



THE 13 CLASSIFICATIONS OF SPECIAL EDUCATION

<http://schools.nyc.gov/Academics/SpecialEducation/SEP/determination/eligible-categories-disability.htm>

Autism

A developmental disability, significantly affecting verbal and nonverbal communication and social interaction, generally evident before age 3, that adversely affects 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. A student who manifests the characteristics of autism after age 3 could be diagnosed as having autism if the above criteria are otherwise satisfied.

Deafness

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

Deaf-Blindness

A student with both hearing and visual impairments, the combination of which causes severe communication and other developmental and educational needs that cannot be accommodated in special education programs solely for students with deafness or students with blindness.

Emotional Disturbance

A student who exhibits one or more of the following characteristics over a long period of time and to a marked degree that adversely affects the 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 feelings under normal circumstances;
- A generally pervasive mood of unhappiness or depression;
- A tendency to develop physical symptoms or fears associated with personal or school problems.

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

Hearing Impairment

An impairment in hearing, whether permanent or fluctuating, that adversely affects the student's educational performance but is not included under the definition of deafness in this section.



Learning Disability

Learning disability means 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 learning problems that are primarily the result of visual, hearing or motor disabilities; of mental retardation; of emotional disturbance or of environmental, cultural or economic disadvantage.

Intellectual Disability

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

Multiple Disabilities

A student with concurrent impairments (such as mental retardation–blindness, mental retardation– orthopedic impairment, etc.), the combination of which causes educational needs that cannot be accommodated in a special education program solely for one of the impairments. The term does not include deaf-blindness.

Orthopedic Impairment

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 and fractures or burns which cause contractures).

Other Health Impairment

A student with 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, epilepsy, lead poisoning, leukemia, diabetes, attention deficit disorder or attention deficit hyperactivity disorder, or Tourette syndrome, which adversely affects that student's educational performance.

Speech or Language Impairment

A student with a communication disorder, such as stuttering, impaired articulation, language impairment or a voice impairment that adversely affects that student's educational performance.



Traumatic Brain Injury

A student with an acquired injury to the brain caused by an external physical force or by certain medical conditions such as stroke, encephalitis, aneurysm, and anoxia or brain tumors with resulting impairments that adversely affect that student's educational performance.

The term includes open or closed head injuries or brain injuries from certain medical conditions resulting in mild, moderate or 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.

Visual Impairment

Impairment in vision including blindness that, even with correction, adversely affects that student's educational performance. The term includes both partial sight and blindness.