

## **BEST PRACTICES FOR THE COMMUNICATION OF PSYCHOLOGICAL EVALUATION RESULTS AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

In school settings, students are referred to school psychologists and other evaluation specialists to help determine their educational needs. School personnel and parents can use information from psychological evaluations to answer questions about student's achievement and behavior and to plan meaningful educational and other intervention programs. Because of the importance placed on psychological assessments, persons responsible for assessing students in educational settings must possess a variety of competencies and professional skills as determined by requisite licensure and/or certification.

Typically, students are referred to the school psychologist to answer specific questions regarding their skills, abilities, and behaviors. Because each student is unique, the use of specific assessment methods and instruments is guided by the context of the student's functioning and the reason(s) for the referral. Therefore, in order to interpret and report the results of the evaluation accurately, it is critical that the context of the assessment be addressed. Substantial loss in interpretive meaning may occur when someone other than the person who conducted the evaluation interprets assessment information. This can occur even when the individual interpreting the evaluation is another school psychologist. For this reason, the evaluation specialist who examined the student is best able to convey the context of the assessment and to integrate the assessment information into meaningful educational programs, plans and recommendations.

School administrators should consider the loss of contextual information that occurs when the school psychologist who conducted the assessment is unable to attend planning, eligibility, or Individual Education Plan meetings. A similar loss of contextual information would occur if a substitute teacher were to present the student's performance records in place of the regular teacher. It is, therefore, best practice for the individual who conducted the evaluation to present the results, interpretations, and recommendations at conferences and meetings. This will help to ensure that the report, based on these results, effectively conveys contextual information and that assessment data are accurately interpreted and clearly understood.

If participation at conferences and meetings by the school psychologist who conducted the evaluation is impossible or infeasible, a similarly qualified psychologist who can discuss it clearly and effectively should present the psychological report.

*Approved by the FASP Executive Board 7/25/00*

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