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MEMORANDUM

TO: Intermediate School District Directors of Special Education

FROM: Jacquelyn J. Thompson, Director  
Office of Special Education and Early Intervention Services

SUBJECT: Clarification of the Observation Requirement for the Reevaluation of Students with Specific Learning Disabilities

**DISSEMINATE TO LEAs AND PSAs**

This memorandum is in response to recent questions regarding the requirement to conduct an observation during the reevaluation of students with specific learning disabilities (SLD).

**Question:** Is an observation required for the reevaluation of a student with a SLD?

**The Answer Has Two Parts:**

1. If the Review of Existing Evaluation Data indicates that there is not sufficient information available to determine eligibility for the SLD, then an observation is required. (Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) regulation §300.305(e) Evaluations before change in eligibility.)

Rule 340.1713(3) of the Michigan Administrative Rules for Special Education requires a comprehensive evaluation by a Multidisciplinary Evaluation Team to determine whether a student has a SLD. This evaluation must meet all of the IDEA requirements for evaluations and the determination of SLD in order to be comprehensive.

The general IDEA requirements for evaluations are found in the following IDEA regulations:

- §300.304 Evaluation Procedures;
- §300.305 Additional Requirements for Evaluations and Reevaluations; and
- §300.306 Determination of Eligibility.

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There are also specific additional procedures for identifying students with SLD. These are found in the following IDEA regulations:

- §300.307 Specific Learning Disabilities;
  - §300.308 Additional Group Members;
  - §300.309 Determining the Existence of a Specific Learning Disability;
  - §300.310 Observation; and
  - §300.311 Specific Documentation for the Eligibility Determination.
2. If the Review of Existing Evaluation Data indicates there is sufficient information available to determine eligibility as a student with a SLD, then an observation is not required. Reevaluations can be conducted for reasons other than determining eligibility, and reevaluations conducted for those reasons do not require an observation. (IDEA regulation §300.305(a)(2))