

T.E.S.S.

The Educational Support Services

EVALUATION PROCESS AND TERMINOLOGY



EASTERN CHRISTIAN SCHOOL



Parent Comments

"'You are Enough': These were the words shared during one of the first TESS meetings. It rings through for those who learn differently. Having a Special Education Director and a team specifically to support the students who learn differently is known as one of the unique qualities of EC. Each child is unique in their own special way and with a supportive team they can truly meet their potential with support and growth in confidence."

"The staff is patient, kind and compassionate toward my son. He is still part of his classroom and there seems to be no stigma about needing extra help."

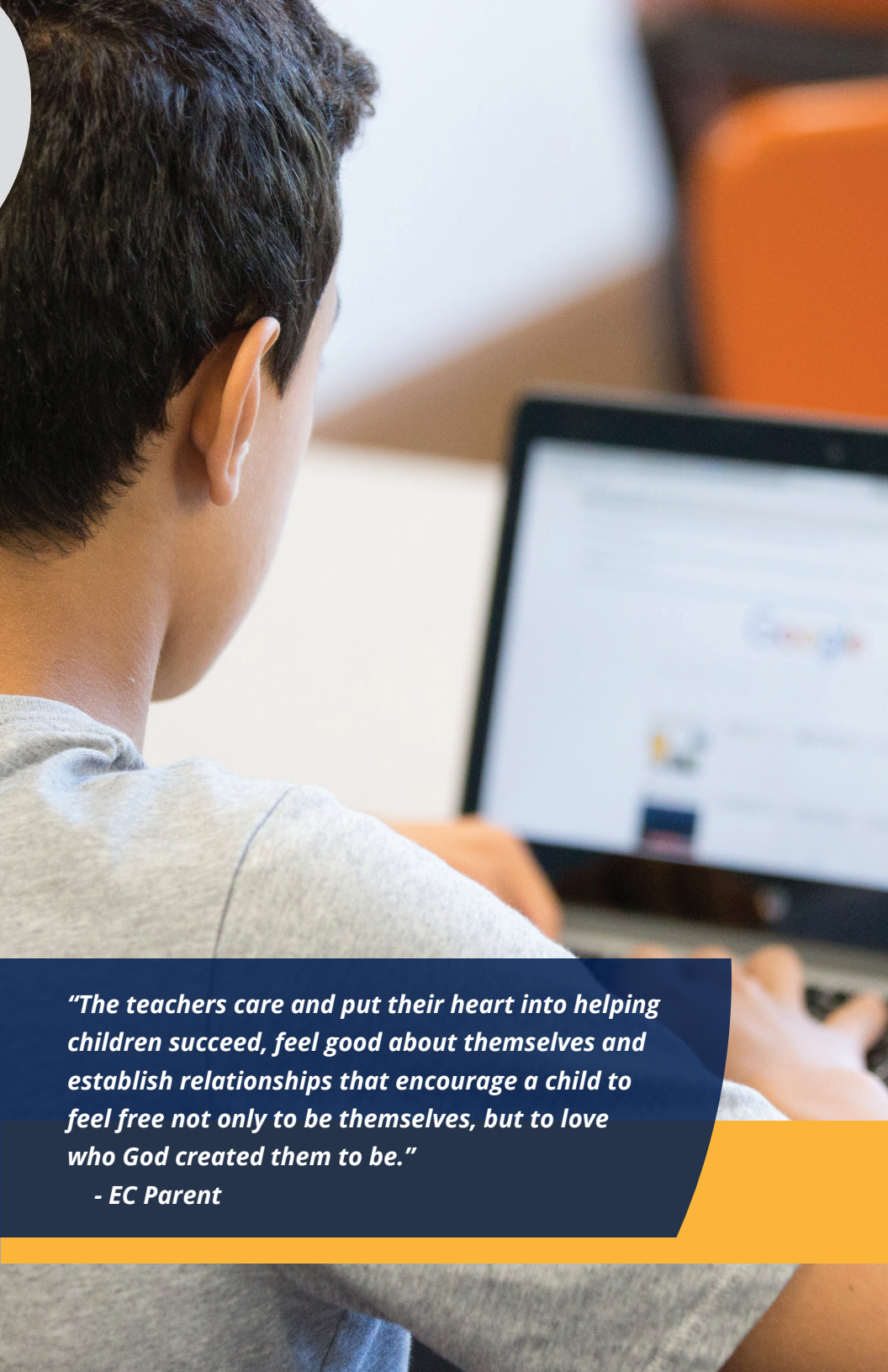
"I really appreciate the diversity represented in learning styles. It is unusual in a private school setting."

"The climate and culture of the school supports acceptance of students who learn differently. Teachers, both general and special education, have been excellent at finding ways to help our son grow and learn, despite a significant language-based learning disability."

"Thank you for having special education for parents who want their kids in Christian school but have special needs."

Former Student Comment

"Eastern Christian touched my heart as a student who struggled. I am blessed for every dollar my parents spent on Christian education. Even before being classified, EC provided me with intense reading, writing, and math instruction that met my learning needs. EC is truly special to me because it helped me find my place in the Kingdom where I could use my gifts to glorify God. Thank you Eastern Christian!"



"The teachers care and put their heart into helping children succeed, feel good about themselves and establish relationships that encourage a child to feel free not only to be themselves, but to love who God created them to be."

- EC Parent

Introduction to T.E.S.S. at EC

On all three campuses, Eastern Christian School strives to meet the needs of all students. We recognize that students have different gifts, strengths, weaknesses and learning styles. Children who struggle with learning may receive support services from The Educational Support Services teachers (T.E.S.S.) at EC and/or Bergen County Special Services (BCSS).

The T.E.S.S. Programs at Eastern Christian School are run by qualified EC teachers who have been specially trained to teach students who learn differently or who have been diagnosed with a learning disability. The T.E.S.S. teachers collaborate and plan with general education classroom teachers to help provide the best educational program and instructional practices for each student.

BCSS is a state-funded organization which provides teachers and therapists to work with students in private schools who have service plans or who qualify for compensatory education. Students may work with a BCSS teacher in a small group setting, or in the classroom as "push in support." BCSS teachers also work closely with EC T.E.S.S. teachers and the general education teachers to help strengthen the learning community.

In order to have a thorough understanding of a child's learning style and learning needs, it may be necessary for a Child Study Team from BCSS to conduct an evaluation of the child. Evaluations are a free service provided by BCSS which give parents and teachers detailed information on the child's academic strengths, weaknesses and learning style. This information assists resource room teachers and general education classroom teachers in creating an optimal educational program for the child to ensure success in learning.



Child Study Team Evaluation Process

Teachers or parents identify when a child is having difficulty learning or is not performing on grade level. The teachers and parents meet to discuss the problem and decide if the child should be evaluated by the BCSS Child Study Team.

Parents may choose not to have their child evaluated. The classroom teacher will continue reasonable accommodations within the general education for the needs of the child. The child may be eligible for support from BCSS based on MAP test results.

If teachers and parents agree to conduct an evaluation, parents will sign a consent form and EC will contact the BCSS Child Study Team to set up an initial evaluation meeting.

Parents and teachers meet with the BCSS Child Study Team for an initial evaluation planning meeting. The team consists of a learning consultant, psychologist and social worker. The team will ask questions and take notes on the child's strengths, weaknesses, social interactions, attention span and other topics that will help them get to know the child. At the end of the meeting, the team will decide on next steps.

The child will meet with the learning consultant for an educational evaluation to determine the child's academic performance level. On a different day, the child will meet with the psychologist for a psychological evaluation to determine the child's learning potential. Each evaluator will tally scores, write up a report of the findings and send the report to the parents.

Parents and teachers meet with the BCSS Child Study Team for an eligibility meeting to discuss the results of the evaluation. Each evaluator will report their findings. The Case Manager will compare the scores of the educational and psychological evaluations. If there is a discrepancy between the scores, the child is eligible to be classified as eligible for special education and related services.

Parents may opt not to have their child classified nor receive services.

Children may be classified eligible for one of several local classifications. A Service Plan (SP) will be developed including goals, modifications and accommodations to help the child succeed in the classroom. Classified students are eligible for additional services from BCSS. Parents, teachers and BCSS will meet annually to review the SP for two years. In the third year, a new evaluation will be conducted and a new SP will be written.

Resource Rooms at Eastern Christian School

The Eastern Christian School resource program provides access to Christian education for many students with diverse learning needs. Eastern Christian School has been embracing students who learn in atypical ways for almost 50 years.

Resource Room Beliefs & Values:

We believe that God has created each student for a unique purpose in His Kingdom.

- We exist to serve students who have been classified with several Specific Learning Disabilities, students with a variety of Other Health Impairments, students with some Autistic Classifications, as well as students not eligible to be classified but who would benefit from extra support or intervention.
- We believe that all students will learn when supported by a unified team of teachers, learning experts, and paraprofessionals in partnership with parents.
- We value open communication with parents and students.

While serving a broad spectrum of learners, the educational support service teachers at each campus provide services in a variety of ways. Our goal is to ensure the utilization of modifications and accommodations set forth in the child's service plan (SP) from Bergen County Special Services (BCSS) are met in the child's best learning environments. Services may be provided in the classroom through an inclusive model, small group pull out instruction, or consultation to support the student and classroom teachers with tools and strategies. An annual or reevaluation meeting is held with the BCSS Child Study Team, Resource room teacher(s), classroom teacher(s) and parents to discuss the SP and student progress.

Elementary & Upper Elementary Grades K-5

The resource room in our elementary program is referred to as the Owl's Nest. The Owl's Nest provides a Christ-centered education for students who learn differently or need extra academic reinforcement. We use a variety of multi-sensory, highly structured and sequenced programs to meet our students' varied academic needs.

In addition to utilizing these programs that "Engage the Mind" the Owl's Nest "Nurtures the Spirit" with a low student to teacher ratio that enables us to build relationships, encourage a positive self esteem, and reinforce the strengths our students already possess.

As our students' needs are met in the Owl's Nest, it is our goal to prepare them to meet their future academic challenges with confidence and ultimately to equip them with the faith and the tools they need to help "Transform the World" in which they live.



Middle School Grades 6-8

We believe that all students can learn, every day. The Educational Support Services at the Wyckoff Campus are designed to help meet the specific learning needs of students to maximize their academic, social and emotional potentials through a Christ-centered education.

The goal is to help students understand the ways in which they learn best, and recognize their own strengths and weaknesses in order to help them develop independence in the general education classroom. Focusing on students who present a wide variety of learning needs, the Eastern Christian T.E.S.S. teachers work closely with the general education classroom teachers, parents and Bergen County Special Services to ensure that comprehensive support for the student is achievable. These partnerships help provide differentiated tasks and instruction, accommodations, support structures and tools to help all learners feel a sense of belonging, autonomy and competence throughout their day at school.

In addition to the in-class support of general education classroom learning objectives and activities, the T.E.S.S. program provides replacement instruction on a limited, or as needed basis for small groups of students in core academic areas. Supplemental curriculums include, but are not limited to, Wilson's *Just Words* and *Touch Math*. These additional tools help to close the learning gaps for some students.

High School Grades 9-12

The goal of our resource program at the high school is to assist students with academic subject areas, study skills, and self advocacy. This goal is accomplished through a variety of resources:

Resource Room Class

Students earn credit for enrollment in our Resource Class which focuses on study skills, the student's current academic schedule, and self advocacy.

Support Model

Students are supported by Eastern Christian staff members and/or Bergen County Special Services teachers through "push in support." These support teachers collaborate with HS teachers to differentiate instruction to make the curriculum more accessible to students who learn differently.

Remediation Class

The highest level of intervention is a Remediation Class that parallels the grade level college prep curriculum.



Abbreviations, Terms, and Descriptions

Abbreviation/ Terminology	Description
BCSS = Bergen County Special Services	Bergen County Special Services is the state-funded organization that conducts child study team evaluations and provides services to students in nonpublic schools in New Jersey.
CST = Child Study Team	The Child Study Team consists of 3 members from BCSS (learning consultant, psychologist and social worker), the EC resource room teacher(s), the EC general education teacher(s) and the child's parents. The BCSS staff conducts educational and psychological evaluations on a child to determine if the child is eligible for classification.
Initial Evaluation	The initial evaluation is the first evaluation conducted by BCSS to determine if a child is eligible for classification.
Annual Review	The child study team meets each year after a child is classified to discuss the child's growth and review the modifications and accommodations. The Service Plan will be reviewed annually for two years. The student will be reevaluated to determine continued eligibility at the third year of their Service Plan.
Reevaluation	The third year after a child is classified, the child study team meets and conducts educational and psychological evaluations to determine if the child is still eligible for classification and to update accommodations and modifications.
Classification	A child who has been evaluated by the child study team and has been found to have a disability will receive a classification which states the specific name of the disability (see NJ Special Education Classifications).
Discrepancy Model	The discrepancy model assesses whether there is a significant difference between a child's potential (IQ) and academic achievement. A significant difference or discrepancy indicates eligibility for a child to be classified with a disability.
IEP = Individualized Education Program SP = Service Plan	A child who is classified in a public school receives an IEP. A child who is classified in a nonpublic school receives a SP. The Service Plan includes the classification as well as the accommodations and modifications the child needs in order to be successful in school.
504 Plan Accommodation Plan	A child who has been diagnosed with a physical or mental impairment that substantially limits his/her ability to learn or participate in public school classroom activities is eligible for a 504 Plan based on Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act. At Eastern Christian School, this plan is called an Accommodation Plan. This plan outlines any accommodations, modifications or services needed to enable the child to learn and participate in general education classroom activities.
Accommodations	Accommodations change how a student learns material compared to other students in the grade level. Accommodations typically include changes in presentation, response, setting or timing/schedule to meet the different learning needs of the child.
Modifications	Modifications are changes in the curriculum or what is being taught. Modifications typically include reducing the amount of work or completing alternative or adjusted assignments.

Services Provided	Description
Resource Room (EC)	Eastern Christian School has resource rooms on all 3 campuses. Students receive replacement services or support services from Eastern Christian staff members based on their classification and/or educational needs.
Replacement Services (EC)	Replacement services are provided by Eastern Christian staff members in the resource rooms. Students may receive instruction for a specific subject area (typically language arts or mathematics) in the Resource Room to provide a more intensive level of support to the general education classroom curriculum.
Support Services (EC)	Support services are provided by Eastern Christian resource room staff members. Students receive most of their instruction in the general education classroom. They receive additional instruction for a specific subject area in the resource room or through in-class support in the general education classroom.
Comp. Ed. = Compensatory Education (BCSS)	Comp. Ed. is provided by a BCSS teacher. Students qualify for Comp. Ed. based on a classification and/or MAP test scores. Comp. Ed. is generally provided in reading and/or math and occurs in 30 minute group or individual sessions with Push In or Pull Out support.
S.I. = Supplemental Instruction (BCSS)	S.I. is provided by a BCSS teacher. Students qualify for S.I. based on a classification. S.I. is generally provided in reading and/or math and occurs in 30 minute group or individual sessions with Push In or Pull Out support.
Push In Support (BCSS)	BCSS provides push in support for students in the general education classroom through a qualified BCSS teacher. The BCSS teacher assists the student with general education curriculum work.
Pull Out Support (BCSS)	BCSS provides pull out support for students outside of the general education classroom through a qualified BCSS teacher. The BCSS teacher takes individuals or small groups of students out of the classroom to work on specific skills.
Speech Articulation and Language (BCSS)	Students may receive speech services from a BCSS speech therapist for articulation (pronunciation of sounds) or for language (understanding of the English language). Students must be evaluated by the speech therapist to determine eligibility. Speech is generally provided in small group sessions once or twice a week based on the student's Service Plan.
IDEA Services (BCSS)	Students who are classified may receive an additional service from BCSS. The specific service will be based on the student's need and the available resources from BCSS. Possible services include extra academic support, speech, O.T., social skills, or behavioral intervention.
ESL = English as a Second Language ESLS = Eligible for Speech-Language Service (BCSS)	Students whose native language is not English, may qualify for ESL or ESLS. Students typically receive one or two 30-minute sessions from a BCSS teacher.
O.T. = Occupational Therapy (BCSS)	Students who have been evaluated for occupational therapy through the CST process or through an independent evaluation may qualify to receive weekly O.T. sessions by a BCSS occupational therapist. O.T. sessions assist students with fine motor skills.

NJ Special Education Classifications

1	AI	Auditory Impairment	“Auditory Impairment” corresponds to “auditorily handicapped” and further corresponds to the Federal eligibility categories of deafness or hearing 70 impairment. “Auditory impairment” means an inability to hear within normal limits due to physical impairment or dysfunction of auditory mechanisms characterized by (c)1i or ii below. An audiological evaluation by a specialist qualified in the field of audiology and a speech and language evaluation by a certified speech-language specialist are required.
		Deafness	“Deafness” – The auditory impairment is so severe that the student is impaired in processing linguistic information through hearing, with or without amplification, and the student’s educational performance is adversely affected.
		Hearing Impairment	“Hearing Impairment” – An impairment in hearing, whether permanent or fluctuating, that adversely affects the student’s educational performance.
2	AUT	Autism	“Autism” means a pervasive developmental disability that significantly impacts verbal and nonverbal communication and social interaction that adversely affects a student’s educational performance. Onset is generally evident before age three. Other characteristics often associated with autism are engagement in repetitive activities and stereotyped movements, resistance to environmental change or change in daily routine, unusual responses to sensory experiences, and lack of responsiveness to others. The term does not apply if the student’s adverse educational performance is due to an emotional regulation impairment as defined in (c)5 below. A child who manifests the characteristics of autism after age three may be classified as autistic if the criteria in this paragraph are met. An assessment by a certified speech-language specialist and an assessment by a physician trained in neurodevelopmental assessment are required.

3	ID	Intellectual Disability	“Intellectual Disability” means a disability that is characterized by significantly below average general cognitive functioning existing concurrently with deficits in adaptive behavior; manifested during the developmental period that adversely affects a student’s educational performance and is characterized by one of the following:
	ID/MI	Mild Intellectual Disability	“Mild Intellectual Disability” means a level of cognitive development and adaptive behavior in home, school, and community settings that are mildly below age expectations with respect to all of the following: (1) The quality and rate of learning; (2) The use of symbols for the interpretation of information and the solution of problems; and (3) Performance on an individually administered test of intelligence that falls within a range of two to three standard deviations below the mean.
	ID/MO	Moderate Intellectual Disability	“Moderate Intellectual Disability” means a level of cognitive development and adaptive behavior that is moderately below age expectations with respect to the following: (1) The ability to use symbols in the solution of problems of low complexity; (2) The ability to function socially without direct and close supervision in home, school, and community settings; and (3) Performance on an individually administered test of intelligence that falls three standard deviations or more below the mean.
	ID/SEV	Severe Intellectual Disability	“Severe Intellectual Disability” means a level of functioning severely below age expectations whereby, on a consistent basis, the student is incapable of giving evidence of understanding and responding in a positive manner to simple directions expressed in the child’s primary mode of communication and cannot in some manner express basic wants and needs.

<http://www.state.nj.us/education/code/current/title6a/chap14.pdf> (Pages 69-76)



4	CI	Communication Impairment	<p>“Communication Impairment” means a language disorder in the areas of morphology, syntax, semantics, and/or pragmatics/discourse that adversely affects a student’s educational performance and is not due primarily to an auditory impairment. The problem shall be demonstrated through functional assessment of language in other than a testing situation and performance below 1.5 standard deviations, or the 10th percentile on at least two standardized language tests, where such tests are appropriate, one of which shall be a comprehensive test of both receptive and expressive language. When the area of suspected disability is language, assessment by a certified speech-language specialist and assessment to establish the educational impact are required. The speech-language specialist shall be considered a child study team member.</p> <p>i. When it is determined that the student meets the eligibility criteria according to the definition, but requires instruction by a speech-language specialist only, the student shall be classified as eligible for speech-language services.</p> <p>ii. When the area of suspected disability is a disorder of articulation, voice, or fluency, the student shall be evaluated pursuant to N.J.A.C. 6A:14-3.4(g) and, if eligible, classified as eligible for speech-language services pursuant to N.J.A.C. 6A:14-3.6(a).</p>
5	ER	Emotional Regulation Impairment	<p>“Emotional Regulation Impairment” 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 student’s educational performance due to:</p> <p>i. An inability to learn that cannot be explained by intellectual, sensory, or health factors;</p> <p>ii. An inability to build or maintain satisfactory interpersonal relationships with peers and teachers;</p> <p>iii. Inappropriate types of behaviors or feelings under normal circumstances;</p> <p>iv. A general pervasive mood of unhappiness or depression; or</p> <p>v. A tendency to develop physical symptoms or fears associated with personal or school problems.</p>
6	MD	Multiple Disabilities	<p>“Multiple Disabilities” means the presence of two or more disabling conditions, the combination of which causes such severe educational needs that they cannot be accommodated in a program designed solely to address one of the impairments. Multiple disabilities include intellectual disability-blindness and intellectual disability-orthopedic impairment. The existence of two disabling conditions alone shall not serve as a basis for a classification of multiple disabilities. Eligibility for speech-language services as defined in this section shall not be one of the disabling conditions for classification based on the definition of “multiple disabilities.” Multiple disabilities does not include deaf-blindness.</p>

7	D/B	Deaf/Blindness	<p>“Deaf/Blindness” means 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.</p>
8	OI	Orthopedic Impairment	<p>“Orthopedic Impairment” means a disability characterized by a severe orthopedic impairment that adversely affects a student’s educational performance. The term includes malformation, malfunction, or loss of bones, muscle, or tissue. A medical assessment documenting the orthopedic condition is required.</p>
9	OHI	Other Health Impairment	<p>“Other Health Impairment” means a disability characterized by having limited strength, vitality, or alertness, including a heightened alertness with respect to the educational environment, due to chronic or acute health problems, such as attention deficit hyperactivity disorder, a heart condition, tuberculosis, rheumatic fever, nephritis, asthma, sickle cell anemia, hemophilia, epilepsy, lead poisoning, leukemia, diabetes, or any other medical condition, such as Tourette Syndrome, that adversely affects a student’s educational performance. A medical assessment documenting the health problem is required.</p>
10	PD	Preschool Child With a Disability	<p>“Preschool Child with a Disability” means a child between the ages of three and five who either:</p> <p>i. Is experiencing developmental delay, as measured by appropriate diagnostic instruments and procedures, in one or more of the areas in (c)10i(1) through (5) below, and requires special education and related services. As measured by a standardized assessment or criterionreferenced measure to determine eligibility, a developmental delay shall mean a 33 percent delay in one developmental area, or a 25 percent delay in two or more developmental areas.</p> <p>(1) Physical, including gross motor, fine motor, and sensory (vision and hearing);</p> <p>(2) Intellectual;</p> <p>(3) Communication;</p> <p>(4) Social and emotional; and</p> <p>(5) Adaptive; or</p> <p>ii. Has an identified disabling condition, including vision or hearing, that adversely affects learning or development and who requires special education and related services.</p>
11	SM	Social Maladjustment	<p>“Social Maladjustment” means a consistent inability to conform to the standards for behavior established by the school. Such behavior is seriously disruptive to the education of the student or other students and is not due to an emotional regulation impairment as defined in (c)5 above.</p>

12	SLD	Specific Learning Disability	<p>“Specific Learning Disability” means a disorder in one or more of the basic psychological processes involved in understanding or 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.</p> <p>i. A specific learning disability can be determined when a severe discrepancy is found between the student’s current achievement and intellectual ability in one or more of the following areas:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (1) Basic reading skills; (2) Reading comprehension; (3) Oral expression; (4) Listening comprehension; (5) Mathematical calculation; (6) Mathematical problem solving; (7) Written expression; and (8) Reading fluency. <p>ii. A specific learning disability may also be determined by utilizing a response to scientifically based interventions methodology as described in N.J.A.C. 6A:14-3.4(h)6.</p> <p>iii. The term “severe discrepancy” does not apply to students who have learning problems that are primarily the result of visual, hearing, or motor disabilities, general intellectual deficits, emotional regulation impairment, or environmental, cultural, or economic disadvantage.</p> <p>iv. If the district board of education utilizes the severe discrepancy methodology, the district board of education shall adopt procedures that utilize a statistical formula and criteria for determining severe discrepancy. Evaluation shall include assessment of current academic achievement and intellectual ability.</p>
13	TBI	Traumatic Brain Injury	<p>“Traumatic Brain Injury” means an acquired injury to the brain caused by an external physical force or insult to the brain, resulting in total or partial functional disability or psychosocial impairment, or both. 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.</p>
14	VI	Visual Impairment	<p>“Visual Impairment” means an impairment in vision that, even with correction, adversely affects a student’s educational performance. The term includes both partial sight and blindness. An assessment by a specialist qualified to determine visual disability is required. Students with visual impairments shall be reported to the New Jersey Commission for the Blind and Visually Impaired.</p>



Resource Room Contact Information

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