

DEFINITIONS OF DISABILITIES

- **§300.7 Child With A Disability:** A child evaluated as having mental retardation, a hearing impairment (including deafness), a speech and language impairment, a visual impairment (including blindness), serious emotional disturbance, orthopedic impairments, autism, traumatic brain injury, other health impairments, or specific learning disabilities, deaf-blindness, or multiple disabilities, and who, by reason thereof, needs special education and related services.

- **Autism:** a developmental disability significantly affecting verbal and non-verbal communication, and social interaction; generally evident before age three, 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 child's educational performance is adversely affected primarily because the child has an emotional disturbance.

- **Deaf-blindness:** 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.

- **Deafness:** a hearing impairment that is so severe that the child is impaired in processing linguistic information through hearing, with or without amplification, that adversely affects a child's educational performance.

- **Emotional/Behavioral Disturbance:** a condition exhibiting one or more of the following characteristics over a long period of time and to a marked degree which affects educational performance: a) an inability to learn which cannot be explained by intellectual, sensory or other health factors; b) an inability to build or maintain satisfactory interpersonal relationships with peers and teachers; c) inappropriate types of behavior or feelings under normal circumstances; d) a general pervasive mood of unhappiness or depression; or e) a tendency to develop physical symptoms or fears associated with personal or school problems.
 - ❖ The term includes children who are schizophrenic.
 - ❖ The term does not include children who are socially maladjusted unless it is determined that they are also emotionally/behaviorally disturbed.

- **Hearing Impairment:** 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 in this section.

- **Mental Retardation:** significantly sub-average general intellectual functioning, existing concurrently with deficits in adaptive behavior and manifested during the developmental period that adversely affects a child's educational performance.



- ☀ **Multiple Disabilities**: concomitant impairments (such as mental retardation-blindness, mental retardation-orthopedic impairment, etc.), the combination of which causes such severe educational needs that they cannot be accommodated in special education programs solely for one of the impairments. The term does not include deaf-blindness.
- ☀ **Orthopedic Impairment**: a severe orthopedic impairment that adversely affects a child's educational performance. This term includes impairments caused by congenital anomaly (e.g., clubfoot, absence of a member, etc.), impairments caused by disease (e.g., poliomyelitis, bone tuberculosis, meningitis, etc.), and impairments from other causes (e.g., cerebral palsy, amputations, fractures or burns that cause contractures, etc.).
- ☀ **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, and sickle cell anemia; and
 - ❖ Adversely affects a child's educational performance.
- ☀ **Specific Learning Disability**: 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 mathematic calculations, including conditions such as perceptual disabilities, brain injury, minimal brain dysfunction, dyslexia, and developmental aphasia.

 - ❖ *Disorders not included.* 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.
- ☀ **Speech or Language Impairment**: a communication disorder, such as stuttering, impaired articulation, a language impairment, or a voice impairment, that adversely affects a child's educational performance.
- ☀ **Traumatic Brain Injury**: an acquired injury to the brain caused by an external force, resulting in total or partial functioning disability or psychosocial impairment, or both, that adversely affects a child's educational performance.

 - ❖ The term applies to open and 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.
 - ❖ This term does not apply to brain injuries that are congenital or degenerative, or to brain injuries induced by birth trauma.
- ☀ **Visual Impairment including Blindness**: an impairment in vision that even with correction, adversely affects a child's educational performance. The term included both partial sight and blindness.

