

< Evaluation basics

6 Steps to Request a Free School Evaluation



By Amanda Morin



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If you want to request a **free school evaluation** for your child, you may wonder how to get that process going. It starts with a simple but formal letter you write to the school. Here are the steps to make it happen.

1. Find out where to send your request.

Ask your child's teacher who to send your request to. If the teacher doesn't know, you can either ask the principal or call the school district's main office.

2. Write a formal letter.

Your request needs to be in writing. It's that letter that jump-starts the testing process. After they get your letter, the school has to follow a timeline—it's part of the law.

Download a sample letter to give yourself a model to follow. You can change the letter to reflect your concerns and **observations of your child**.

3. Be specific about why you're requesting the evaluation.

Write as much as you need to about why you're requesting the evaluation. It's **OK to say** things like, "I'm requesting that my child be evaluated because her trouble with reading makes me think she may have dyslexia."

4. Consent to your child being evaluated.

Say very clearly in your letter that you're **giving consent** for your child to be evaluated. Without your consent, the school can't do any testing. To make sure it's done according to the rules, request a "Consent to Evaluate" form to sign, too.

5. Make sure the letter arrives.

Hand-deliver it or send it via certified mail ("return receipt requested"). If you hand-deliver the letter, ask for a date-stamped, signed copy to have for your own records.

6. Follow up.

After five days, if you haven't heard anything, check in with the school. You can do this by phone, but **send an email afterward** outlining the next steps that were talked about in that phone conversation. Your email gives you something in writing that you can come back to if you need to remind anyone of that conversation.

Sometimes, a school may **deny your request for evaluation**. Learn the **steps you can take** if that happens. Most of the time, though, requests are approved. Find out **what to expect from the evaluation process**. And help your

child feel more prepared by talking openly about what a school evaluation is and what it looks for.

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About the Author



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