Abstract: The Review of Existing Data and Eligibility (RED-MET) process within special education is, for better or worse, the bread and butter of many school psychologists’ jobs in Arizona. If you are immersed in the process and barely making it from day-to-day in your swirling workload, then you might not have the chance to go to the IEP meetings after your METs. Do these questions sound familiar?

Isn’t the RED the main way we get permission to test? Is there more to it?

How does the RED link to the MET/eligibility and how should all of this link to the IEP?

How do I stay strengths-based when it is the deficits that make the student eligible for special education in the first place?

How can we write a comprehensive, yet concise and parent-friendly report that will also be defensible? Wait! When I got trained my supervisor said that no one reads our reports anyway.

This presentation will allow participants to take a step back and walk through the special education process from RED to eligibility to IEP with a guide to keeping a clear eye on the purposes and explicit connections between these processes. In addition to the processes and assumptions built into the RED-eligibility-IEP process, we will also discuss how a strengths-based approach and acknowledgement of deficits are both essential to questions of eligibility for special education. We will explore the eligibility criteria of Arizona’s DDD services and how to ensure that our reports can be used by families with DDD applications. The ultimate goal is to bring the big picture into view for new school psychologists and practicum students as well as to revitalize practice for experienced school psychologists who are may feel “in the weeds.”

Learning Objectives

1. Explain the purposes of legal protections embedded in the RED-MET process.

2. Explain when there is sufficient versus insufficient evidence leading to the decision to gather new data following a RED.

3. Explain the balance between strengths and deficits as they impact eligibility within schools as well as within DDD and other agencies.

4. Describe features of a defensible and understandable report.
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