

SECTION 1: IDENTIFICATION PROCESS

Georgia School for Innovation and the Classics will implement procedures and practices to ensure that ALL students suspected of having a disability receive a special education evaluation and services, if appropriate.

The following sections include procedures related to Child Find, Evaluations and Reevaluations, and Confidentiality.

Child Find Procedures

(Aligned with State Rule 160-4-7-.03)

Definition

Child Find is a process that Georgia School for Innovation and the Classics uses to identify, locate, and evaluate all children in the district, birth through 21, who are suspected of having disabilities, including those who are homeless, are wards of the State or are attending private schools, regardless of the severity of their disability, and who are in need for special education and related services. Georgia State Rule 160-4-7-.03 requires that districts have policies and procedures in place to ensure the identification, location, and evaluation of these children.

In order to execute Child Find, Georgia School for Innovation and the Classics participates in activities so that all suspected children with disabilities, including those who are homeless, wards of the state, and/or attending private schools, regardless of their disability and need of related services are identified, located, and evaluated.

Public Notice of Annual Child Find Activity

Public notification must be given before any significant Child Find activities are implemented. Every July the Special Education director will mail a Child-Find notice to the local health department, daycare facilities and private schools in the district. The Special Education Director will provide annual public notification in the following print and electronic sources:

- Georgia School for Innovation and the Classics Website – www.gsiccharter.com - year round
- Child-Find notice in local daycare facilities, health departments, and private schools in the Richmond, Columbia, Burke, Jefferson, McDuffie Counties. [Child Find Notice](#)

Screening and Evaluation of All Children with Suspected Disability Ages 3-21

Students aged three through seven (3-7) may be eligible for special and related services through the eligibility category of significant developmental delay (SDD). Eligibility is based on significant delays on one or more of the following areas: cognition, adaptive development, communication, physical development, and social/emotional development. SDD eligibility

should be established for students between the ages of three and seven (3-7). Eligibility redetermination for categorical eligibility should be determined by the 'end of the school year in which the student turns nine (9).

When a child is suspected as having a disability, the person referring will request a [Referral for Special Education Evaluation/Eligibility](#) form and [Release of Information](#) from the Special Education Department. These forms should be completed by the referring party and returned within two weeks to the Special Education Department. Upon receipt of these forms the Special Education Department will review, initiate the initial referral process using the [Initial Referral to Special Education](#) and follow-up with any additional information needed. The following policies and procedures are followed to ensure the identification, screening and evaluation of children with suspected disabilities birth through age 21 includes:

- **Children birth through age three:**
When a child who is birth through age three suspected of having disabilities is identified through any child find activities (e.g. parent-teacher conference, community referral, parent mentor activities, migrant program), the Special Education Director should be notified so that an appropriate referral may be made to the appropriate Babies Can't Wait for screening and evaluation.
- **When a child receives services through Georgia School for Innovation and the Classics Special Education Babies Can't Wait program. Special Education Director will attend Transition meetings to ensure a special education evaluation, eligibility, and IEP are in place by the child's third birthday. [Birth-Age Three Referral Process](#)**
- **When a Child does not receive services at Georgia School for Innovation and the Classics and is accepted into the kindergarten program, the request of the child's local district or parent(s), or the Georgia School for Innovation and the Classics Kindergarten program, the Special Education Director will attend Transition meetings to ensure a special education evaluation, eligibility, and IEP are in place by the child's third birthday. [Birth-Age Three Referral Process](#)**

Preschool children, ages 3-5:

(It should be noted that Georgia School for Innovation and the Classics does not currently have a Pre-Kindergarten Program)

The following activities shall be conducted to identify preschool children ages 3-5 suspected as having disabilities [Not Enrolled in Preschool](#); [Preschool 3-5 Referral Process: Enrolled in Private Preschool or Daycare](#); [Preschool 3-5 Referral Process: Enrolled in Public Preschool](#):

- **Georgia School for Innovation and the Classics Pre-Kindergarten Program will participate in Response to Intervention as part of Georgia School for Innovation and the Classics . *See RTI Manual.***
- **Georgia School for Innovation and the Classics Speech/Language Pathologists conduct Universal Screenings at Georgia School for Innovation and the Classics System Pre-K Programs.**
- **Written notices are provided in the community to include: private preschools (e.g. Hillcrest Baptist School), the Columbia, Richmond, Burke, Jefferson, and**

McDuffie county Health Departments. [Referral for Special Education Evaluation/Eligibility form](#) can be obtained by contacting the Special Education Office or obtaining from the school system website.

- **Children enrolled in Georgia School for Innovation and the Classics :**
Children currently enrolled in Georgia School for Innovation and the Classics will be identified through Response to Intervention and parent referral. Please refer to the RTI Manual for additional information.
- **Highly mobile children, including migrant children:**
Georgia School for Innovation and the Classics will refer any child who is suspected of having a disability to the Special Education Director or School Psychologist, by completing the Referral for Special Education Form. [Referral for Special Education Evaluation/Eligibility](#)
- **Children who are detained or incarcerated in jails or correctional facilities:**
Child-Find notices will be given to the facility with appropriate contact information so that any child suspected of having a disability can be referred to the Special Education Director or School Psychologist, using the Referral for Special Education Form. [Referral for Special Education Evaluation/Eligibility](#)
- **Parentally-placed private school children, including religious, elementary and secondary schools, or home school/study programs:**
Screening and evaluations are provided, at no cost to the parent, for any child parentally-placed in a private school or receiving home school who is suspected as having a disability. A [Referral for Special Education Evaluation/Eligibility](#) should be completed and turned in to the Special Education Director. Currently, there are 26 private schools located in the core service area for Georgia School for Innovation and the Classics. The core service areas for Georgia School for Innovation and the classics consist of the following counties: Richmond, Columbia, Jefferson, McDuffie, and McBean.
- **Children who are enrolled in a public charter school within the Georgia School for Innovation and the Classics District:** Georgia School for Innovation and the Classics is a public charter school which allows for any student with residency in the Georgia to attend at no cost to the family. As part of the public charter system, operating under the provision of the State of Georgia Department of Education and the State Charter School Commission, the Special Education Director and the Response to Intervention Coordinator will work together to implement Response to Intervention and respond to parent referrals.

Interventions Prior to Referral

Screening

Screening is used to provide additional information during the intervention process. Screenings are provided predominately for students in Tier III of the RTI process, or by parental request. The screening of children by a teacher or specialist to determine appropriate educational strategies for curriculum implementation shall not be considered to be an evaluation for eligibility for special education and related services. [Request for Academic/Behavior Screening](#)

Pre-referral Interventions

Georgia School for Innovation and the Classics utilizes a Response to Intervention (RTI) process for referral for a special education evaluation. This process includes **universal screening** to identify students needing academic or behavioral support, the provision of **research-based and/or evidence-based interventions** based on the student's needs, and **progress monitoring** to inform student progress. School staff providing interventions should receive training and professional development. School personnel assigned by the system RTI Coordinator monitor the fidelity of implementation.

School level RTI Teams meet regularly to review student data and progress. If a student does not make adequate grade or age level progress, the student may be referred for a screening/comprehensive evaluation. The Student Support Team is an integral part of the RTI process at Tier III.

The RTI Coordinator is responsible for monitoring and supervising the Response to Intervention process in Georgia School for Innovation and the Classics.

Documentation of Interventions

Special education referrals must be accompanied by documentation of scientific, research or evidence based academic or behavioral interventions that demonstrate insufficient rate of progress. Exceptions are allowed only when evaluation and/or placement is required due to a significant disability. (For additional guidelines, see *Response to Intervention Manual*.)

Referral Sources

Referrals for initial evaluations can be made through a variety of sources including: Babies Can't Wait, Student Support Team, Child Find activities, parents, and crisis situations (extreme circumstances). Parent requests for evaluation must be in writing to the Special Education Director. If any school system employee receives a request for evaluation from a parent, the employee should provide the parent with the [Referral for Special Education Evaluation/Eligibility](#) and contact the Special Education Director immediately.

Student Support Team

(Aligned with State Rule: 160-4-2-.32)

Georgia School for Innovation and the Classics has an identified Student Support Team (SST). These teams may be at the school or grade level. The SST meets as needed to identify and assist students with learning and behavioral difficulties at Tier III (see RTI manual). The SST consists of the referring teacher, school psychologist, and those who may have knowledge of the children or who can assist in meeting the needs of the student. Participants must include at least two of the following individuals: principal, general education teacher, counselor, lead teacher, content area specialist, ESOL teacher, special education teacher, or other appropriate staff members. **Parents should always be invited to SST Meetings.** Exceptions to the SST process should be on very rare occasions with documentation in the student record to justify the decision. When immediate referral is sought, the SST should determine the interim strategies, interventions, and accommodations that shall be attempted with the students.

When a referral for special education is made, an evaluation will be completed. However, appropriate interventions may be required during the evaluation process prior to eligibility determination. The School Psychologist will provide the needed guidelines in specific circumstances.

Steps of SST Process

- During RTI Meeting, Team will identify students who would benefit from Tier III Interventions, based on classroom performance, lack of progress at Tier II, and Red Flag status.
- Once Team determines Tier III is appropriate, a meeting will be scheduled with parent, psychologist, special education lead teacher, and RTI Team. At this meeting, baseline and progress monitoring data will be analyzed to create specific goals for student improvement and an implementation plan is developed with a time-line 8 weeks.
- The school psychologist or speech language pathologist shall determine the need for additional information.
- Once Tier III interventions have been implemented with fidelity and adequate data has been collected, the team will reconvene to determine effectiveness of intervention.
- If adequate progress is made, student will continue Tier III Interventions.
- If data demonstrates a lack of response to interventions, the team may determine that a referral for a special education evaluation may be completed.

Each month, the RTI Coordinator will provide the Special Education Director with a list of students in each tier of the RTI process. The Special Education Director will ensure SST referrals are processed in a timely manner.

Additional Information

Agencies or community members that would like to refer a child for possible services through Child Find should contact the Special Education Office via the contact information listed previously in this handbook to obtain a referral form.

Technical Assistance

The SPED Director will monitor compliance with the protocol for Child Find procedures. If it is determined the teacher/staff member is not in compliance with the protocol, the SPED Director will discuss this with the staff member and provide feedback/correction/re-training. If this does not resolve the issue, the SPED Director will review the situation with appropriate administrator. If this does not resolve the problem, the SPED Director will address with the personnel involved to resolve the situation and to remediate and to provide additional training to the staff member. Failure to follow the appropriate protocol may be reflected in the staff member's end of the year evaluation.

Child Find Notice

In accordance with IDEA regulations, the Georgia School for Innovation and the Classics system seeks to ensure that all disabled students (ages birth-21) who are in need of special education within its jurisdiction are identified, located, and evaluated, including those attending private school and home school. Final identification of students with disabilities and programming for such students occurs only after an appropriate evaluation and a determination by a Multidisciplinary Placement Team.

If the "child find" process indicates that a student may require special education and supportive services in order to benefit from regular education, the student shall be referred to the Multidisciplinary Placement Team to determine the student's eligibility for special education services.

If you know a child with a disability who is not being served, please notify:

*Director of Special Education
5073 Storey Mill Road
Hephzibah, GA 38015
Phone: 706.434.8085*