

EDUCATIONAL DISABILITY AREAS AND EVALUATION GUIDELINES

ASSESSMENT FACTORS RELATED TO TYPE OF DISABILITY

The Rhode Island Regulations require certain types of evaluations to determine eligibility for special education services under the Individuals with Disabilities Act. The evaluations listed below are the minimum required for determination of an educational disability. The Evaluation Team, as part of its deliberations, will determine the evaluations needed to assist in determining disability. The list below is intended as a *guideline*. As part of the process, before referral to the Special Education Evaluation Team, a problem-solving approach that uses progress monitoring of the general education curricula and assessments to gauge the intensity of intervention in relation to the student's progress and response to that intervention should be utilized.

Guidance taken from South Kingstown Public Schools Educational Disability Areas and Evaluation Guidelines, July, 2016

AUTISM SPECTRUM DISORDER

A developmental disability significantly affecting verbal and non-verbal communication and social interaction, generally evident before age three, this 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.

Initial Evaluation

Evaluations

- Psychological and Psychiatric; or
Clinical Psychological
- Educational
- Speech and Language
- Social History
- General Medical: Information that may contribute to an understanding of the cause and/or diagnosis
- Assessment of Adaptive Behavior
- Observation

Suggested if appropriate and recommended by the ET:

- ✓ Results of evidenced- based interventions addressing the identified areas of concern
- ✓ Behavioral Rating Scales
- ✓ Occupational Therapy/Physical Therapy
- ✓ Vocational/career assessment shall commence with every child with a disability at the age of fourteen
- ✓ Assessment of Adaptive Behavior

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Re-Evaluation

Evaluations

- Observation

Based on level of academic functioning (only if academic goals):

- Educational

Suggested if appropriate and recommended by the ET:

- ✓ Results of evidenced- based interventions addressing the identified areas of concern
- ✓ Social History
- ✓ Speech and Language
- ✓ Psychological
- ✓ Behavioral Rating Scales
- ✓ Occupational Therapy/Physical Therapy
- ✓ Vocational/career assessment shall commence with every child with a disability at the age of fourteen

DEAF-BLINDNESS

Concomitant hearing and visual impairments, the combination of which causes such severe communication and other developmental and educational problems that they cannot be accommodated in special education programs solely for students with deafness or students with blindness.

EVALUATIONS

See evaluations under each disability area for minimum requirements.

DEVELOPMENTAL DELAY

A student, age three through eight years old (i.e., until the student's ninth birthday), who shall qualify for preschool special education and related services when he or she is experiencing a developmental delay or a disability, as determined by the evaluation process:

- A developmental delay of disability
- Defined as a 25% delay and/or a score equal to or greater than two standard deviations below the mean in one of the following areas of development;
- **Or**, a score equal to or greater than 1.5 SD below the mean in two or more of the following areas of development: physical development, cognitive development, communication development, social or emotional development, or adaptive development.

Students, age three through five years old, who are also eligible, including those students having a diagnosed physical or mental condition, which would adversely affect educational performance.

Initial Evaluation

Evaluations

- Educational
- Psychological
- Social History
- General Medical
- Observation

Suggested if appropriate and recommended by the ET:

- ✓ Results of evidenced- based interventions addressing the identified areas of concern
- ✓ Adaptive
- ✓ Speech and Language
- ✓ Occupational Therapy/Physical Therapy
- ✓ The team should also gather any medical information that may contribute to an understanding of medical information that may be the cause and/or diagnosis

Re-Evaluation

Suggested if appropriate and recommended by the ET:

- ✓ Psychological
- ✓ Educational
- ✓ Social History
- ✓ General Medical
- ✓ Observation
- ✓ Results of evidenced- based interventions addressing the identified areas of concern
- ✓ Speech and Language
- ✓ Adaptive
- ✓ Occupational Therapy/Physical Therapy

EMOTIONAL DISTURBANCE

A condition exhibiting one or more of the following characteristics over a long period of time and to a marked degree, which adversely affects a student's educational performance: 1. An inability to learn that cannot be explained by intellectual, sensory or other health factors; 2. An inability to build or maintain satisfactory interpersonal relationships with peers and teachers, 3. Inappropriate types of behaviors or feelings under normal circumstances, 4. A general pervasive mood of unhappiness or depression. 5. A tendency to develop physical symptoms or fears associated with personal or school problems.

Emotional disturbance includes schizophrenia. The term **does not** apply to children who are socially maladjusted.

Initial Evaluation

Evaluations

- Psychological and Psychiatric; **or**
Clinical Psychological
- Educational
- Social History
- General Medical
- Functional Behavioral Assessment
- Observation

Suggested if appropriate and recommended by the ET:

- ✓ Rating Scales
- ✓ Results of evidenced- based interventions addressing the identified areas of concern
- ✓ Interview
- ✓ Vocational/career assessment shall commence with every child with a disability at the age of fourteen

Re-Evaluation

Evaluations

- Observation
- Functional Behavior Assessment and Behavior Intervention Plan

Based on level of academic functioning:

- Educational (only if academic goals)

Suggested if appropriate and recommended by the ET:

- ✓ Results of evidenced- based interventions addressing the identified areas of concern
- ✓ Psychological
- ✓ Neuropsychological, Clinical Psychological or Psychiatric
- ✓ Interview
- ✓ Vocational/career assessment shall commence with every child with a disability at the age of fourteen
- ✓ Social History

HEARING IMPAIRED

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

Initial Evaluation

Evaluations

- Audiological Assessment
- Otological Assessment
- Speech and Language Assessment
- Social History
- General Medical: Information that may contribute to an understanding of the cause and/or diagnosis

Suggested if appropriate and recommended by the ET:

- ✓ The team where appropriate should include a Teacher of the Hearing Impaired to assess communication needs (e.g. sign language).
- ✓ Psychological
- ✓ Educational
- ✓ Vocational/career assessment shall commence with every child with a disability at the age of fourteen

Re-Evaluation

Evaluations

- Updated Audiological Assessment
- Updated Otological Assessment
- Observation

Suggested if appropriate and recommended by the ET:

- ✓ Psychological
- ✓ Educational
- ✓ Social History
- ✓ The team where appropriate should include a Teacher of the Hearing Impaired to assess communication needs (e.g. sign language).
- ✓ Vocational/career assessment shall commence with every child with a disability at the age of fourteen

INTELLECTUAL DISABILITY

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.

Guidelines (from AAMD):

Level	IQ
<i>Mild</i>	<i>50-55 to 70</i>
<i>Moderate</i>	<i>35-40 to 50-55</i>
<i>Severe</i>	<i>20-25 to 35-40</i>
<i>Profound</i>	<i>Below 20-25</i>

Initial Evaluation

Evaluations

- Psychological
- Educational
- Social History
- General Medical: Information that may contribute to an understanding of the cause and/or diagnosis
- Assessment of Adaptive Behavior
- Observation

Suggested if appropriate and recommended by the ET:

- ✓ Results of evidenced- based interventions addressing the identified areas of concern
- ✓ Vocational/career assessment shall commence with every child with a disability at the age of fourteen

Re-Evaluation

Evaluations

- Observation

Suggested if appropriate and recommended by the ET:

- ✓ Psychological
- ✓ Social History
- ✓ Results of evidenced- based interventions addressing the identified areas of concern
- ✓ Vocational/career assessment shall commence with every child with a disability at the age of fourteen
- ✓ Assessment of Adaptive Behavior
- ✓ Educational

MULTI HANDICAPPED

Concomitant impairments (such as intellectual disability-blindness, intellectual disability-orthopedic impairment, etc.) The combination of which causes such severe educational problems that they cannot be accommodated in special education programs solely for one of the impairments. The term **does not** include deaf-blindness

EVALUATIONS

See evaluations under each individual disability area for minimum requirements.

ORTHOPEDIC IMPAIRMENT

Severe orthopedic impairment that adversely effects 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 that cause contractures).

Initial Evaluation

Evaluations

- Psychological
- Educational
- Social History
- General Medical: Information that may contribute to an understanding of the cause and/or diagnosis
- Physical and/or occupational therapy that assist in identifying the orthopedic/educational need
- Observation

Suggested if appropriate and recommended by the ET:

- ✓ Vocational/career assessment shall commence with every child with a disability at the age of fourteen

Re-Evaluation

Evaluations

- Observation

Suggested if appropriate and recommended by the ET:

- ✓ Social History
- ✓ Physical and/or occupational therapy that assist in identifying the orthopedic/educational need
- ✓ Vocational/career assessment shall commence with every child with a disability at the age of fourteen
- ✓ School Function Assessment

OTHER HEALTH IMPAIRMENT

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 hyperactivity disorder, diabetes, epilepsy, a heart condition, hemophilia, lead poisoning, leukemia, nephritis, rheumatic fever, an sickle cell anemia and adversely affects a child's educational performance

Initial Evaluation

Evaluations

- Psychological
- Educational
- Social History
- General Medical: Information that may contribute to an understanding of the cause and diagnosis
- Rating Scales
- Observation

Suggested if appropriate and recommended by the ET:

- ✓ Neuropsychological, Clinical Psychological or Psychiatric
- ✓
- ✓ Results of evidenced- based interventions addressing the identified areas of concern
- ✓ Vocational/career assessment shall commence with every child with a disability at the age of fourteen

Re-Evaluation

Evaluations

- Observation
- Rating Scales

Based on level of academic functioning/goals:

- Educational (only if academic goals)

Suggested if appropriate and recommended by the ET:

- ✓ Neuropsychological, Clinical Psychological or Psychiatric
- ✓ Social History
- ✓ Psychological
- ✓ Results of evidenced- based interventions addressing the identified areas of concern
- ✓ Vocational/career assessment shall commence with every child with a disability at the age of fourteen

SPECIFIC LEARNING DISABILITY

The term means a disorder in one or more of the basic psychological processes involved in understanding or in using language, spoken or written, that may manifest itself in an imperfect ability to listen, think, speak, read, write, spell, or to do mathematical calculations, including conditions such 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.*

Guidelines:

Criteria for determining disability –

Utilizing a process based on the student’s response to scientific, research based interventions (RtI) the decision making process must lead to the following conclusions if a determination is made that the student has a specific learning disability and is eligible for special education and related services (achievement gap, educational progress, individual context and need).

Initial Evaluation

- Psychological
- Educational (in the area of academic goal)
- Observation
- Curriculum Based Measures/Response to Intervention Summary: Results of evidenced-based interventions addressing the identified areas of concern

Suggested if appropriate and recommended by the ET:

- ✓ Social History
- ✓ Vocational/career assessment shall commence with every child with a disability at the age of fourteen

Re-Evaluation

Evaluations

- Observation
- Educational (in the area of academic goal)
- Curriculum Based Measures/Response to Intervention Summary: Results of evidenced-based interventions addressing the identified areas of concern

Suggested if appropriate and recommended by the ET:

- ✓ Social History
- ✓ Psychological
- ✓ Vocational/career assessment shall commence with every child with a disability at the age of fourteen

SPEECH OR LANGUAGE IMPAIRMENT

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

Speech and language pathology services shall remain a special education service for children three through eight, "speech-only" Individualized Education Program (IEP). Speech and Language as a related service is available as identified through the IEP process for children

Initial Evaluation

Evaluations

- Speech Evaluation
- Language Evaluation
- Observation

Suggested if appropriate and recommended by the ET:

- ✓ Psychological
- ✓ Educational

Re-Evaluation

Evaluations for Speech

- Observation
- Articulation Evaluation

Re-Evaluation

Evaluations for Language

- Observation
- Language Evaluation: Receptive and Expressive/Pragmatic Language

Suggested if appropriate and recommended by the ET:

- ✓ Psychological
- ✓ Educational
- ✓ Social History

TRAUMATIC BRAIN INJURY

An acquired injury to the brain caused by an external physical force, resulting in total or partial functional disability or psycho-social maladjustment, or both, that adversely affects a student'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; psycho-social 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.

Initial Evaluation

Evaluations

- Neurological
- Psychological
- Educational
- Social History
- General Medical: Information that may contribute to an understanding of the cause and/or diagnosis
- Observation

Suggested if appropriate and recommended by the ET:

- ✓ Speech and Language
- ✓ Occupational Therapy/Physical Therapy
- ✓ Rating Scales
- ✓ Functional Behavioral Assessment and Behavior Intervention Plan
- ✓ Vocational/career assessment shall commence with every child with a disability at the age of fourteen
- ✓ Adaptive

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Re-Evaluation

Evaluations

- Observation
- Educational

Suggested if appropriate and recommended by the ET:

- ✓ Social History
- ✓ Speech and Language
- ✓ Psychological
- ✓ Adaptive
- ✓ Occupational Therapy
- ✓ Physical Therapy
- ✓ Rating Scales
- ✓ Functional Behavioral Assessment and Behavior Intervention Plan
- ✓ Vocational/career assessment shall commence with every child with a disability at the age of fourteen

VISUAL IMPAIRMENT INCLUDING BLINDNESS

An impairment in vision that, even with correction, adversely affects a child's education performance. The term includes both partial sight and blindness.

Initial Evaluation

Evaluations

- Social History
- General Medical: Information that may contribute to an understanding of the cause and/or diagnosis
- Ophthalmological Assessment (including the exploration of the need for low vision services)
- Examination of mobility and orientation of skills and visual communication skills
- Observation

Suggested if appropriate and recommended by the ET:

- ✓ The team where appropriate should include a Teacher of the Visually Impaired
- ✓ Psychological
- ✓ Educational
- ✓ Vocational/career assessment shall commence with every child with a disability at the age of fourteen

Re-Evaluation

Evaluations

- Updated Ophthalmological Assessment (including the exploration of the need for low vision services)
- Observation

Suggested if appropriate and recommended by the ET:

- ✓ Social History
- ✓ The team where appropriate should include a Teacher of the Visually Impaired
- ✓ Psychological
- ✓ Educational
- ✓ Vocational/career assessment shall commence with every child with a disability at the age of fourteen