

EXCEPTIONAL : PARENT TRAINING and INFORMATION

13 CATEGORIES OF ELIGIBILITY

California Education Code has 13 eligibility categories and one additional category for children ages 3 to 5. For each category, the disability must adversely affect education and result in needing Special Education and related services so the student will benefit from his or her education. The lack of educational achievement cannot be the result of limited school experience, poor school attendance, a history of inappropriate instruction, or environmental, cultural, or economic disadvantage. Schools provide an evaluation at no expense to parents to decide eligibility for Special Education.

Note: Special Education categories are not the same as diagnostic categories used by doctors and professionals outside the education system. A student can have a diagnosis and not meet the criteria for Special Education eligibility that may apply to that diagnosis.

• **Specific Learning Disability (SLD)**

Option # 1: the discrepancy method requires a severe discrepancy or gap between intellectual ability and certain academic skills. The discrepancy must be caused by a disorder in one or more of the basic processing areas (visual, auditory, attention, cognitive, sensory/motor). The processing disorder results in problems with listening, speaking, reading, writing, doing math. Option #2: The RTI (response to intervention) method evaluates the student's response to increasingly intensive levels of general education intervention, and, if limited response, Special Education may result.

• **Speech and Language (SL)**

Several possible disorders qualify: reduced intelligibility or inability to use speech which significantly gets in the way of communication or attracts adverse attention; disorders of abnormal voice and fluency; expressive or receptive language with scores at least below 7% for age on two or more standardized tests in one or more area: morphology, syntax, semantics, pragmatics.

• **Other Health Impairment (OHI)**

Limited strength, vitality, or alertness due to chronic or acute health problems, including but not limited to asthma, attention deficit or attention deficit hyperactivity disorder, diabetes, epilepsy, a heart condition, hemophilia, lead poisoning, leukemia, nephritis, rheumatic fever, sickle cell anemia, and Tourette Syndrome.

• **Emotional Disturbance (ED)**

One or more of the following are seen over an lengthy period of time and to a marked degree: inability to learn which 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 in several situations; a general pervasive mood of unhappiness or depression; or a tendency to develop physical symptoms or fears associated with personal or school problems.

• **Autistic-like (AUT)**

A developmental disability significantly affecting verbal and nonverbal communication and social interaction, generally seen before age 3. Other traits: engagement in repetitive activities and stereotyped movements, resistance to environmental change or change in daily routines, and unusual responses to sensory experiences.

- **Intellectual Disability (ID)**

General intellectual functioning is significantly below average with deficits in adaptive behavior which are during the developmental period.

- **Hard of Hearing (HH)**

A hearing impairment, whether permanent or fluctuating, which causes problems with the processing of language through hearing, even with amplification.

- **Deaf**

- **Deaf/Blindness (DB)**

Both hearing and visual impairments, the combination of which causes severe communication, developmental, and educational problems.

- **Multiple Disabilities (MD)**

Combination of disabilities when needs can't be met in programs for only one impairment, i.e. intellectual disability (ID) & blindness, ID & deafness, ID & orthopedic impairment (excludes deaf blindness).

- **Orthopedic Impairment (OI)**

Severe impairment, including those caused by congenital anomaly, disease or other causes (such as cerebral palsy, amputations and fractures, or burns which cause contractures).

- **Traumatic Brain Injury (TBI)**

Brain injury by an external force or an internal event, i.e. stroke or aneurysm, resulting in partial or total functional disability or psychosocial problems 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. Not included: congenital, degenerative, or birth trauma brain injury.

- **Visual Impairment (VI)**

Includes blindness and partial sight that, even with correction, affects a child's educational performance.

- **Established Medical Condition (3–5 years)**

An established medical condition or congenital syndrome which the IEP team decides has a high chance of needing Special Education. Note: Early Start Service (birth–36 months, provided by Regional Centers and local education agencies) A developmental delay in one or more of five areas: • for children birth–23 months, 33% in one or more area • for children 24–36 months, 50% in one area or 33% in more than one area Or an established risk condition with a high probability of developmental delay