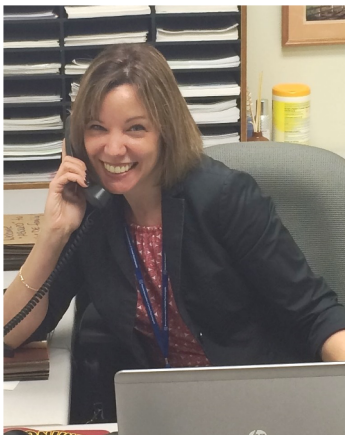# "MacGyvering" Educational Evaluations During and After the Closures

Arizona Association of School

Psychologists

aasp-az.org

Meet Your Presenters

Claudia Weiss, Ed.S., NCSP
AASP Communications
Committee
School Psychologist
Agua Fria Union HS District

Jennifer Kirkpatrick, Ph.D.
AASP Communications
Committee Chairperson
Assistant Professor of
Practice, EdS Program
Director, University of AZ,
Tucson

Jennifer Ostrom, Ph.D., NCSP
AASP ADE Liaison
Social Behavioral Health
Coordinator
Tempe Elementary
School District

Review of Spring Recommendations

AASP Best Practice Paper

Limitations of tele-assessment

Recommendations for completing already-initiated evaluations

State and Federal Guidelines

- **Office for Civil Rights (OCR) Covid Fact Sheet**
    - Delay face to face assessment or observations
    - Conduct evaluations and reevaluations without above as long as parent consents
- **Arizona Department of Education**
    - School's out re: parent referrals
    - No ability to waive timelines, including 45-day screenings
    - Address exceeded timelines in Prior Written Notices
- **National & Arizona Association of School Psychologists (NASP & AASP)**
    - Use ethical problem-solving model
    - Consider existing data
    - Stay within the scope of your expertise

AASP
Arizona Association
of School Psychologists

Current State of Evaluations

- What are you doing in your district?

- In-person testing?

- What kind of PPE are you using?

- Are you comfortable?

- Are you using a waiver?

Current State of Evaluations (cont.)

Once schools re-opened, evaluation timelines continued

Schools are now completing open evaluations requiring in-person testing, most using extensive PPE.

Schools are thoughtfully completing re-evaluations and continue to determine what specific data is needed
to re-determine eligibility

Evaluation vs. Assessment vs. Testing

Evaluation is the process of systematically reviewing data as a team to determine eligibility

Assessment is when qualified personnel collect quantitative and/or qualitative data to be used by a team to determine eligibility

Testing is when qualified personnel use psychometric instruments to collect quantitative data to be used by a determine eligibility

AASP ψ
Arizona Association
of School Psychologists

Term	Appear in Law[1]	Explanation	Practice
Evaluation	Yes	The process of systematically reviewing data within a team process to make determination about SPED services.	LEA convene an IEP meeting and review data related to SPED services. Can be face to face or virtual.
Assessment	Yes	Qualified personnel collect data (quantitative and/or qualitative) using different methods which will be used in the team process to make determination about SPED services.	Multi-disciplinary team members use both quantitative and qualitative data collection methods to provide best data for team decision.
Testing	No	Qualified personnel using psychometric instruments to collect quantitative data as part of an assessment to be used in the team evaluation process.	SP using norm-referenced standardized tests.

Completing Evaluations without Testing

Re-evaluations: Do you have enough data to document the continued presence of a disability and need for specialized services?

Examples

The student was identified in kindergarten with a SID eligibility. This is the 2nd triennial for the student.

The student receives services under OHI due to inattention. Before closure, teachers were concerned about withdrawal and engagement.

Guidelines for In-Person Testing

Extensive Record Review

Structured Interviews

Observations

Preparation Work for Safety

Safety Procedures During Testing

Safety Procedures After Testing

Consider SEL and Mental Health Needs

Guidelines for Virtual Testing

Proceed with caution!

Know limits of the instruments you're using

Currently available standardized tests were not designed for virtual administration

Validity issues

Are tests measuring what they intended to measure (cognitive ability)?

Guidelines for Virtual Testing (cont.)

Don't use unsupported practices during a crisis
  Children, families, school personnel under heightened
  social-emotional stress

Document all deviations from standardized test practices, justification for these deviations, and their potential impact on test results.

Guidelines/Options for Classroom Observations

IDEA Definition of Classroom Observation: The public agency must ensure that the child is observed in the child's learning environment (including the regular classroom setting) to document the child's academic performance and behavior in the areas of difficulty.

Options:

Observe in virtual settings (multiple classes if possible)

Supplement observations with input from teacher

Supplement observations with input from parent

SLD Determination Recommendations (NASP, 2020)

What pre-closure data are available?

Consider exclusionary criteria and retention/recoupment

Only test in areas necessary for eligibility determination

--If no concerns about cognitive ability do we need cognitive tests?

--Use targeted assessment in areas of concern (e.g., assessment in math only for a concern in math)

Consider the ramifications of over or under identification

Scenarios

An evaluation was started in February of 2020. Only parts of the achievement and cognitive tests were administered. How should the team proceed?

Scenarios (slide 2 of 4)

A parent requests an evaluation for her 7th grade student due to concerns about ADHD (previous medical diagnosis). The student participates in instruction virtually from a school site monitored by a teaching assistant. The current 7th grade team has only interacted with the student virtually. In-person observations show that the student does not differ significantly from others in the same environment. How should the team proceed?

Scenarios (slide 4 of 4)

A school psychologist begins her first cognitive test with a 5th grader as a part of his re-evaluation. Within the first 10 minutes of testing, the student removes his mask and refuses to wear it. What are appropriate next steps?

References

California Association of School Psychologists. (2020). School psychology practice during COVID series #1: Assessment guidance.
https://casponline.org/pdfs/publications/covid/CASP%20Online%20Assessment%20Resource%20Paper.pdf

Farmer, R. L., McGill, R. J., Dombrowski, S. C., Benson, N. F., Smith-Kellen, S., Lockwood, A. B., Powell, S., Pynn, C. & Stinnett, T. A. (2020). Conducting Psychoeducational Assessments During the COVID-19 Crisis: The Danger of Good Intentions. *Contemporary School Psychology*, 1-6. https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC7265873/

National Association of School Psychologists. (2020). The pandemic's impact on special education evaluations and SLD identification. https://www.nasponline.org/resources-and-publications/resources-and-podcasts/covid-19-resource-center/return-to-school/the-pandemics-impact-on-special-education-evaluations-and-sld-identification

References (cont)

Wright, A.J. (2018a). Equivalence of remote, online administration and traditional, face-to-face administration of the Woodcock-Johnson IV cognitive and achievement tests. Archives of Assessment Psychology, 8(1), 23-35. https://www.presencelearning.com/app/uploads/2016/09/WJ-IV_Online_Remote_whitepaper_FINAL.pdf

Wright, A. J. (2018b). Equivalence of remote, online administration and traditional, face-to-face administration of the Reynolds Intellectual Assessment Scales-Second Edition. [White paper]. Psychological Assessment Resources, Inc. https://www.parinc.com/Products/Pkey/365

Wright, J. A. (2020). Equivalence of remote, digital administration and tradition, in-person administration of the Wechsler Intelligence Scale for Children, Fifth Edition (WISC-V). Psychological Assessment, 32 (9), 809-817.

Thank you!

Arizona Association of School Psychologists (AASP)

Jennifer Ostrom, AASP ADE Liaison

Jennifer.ostrom@aasp-az.org

Jennifer Kirkpatrick, AASP Communications Chairperson

jennifer.kirkpatrick@aasp-az.org

Claudia Weiss, AASP Communications Chairperson Emeritus

claudia.weiss@aasp-az.org