

## Exceptionality Descriptions\*

**Autistic (AU):** One who has a developmental disability which significantly affects verbal and nonverbal communication and social interaction, generally evident before age three, and adversely affects educational performance. Characteristics of autism include: irregularities and impairment in communication, 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 include children with characteristics of the disability behaviorally-emotionally handicapped.

**Behaviorally/Emotionally Disabled (BED):** School-age student who after receiving specially designed educational support services and intervention strategies in the regular educational setting, still exhibit patterns of situationally inappropriate interpersonal and intrapersonal behavior of such frequency, duration, and intensity are long-standing patterns of behavior which occur regularly and often enough to interfere consistently with the students own learning process. A behavioral/emotional handicap is evidenced by one or more of the following characteristics which cannot be attributed primarily to physical, sensory or intellectual deficits:

- \*inability to achieve adequate academic progress (not due to a learning disability)
- \*inability to maintain satisfactory interpersonal and/or intrapersonal relationships
- \*inappropriate or immature types of behavior or feeling under normal conditions
- \*a general pervasive mood of unhappiness or depression
- \*a tendency to develop physical symptoms, pains or fears associated with personal or school problems

The term does not include the socially maladjusted student unless it is determined that he/she is also behaviorally/emotionally handicapped.

**Deaf-Blind (DB):** Deaf-blind students have concomitant hearing and visual impairments, the combination of which causes such severe communication and other developmental and educational that they cannot be accommodated in special education programs for deaf or blind children.

**Developmentally Delayed:** Children who are ages three and four or those five-year-olds who are ineligible for kindergarten and whose development and/or behavior is so significantly delayed or atypical that special education and related services are required.

**Educable Mentally Disabled (EMD):** One who is mildly subaverage in general cognitive functioning and has a reduced rate of learning. The measured intelligence of an EMH student generally falls between 50-69 plus or minus one standard error of measurement (3 points). This condition exists concurrently with deficits in adaptive behavior, is manifested during the developmental period and adversely affects the student's educational performance.

**Hearing Impaired (HI):** One who has a hearing loss which is handicapping educationally and who, or without amplification, may require various instructional modifications and related services in order to make full use of his/her learning opportunities. Hearing impaired is a generic term which includes all hearing losses ranging from mild to profound.

**Multihandicapped (MU):** One who has a pervasive primary handicap this cognitive and/or in with one or more other handicaps such as mentally handicapped, behaviorally/emotionally handicapped, handicapped, blind, etc., the combination of which causes such developmental and education that child cannot be accommodated in special programs that primarily serve one area of handicapping.

**Orthopedically Impaired (OI):** One who possesses a severe orthopedic impairment which adversely affects his/her educational performance. The term includes impairments caused by congenital and impairment from other causes.

**Other Health Impaired (OHI):** Students who have chronic or acute health problems which cause limited strength, vitality or alertness to such an extent that special education services are necessary. The health problems may include heart conditions, chronic lung disease, tuberculosis, rheumatic fever, nephritis, asthma, sickle cell anemia, hemophilia, epilepsy, lead poisoning, leukemia, diabetes, genetic impairments or

some other illness which may cause a student to have limited strength, vitality or alertness, adversely affecting education performance or developmental progress.

**Specific Learning Disabled (SLD):** One who, after receiving instructional intervention in the regular education setting, has substantial discrepancy between ability and achievement. The disability is manifested by substantial difficulties in the acquisition and use of skills in listening comprehension, oral expression, written expression, reading and/or mathematics. Specific learning disability is an inclusive term used to denote various processing disorders presumed to be intrinsic to an individual. A learning disability may occur concurrently with, but is not the primarily result of, other handicapping conditions and/or environmental, cultural and/or economic influences.

**Severe/Profoundly Mentally Disabled (SP):** One who is significantly subaverage in general cognitive functioning and reduced rate of learning. This condition exists concurrently with significant deficits in adaptive behavior and life skills.

**Speech/Language Impaired (SI):** One who has a disorder in articulation, language, voice and/or fluency. A speech/language impairment may range in severity from mild to severe. It may be developmental or acquired and pupils may demonstrate one or any combination of the four parameters listed above. A speech/language impairment may be a primary handicapping condition or it may be secondary to other handicapping conditions. It is different from a communicative difference/dialect which is a variation of a symbol system used by a group of individual which reflects and is determined by shared regional, social or cultural/ethnic factors and should not be considered a disorder of speech or language.

**Trainable Mentally Disabled (TMD):** One who is moderately subaverage in general cognitive functioning with a reduced rate of learning. The measured intelligence of a TMD student generally falls between 30-49 plus or minus one standard error of measurement. This condition exists concurrently with deficits in adaptive behavior, is manifested during the developmental period and adversely affects the student's educational performance.

**Traumatic Brain Injury (TBI):** Means an acquired open or closed head injury caused by an external physical force that impairs a student's cognitive, communicative, perceptual, behavioral, social-emotional, and/or physical abilities to the extent that the student requires special education. Congenital, degenerative or brain injuries induced by birth trauma are not included in this definition.

**Visually Impaired (VI):**

**Functionally Blind:** Those school-age students who have so little remaining vision that they must use Braille as their medium. Preschool children who are functionally blind use predominantly tactile or auditory mediums in order to learn.

**Partially Seeing:** Those school-age children who have a loss of vision but are able to use regular or large type as their reading medium. These will generally be children who have a visual acuity between 20/70 and 20/200 in the better eye after correction. Preschool children with low vision are those who have a loss of vision but are able to use the visual acuity between 20/70 and 20/200 in the better eye after correction or whose visual impairment impedes the acquisition of developmental milestones.

**Legally Blind:** Those students who have a visual acuity of 20/200 or less in the better eye after correction or a peripheral field so contracted that the widest diameter subtends an arc no greater than 20 degrees.

\*Definitions and Descriptions Taken From the NC EC Procedures Handbook