

# Autism NC Evaluation and Eligibility Policy

Effective January 1, 2020

Evaluation Procedures: NC 1503-2.5



# ASD Policy Changes

- **Approved by NC State Board of Education on September 5, 2019**
- **Implementation January 1, 2020**
- **For all LEAs in the NC schools**



# Prevalent ranking across 14 disability categories

**Specific Learning Disability 35.4%**

**Other Health Impaired 17.5 %**

**Speech/Language Impairment 14.1%**

**Autism 11.1 % Ranks as the 4th Most prevalent category**

**Intellectual Disability 8.1%**

# Determination of Eligibility: NC 1503-2.7

A group of qualified professionals and the parent determines whether the child is a child with a disability

- **The LEA must draw upon**, document, and carefully consider information from a variety of sources, including aptitude and achievement tests, parent input (i.e. outside evaluations, medical reports, etc), and teacher recommendations, as well as information about the child's physical condition, social or cultural background, and adaptive behavior.

# Determination of Eligibility: NC 1503-2.7

- when considering eligibility, **the team must determine that the student meets the criteria for one or more** of the fourteen disabling conditions, that the disability has **an adverse effect on educational performance**, and that the student is in **need of specially designed instruction**.
- This is often referred to as the **three(3) prongs** for eligibility determination



# Meets Criteria: Three (3) Prongs

## Prong 1A:

To be determined eligible in the disability category of autism spectrum disorder, the following must be demonstrated currently or by history:

(A) Persistent deficits in social communication and social interaction across multiple contexts, manifested in **ALL THREE** of the following:

- social-emotional reciprocity
- nonverbal communicative behaviors
- developing, maintaining, and understanding relationships

# Prong 1B



B) Restricted, repetitive patterns of behavior, interests, or activities, manifested **by one(1) or more** of the following:

- Stereotyped or repetitive motor movements, use of objects, or speech
- Insistence on sameness, inflexible adherence to routines, or ritualized patterns of verbal or nonverbal behavior
- Highly restricted, fixated interests that are abnormal in intensity or focus
  - Atypical responses to sensory

# Prong 1C



Symptoms generally **present in the early developmental period**, (but may not

**manifest until social demands exceed coping capacities or may be masked by learned strategies in later life**).

A child who manifests the characteristics of

autism **after age three** could be identified as having autism spectrum

disorder if the criteria in (A) and (B) are satisfied.



# Prong 2: Adverse Effect



The disability must have an adverse effect on educational

**(academic and/or functional) performance.**

**Areas to consider to include: (But not limited to):**

Academic performance, Communication functioning

Social functioning, Pragmatic language, Organizational skills, Group work skills

Problem solving skills, Emotional regulation, Hygiene, Behavior, Attention,

challenges Daily living skills/adaptive behavior, Transition

## Prong 3: Need for Specially Designed Instruction (SDI)



**The disability must require specially designed instruction.**

Specially designed instruction means adapting, as appropriate to the needs of an eligible child under this part, the **content, methodology, or delivery of instruction**--

- To address the **unique needs of the child** that result from the child's disability; and
- To ensure **access of the child to the general curriculum**, so that the child can meet the educational standards within the jurisdiction of the public agency that apply to all children.

# RULE OUTS (3): Exclusionary factors

A child **must not be** determined to be a child with a disability if the primary factor for that determination is:

- Lack of appropriate instruction in reading, including the essential components of reading instruction
- Lack of appropriate instruction in math; or
  - Limited English proficiency;



# Required Screenings & Evaluation ASD 1502-2.5

- NO CHANGES
- MODIFIED
- NEW



# NO CHANGES

Vision, Hearing, Observation across setting,

Summary of Conferences with documentation of attempts,

Education evaluation, Adaptive behavior,

Speech language evaluation including semantics and pragmatics,

# MODIFIED

**Psychological Evaluation:** Psychological evaluation; the yielding of an overall intellectual score is not required and should be considered on a case-by-case basis.

1) This modification acknowledges that **an overall intellectual score** provides meaningful information only when there is minimal scatter across abilities measured.

2) Students with ASD **often have scatter across cognitive domains**; therefore, an overall score may not represent meaningful information for instructional planning purposes. When this is the case, the reporting of unreliable scores of this type is not required.

# NEW CHANGES

**Sensory processing evaluation** (Defined as: **Sensory evaluations are performed by occupational therapists.**)

A sensory processing evaluation collects, organizes, and analyzes information specific to how a student's current level of sensory processing **impacts occupational performance and participation at school.**

This information may be gathered through: review of educational and medical records; interviews with the student, teachers, parents, and others; detailed, in-context observations; and, the administration of formal testing instruments, procedures, and techniques.

# NEW CHANGES

**A sensory processing evaluation should include, but is not limited to,** as many of the areas listed below as may be appropriate:

(1) intensity of response to various sensory experiences, including (a) visual stimuli (b) auditory stimuli (c) olfactory stimuli (d) tactile stimuli (e) taste stimuli (f) vestibular stimuli (g) proprioceptive stimuli

(2) sensory-motor coordination (a) sensory-motor skills (b) praxis/motor planning skills)





## Suspected scenarios for AU support Five (5) considerations

- Involving external Community providers
- Criteria for NCDPI 14 conditions
- Adverse effect to education performance
- Requires SDI
- Eligible for Special Education and Related services(if needed

Scenarios ASD Suspected	External Community Provider Diagnosis of ASD	Meets One of the Fourteen Disabling Conditions	Adverse Effect to Educational Performance	Requires Specially Designed Instruction	Eligible for Special Education and Related Services (if needed)
Student #1:	NO	NO	NO	NO	NO
Student #2:	NO	YES	YES	YES	YES
Student #3:	YES	NO	NO	NO	NO
Student #4:	YES	YES	NO	NO	NO
Student #5:	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES

## Students not eligible for SDI should use other avenues for support

- A school's Multi-tiered system of support (MTSS) or similar framework that provides interventions and matches intervention resources available within a school to the student's academic and social emotional needs.
- Accommodations and/or modifications provided through Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act (if determined eligible for Section 504)
  - <http://www.dpi.state.nc.us/parents/disabilities/section504/>
  - <http://ec.ncpublicschools.gov/policies/nc-policies-governing-services-for-children-with-disabilities/ncdpi-communication/2016-2017/federal-programs-Updates/parent-and-educator-resource-guide-to-section-504-in-public-elementary-and-secondary-schools-12-28-16/view> \*Note: It is important for school staff to provide resources to parents

## Placement Decision: Role of IEP team (NC 1501-3.3)

*In determining the educational placement of a child with a disability, including **a preschool child with a disability**,*

*Each LEA must ensure that the placement is made by the IEP Team, **which includes the parents** and other persons knowledgeable about the child, the meaning of the evaluation data, and the placement options, including **Least Restrictive Environment**.*



# **Definition** of Individualized Education Program: 34CFR 300.320(a)(4) and NC 1503-4.1

ASD is unique in that there are a set of evidence

based practices that scientific research has found to be effective when working with students with autism.

Research also shows that early intervention is key to improving outcomes for students with ASD. The designation of ASD as the student's disabling condition

guides educators to utilize these evidence based practices in their teaching and early intervention services. Information on these Evidence Based Practices and



# Definition of Individualized Education Program: 34CFR 300.320(a)(4) and NC 1503-4.1

*Definition: The definition for ASD in the federal IDEA regulations and state policy are consistent, with the exception of a few wording differences as depicted in the table below.*

- *Federal Policy: <https://sites.ed.gov/idea/regs/b/a/300.8>*
- *State Policy:  
<https://ec.ncpublicschools.gov/policies/nc-policies-governing-services-for-children-with-disabilities>*

# Definition of Individualized Education Program: 34CFR 300.320(a)(4) and NC 1503-4.1

*Early intervention can be found through accessing the resources below.*

- *National Professional Development Center on Autism Spectrum Disorder:*
- *[https://autismpdc.fpg.unc.edu/evidence based practices](https://autismpdc.fpg.unc.edu/evidence-based-practices)*
- *National Autism Center: [http ://www.nationalautismcenter.org/national standards project/](http://www.nationalautismcenter.org/national-standards-project/)*
- *Early Intervention:*

*<https://www.nichd.nih.gov/health/topics/autism/conditioninfo/treatments/earl>*

# New Steps....

**Collaboration with support services staff throughout the problems solving and referral procedures,**

