



Evaluations: What if the School Says 'No'?

The public school district or charter school can only deny an evaluation if they believe there's no evidence that your child should be evaluated for a qualifying disability. This can happen before a Review of Existing Data Meeting, or after that meeting.

If you believe the denial was incorrect, here are some steps to take.

1. Ensure your Evaluation Request was in Writing

Make sure your initial evaluation request is in writing. Your written request should clearly outline the reasons why your child needs an evaluation. This written record is a crucial document to the evaluation process.

2. Ask for a Written Explanation

The school must send you a formal letter called Prior Written Notice (PWN) to explain why they are denying your evaluation request. If their reason for denying is unclear or incomplete, you may request more details that are in writing. The school may, or may not respond to this and may rely on the PWN document for legal purposes.

3. Consider a Private Evaluation (at your expense)

You may want to consider a private evaluation so that you can better understand your child's condition. This independent assessment, conducted by a professional unaffiliated with the school and funded by the family, can be shared with the school. However, the school is not obligated to agree with the results or implement the recommendations and you will have to pay for this on your own.

4. Request Mediation

If the situation persists, you may consider requesting mediation with the school. Mediation involves a neutral third party assisting in reaching an agreement between you and the school.

5. File a Due Process Complaint

If the school remains unresponsive to your evaluation request, [you can fill a due process complaint](#). This form is simple and you do not have to write pages and pages of information. In most cases you can complete it in 15 minutes! Many parents avoid this step because it can feel scary, but don't worry! If you feel your request for an evaluation has been unjustly denied, you should file a state complaint. You can also reach out to Love Your School for input and support at hello@loveyourschool.org!

6. Consider Professional Help

For additional support, you can consult with an advocate or lawyer. While there is a fee involved, these professionals can guide you through the evaluation process and help you make informed decisions on the next steps to take. You can also reach out to Love Your School for input and support at hello@loveyourschool.org!

More Resources:

[Why your child's school may deny your evaluation request](#)

[Advocates: Parent Support Arizona](#)

[Evaluations Part 2: Next Steps if the School Says 'No' - PAVE](#)

[Raising Special Kids](#)

[School Denies Evaluation Request - Smart Kids.](#)

[Can a School District Refuse to Evaluate a Child for Special Education?](#)