

Special Education Classifications

To be eligible for Special Education services, a school-age student must meet the criteria to be classified in one of the following categories:

Autism: means a developmental disability significantly affecting verbal and nonverbal communication and social interaction, generally evident before age three (3), which adversely affects a student's educational performance. Other characteristics often associated with autism are engagement in repetitive activities and stereotyped movements, resistance to environmental change or change in daily routines, and unusual responses to sensory experiences. The term does not apply if a student's educational performance is adversely affected primarily because the student has an emotional disturbance as defined in paragraph four. A student who manifests the characteristics of autism after age three could be diagnosed as having autism if the criteria in this paragraph are otherwise satisfied.

Deafness: a hearing impairment which is so severe that the student is impaired in processing linguistic information through hearing, with or without amplification, which adversely affects educational performance.

Deaf-Blindness: a concomitant hearing and visual impairment, the combination of which causes such severe communication and other developmental and educational needs that the student cannot be accommodated in special education programs solely for students with deafness or blindness.

Emotional Disturbance: means a condition exhibiting one or more of the following characteristics over a long period of time and to a marked degree that adversely affects a student's educational performance:

- An inability to learn that cannot be explained by intellectual, sensory or health factors
- An inability to build or maintain satisfactory interpersonal relationships with peers and teachers.
- Inappropriate types of behavior or feeling under normal circumstances
- A generally pervasive mood of unhappiness or depression; or
- A tendency to develop physical symptoms or fears associated with personal or school problems.

The term includes schizophrenia. The term does not apply to socially maladjusted students unless, it is determined that they have an emotional disturbance.

Hearing Impaired: a hearing impairment, whether permanent or fluctuating, which adversely affects the child's educational performance but which is not included under the definition of deafness in this section.

Learning Disabled: a disorder in one or more of the basic psychological processes involved in understanding or in using language, spoken or written, which manifests itself in an imperfect ability to listen, think, speak, read, write, spell, or to do mathematical calculations. The term includes such conditions as perceptual disabilities, brain injury, minimal brain dysfunction, dyslexia and developmental aphasia. The term does not include students who have learning problems which are primarily the result of visual, hearing or motor disabilities, of mental retardation, or emotional disturbance, or of environmental, cultural or economic disadvantage, a

student who exhibits a discrepancy of 50 percent or more between expected achievement and actual achievement determined on an individual basis shall be deemed to have a learning disability.

Mentally Retarded: significantly sub average general intellectual functioning, existing concurrently with deficits in adaptive behavior and manifested during the developmental period, that adversely affects a student's educational performance.

Multiply Disabled: concomitant impairments (such as mental retardation-blindness, mental retardation-orthopedic impairment, etc.) the combination of which case educational needs that they cannot be accommodated in a special education program solely for one of the impairments. The term does not include deaf-blindness.

Other Health Impaired: limited strength, vitality or alertness, including a heightened alertness to environmental stimuli, that results in limited alertness with respect to the educational environment, that is due to chronic or acute health problems, including but not limited to a heart condition, tuberculosis, rheumatic fever, nephritis, asthma, sickle cell anemia, hemophilia, lead poisoning, leukemia diabetes, attention deficit disorder or attention deficit hyperactivity disorder or Tourette's Syndrome, which adversely affects a student's educational performance.

Orthopedically Impaired: means a severe orthopedic impairment that adversely affects a student's educational performance. The term includes impairments caused by congenital anomaly (e.g., clubfoot, absence of some member, etc.), impairments caused by disease (e.g., poliomyelitis, bone tuberculosis, etc.), and impairments from other causes (e.g., cerebral palsy, amputation, fractures and burns which cause contractures).

Speech or Language Impaired: a communication disorder, such as stuttering, impaired articulation, a language impairment or a voice impairment, which adversely affects a student's educational performance.

Traumatic Brain Injury: means an acquired injury to the brain caused by an external physical force or by certain medical conditions such as stroke, encephalitis, aneurysm, anoxia or brain tumors with resulting impairments that adversely affect educational performance. The term includes open or closed head injuries or brain injuries from certain medical conditions resulting in mild, moderate to severe impairments in one or more areas, including cognition, language, memory, attention, reasoning, abstract thinking, judgment, problem solving, sensory, perceptual and motor abilities, psychosocial behavior, physical functions, information processing and speech. The term does not include injuries that are congenital or caused by birth trauma.

Visually Impaired including Blindness: impairment in vision that, even with correction, adversely affects a student's educational performance. The term includes both partial sight and blindness.