SLD Evaluation Reporting

Considerations for Practitioners

WEBINAR COMPANION

March 2020

PUBLIC SCHOOLS OF NORTH CAROLINA
Educating the Whole Child

Evaluations: The Foundation for Instructional Planning

- … the discussion must move <u>beyond classification and eligibility</u> and toward processes that improve the lives of children

- The primary goal is improved treatment of persistent academic difficulties

- The amount of testing administered as part of the identification process **should be limited to only those that inform future intervention**

The Identification of Specific Learning Disabilities:
A Summary of Research on Best Practices
Fletcher and Miciak, 2019

The Evaluation *Purpose(s)*

Synthesize/Summarize Data Sources
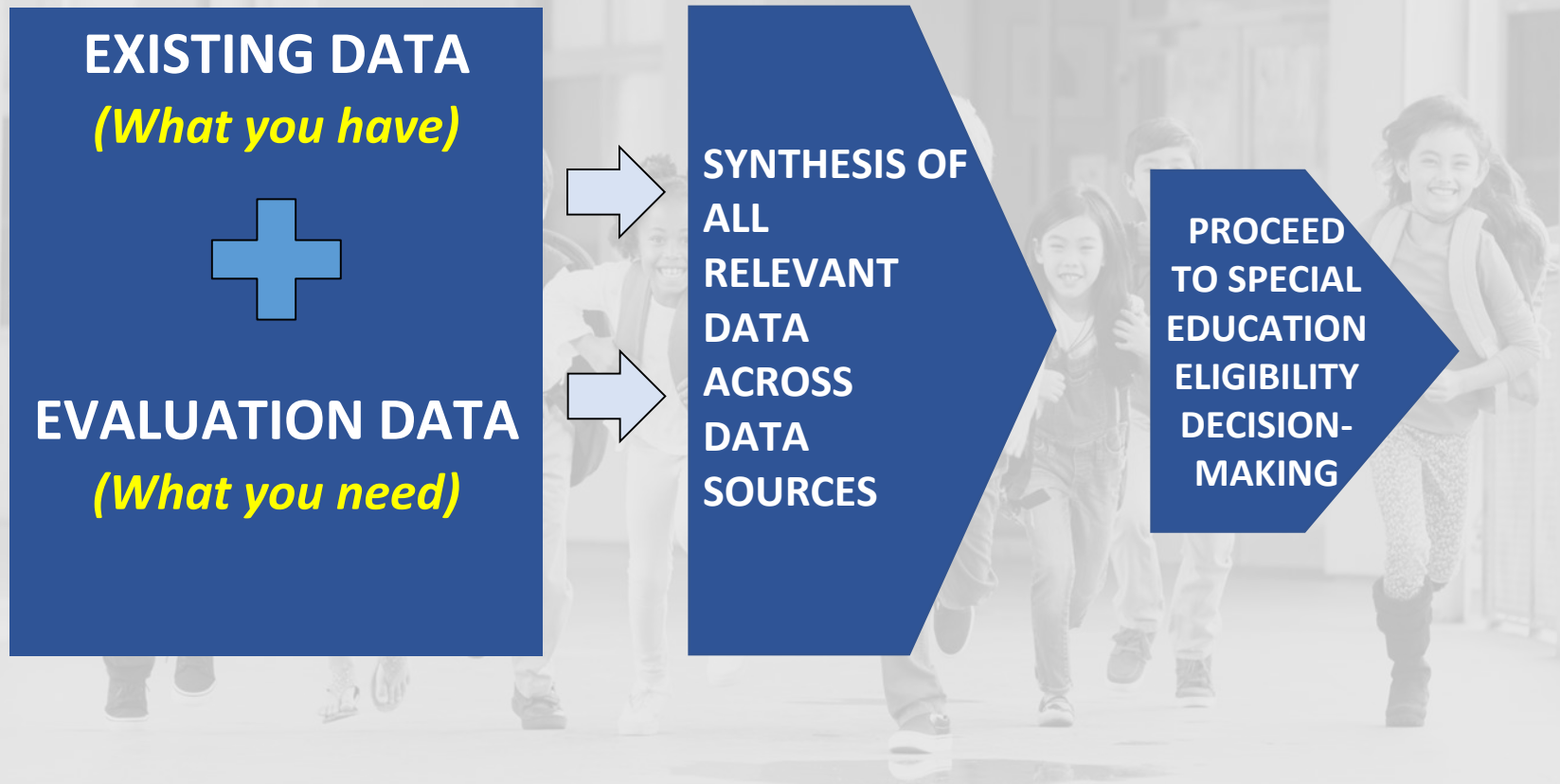
Educational Decisions (Eligibility)
'Get it Right'

**Educational Planning
(Design of Effective Instruction)**
'Do What's Right'

Regardless of IDEA eligibility status

The Evaluation *Process*

EXISTING DATA
(What you have)

+

EVALUATION DATA
(What you need)

SYNTHESIS OF ALL RELEVANT DATA ACROSS DATA SOURCES

PROCEED TO SPECIAL EDUCATION ELIGIBILITY DECISION-MAKING

The Evaluation *Focus*

Multiple sources of academic data

(defined in NC's Comprehensive Assessment System)

- Common formative assessments
- Interim/benchmark assessments
- Outcome assessments
- Universal screening
- Progress monitoring
- Diagnostic assessments

The Evaluator's *Role*

(10) Psychological services includes--
(i) Administering psychological assessments, educational assessments, and other assessment procedures such as observations and interviews, in order to determine a student's strengths and educational, social, emotional, behavioral, or developmental needs. For preschool children, psychological evaluation may include administering psychological assessments, and curriculum-based and other educational assessments, as well as conducting assessment procedures such as observations, interviews, structured interactions, and play assessments as deemed appropriate by the school psychologist or contracting psychologist;
(ii) Interpreting assessment results;
(iii) Obtaining, integrating, and interpreting information about a child's behavior and environmental conditions relating to learning and development;
(iv) Consulting with parents, teachers, and other school personnel in planning school programs and services to meet the identified needs of children, including but not

What are we measuring?

Individual learner data:

- **Academic** *proficiency -* substantially below standard(s)?
- **Academic** *growth -* insufficient to close gaps/reduce risk?

Relevant comparisons:

- Group response to instruction (proficiency? growth?)
- Group response to intervention (proficiency? growth?)

Decisions made based on *preponderance* of data
(NO rigid formulas derived from single measures)

Questions the evaluation should answer:

Does group data guide decisions regarding the "rule outs" (e.g., comparison data reflecting group proficiency and/or group growth)?

Have exclusionary factors been sufficiently addressed?

Is academic performance significantly below age/grade level expectancies across multiple measures of similar skills?

Is rate of progress = 0, or, insufficient to reduce risk of academic failure?

Evaluation Reports: Common Complaints

- Emphasis on test-by-test interpretation rather than focus on the individual child

- Over reliance on technical jargon

- Focus on child's weaknesses

- Generic interpretation

- Higher reading level (college level) above the average educational level of the typical parent (grade 12 or less)

NASP & APA Ethical Guidelines

- Present findings in language **clearly understood** by the recipients

- Written reports should **emphasize interpretation and recommendations**

- Written reports should **support the recipients in their work or interactions with the child**

- Interpretation of test data should be **written in simple language**

- Interpretation of data should be based on **convergent and comprehensive** assessment sources

Educationally Relevant Evaluation Reports

- Address <u>strengths</u> & needs

- Answer the referral questions

- Are easy to read/understand by all stakeholders

- Reflect multiple sources of data

- Include targeted instructional strategies to help close the academic or behavior gap

Educationally Relevant Evaluation Reports

Information provided to assist the IEP team determine:

- Where the student is functioning (present level)

- Where they need to be (ambitious, but attainable goal; to close the gap)

- What is going to get them there (instruction needed to accomplish the goal(s) established)

- What may be needed to level the playing field for this student (accommodations)

- In what setting will all of this most reasonably be accomplished? (setting in which this instruction would be best delivered)

Educationally Relevant Evaluation Reports

Guiding Questions:

- What does this student need to access, participate and make progress in the general education curriculum?

- What supports this student's performance?

- What limits this student's performance?

Organizational Framework

- RIOT involves:
  - **R**ecord review
  - **I**nterviews
  - **O**bservation
  - **T**esting

- Typically, an integral part of the early intervening period

Review:

- Hearing/Vision
- Summary of conferences with parents
- Attendance/Grades/Outcome assessments
- Interventions/PM data
- Social/developmental history

Interview:

- Teachers (in content areas of concern)
- Teachers (in content areas of strength)
- Parent(s)/Caregiver(s)
- Student

Observe:

- Learning environment
- Student in specific, relevant settings (when problem is most likely/least likely to occur)
  - Functional skills
  - Academic skills

Test:

- Common formative assessments
- Interim/benchmark assessments
- Universal screening
- Progress monitoring
- Diagnostic assessments
- Norm-referenced assessments

Evaluation Reporting Considerations

Reporting factors to consider/address:

- IDEA eligibility decisions must address the rule-outs
  - report can provide relevant information that the IEP team must consider
  - reporting should be data driven; based in fact
  - reporting should summarize all relevant factors; however, the "reporter" is not the "decider"

Special Rule for Eligibility Determination
IDEA 300.306 (2)(b)

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**

Determining the Existence of a Learning Disability
IDEA 300.309 (3)(b)

To ensure that underachievement in a child suspected of having a specific learning disability is not due to lack of appropriate instruction in reading or math, the group must consider, as part of the evaluation described in §§ 300.304 through 300.306—

(1) Data that demonstrate that prior to, or as a part of, the referral process, the child was **provided appropriate instruction in regular education settings, delivered by qualified personnel**; and

(2) Data-based documentation of repeated assessments of achievement at reasonable intervals, **reflecting formal assessment of student progress during instruction**, which was provided to the child's parents.
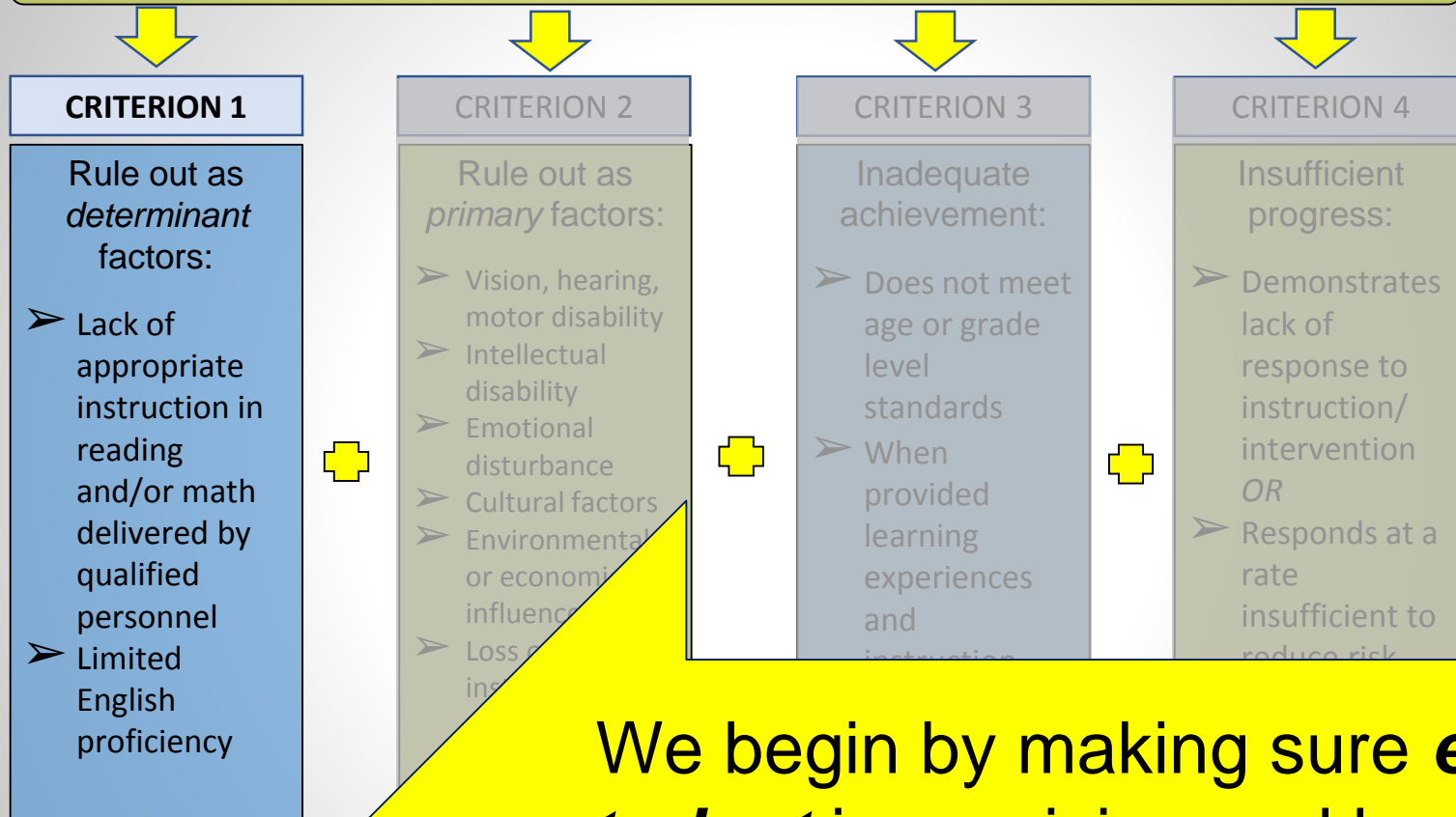
Evaluation Reporting Considerations

Background Information/Referral Questions

- Statement of confidentiality
- Student demographic information
- Student academic and functional strengths
- Reason for evaluation/targeted referral questions to answer

Convergence of Data from Multiple Sources

CRITERION 1

Rule out as *determinant* factors:

➢ Lack of appropriate instruction in reading and/or math delivered by qualified personnel
➢ Limited English proficiency

CRITERION 2

Rule out as *primary* factors:

➢ Vision, hearing, motor disability
➢ Intellectual disability
➢ Emotional disturbance
➢ Cultural factors
➢ Environmental or economic influence
➢ Loss of instruction

CRITERION 3

Inadequate achievement:

➢ Does not meet age or grade level standards
➢ When provided learning experiences and instruction

CRITERION 4

Insufficient progress:

➢ Demonstrates lack of response to instruction/intervention *OR*
➢ Responds at a rate insufficient to reduce risk

Adverse

We begin by making sure *every student* is receiving and benefiting from *appropriate instruction*.

Evaluation Reporting Considerations

Summarizing Instruction/Intervention:

- Group data: school, grade, class and relevant subgroup academic data
- Implementation fidelity data (core instruction/intervention instruction)
- (Group) response to intervention data
- Evidence that interventions are supported by scientific research

Evaluation Reporting Considerations

(If applicable) Summarize LEP Data:

- Does the student demonstrate limited English proficiency?
  - If *yes*, to what extent are the effects of limited English proficiency a contributing factor to the current documented areas of need?

- Limited number of years in the US?

- History of early or developmental difficulties in primary language?

- Current primary language proficiency results

- Current English language proficiency results

Convergence of Data from [...]

CRITERION 1

Rule out as *determinant* factors:

➤ Lack of appropriate instruction in reading and/or math delivered by qualified personnel
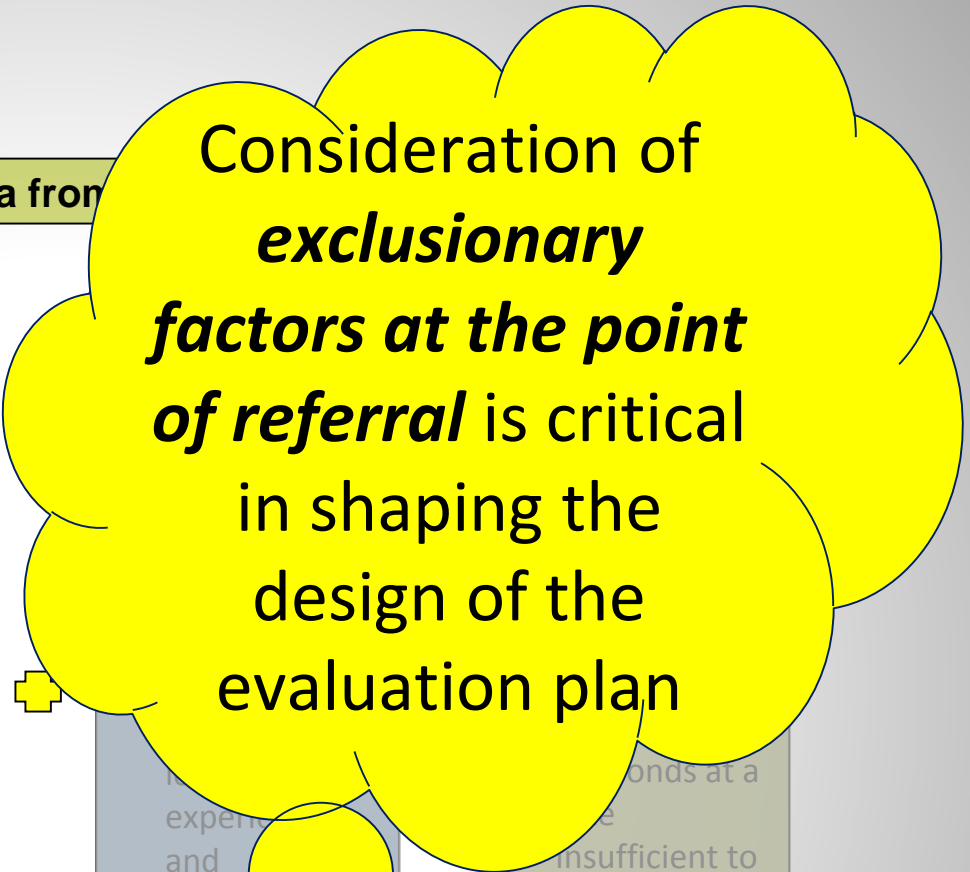➤ Limited English proficiency

CRITERION 2

Rule out as *primary* factors:

➤ Vision, hearing, motor disability
➤ Intellectual disability
➤ Emotional disturbance
➤ Cultural factors
➤ Environmental or economic influences
➤ Loss of instructional time

[...] exper[...] and instru[...] appro[...] for the child's age or grade

[...]onds at a [...]e insufficient to reduce risk over time

CRITERION 5

Adverse effect and requires special education

Consideration of *exclusionary factors at the point of referral* is critical in shaping the design of the evaluation plan
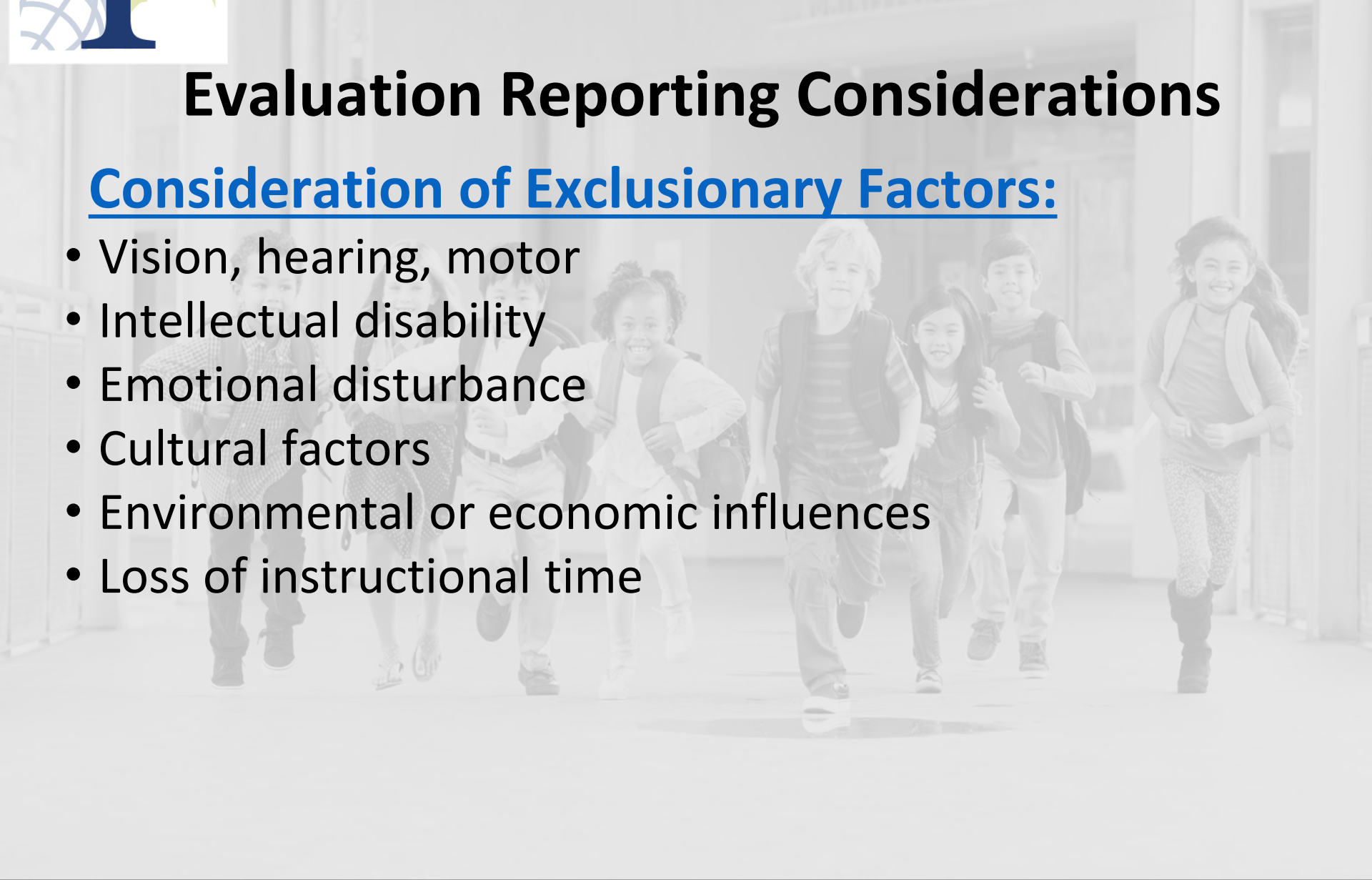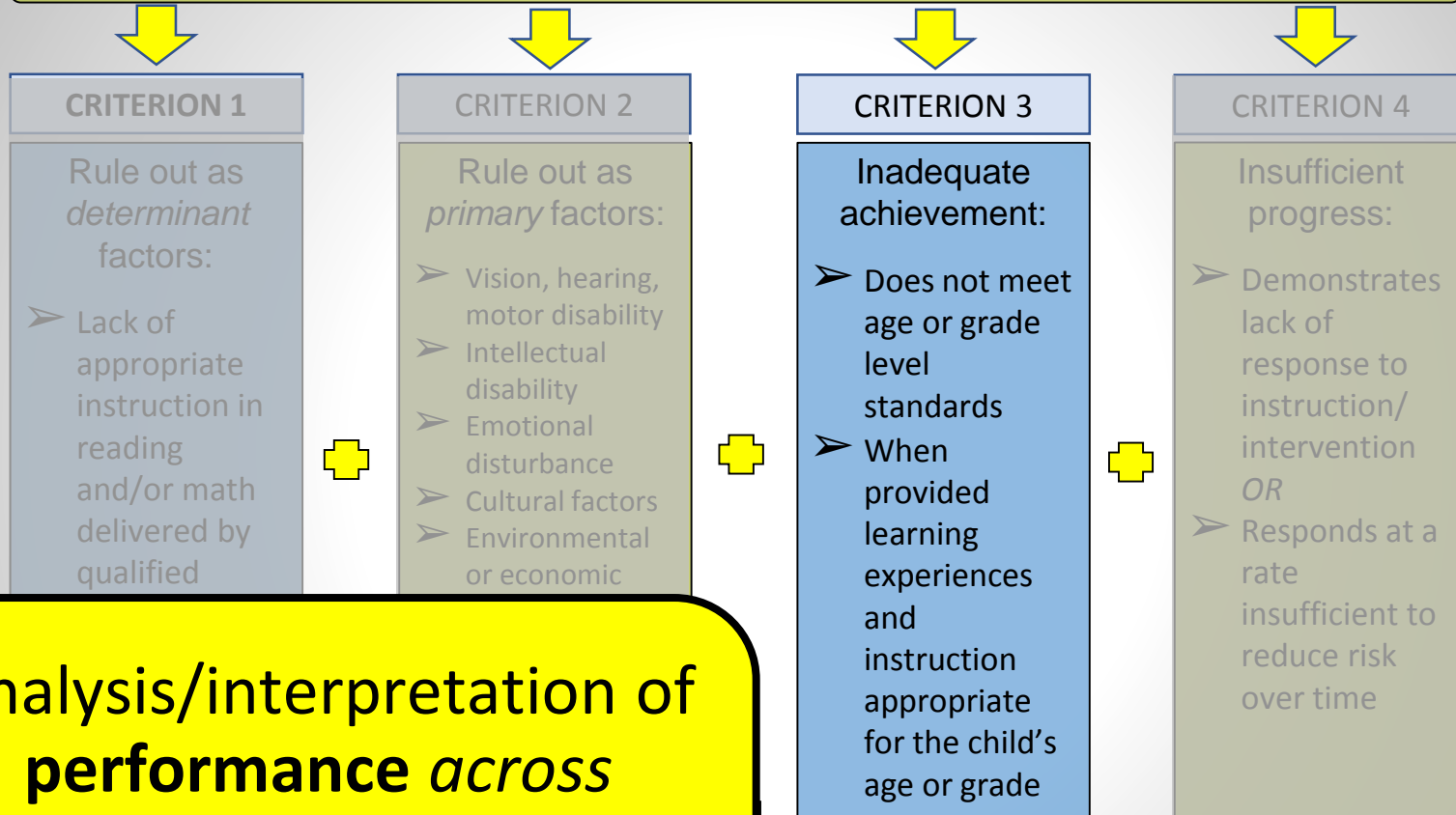
Evaluation Reporting Considerations

Consideration of Exclusionary Factors:

- Vision, hearing, motor
- Intellectual disability
- Emotional disturbance
- Cultural factors
- Environmental or economic influences
- Loss of instructional time

Convergence of Data from Multiple Sources

CRITERION 1

Rule out as *determinant* factors:

➤ Lack of appropriate instruction in reading and/or math delivered by qualified

CRITERION 2

Rule out as *primary* factors:

➤ Vision, hearing, motor disability
➤ Intellectual disability
➤ Emotional disturbance
➤ Cultural factors
➤ Environmental or economic

CRITERION 3

Inadequate achievement:

➤ Does not meet age or grade level standards
➤ When provided learning experiences and instruction appropriate for the child's age or grade

CRITERION 4

Insufficient progress:

➤ Demonstrates lack of response to instruction/ intervention *OR*
➤ Responds at a rate insufficient to reduce risk over time

ON 5

res special education

Analysis/interpretation of **performance** *across multiple sources* of *academic data* is the <u>*only*</u> way to establish a **pattern**

Evaluation Reporting Considerations:
Summarize Student *Performance* Data

Review:

- Attendance/Grades/Outcome assessments
- Social/developmental history

Interview:

- Teachers (in content areas of concern)
- Teachers (in content areas of strength)
- Parent(s)/Caregiver(s)
- Student

Observe:

- Learning environment
- Student in specific, relevant settings (when problem is most likely/least likely to occur)
  - Functional skills
  - Academic skills

Test:

- Common formative assessments
- Interim/benchmark assessments
- Universal screening
- Progress monitoring
- Diagnostic assessments
- Norm-referenced assessments

Evaluation Reporting Considerations

Summarizing Student Performance Data (C3):

Questions to Answer:

- Does the student demonstrate discrepant performance from peers across measures
- Is the student failing to meet state standards (in one or more) academic area?

Convergence of Data from Multiple Sources

CRITERION 1

Rule out as *determinant* factors:

➢ Lack of appropriate instruction reading

➢ ...

CRITERION 2

Rule out as *primary* factors:

➢ ...

CRITERION 3

Inadequate achievement:

➢ Does not meet age or grade level standards

➢ ...provided learning experiences

...instruction appropriate for the child's ...or grade

CRITERION 4

Insufficient progress:

➢ Demonstrates lack of response to instruction/ intervention *OR*

➢ Responds at a rate insufficient to reduce risk over time

CRITERION 5

...erse effect and requires special education

Time series graphs <u>do not replace</u> *sound professional judgement*

Evaluation Reporting Considerations
Summarize Student *Progress* Data

IDEA Requirement:
Data-based documentation of repeated assessments of achievement at reasonable intervals, **reflecting formal assessment of student progress during instruction**, which was provided to the child's parents.

300.309 (3)(b)(2)

NC 1500-2.11(b)(13) Progress Monitoring

Progress monitoring

Progress monitoring refers to a scientific research-based practice used to assess students' academic and/or behavioral performance and evaluate the effectiveness of instruction and/or specific interventions. Progress monitoring can be implemented with individual students, groups of students, or an entire class. Central to the practice is data-based documentation of repeated assessments that produce quantitative results that are charted over time to document rates of improvement. The measures should be brief, reliable, valid, sensitive, linked to the area of intervention/instruction, and measure the same construct/skill over time. Embedded assessments within evidence-based intervention programs can also be an important source of progress monitoring data for students that are performing well below grade level. Students who are performing very far below expected levels may be progress-monitored the most frequently with these types of measures, but should also receive periodic progress monitoring using a general outcome measure (CBM) in order to ensure skills are transferring to content that is closer to grade level expectations.

Evaluation Reporting Considerations

Summarize Student *Progress* Data:

1) The type, intensity, and duration of identified instructional intervention(s)

2) The child's rate of progress during the instructional intervention(s);

3) A comparison of the child's rate of progress to expected rates of progress, including evidence that the intervention yielded successful responses and outcomes for the majority of other children receiving the intervention;

4) Progress monitoring on a schedule that:
   - Allows a comparison of the child's progress to the performance of peers;
   - Is appropriate to the child's age and grade placement;
   - Is appropriate to the content monitored; and
   - Allows for interpretation of the effectiveness of intervention

5) Evidence that the intervention was implemented with fidelity.

Evaluation Reporting Considerations

Summarizing Student Progress Data (C4)

Questions to Answer:

- Is the gap reduction occurring?

- If yes, is the reduction occurring at a rate that will reduce risk of academic failure in a reasonable amount of time

"ROI is one way to judge whether "gap" is being reduced, but we know that slope in and of itself can be problematic."

- Mark Shinn

Evaluation Reporting Considerations

Recommendations

C.L.E.A.R., feasible, individualized

- **C**hild-centered

- **L**ink referral questions, assessment results and recommendations

- **E**nable the reader with concrete recommendations

- **A**ddress strengths and needs

- **R**eadability

Masters et al., 2011

Evaluation Reporting Considerations

Recommendations

Structural considerations:

- Instructional recommendations by [prioritized](#) need

THEN

- Recommendations for accommodations/modifications/supplementary supports

THEN

- Additional needs addressed as "considerations for future planning"

Evaluation Reporting Considerations

Signature and Date

- Make sure the report is signed!

- Date report was completed should be reflected