

# SPECIAL EDUCATION ADVANCED TOPICS WORKSHOP

*Presentation by Kathleen R. LaMay  
August 2, 2013*

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## AGENDA

### EDUCATIONAL OBJECTIVES:

- ▶ Review the Legal Requirements of Special Education Assessment Reports;
- ▶ Discuss Recent Litigation Outcomes in Light of IEE Requests and What They Mean for Assessment Reports;
- ▶ Evaluate Report Samples for a Nexus Between Data and Findings;
- ▶ Take Away Tips for Better Report Writing from a Legal Standpoint

1:00-1:05 p.m.	Introductions
1:05-1:15 p.m.	Brief Review of OAH Decision/Laws California Education Code Code of Federal Regulations
1:15-1:30 p.m.	Tips and Frequent Issues
1:30-1:45 p.m.	Review of Working Examples

### MATERIALS:

1. OAH Legal Conclusion Excerpt
2. California Education Code Section 56327
3. Code of Federal Regulations Section 300.304
4. Code of Federal Regulations Section 300.306
5. Report Writing Tips/Frequent Issues
6. Working Examples

TWO STATEMENTS OF ASSESSMENT REQUIREMENTS:

For purposes of evaluating a child for special education eligibility, the District must ensure that "the child is assessed in all areas of suspected disability." (Citations omitted.) The determination of what tests are required is made based on the information known at the time. A school district must use a variety of assessment tools and strategies to gather relevant functional, developmental, and academic information to determine whether the child is eligible for special education services. (Citations omitted.) No single procedure shall be used as the sole criterion for determining whether the student has a disability or for determining an appropriate educational program for the student. (Citations omitted.) The assessment must use technically sound instruments that assess the relative contribution of cognitive, behavioral, and developmental factors. (Citations omitted.) (Page 16, Paragraph 2.)

A school district is required to assess a student in all areas of suspected disability to determine special education eligibility. Persons who are knowledgeable and competent to perform the assessments must conduct the assessments. The assessments must be administered in the primary language of the student to be assessed, and must be in the form most likely to yield accurate information on what the student knows and can do academically, developmentally, and functionally, unless it is not feasible to do so. Tests and assessment tools must be used for purposes for which they are valid and reliable, and administered in conformance with the instructions provided by the producer of the tests. District may not use a single measure as the sole criterion for determining whether a student is eligible for special education, or whether a particular special education program is appropriate. An IEP meeting to review the assessment must occur within 60 days of receipt of parental consent for the assessment. (Page 4, Paragraph 7.)

CALIFORNIA EDUCATION CODE

SECTION 56327  
RESULTS; REPORTS

56327. The personnel who assess the pupil shall prepare a written report, or reports, as appropriate, of the results of each assessment. The report shall include, but not be limited to, all the following:

- (a) Whether the pupil may need special education and related services.
- (b) The basis for making the determination.
- (c) The relevant behavior noted during the observation of the pupil in an appropriate setting.
- (d) The relationship of that behavior to the pupil's academic and social functioning.
- (e) The educationally relevant health and development, and medical findings, if any.
- (f) For pupils with learning disabilities, whether there is such a discrepancy between achievement and ability that it cannot be corrected without special education and related services.
- (g) A determination concerning the effects of environmental, cultural, or economic disadvantage, where appropriate.
- (h) The need for specialized services, materials, and equipment for pupils with low incidence disabilities, consistent with guidelines established pursuant to Section 56136.

CODE OF FEDERAL REGULATIONS  
Sections 300.304 and 300.306

Evaluation Procedures  
Determination of Eligibility

300.304 Evaluation Procedures

(a) Notice. The public agency must provide notice to the parents of a child with a disability, in accordance with Sec. 300.503, that describes any evaluation procedures the agency proposes to conduct.

(b) Conduct of evaluation. In conducting the evaluation, the public agency must--

(1) Use a variety of assessment tools and strategies to gather relevant functional, developmental, and academic information about the child, including information provided by the parent, that may assist in determining--

(i) Whether the child is a child with a disability under Sec. 300.8; and

(ii) The content of the child's IEP, including information related to enabling the child to be involved in and progress in the general education curriculum (or for a preschool child, to participate in appropriate activities);

(2) Not use any single measure or assessment as the sole criterion for determining whether a child is a child with a disability and for determining an appropriate educational program for the child; and

(3) Use technically sound instruments that may assess the relative contribution of cognitive and behavioral factors, in addition to physical or developmental factors.

(c) Other evaluation procedures. Each public agency must ensure that--

(1) Assessments and other evaluation materials used to assess a child under this part--

(i) Are selected and administered so as not to be discriminatory on a racial or cultural basis;

(ii) Are provided and administered in the child's native language or other mode of communication and in the form most likely to yield accurate information on what the child knows and can do academically, developmentally, and functionally, unless it is clearly not feasible to so provide or administer;

(iii) Are used for the purposes for which the assessments or measures are valid and reliable;

(iv) Are administered by trained and knowledgeable personnel; and

(v) Are administered in accordance with any instructions provided by the producer of the assessments.

(2) Assessments and other evaluation materials include

those tailored to assess specific areas of educational need and not merely those that are designed to provide a single general intelligence quotient.

(3) Assessments are selected and administered so as best to ensure that if an assessment is administered to a child with impaired sensory, manual, or speaking skills, the assessment results accurately reflect the child's aptitude or achievement level or whatever other factors the test purports to measure, rather than reflecting the child's impaired sensory, manual, or speaking skills (unless those skills are the factors that the test purports to measure).

(4) The child is assessed in all areas related to the suspected disability, including, if appropriate, health, vision, hearing, social and emotional status, general intelligence, academic performance, communicative status, and motor abilities;

(5) Assessments of children with disabilities who transfer from one public agency to another public agency in the same school year are coordinated with those children's prior and subsequent schools, as necessary and as expeditiously as possible, consistent with Sec. 300.301(d)(2) and (e), to ensure prompt completion of full evaluations.

(6) In evaluating each child with a disability under Sec. Sec. 300.304 through 300.306, the evaluation is sufficiently comprehensive to identify all of the child's special education and related services needs, whether or not commonly linked to the disability category in which the child has been classified.

(7) Assessment tools and strategies that provide relevant information that directly assists persons in determining the educational needs of the child are provided.

(e) Evaluations before change in eligibility.

(1) Except as provided in paragraph (e)(2) of this section, a public agency must evaluate a child with a disability in accordance with Sec. Sec. 300.304 through 300.311 before determining that the child is no longer a child with a disability.

(2) The evaluation described in paragraph (e)(1) of this section is not required before the termination of a child's eligibility under this part due to graduation from secondary school with a regular diploma, or due to exceeding the age eligibility for FAPE under State law.

(3) For a child whose eligibility terminates under

circumstances described in paragraph (e)(2) of this section, a public agency must provide the child with a summary of the child's academic achievement and functional performance, which shall include recommendations on how to assist the child in meeting the child's postsecondary goals.

#### 300.306 Determination of eligibility.

(a) General. Upon completion of the administration of assessments and other evaluation measures--

(1) A group of qualified professionals and the parent of the child determines whether the child is a child with a disability, as defined in Sec. 300.8, in accordance with paragraph (b) of this section and the educational needs of the child; and

(2) The public agency provides a copy of the evaluation report and the documentation of determination of eligibility at no cost to the parent.

(b) Special rule for eligibility determination. A child must not be determined to be a child with a disability under this part--

(1) If the determinant factor for that determination is--

(i) Lack of appropriate instruction in reading, including the essential components of reading instruction (as defined in section 1208(3) of the ESEA);

(ii) Lack of appropriate instruction in math; or

(iii) Limited English proficiency; and

(2) If the child does not otherwise meet the eligibility criteria under Sec. 300.8(a).

(c) Procedures for determining eligibility and educational need.

(1) In interpreting evaluation data for the purpose of determining if a child is a child with a disability under Sec. 300.8, and the educational needs of the child, each public agency must--

(i) Draw upon information from a variety of sources, including aptitude and achievement tests, parent input, and teacher recommendations, as well as information about the child's physical condition, social or cultural background, and adaptive behavior; and

(ii) Ensure that information obtained from all of these sources is documented and carefully considered.

(2) If a determination is made that a child has a disability and needs special education and related services, an IEP must be developed for the child in accordance with Sec. 300.320 through 300.324.

## REPORT WRITING TIPS

### WHEN WRITING RECOMMENDATIONS:

1. Divide recommendations into categories for school/teacher implementation and parent/home implementation.
2. Explain which need the recommendation is addressing and how it will help student progress.
3. Explain the recommendation clearly so the reader can understand and follow through.

### PRACTICAL TIPS:

1. Show your work (i.e., explain how you came to your conclusion and why you are making specific recommendations).
2. Rationale/nexus (explain why the data supports your interpretation and conclusions).
3. Save your samples/testing protocols.
4. Use follow-up interviews when necessary.
5. During initial evaluation/reevaluation, utilize extra testing to corroborate results, especially when there are red flags in the subtests and student does not qualify for special education or current testing supports a reduction in services. These types of cases frequently lead to disagreement and subsequent due process complaints as parents often think their child should receive special education services due to low subtest scores. Parents need clear explanations, not just short statements about areas of relative weakness or that the area of weakness is not affecting the student's academics. Thoroughly explain "relative weakness" and why it does not affect the student's education or affect it to the extent that specially designed education and services are necessary.
6. Remember, your report must be understood by lay persons (parents) and hearing officers (lawyers).
7. If there is a concern about a student who does not qualify, thoroughly explain why the student's issues do not meet eligibility requirements.
8. Check the release date of your testing instruments and double check that you are using the current edition of the test; note the edition of each test used.

## FREQUENT ISSUES:

1. **Providing Reports to Parents:** For example, parents have requested a report five days prior to the IEP meeting. There is no legal requirement that parents be provided with a report five days prior to an IEP meeting; however, it is important that parents are provided the information they need to meaningfully participate in an IEP team meeting. C.F.R. 300.613(a) requires a public agency to comply with parents' request to inspect and review records. In California, there is a requirement to provide parents the opportunity to inspect and review their child's records within five days of their request. If the report is completed, it should be provided to parents within five days from the date of request; however, there is no requirement that the district complete the report five days prior to the IEP meeting.
2. **Date the Report:** *Please, Please, Please DATE* the report. You may include dates of testing and dates of observations but there should ALWAYS also be a date next to your signature which the reader can use to easily ascertain the date the report was completed.
3. **Speech/Language Samples:** Write out the sample and place it in the file. If you do not have the sample at the time you are defending your assessment, you will be unable to rely on your results and the testing will be deemed invalid. In defending the assessment, we need to see your work to know how you arrived at your conclusions and at hearing the parents are entitled to have their own expert review your language sample to determine if they agree with your findings.
4. **Document Your Observations:** Document the number of student observations and the time, place, and duration. This information is helpful when considering issues such as the effects of medications, behaviors which may be related to time of day, and what kind of access to allow independent assessors. Include a description of the method used to conduct the observation. Please see working examples provided.
5. **Check Student's Native Language:** We have recently had several cases where student's native language was Spanish but the child was tested in English without any documentation of native language consideration.
6. **Only One Version:** There should only be one version of the final report - the one signed and dated; others should be marked "draft." Drafts should be disposed of when a final report is completed.
7. **Language:** Avoid saying "Student may benefit from special education services." Instead, use definitive language such as "Student meets the eligibility criteria for special education services" or "Student does not meet the criteria for special education services."

## WORKING EXAMPLE #1

### AUTISM

According to the California Code of Regulations, Title 5, Education Section 3030 (g), Jamey Juvenile does meet the criteria for Autism. Jamey demonstrates a developmental disability significantly affecting verbal, non-verbal communication and social interaction. In order to qualify, Jamey must exhibit two or more of the following Autistic-like behaviors, which adversely affect educational performance:

1. Lack of oral language for appropriate communication.
  - To fit this category the student should have a lack of speech, delay in speech development, and/or language peculiarities. Language peculiarities may include, but are not limited to: pronoun reversals, echolalia, jargon, unusual tonal quality or volume, repetitive use of phrases, and preoccupation with particular topics.
  - Per interviews, observations, and formal assessments, Jamey does demonstrate delays in speech development. Jamey did not begin using single words until he was about 2.5 years old and did not use 2-3 word phrases until about age 5.
  - ✓ *Jamey does fit this category.*
2. History of extreme withdrawal or relating to people inappropriately and continued impairment in social interaction from infancy through early childhood
  - To fit this category the student should demonstrate significant difficulties interacting with familiar and unfamiliar people, including both adults and peers. These social impairments must be present beginning in infancy and must continue through early childhood. Social impairments may include, but are not limited to: extreme withdrawal or shyness, aloofness, poor eye contact, poor responsiveness, and/or failure to initiate interactions with others.
  - Per interviews, observations, and formal assessments, Jamey does have a history of relating to people inappropriately and this impairment has continued into early childhood. Jamey makes limited eye contact with others, hides or turns away when unfamiliar adults attempt to talk to him, sometimes does not respond when familiar adults talk to him, and prefers to play alone.
  - ✓ *Jamey does fit this category.*
3. An obsession to maintain sameness.
  - To fit this category the student should show marked distress over changes in established routines, patterns, and/or the physical environment.

- Per interviews, observations, and formal assessments, Jamey does demonstrate distress over changes in his environment. Jamey insists on keeping everything in his bedroom a certain way and will immediately move an object back to its original location if his father moves it somewhere else. If Jamey is not allowed to return the object to its original location he will become upset and cry. This behavior was also observed during the cognitive assessment when Jamey began stacking the stimulus materials (blocks) and the assessor attempted to move the blocks out of the way for the next subtest.

✓ *Jamey does fit this category.*

4. Extreme preoccupation with objects or inappropriate use of objects.

- To fit this category the student may have an unusual attachment and dependence on a particular object, may not use objects as they were designed even after modeling, may show an intense interest in parts of objects, and/or may have difficulty using objects in imaginative play.

- Per interviews, observations, and formal assessments, Jamey does demonstrate a preoccupation with objects and inappropriate use of objects. Jamey has a shirt from when he was a baby that he takes everywhere; he will cry or tantrum if his father tries to take it away. Jamey also does not use toys as they are intended. He often takes toys apart, stacks them, and/or lines them up. Jamey does not demonstrate any type of imaginative play.

✓ *Jamey does fit this category.*

5. Extreme resistance to controls.

- To fit this category the student should have intense negative reactions when given instructions to complete non-preferred activities. Negative reactions may include but are not limited to: crying, yelling, hitting, kicking, and/or biting.

- Per interviews, observations, and formal assessments, Jamey does demonstrate negative reactions, such as crying, hitting, and yelling “no, no” when he is directed to do an undesired activity.

✓ *Jamey does fit this category.*

6. Displays peculiar motoric mannerisms and motility patterns

- To fit this category the student may demonstrate unusual hand and finger mannerisms, unusual body movements, and/or have an unusual gait (toe-walking or abnormal bouncing).

- Per interviews, observations, and formal assessments, Jamey does not demonstrate any peculiar mannerisms or motility patterns.

✓ *Jamey does not fit this category.*

7. Self-stimulating and ritualistic behaviors.

- To fit this category the student should demonstrate repetitive movements and/or specific compulsions in which the student must complete a given activity in a special way. Repetitive movements may include but are not limited to: hand-flapping, body rocking, smelling/licking objects, and/or staring at lights.
- Per interviews, observations, and formal assessments, Jamey does not demonstrate any self- stimulating or ritualistic behaviors.
- ✓ *Jamey does not fit this category.*

The above impairments adversely affect Jamey's educational performance.

*Based on the information gathered, Jamey does not qualify for Special Education services under the following handicapping condition:*

EMOTIONAL DISTURBANCE

According to the California Code of Regulations, Title 5, Education Section 3030 (i), Jamey does not meet the criteria for Special Education under the category of Emotional Disturbance. In order to qualify, Jamey must exhibit one or more of the following characteristics over a long period of time and to a marked degree which adversely affect educational performance:

1. An inability to learn which cannot be explained by intellectual, sensory, or health factors.

- To fit this category there should be no other handicapping conditions that better accounts for the student's lack of educational progress, such as Intellectual Disability, Autism, Hearing Impairment, Other Health Impairment, or Specific Learning Disability.
- Per observations, interviews, and formal assessments, Jamey does appear to meet the criteria for Autism.
- ✓ *Jamey does not fit this category.*

2. An inability to build or maintain satisfactory interpersonal relationships with peers and teachers.

- To fit this category the student must be unable to initiate or maintain satisfactory relationships with both students and adults. In other words, the student should not have friends at school, home, and in the community or engage in any voluntary social activities. This must exist for a long period of time (6+ months), must be pervasive (school, home, and community) and must adversely affect educational performance.
- Per observations and interviews, Jamey does have some positive relationships with staff at school. The difficulties Jamey appears to have with interpersonal relationships are more related to autistic-like behaviors than an emotional disturbance.
- ✓ *Jamey does not fit this category.*

3. Inappropriate types of behavior or feelings under normal circumstances exhibited in several situations.
  - Inappropriate types of behaviors include catastrophic reactions to everyday occurrences, manic behavior, self-mutilations, delusions, rage reactions or other bizarre behaviors. Must be present for a long period of time, pervasive, and to a marked degree or intense enough to adversely affect educational performance.
  - Per observations, teacher behavior rating scale, and interviews, Jamey does not exhibit any of the above behaviors.
  - ✓ *Jamey does not fit this category.*
  
4. A general pervasive mood of unhappiness or depression.
  - In order to fit this category the student must exhibit a general pervasive mood of unhappiness or depression over a long period of time and to a marked degree.
  - Per behavior rating scale completed by Jamey's father, Jamey does demonstrate Clinically Significant symptoms of depression. It is, however, important to note that some of the items that were rated as 'Almost Always' on the depression scale may be more related to characteristics of Autism than actual depression (i.e. is easily upset and cries easily). In addition, Jamey's father stated during an interview that Jamey is typically a happy child. The behavior rating scale completed by Jamey's Speech/Language Pathologist did not indicate any Clinically Significant symptoms of depression.
  - ✓ *Jamey does not fit this category.*
  
5. A tendency to develop physical symptoms or fears associated with personal or school problems.
  - To fit this category the student might have a pattern of physical symptoms without identifiable physical cause, meaning possible "severe" anxiety including panic attacks. Fears must be present "consistently" for a long period of time (6+months), exist to a marked degree, and be documented to adversely affect educational performance.
  - Per behavior rating scales completed by Jamey's father and Speech/Language Pathologist, Jamey does not demonstrate Clinically Significant signs of somatization.
  - ✓ *Jamey does not fit this category.*

It is the determination of the Psychologist that Jamey's disabilities are not primarily the result of limited school experience, poor attendance, social disadvantages, or economic disadvantages. Jamey demonstrates a need for special education and related services that cannot be offered through other general or categorical services within the regular instructional program.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

1. The present information will be shared with the IEP team. The IEP team will review all results to determine how to best meet Jamey's educational needs.
2. Discuss the full continuum of special education services and supports.
3. Consider a placement designed to meet the needs of children with Autism as the least restrictive environment at this time. It does not appear that Jamey would be successful in a regular school setting without special education programming. A small group setting with opportunities for 1-on-1 instruction would help Jamey make academic progress.
4. Consider the development and implementation of a Behavior Support Plan to address compliance behavior if needed.
5. Provide routine, structured environments.
6. Encourage peer interactions during recess and lunch when at school. These student relationships provide opportunity for the modeling of age-appropriate social behavior.
7. Gradually increase Jamey's ability to follow more complex directions. Directions should be short, concise, and modeled as they are stated.
8. Provide a visual schedule and visual directions to help Jamey anticipate upcoming activities and understand expectations.
9. Maintain open lines of communication with all parties involved in Jamey's academic, social, and emotional growth.

## WORKING EXAMPLE #2

### OTHER HEALTH IMPAIRMENT

Steven Student has a diagnosis of ADHD and a history of attention and behavioral problems. Most recently, he has been diagnosed with a hearing loss. Current assessment results, classroom observations, and individual test scores do not indicate the academic need for special education services. While Steven does evidence some behavioral issues in the classroom, most likely related to a combination of his ADHD and conduct disorder, these symptoms are not adversely affecting his educational performance. It appears that the accommodations provided within the 504 Plan and the positive effects of medication have been sufficient to address Steven's educational needs.

### EMOTIONAL DISTURBANCE

The criteria for Emotionally Disturbed require that a student exhibits one or more of the five characteristics listed below:

1. An inability to learn which cannot be explained by intellectual, sensory, or health factors.
2. An inability to build or maintain satisfactory interpersonal relationships with peers and/or teachers.
3. Inappropriate types of behavior or feelings under normal circumstances.
4. A general pervasive mood of unhappiness and/or anxiety.
5. A tendency to develop physical symptoms or fears associated with personal or school problems.

Furthermore, the characteristics must meet all three limiting criteria:

1. It must have existed over a long period of time;
2. Must be to a marked degree;
3. Must adversely affect the individual's educational performance.

Based on results of the current assessment, teacher and parent observations, and behavioral ratings, Steven does not currently meet the criteria as outlined above. His emotional and behavioral difficulties have not resulted in an inability to learn. He attends school regularly and he is performing well academically. During the current evaluation, Steven did not evidence any

significant behavioral or emotional symptoms that would indicate he could not be educated in the general education setting.

There does seem to be a general consensus among teachers and parent that Steven exhibits difficulties with maintaining interpersonal relationships with peers. He can be argumentative and occasionally aggressive. He often over reacts and incorrectly perceives the actions and words of other students. At the same time, he has difficulty with boundaries and will make inappropriate comments leading to verbal altercations with peers. Steven's social difficulties are generally limited to interactions with adolescents his age and occur in more unstructured settings. He prefers the company of adults and is viewed by adults as generally cooperative and respectful. It is likely that his difficulties with peer interactions will at times contribute to some social stress and result in an increase in symptoms of withdrawal and depression.

It is my opinion that at this time, Steven's educational and behavioral needs can be met through the general education program with 504 accommodations including a Behavior Support Plan.

The final determination of eligibility, placement, services, and education programming is the responsibility of the IEP Team. This report is submitted to assist in this process.

## WORKING EXAMPLE #3

### CLASSROOM OBSERVATION

Alexandra ADHD's on-task behavior was measured in the classroom using 15-second momentary time sampling recording. For the purpose of this observation, "on-task" was defined as following directions within five seconds of a teacher directive, head oriented toward the teacher or student asking/answering a question, raising a hand to answer or ask a question, head oriented toward appropriate materials during class work time, using pencil appropriately, etc. "Off-task" was defined as not following directions, talking to another student without permission, out of seat without permission, looking around the room when the teacher is talking to the class, not looking at or writing from appropriate materials, etc.

Alexandra's on-task behavior was observed during an independent phonics activity and was compared to other randomly chosen students in the same activity. During the observation session, Alexandra was observed to be on-task during 84% of the intervals measured, as compared to 91% on-task behavior for the comparison student(s). The classroom teacher indicated that Alexandra's behavior, as observed, was typical for those circumstances.

Off-task behavior included: talking-1, playing with objects-5 (fingers, shoes), staring-4 (looking at neighbor's paper), disruptive-1, out of seat-1. During this time Alexandra was observed to be copying answers from her neighbor's paper. The results of this observation session may or may not represent Alexandra's behavior under similar circumstances across time and settings.

## WORKING EXAMPLE #4

### ASSESSMENT OBSERVATION 2

John Doe was observed during the academic assessments that were conducted over a period of five days (May 12, 21, 23, 24, and 29). Each day of assessment covered an approximately 60-minute time period. John enjoyed playing with some of the manipulatives that came with one of the assessments (blocks and stacking containers). After these manipulatives were no longer needed, John did not want to put them away. The examiner allowed John to continue playing with the manipulatives throughout the assessment as it appeared to help John stay engaged. He would play with the manipulatives, but would stop to answer a question or complete a task. John enjoyed stacking the blocks and containers. He would then knock the tower over and then restack it. John did this over and over during the assessment. He also frequently lined the blocks and containers up in a row.

There were some tasks that John refused to do even though he had previously demonstrated in other settings that he could complete the tasks. For example, John was asked to recite the alphabet on three different occasions (on two different days), but he always refused by saying "no." Another example was when he was asked to write the uppercase letters of the alphabet from memory. John began by writing the uppercase and lowercase letters side by side (even though he was redirected to only write the uppercase), but he then refused to write any more after the letter "Gg." At this point, he drew a line and said "enough." John's task refusal may have impacted his overall performance on the academic assessments as it was difficult to determine what he was actual capable of doing.

WORKING EXAMPLE #5  
(Author Unknown)

RECOMMENDATIONS

- Keep in mind that recommendations should be practical enough and explained in such a way that the reader will have no problem following through.
- For example, a recommendation to a parent to "try to spend more time with Sally" is useless. It provides the reader with no direction or specifics. Instead, a recommendation such as "read at home with Sally in unison. By this, we mean that both you and Sally have the same book and read aloud together so that she receives constant auditory feedback."
- This more detailed recommendation provides the reader with specific direction.
- Try to separate the recommendations into the following two or three sections:
  - Recommendations to the school
  - Recommendations to the teacher
  - In many cases, school and teacher recommendations can be combined
  - Recommendations to the parents

*Recommendations to the school:*

This section might contain suggestions such as further testing from other professionals on staff, vision or hearing tests by the school nurse, recommendation for a review by the Eligibility Committee, remedial reading assistance, or an ESL evaluation

*Recommendations to the teacher:*

This section should contain useful information for the teacher including an indication of the conditions under which the child learns best. The teacher is probably mainly interested in "What do I do to help the child learn?" Keep in mind that even before you begin the evaluation process, you should ask the teacher what he or she has already tried in an attempt to alleviate the problems. This should be done so your recommendations do not include suggestions already attempted by the teacher. Doing this will avoid having your recommendations being viewed as "nothing I haven't already tried before."

*Recommendations to the parents:*

This part should be very practical, direct, and diplomatic. The suggestions should also be inclusive enough to answer the questions "why" and "how" so parents do not have to interpret them.

*Recommendations to the teachers and school:*

1. Help Sally with her organizational skills by speaking to her teachers about her difficulties in organization.

2. Make sure all of Sally's teachers understand her disability. All teachers should be aware of where Sally's limitations lie and do whatever is necessary to help her.
3. Do not count spelling errors when giving Sally a grade on a project. Instead, allow Sally to fix her mistakes at home so she can resubmit her work without penalty.
4. To further develop feelings of success, always design spelling problems in ascending order of difficulty.

*Recommendations to Sally's Parents:*

1. Be patient and understand that Sally will need more time than other students her age when it comes to reading, writing, and spelling.
2. Work with Sally at home, helping her on various educational concepts that she may have difficulty understanding.
3. Provide much positive reinforcement, verbal praise, and words of encouragement.
4. Help Sally deal with her frustration levels by letting her know that you will help her in any way you can.