

Process for Determining the Existence of a Specific Learning Disability

Per the MDE, each local educational agency and public school academy in Michigan is required to publicly post the process used to determine the existence of a Specific Learning Disability (SLD).

Consistent with this requirement, **Vicksburg Community Schools** reports the following:

The District will utilize an underachievement plus pattern of strengths and weaknesses (PSW) model for the determination of a specific learning disability, as these terms are defined below.

1. A student may be found to demonstrate inadequate achievement in basic reading, reading, comprehension, reading fluency, math calculation, math problem solving, oral expression, listening comprehension, or written expression, if his/her performance on an individually administered achievement measure of the skill area in question falls at or below the 12th percentile on national or local norms, or in the lowest 10% of his/her class when provided with appropriate instruction to state approved grade level content expectations.
2. A pattern of strengths and weaknesses is based on the following decision rules:
 - a. A “strength” or “weakness” is defined by use of the decision rules on the attached grid (Attachment A).
 - b. A “pattern of strengths” means at least three separate assessment measures within two or more assessment boxes (one of which must be “observation”) in at least one skill area, that are coded as strengths using the criteria identified in 2a.
 - c. A “pattern of weaknesses” means at least four separate assessment measures within two or more assessment boxes (one of which must be “observation”) in the skill area of concern for the initial evaluation or subsequent redetermination of eligibility for specific learning disability.

In making a determination as to whether a student has or continues to have a specific learning disability, the District will also comply with all applicable federal regulations and State rules, including those addressing comprehensive evaluations, determination of the existence of a specific learning disability, observations of academic performance and behavior in the areas of difficulty, specific documentation for SLD eligibility determination, and reevaluation requirements.

Additional information regarding determining the existence of a Specific Learning Disability is available on the Kalamazoo Regional Education Service Agency’s website at <http://kresa.schoolwires.com> in the ***Special Education: Forms, Handbooks, Resource Guides*** section.

Attachment A

Suggested Guidelines for Determining Strengths and Weakness

Assessment Type	Strength	Weakness
Progress monitoring	Meeting / exceeding aimline	Falling below aimline for at least 4 consecutive weeks on most recent tests.
CBM (Benchmark) screening	At 'benchmark' level or above grade-level median score if using local norms.	At 'at-risk' level or below 10%ile if using local norms.
Criterion-referenced assessment	Skills at or above grade level	Skills well below grade level
MEAP	Level 1 or Level 2	Level 3 or Level 4
Norm-referenced tests (Achievement, IQ)	Percentile rank \geq 30	Percentile rank \leq 9
Curriculum assessments	Scores \geq 80%	Scores \leq 70%
Grades	A / B or 'meets / exceeds' expectations	D / E or 'does not meet' expectations
Teacher report	Based upon professional judgment of teacher in comparing student to others in classroom.	Based upon professional judgment of teacher in comparing student to others in classroom.
Observations - Academic	Student demonstrates average understanding of academic content in comparison to other students in classroom.	Student demonstrates that s/he does not understand the academic content.
Observations/Interviews/Scales - Functional	Student demonstrates typical functional skills in comparison to other students the same age or in the same grade. Percentile rank on scale \geq 30.	Most of the student's functional skills appear to be well below average in comparison to other students the same age or in the same grade. Percentile rank on scale \leq 9.

**From Kalamazoo RESA Specific Learning Disabilities Evaluation Procedures document, p. 35.*