedural Safeguards Notice*. At the same time, the parent/adult student shall be afforded an opportunity to provide input regarding the need for and scope of the initial evaluation, including the opportunity to hold a meeting if desired.
- 12) If, after consultation with the parent, PIE-Arizona determines that a full and individual evaluation is not warranted, it shall provide prior written notice and procedural safeguards notice to the parent in a timely manner.