



Special Education Department

Anna ISD Early Childhood Assessment Information

All meetings and evaluations will take place at the Anna Education Center or "AEC". When you arrive at the school, please make sure that you check-in at the front office.

Location: **Anna Education Center, 601 S Sherley Rd. Anna, TX 75409**

What will happen now?

Once you complete the Early Childhood Referral Form, you will be contacted by a member of our Early childhood evaluation team to schedule an evaluation planning/ consent meeting.

What is a Consent Meeting?

This initial meeting usually lasts between twenty and thirty minutes. Please bring your child with you if possible. At this meeting we will discuss your concerns, complete a hearing and vision screening, take a picture of your child, complete paperwork, and schedule the evaluation. Based on the concerns/needs of your child, as a team we will discuss the type of evaluation that needs to be completed. Typically, the most appropriate assessment is a transdisciplinary play based assessment. *Note: Due to Covid-19 restrictions, this meeting may take place virtually via zoom. *

What is a TPBA?

A Transdisciplinary Play Based Assessment is a format for assessing all aspects of a child's development during play. We are observing each developmental area separately, but also how they work together to make your child who they are.

- **Communication skills:** how your child understands and utilizes language in their daily lives. This includes all areas of communication such as non-verbal language, verbal language, social language, and articulation (how a child produces sounds).
- **Cognitive and Academic skills:** how your child attends, remembers, thinks, and plays.
- **Motor skills:** how your child uses their motor skills to navigate the environment as well as to complete tasks.
- **Social and Emotional Development:** how your child relates to others, understands themselves in relation to others and manages behavior.
- **Adaptive Behavior (Self-help skills):** how your child takes care of daily needs such as feeding, dressing, and toileting.

What should I expect on the day of the assessment?

The parent facilitator and/or play facilitator will meet you at the front office to escort you to our very exciting playroom. Once you arrive, there will be several other people waiting in the room. You may see any of the following team members: diagnostician, licensed specialist in school psychology, speech-language pathologist, occupational therapist, physical therapist, and/or a preschool teacher. Although there may be a lot of adults in the room, your child will mainly be interacting with the play facilitator. The play facilitator's role is to focus on your child as they play and interact with materials in the room. This type of guided and structured play allows us to see a full picture of your child's skills across all developmental areas. The other team members may interview you about your child's abilities and how your child interacts at home versus in the playroom. After all, you are the expert on your child!

What should you bring?

- Forms: If there are any forms that we sent home with you at your last meeting, please remember to bring them back completed.
- Snack and drink: please bring a preferred snack and drink for your child to enjoy so that we can gain a better understanding of their feeding and fine motor skills.
- Familiar toy: If your child has a favorite, small toy please bring it. Sometimes a toy of their own helps them feel more secure as we get started with the assessment.
- Please try to leave siblings at home. Often times they get excited with all the toys and want to play as well. This can impact the evaluation and can prevent the team from getting an accurate depiction of your child.

How long does the assessment last?

Generally, an evaluation lasts for an hour to an hour and a half. Typically, we are able to gather all the information we need between the consent meeting and the evaluation session. However, if we did not get an accurate picture of your child's skills (they were very shy, having an off day, etc) or if we see additional areas of concern and need to pull in additional evaluation staff we may ask you to come back for a second evaluation meeting.

What if my child attends a Preschool/Daycare?

If your child currently attends a mother's day out, preschool, or daycare etc. we will ask you for a consent to release information to be able to get teacher input and complete a daycare observation if needed. This will be discussed more in depth at the consent meeting.

What if formal testing is recommended?

If formal testing is recommended instead of a TPBA, the speech pathologist or educational diagnostician will work with your child one on one with a standardized testing instrument. You will wait in the front lobby while the testing is completed to comply with standardized testing requirements to ensure validity and reliability of the tests.

When do I get the results?

After we finish the assessment, we will share with you some of the skills that your child demonstrated for us and possible areas of improvement. We may ask for additional input to gain a better understanding of your child's skills. We will not be able to give you definitive results until the evaluation team has met and discussed our assessment findings and completed our report. As a group, we will collaborate to write the evaluation report with results and recommendations.

When do I get the evaluation report?

According to the Texas Education Agency, the evaluation team has 45 school days from date consent was signed to complete the evaluation process and evaluation report. Our goal is to complete the report as quickly as we can, before the end of our legal time frame. We appreciate your patience as we collaborate as a team to determine the best educational plan for your child. Once the report is completed, you will receive your copy of the report via email from one of our evaluation team members. You will also receive a time and date for our Individual Education Plan (IEP) meeting.

What is an ARD/IEP meeting?

An ARD meeting (sometimes referred to as an IEP meeting) is a meeting to discuss the results of the evaluation. During this time, we (as a committee) will determine if your child is eligible for special education services. If your child meets state guidelines and is eligible for services, we will also discuss an educational plan to best meet your child's needs. This meeting will take place no later than 30 calendar days following the date of the evaluation report.

What will services look like?

If your child meets eligibility for special education, the ARD committee will consider your child's least restrictive environment. The ARD committee will make the determination based on the data provided in the Full and Individual Evaluation report. The public school program for young children, ages 3-5, is called the **Early Childhood Special Education (ECSE)** (*formally called Preschool Program for Children with Disabilities (PPCD)*). Just like services in grades K-12, there is a continuum of placements available for children age 3-5. Here are some options the ARD committee will consider/discuss if your child qualifies for special education services:

WALK-IN SPEECH:

Walk-in speech therapy services are provided on an appointment style basis. The parent/caregiver will bring the child to the school generally one to two times weekly for speech therapy. The appointments are typically thirty minutes. (The frequency and duration will be determined by the ARD committee). The therapist and parent/caregiver will determine the best day/time for services. Therapy is provided/supervised by a speech language pathologist. The therapist will target the speech/language goals set by the ARD committee through modeling correct vocabulary and grammar, and the use of repetition exercises to build language skills. Articulation, or sound production, exercises involve having the **therapist** model correct sounds and syllables in words and sentences for a **child**, often during play activities. Children may be seen individually or in a small group for a session to target their specific needs.

COMMUNICATION CLASS:

Communication class offers speech services in a small-group preschool classroom environment. This class provides an intensive language rich environment led by a speech language professional. The communication class is a literacy based phonology group that utilizes a modified Hodson's cycles approach. This program is primarily for students who need **speech-language therapy without any other instructional/functional supports**. This program is generally recommended for students that have a moderate to severe impairment in the area of speech and/or language. Students are seen on Tuesdays and Thursdays for 90 minutes in either the morning session or afternoon session.

INTEGRATED PRE-KINDERGARTEN CLASS (IPK):

The integrated pre-k program offers an active, supportive environment in which preschool students with special needs and typical peers learn together through developmentally appropriate, curriculum based activities and experiences. The integrated pre-k class is for children between three and five years of age who require special education programming as well as students who are typically developing. The integrated class helps ensure strong and appropriate peer modeling. The teachers are dually certified as general and special education teachers. The majority (at least 51%) of the classroom is typically developing peers. This classroom values inclusion as the optimal method of teaching children with disabilities. Students with and without disabilities benefit from this philosophy, as the classes provide a rich, language-based curriculum with a multi-sensory, developmental approach to teaching. This classroom is typically provided for children with disabilities who do not require a small staff to student ratio the majority of their day to make progress on their goals. Therapies (Speech, Occupational, Physical etc) as outlined in the ARD will be provided through direct/in class support. This class is 5 days weekly for 180 minutes (half day) or 360 minutes (full day) depending on the age and needs of your child.

ECSE-Self Contained (EARLY CHILDHOOD SPECIAL EDUCATION CLASS)(ECSE-SC):

Like the integrated pre-k program, this class offers an active, supportive environment in which preschool students with special needs through developmentally appropriate, curriculum based as well as functional activities and experiences. The ECSE-SC class is typically for children between three and five years of age who require special education programming to support needs across multiple areas. (i.e. cognitive, social/emotional, behavior, pre-academic, adaptive/functional skills, communication). The ECSE-SC class helps ensure a smaller staff to student ratio to provide intensive support and intervention. This classroom also values inclusion as the optimal method of helping students generalize skills learned. Students in this classroom will receive inclusion support with typical peers during breakfast/lunch, recess and PE as well as inclusion time in the IPK classroom as appropriate. Students benefit from this philosophy, as the classes provide a goal-based curriculum with a multi-sensory, developmental approach to teaching. Some students benefit from being placed in a smaller classroom with students who have similar educational needs. This classroom is typically recommended for students who require a lower student to teacher ratio to help them to grasp educational/developmental concepts, and overcome challenges that would hold them back in other classroom formats. Therapies (Speech, Occupational, Physical etc) as outlined in the ARD will be provided through direct/in class support. This class is 5 days weekly for 180 minutes (half day) or 360 minutes (full day) depending on the age and needs of your child.

The ARD committee will make the placement determination based on data provided in the Full and Individual Evaluation.

If your child does meet eligibility for services, please note that prior to services beginning your child must be enrolled in Anna ISD. You will receive an email with the link for the enrollment process. You will need proof of residence, birth certificate, social security card, shot record, and copy of parent driver's license. For enrollment related questions please contact aecregistration@annaisd.org.

For additional questions, please contact Nicole DuLaney at Nicole.Dulaney@annaisd.org or 972-924-1037.

We look forward to seeing you and your child soon!

The Anna ISD Preschool Evaluation Team