



# Physician's Assessment Report

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HOWARD COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOL SYSTEM  
Ellicott City, MD 21042

## Definitions of Disabilities as Contained in Federal Law Under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA)

**Autism** means a developmental disability significantly affecting verbal and nonverbal communication and social interaction, generally evident before age three, **that adversely affects a child'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 child's educational performance is adversely affected primarily because the child has an emotional disability. A child who manifests the characteristics of autism after age three could be identified as having autism if the criteria listed above are satisfied.

**Deaf-blindness** means concomitant hearing and visual impairments, **the combination of which causes such severe communication and other developmental and educational needs** that they cannot be accommodated in special education programs solely for children with deafness or children with blindness.

**Orthopedic Impairment** means a severe orthopedic impairment **that adversely affects a child's educational performance**. The term includes impairments caused by congenital anomaly, impairments caused by disease (e.g., poliomyelitis, bone tuberculosis, etc.), and impairments from other causes (e.g., cerebral palsy, amputations, and fractures or burns which cause contractures).

**Other Health Impairment** means having 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 such as asthma, attention deficit disorder or attention deficit hyper activity disorder, diabetes, epilepsy, a heart condition, hemophilia, lead poisoning, leukemia, nephritis, rheumatic fever, sickle cell anemia, or Tourette syndrome; and **adversely affects a child's educational performance**.

**Emotional Disability (ED)** is defined as follows:

- The term 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 child'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 general pervasive mood of unhappiness or depression
  - A tendency to develop physical symptoms or fears associated with personal or school problems
- The term includes schizophrenia. The term does not apply to children who are socially maladjusted, unless it is determined that they have an emotional disability.

**Traumatic Brain Injury** means an acquired injury to the brain caused by an external physical force, resulting in total or partial functional disability or psychosocial impairment, or both, **that adversely affects a child's educational performance**. The term applies to open or closed head injuries resulting in impairments in one or more areas, such as 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 apply to brain injuries that are congenital or degenerative, or brain injuries induced by birth trauma.

**Visual Impairment including Blindness** means an impairment in vision **that, even with correction, adversely affects a child's educational performance**. The term includes both partial sight and blindness.