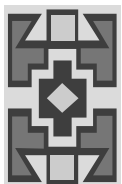
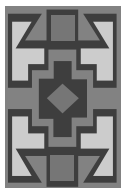
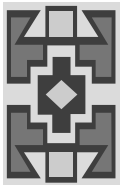


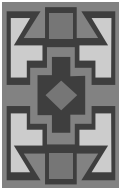
Tier III: The Multidisciplinary Evaluation Process



When a student is referred to the SAT because a concern is raised, the team members are responsible for collecting information about the student and forming a hypothesis about the possible factors contributing to the student’s difficulties. The SAT first considers specific factors in three broad categories: general health and well-being, language proficiency, and academic achievement. These factors are assessed for all students through the general screening process at Tier I. Based on its hypothesis, the SAT then determines how the student’s needs may best be met through Tier II interventions, which are designed to remove obstacles that may be in the way of the child’s path to learning. If, after implementing carefully designed interventions used within the regular education setting, the SAT determines that the student has not demonstrated a significant and positive response to intervention or that the student’s needs fall outside the range of general education, the SAT has several avenues of further referral. These program options include Title I, Indian Education, Bilingual Education, Multidisciplinary Evaluation for Special Education, 504 Accommodation, community agencies, or other programs and supports. When considering referring a student for a Multidisciplinary Evaluation, the SAT must keep in mind that **the purpose of a Multidisciplinary Evaluation is to determine eligibility and possible need for special education and related services. A referral for this type of evaluation should only be made in cases where there is a crisis, obvious evidence of an exceptionality*, or when interventions have not yielded a significant positive response from the student. The Multidisciplinary Evaluation Process is NOT a substitute for careful analysis and effort by the SAT to address the concerns and the student’s needs.**

**To receive special education or related services, the child must meet the eligibility requirements as having a disability as defined by the IDEA or as gifted under New Mexico regulations. (NOTE: Eligibility cannot be based solely on the determination that the student has limited English proficiency or has had lack of instruction in math or reading.)*

When a student is referred for a Multidisciplinary Evaluation, the first step is formal assessment and evaluation. (NOTE: Assessments given outside the scope of general screening require prior parent notice and consent.) The Multidisciplinary Team (MDT), which is a qualified group of professionals, including the parent, uses this



information to determine the student’s eligibility for special education and related services under the criteria of one or more of the 13 categories of disabilities as defined by the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA). Based on all information gathered, the team makes its determination of eligibility. The three possible options are as follows:



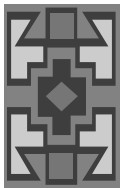
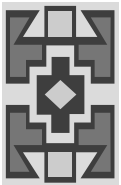
- ▶ The student is ineligible for special education or related services, but shows need. In this case, the student is referred back to the SAT, which takes into consideration new information and readdresses the student’s needs. The SAT may need to revise its hypothesis, redesign interventions that are more appropriate and/or pursue avenues of further referral such as Title I, Indian Education, Bilingual Education, 504 Accommodation (See pages 51–53 and 72–73), community agencies, or other programs and supports.



- ▶ The student is eligible, but does not show need for special education and related services. In other words, the student may have a qualified exceptionality, but the Multidisciplinary Team (MDT) that makes the eligibility determination finds that the student’s disability *does not* affect his or her ability to learn or require specialized instruction. If the MDT determines that a student is ineligible for special education services, the student remains in the general education program.



- ▶ The student is eligible and shows need for special education and related services. In this case, the student’s needs are addressed by an Individualized Education Program (IEP). The IEP team (administrator, teachers, specialists, parents) convenes and designs a master plan for the student to provide what he or she needs to benefit from instruction. The IEP is implemented. An IEP may be reviewed as needed, but must be reviewed at least annually. A reevaluation must be done at least every three years to determine continued eligibility.



Addressing Student Individual Needs

TIER III: The Multidisciplinary Evaluation Process

