

Mary E. Samples, Assistant Superintendent  
Ventura County Special Education Local Plan Area (SELPA)

# GUIDELINES FOR INDEPENDENT EDUCATIONAL EVALUATION (IEE)



Revised 2014

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## INDEPENDENT EDUCATIONAL EVALUATION

### Legal Authority:

Individuals with Disabilities Education Act: Section 300.502 Independent Educational Evaluation. (20 U.S.C. 1415 (b)(I) and (d)(2)(A); California Education Code Section 56329.

Parents of a student with a disability have the right to obtain an independent educational evaluation subject to the provisions of federal and state law. Parents have the right to an independent evaluation at public expense if they disagree with an evaluation completed by the District (“the District”). Parents may request one independent educational evaluation in response to each evaluation completed by the District within the last two years. If necessary the district should request clarification from the parent regarding which evaluation(s) are in dispute. The term “Evaluation” includes any individual assessment of a child that results in a report that is used by the IEP team to determine eligibility and services.

“Independent Educational Evaluation” (IEE) means an evaluation conducted by a qualified examiner who is not employed by the District.

“Public expense” means that the District either pays for the cost (in accordance with cost limits described herein) of the evaluation or evaluation components or ensures that the evaluation or evaluation components are otherwise provided at no cost to the parent.

If a parent requests an IEE at the District’s expense, the District must document the request, and may ask, but cannot require that a parent provide a statement in writing regarding reasons for disagreement.

Regardless of whether or not parents provide reasons in writing, the District must respond to the request without delay. The District may offer to conduct another evaluation of its own with parent consent (see “Option 1”) (This is not an IEE). If the parent agrees to another district evaluation in lieu of an IEE, the parent’s agreement to withdraw the request should be documented. The district should ask them to revoke their request for an IEE in writing, or ask them to sign that they agreed to the withdrawal.

If the parent does not agree to another District evaluation, the District must respond to the parent’s request by either:

1. Initiating a Due Process hearing to show that the District’s evaluation is appropriate, (See “Option 2”), or
2. Arranging an IEE to be provided at public expense (See “Option 3”).

The district must not unreasonably delay taking action to the parent request, and must give a copy of the Parent/Adult Student Rights (full version) to parents as soon as possible. The district must document all contacts with parents to confirm no undue delays.

If the District initiates a hearing and the final decision is that the District’s evaluation is appropriate, the parents still have the right to an IEE, but not at public expense.

If a Hearing Officer orders an IEE as part of a hearing, the cost of the evaluation will be at the District's expense. (See "Option 3")

See flowchart Appendix A.

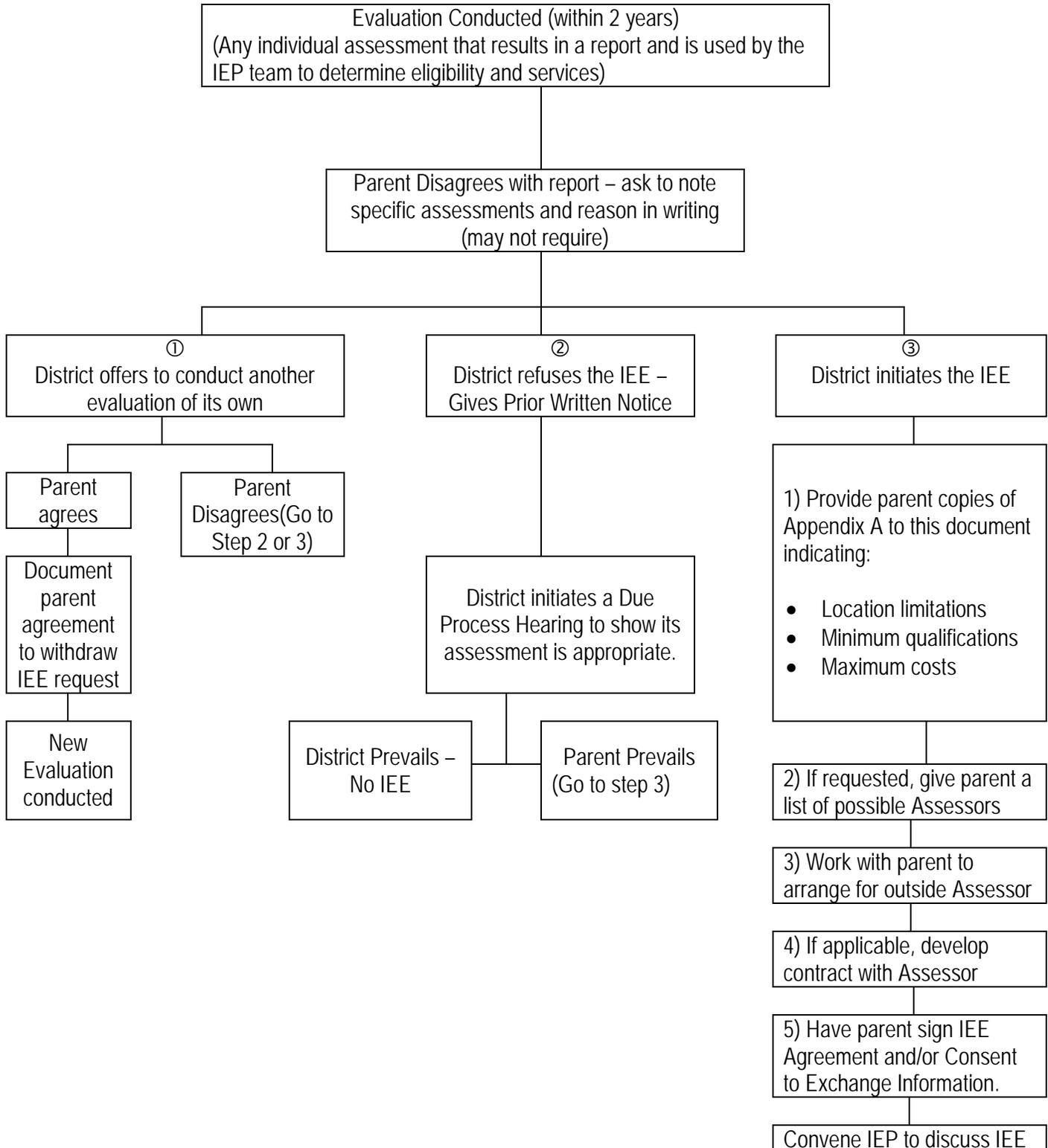
<p><b>Option 1</b></p>	<p>Another assessor within your district or from SELPA Staff. Ideas may include someone who:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Has equal (or better) credentialing/licensure</li> <li>• Has equal (or more) experience assessing students with this disability/area of concern</li> <li>• Is at another school in the district (to remove the emotional factor which may be at the current site)</li> <li>• Has special training which makes them qualified to conduct this assessment.</li> </ul> <p>If district and parent agree to this option, the parents must put in writing that they agree to revoke their request for an IEE. However, parents retain the right to dispute the prior assessment and seek an IEE at a later time.</p>
<p><b>Option 2</b></p>	<p>Initiate a hearing to show the District's Evaluation is Appropriate. Things to consider in deciding whether or not to defend the assessment conducted by your district:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Was the assessment <i>valid</i>? Was the instrument used appropriate for the disability/area of concern? Did the norming sample include children with the same disabilities/area of concern as the student being assessed? Was the test administered according to the directions in the testing manual?</li> <li>• Are the assessment results <i>reliable</i>? Were there no variables that impacted the ability of the assessor to get a true picture of the student? (i.e., student was not ill, tired, hungry, there were no major absences or gaps in the assessment, the testing location was adequate). Do others who know the student (i.e., teacher, paraeducators, other specialists), feel that the results are typical of/commensurate with the student's skills?</li> <li>• Was the assessor <i>qualified</i>? Did the assessor have the appropriate credentials/licensure, training and experience to administer the assessment?</li> <li>• Did the assessment address the concerns articulated by the parents in their disagreement?</li> </ul> <p>If you decide that your assessment is adequate, complete a "Prior Written Notice to Parent of Action" form indicating that you are refusing to pay for an IEE, the reasons why and factors you considered. Next, file a "Notice of Due Process Complaint" with the Office of Administrative Hearings.</p>
<p><b>Option 3</b></p>	<p>Arranging for an IEE at Public Expense</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) Administrator provides parent with a copy of the IEE informational packet (Appendix "B" of these Guidelines)</li> <li>2) District offers parent a list of possible assessors. One source of possible</li> </ol>

assessors is the list of Nonpublic Agencies with whom the SELPA has a Master Contract. (See SELPA website – “Special Education Services”). SELPA personnel may not be considered Independent Educational Evaluators if the SELPA provides that service to the district.

- 3) Parent and Administrator arrange for an outside assessor who meets the requirements for location, qualifications, and maximum cost listed in Appendix B. Costs above the maximum allowable amounts will not be approved unless the parent can demonstrate that unique circumstances justify going above the cost described.
- 4) Parent/district may utilize Agreement for IEE form with consent for exchange of information (Appendix C) and/or parent will be required to sign a release of information authorizing communication with the IEE provider. District may refuse to pay for an IEE if parent refuses to sign consent to exchange information.
- 5) Administrator may develop an Agreement for IEE (Appendix D) for the assessment to be done by the Assessor. Assessor must agree to release their assessment information and results (including protocols) directly to the district before receiving payment from the district.
- 6) Standard Assessment Plan should not be used. (It would imply a 60-day timeline, which is not applicable).
- 7) Assessment is conducted. If assessment will include observation, give copy of “Guidelines for Observations by Independent Education Assessors” (Appendix E) to the Assessor. Copy of report is forwarded to district and parent.
- 8) IEP Team reconvenes to discuss the new Assessment Report. IEE Assessor may attend IEP meeting to review the report and to address any questions from IEP team members.

## Appendix A

### INDEPENDENT EDUCATIONAL EVALUATION IEE FLOWCHART



**Information Packet for  
Parents Requesting an  
Independent Education Evaluation (IEE)  
at Public Expense**

From “Guidelines for Independent Educational Evaluation (IEE) Assessment,”  
Ventura County SELPA  
[www.venturacountyselpa.com](http://www.venturacountyselpa.com)

## Independent Educational Evaluations

**Please read this entire document before obtaining or paying for an IEE. Your right to reimbursement may be limited.**

The Ventura County Special Education Local Plan Area ("SELPA") has developed this policy and the corresponding procedures and criteria which govern independent educational evaluations ("IEEs") in accordance with federal and state special education law. (See 20 U.S.C. § 1415; 34 C.F.R. § 300.502; California Education Code §§ 56506(c) and 56329(b).) Parents<sup>1</sup> should read this entire document carefully. The policies, procedures, and criteria are intended to be read in conjunction with one another as one comprehensive document. Parents who need additional information about IEEs should contact the school district from which you are requesting an IEE ("District")<sup>2</sup>. Before obtaining an IEE, please contact the District to discuss your questions and options. If your questions are not resolved by the District, you may contact the SELPA for additional clarification or assistance in communicating with the District. Note that the District will not automatically reimburse parents who unilaterally obtain IEEs. Please review this document for further information about a parent's right to obtain IEEs at public expense.

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<sup>1</sup> Parent means any of the following: (1) a biological or adoptive parent of a child; (2) a foster parent if the authority of the biological or adoptive parents to make educational decisions on the child's behalf specifically has been limited by court order in accordance with Section 300.30(b)(1) or (2) of Title 34 of the Code of Federal Regulations; (3) a guardian generally authorized to act as the child's parent, or authorized to make educational decisions for the child, including a responsible adult appointed for the child in accordance with Sections 361 and 726 of the California Welfare and Institutions Code; (4) an individual acting in the place of a biological or adoptive parent, including a grandparent, stepparent, or other relative, with whom the child lives, or an individual who is legally responsible for the child's welfare; (5) a surrogate parent who has been appointed pursuant to Section 7579.5 or 7579.6 of the California Government Code, and in accordance with Section 300.519 of Title 34 of the Code of Federal Regulations and Section 1439(a)(5) of Title 20 of the United States Code. The biological or adoptive parent, when attempting to act as the parent when more than one party is qualified to act as a parent, shall be presumed to be the parent unless the biological or adoptive parent does not have legal authority to make educational decisions for the child. If a judicial decree or order identifies a specific person or persons to act as the "parent" of a child or to make educational decisions on behalf of a child, then that person or persons shall be determined to be the "parent." Parent does not include the state or any political subdivision of government. Parent does not include a nonpublic, nonsectarian school or agency under contract with a local educational agency for the provision of special education or designated instruction and services for a child.

<sup>2</sup> For purposes of this policy, District includes the Ventura County Office of Education ("VCOE") if VCOE is the local educational agency. It does not include VCOE if VCOE is only the service provider or assessor that completed an assessment on behalf of the student's district of residence.

## I. DEFINITIONS

Independent educational evaluation (IEE) means an evaluation conducted by a qualified evaluator who is not employed by the District.

Public expense means that the school district either pays for the full cost of the evaluation or ensures that the evaluation is otherwise provided at no cost to the parent.

## II. POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

### IEE Requests

Parents have the right to an IEE at public expense if they disagree with an evaluation completed by the District. Parents may only request one publicly-funded IEE for each evaluation completed by the District with which they disagree. The request for an IEE must be received within **less than two years' time** from the date of the District's evaluation. If the request for an IEE is received one year or more from the date of completion of the District's evaluation, or if conditions warrant, the District may ask to complete a reevaluation in addition to responding to the parent's request for an IEE.

To initiate an IEE request, a parent must indicate in writing to the District, or communicate the request to District personnel in some other manner (e.g. during an individualized education program ("IEP") team meeting) that the parent:

1. Disagrees with a District evaluation; and
2. Requests an IEE at public expense.

The District may ask for the parent's reason(s) for disagreeing with the District's evaluation. However, the District may not require the parent to provide an explanation regarding his or her disagreement, and may not unnecessarily delay either providing the IEE at public expense or initiating a due process hearing to defend its evaluation because the parent has not provided such an explanation.

### Responding to an IEE Request

Once the parent communicates his or her disagreement with the District's evaluation and requests an IEE at public expense, either in writing or at an IEP team meeting, District staff will notify the District's administrator responsible for special education. The District will provide the parent with a copy of this IEE policy and a copy of the District's notice of parental rights and procedural safeguards. The District will, without unnecessary delay, proceed with providing an IEE at public expense unless the District initiates a due process hearing on the appropriateness of its assessment.

If the District determines that it will initiate a due process hearing to establish the appropriateness of its evaluation, the District will notify the parent of such decision in writing prior to filing a due process hearing complaint. This written notice shall include all of the elements of prior written notice as required by section 300.503(b) of Title 34 of the Code of Federal Regulations.

If the District agrees to provide an IEE at public expense, the District will work collaboratively with the parent, at parent request, to identify potential IEE evaluator(s). Alternatively, parent may provide, in writing, his or her preferred evaluator(s). District and parent may utilize the Agreement for Independent Education Evaluation form and/or parent will be required to sign a release and exchange of information authorizing the District to communicate directly with the parent's chosen independent evaluator.

The District may directly contract with the independent evaluator for the IEE. Alternatively, the District may issue payment to the independent evaluator for the costs of the IEE following its receipt of the items listed in Section IV, District Payment of IEE Costs, below.

If the District initiates a due process hearing and the hearing officer issues a final decision finding that the District's evaluation is appropriate, the parent will still have the right to obtain an IEE, but not at the District's expense.

If a hearing officer orders an IEE as part of a due process hearing decision, the costs of the IEE must be at District's expense.

If the parent obtains an IEE at private expense or through an agency other than the District and shares the IEE with the District, the results of the IEE:

1. Must be considered by the District, if the evaluation meets the agency criteria set forth in Section III below, in any decision made with respect to the provision of a free appropriate public education ("FAPE") to the student; and
2. May be presented as evidence at a due process hearing or other proceeding regarding the student.

### **III. AGENCY CRITERIA**

The criteria under which an IEE is obtained at public expense, including the location limitations for the evaluation, minimum qualifications of the evaluator, cost limitations, and use of approved instruments must be the same as the criteria that the District uses when it initiates its own evaluation of the student.

Parents shall have the opportunity to demonstrate that unique circumstances justify a waiver of any of the criteria noted below.

#### Location Limitations for Evaluators

Evaluators must be located within Ventura County, Los Angeles County, or Santa Barbara County. Evaluators outside of this area will be approved only on an exceptional basis, provided the parent can demonstrate the necessity of using personnel outside the specified area. Any expenses beyond the evaluation and attendance of the evaluator at the subsequent IEP team meeting at which the IEE is considered (e.g., food, lodging, transportation, etc.) will not be covered by the District in the cost of the IEE.

#### Minimum Qualifications of Independent Evaluators

Independent evaluators must have the following minimum credentials. All licenses and

credentials must be issued by the appropriate agency or board with the State of California:

Academic Achievement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Credentialed Special Education Teacher</li> <li>• School Psychologist</li> <li>• Licensed Educational Psychologist</li> </ul>
Adaptive Behavior	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Credentialed Special Education Teacher;</li> <li>• School Psychologist</li> <li>• Licensed Educational Psychologist</li> </ul>
Adapted Physical Education	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Credentialed Adapted PE teacher</li> </ul>
Assistive Technology	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Credentialed or Licensed Speech/Language Pathologist;</li> <li>• Credentialed Assistive Technology Specialist; or</li> <li>• Credentialed Special Education Teacher</li> </ul>
Auditory Acuity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Licensed Educational Audiologist</li> <li>• Licensed or Credentialed Speech/Language Pathologist</li> </ul>
Auditory Perception/Auditory Processing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Licensed or Credentialed Speech/Language Pathologist;</li> <li>• School Psychologist</li> <li>• Licensed Educational Psychologist</li> </ul>
Functional Behavior Assessment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• School Psychologist;</li> <li>• Licensed Educational Psychologist;</li> <li>• Board Certified Behavior Analyst</li> </ul>
Cognitive	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Licensed Educational Psychologist</li> <li>• School Psychologist</li> </ul>
Health (including Neurological)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Licensed Physician</li> <li>• School or Registered Nurse</li> </ul>
Motor	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Licensed Physical Therapist;</li> <li>• Licensed Occupational Therapist;</li> <li>• Credentialed Teacher of Students with Orthopedic Impairments</li> <li>• Credentialed Adapted PE Teacher</li> </ul>
Occupational Therapy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Licensed Occupational Therapist</li> </ul>
Physical Therapy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Licensed Physical Therapist</li> </ul>
Speech and Language	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Credentialed or Licensed Speech/Language Pathologist</li> </ul>
Social/Emotional	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• School Psychologist;</li> <li>• Licensed Educational Psychologist</li> <li>• Licensed Clinical Social Worker</li> <li>• Licensed Marriage and Family Therapist</li> </ul>
Visual Acuity/Developmental Vision	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Licensed Ophthalmologist;</li> <li>• Optometrist</li> <li>• Credentialed Teacher of the Students with Visual Impairments</li> </ul>

Functional Vision	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Credentialed Teacher of the Students with Visual Impairments</li> </ul>
Vision Perception/Visual Processing/Visual-Motor Integration	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Credentialed Special Education Teacher</li> <li>• School Psychologist</li> <li>• Licensed Educational Psychologist</li> </ul>
Orientation and Mobility	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Credentialed Teacher of Students with Visual Impairments</li> </ul>
Transition to Adult Life	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Credentialed Special Education Teacher</li> </ul>

The parent may request a list of suggested IEE assessors who meet the agency criteria; but the parent is not required to select from the list provided.

In-Class Observations

If the District observed the student in a setting other than the test setting as part of the evaluation with which the parent disagrees, or if the District’s evaluation procedures make it permissible to have in-class observations of a student, the independent evaluator shall receive an equivalent opportunity to observe the student in his or her current educational placement and setting and to observe the District’s proposed educational setting, if any. This opportunity shall also be provided regardless of whether the IEE is initiated before or after the filing of a due process hearing proceeding.

The District shall define the nature and scope of an independent evaluator’s in-class observations consistent with the evaluator’s right to an equivalent opportunity to observe, but also consistent with the District’s obligations to prevent unnecessary disruption in the class and to protect the privacy interests of other students. These obligations may include, but are not limited to:

1. Specifying the time constraints of the observation;
2. Identifying District personnel who will be present during the observation; and
3. Imposing restrictions on interactions with the student, teacher, and/or classroom staff.

Cost Limitations

The cost of an IEE shall be comparable to those costs that the District incurs when it uses its own employees or contractors to perform a similar evaluation. Such costs include:

1. Observations;
2. Administration and scoring of tests;
3. Report writing; and
4. Attendance in person or by phone at an IEP team meeting.

The following is a list of evaluations and their associated costs that the District has determined to be reasonable. In the event the parent requests an IEE that exceeds the cost limitations specified below, the parent must demonstrate that unique circumstances justify a waiver of such cost limitations.

Academic Achievement	\$ 750
Adaptive Behavior	\$ 600

Adapted Physical Education	\$ 500
Assistive Technology	\$ 800
Auditory Acuity	\$ 450
Auditory Perception/Auditory Processing	\$ 500
Functional Behavior Assessment	\$ 2,000
Cognitive	\$ 850
Health (including Neurological)	\$ 350
Motor	\$ 750
Occupational Therapy	\$ 750
Physical Therapy	\$ 750
Speech and Language	\$ 1,000
Social/Emotional	\$ 850
Visual Acuity/Developmental Vision	\$ 450
Functional Vision	\$ 350
Vision Perception/Visual Processing/Visual-Motor Integration	\$ 500
Orientation and Mobility	\$ 350
Transition to Adult Life	\$ 500

Based on the cost limitations contained in this chart, the cost limitation for a psycho-educational IEE is \$4,050. Costs include assessment, report writing and IEP participation.

#### **IV. District Payment of IEE Costs**

The District will issue payment to the independent evaluator for the costs of the IEE following the District's receipt of:

1. A written IEE assessment report prepared by the independent evaluator;
2. A copy of any and all assessment protocols utilized to conduct the IEE; and
3. Detailed invoice(s), including dates of assessment and observation and hourly rates.

#### Insurance Coverage

When insurance will cover all, or a portion of, the costs of the IEE, the District will request that parents voluntarily ask their insurance carrier to pay the costs of the IEE covered by their insurance policy. However, the District will not ask parents to have their insurance carrier cover the costs of the IEE if it will result in a financial cost to the parents including, but not limited to the following:

1. A decrease in available lifetime coverage or any other benefit under an insurance policy;
2. A increase in premiums or the discontinuance of the policy; or
3. An out-of-pocket expense, such as payment of a deductible amount incurred in filing a claim, unless the parent is willing to have the District provide reimbursement for the amount of the deductible.

The IEP team will consider the results of the IEE, whether obtained at public or private expense, when making a determination regarding the student's eligibility for special education and related services, educational placement, and other components of the student's educational program, as

required by federal and California special education laws and regulations. However, the results of an IEE will not control the District's determinations and may not be considered if not completed by a qualified professional, as determined by the District.

# Appendix C



**Ventura County Special Education Local Plan Area**  
5100 Adolfo Road, Camarillo, CA 93012  
(805) 437-1560 FAX (805) 437-1599  
[www.venturacountyselpa.com](http://www.venturacountyselpa.com)

Mary E. Samples, Assistant Superintendent

## Ventura County SELPA Parent/District Agreement for Independent Education Evaluation (IEE)

This will serve as evidence of agreement between [Click here to enter text.](#), parent(s), guardian, or surrogate of [Click here to enter text.](#) and the [Click here to enter text.](#) School District for Independent Educational Evaluation, paid for by the school district, as follows:

Area(s) of Assessment: [Click here to enter text.](#)  
Name of Assessor: [Click here to enter text.](#)  
Qualifications of Assessor: [Click here to enter text.](#)

Assessor will be present at the IEP meeting by telephone or in person to share findings: no yes  
telephone in person

It is agreed that the area(s) of assessment are limited to those specified above. The Assessor meets minimum qualifications as specified in Ventura County SELPA Guidelines, unless parent/district have agreed to an exception(s). (Note any exceptions here) [Click here to enter text.](#)

Assessment to be administered in [Click here to enter text.](#) language.

The District agrees to pay all costs for the above assessments, in an amount not to exceed \_\_\_\_\_ . See attached Agreement for Independent Educational Evaluation.

Parent/Guardian/Surrogate signature below indicates agreement for District to exchange with the Assessor reports and other information from the student's educational file necessary to conduct the evaluation, and for Assessor to forward copies of protocols, report and findings to the District.

All parties agree that any services, materials, and/or equipment that may be recommended based on review of this IEE by the IEP team shall not be provided by the assessor and/or his/her agents.

Signatures:

\_\_\_\_\_  
District Representative                      [Click here to enter text.](#)                      [Click here to enter text.](#)  
Title    Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Parent/Guardian/Surrogate                      [Click here to enter text.](#)  
Date

# Appendix D

**VENTURA COUNTY SELPA  
AGREEMENT FOR INDEPENDENT EDUCATIONAL EVALUATION**

<b>Local Education Agency (LEA)</b>					
<b>Address</b>					
<b>City, State Zip</b>					
<b>LEA Case Manager</b>					
<b>Phone and E-Mail</b>					
<b>Student Last Name</b>				<b>Student First Name</b>	
<b>Grade</b>		<b>D.OB.</b>		<b>Sex</b>	( ) M ( ) F
<b>Parent/Guardian Last Name</b>		<b>Parent/Guardian First Name</b>			
<b>Address</b>					
<b>City, State, Zip</b>					
<b>Home Phone</b>		<b>Work</b>		<b>Cell</b>	
<b>Parent/Guardian Last Name</b>		<b>Parent/Guardian First Name</b>			
<b>Address</b>					
<b>City, State, Zip</b>					
<b>Home Phone</b>		<b>Work</b>		<b>Cell</b>	
<b>Assessor</b>					
<b>Address</b>					
<b>City, State, Zip</b>					
<b>Phone</b>			<b>Fax</b>		
<b>E-Mail</b>					

**ESTIMATED MAXIMUM COST \$** \_\_\_\_\_

Other Provisions/Attachments: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**-IEE PROVIDER-**

**-SCHOOL DISTRICT-**

\_\_\_\_\_  
(Name of Assessor)

\_\_\_\_\_  
(Name of School District)

\_\_\_\_\_  
(Signature) (Date)

\_\_\_\_\_  
(Signature) (Date)

\_\_\_\_\_  
(Name and Title)

\_\_\_\_\_  
(Name of Superintendent or Authorized Designee)

### **GUIDELINES FOR OBSERVATIONS BY INDEPENDENT EDUCATIONAL ASSESSORS**

Outside evaluators have the right to observe a Special Education student in his or her current placement or any placement proposed by the educational agency if the public agency's assessment includes, or its assessment procedures permit, such an observation.

- The length of the observation and the location(s) of the observation will be agreed to consistent with district policies regarding observations and any observation by the examiner will be equivalent to what the district's assessors did or would be allowed to do.
- The independent educational assessor will notify the District Special Education Administrator of their request to schedule an observation in writing prior to the date of the observation.
- The District Special Education Administrator may coordinate with the Site Administrator and independent educational assessor to determine a mutually agreeable time and place for the observation. Observations will be limited to one independent evaluator per day.
- The District Special Education Administrator may assign a district staff member to meet the independent assessor and accompany him/her during the observation.
- In order to protect the privacy of other students, there will be no videotaping or recording during observations. There will be no direct contact with students.
- If the independent assessor wishes to discuss the observation with district staff, advance notification of this request will be necessary, so that adequate coverage of students can be arranged.