

## Proposed Policy Recommendations – Autism Spectrum Disorder

**PURPOSE:** In order to improve alignment of NC Policies Governing Services for Children with Disabilities with effective practices, the North Carolina Department of Public Instruction Exceptional Children Division is recommending policy changes in the evaluation and identification of Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD). The information included in this document identifies these recommended changes.

Disability	EXISTING:	PROPOSED CHANGES/ADDITIONS:
	Autism	Autism Spectrum Disorder
NC Definition	<p>(i) Means a developmental disability significantly affecting verbal and nonverbal communication and social interaction, generally evident before age three, which adversely affects a child's educational performance. Other characteristics often associated with autism are engagement in repetitive activities and stereotypical movements, restricted interests, resistance to environmental change or change in daily routines, and unusual responses to sensory experiences.</p> <p>(ii) Autism does not apply if a child's educational performance is adversely affected primarily because the child has an emotional disability, as described in paragraph (b)(5) of this section.</p> <p>(iii) A child who manifests the characteristics of autism after age three could be identified as having autism if the criteria in paragraph (i) of this section are satisfied.</p>	<u><i>NONE</i></u>
NC Required Screenings and Evaluations	<p>(A) Hearing screening;</p> <p>(B) Vision screening;</p> <p>(C) Observation across settings, to assess academic and functional skills;</p> <p>(D) Summary of conference(s) with parents or documentation of attempts to conference with parents;</p> <p>(E) Social/developmental history</p> <p>(F) Educational evaluation;</p> <p>(G) Adaptive behavior evaluation;</p>	<p><u><i>* ADD MOTOR SCREEN</i></u></p> <p><u><i>* ADD SENSORY PROCESSING EVALUATION</i></u></p> <p><u><i>(E) Social/developmental history; to include a structured review of early developmental history</i></u></p>

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	<p>(H) Psychological evaluation;</p> <p>(I) Speech-language evaluation which includes, but is not limited to, measures of language semantics and pragmatics;</p> <p>(J) Behavioral Assessment related to Autism Spectrum Disorder: an assessment using an appropriate behavior rating tool or an alternative assessment instrument that identifies characteristics associated with autism spectrum disorder.</p>	<p><b><u>(H) Psychological evaluation - the yielding of an overall intellectual score is not required and should be considered on a case-by-case basis</u></b></p> <p><b><u>(J) Behavioral Assessment related to Autism Spectrum Disorder: An assessment using appropriate behavior rating tools that yield ratings across environments, and, when available an individually administered instrument that assesses the range of characteristics associated with autism spectrum disorder.</u></b></p>
<p><b>Eligibility Criteria</b></p>	<p>(ii) To be determined eligible in the disability category of autism, a child must demonstrate at least three of the four characteristics listed below:</p> <p>(A) Impairment in communication;</p> <p>(B) Impairment in social interaction;</p> <p>(C) Unusual response to sensory experiences;</p> <p>(D) Restricted, repetitive, or stereotypic patterns of behavior, interests, and/or activities.</p>	<p><b><u>(ii) To be determined eligible in the disability category of Autism Spectrum Disorder, the following must be demonstrated:</u></b></p> <p><b><u>A. Persistent deficits in social communication and social interaction across multiple contexts, manifested by ALL THREE of the following:</u></b></p> <p><b><u>1) Deficits in social-emotional reciprocity</u></b></p> <p><b><u>2) Deficits in nonverbal communicative behaviors</u></b></p> <p><b><u>3) Deficits in developing, maintaining, and understanding relationships</u></b></p> <p style="text-align: center;"><b><u>AND</u></b></p> <p><b><u>B. Restricted, repetitive patterns of behavior, interests, or activities, manifested by AT LEAST 2 of the following:</u></b></p>

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	<p>(iii) The disability must:          (A) Have an adverse effect on educational performance, and          (B) Require specially designed instruction.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <u>Stereotyped or repetitive motor movements, use of objects, or speech</u></li> <li>• <u>Insistence on sameness, inflexible adherence to routines, or ritualized patterns of verbal or nonverbal behavior</u></li> <li>• <u>Highly restricted, fixated interests that are abnormal in intensity or focus</u></li> <li>• <u>Significantly atypical responses to sensory input or significantly atypical interests in sensory aspects of the environment.</u></li> </ul> <p style="text-align: center;"><u>AND</u></p> <p>C. <u>Above symptoms present in the early developmental period (but may not manifest until social demands exceed coping capacities)</u></p> <p>(iii) The disability must:          (A) Have an adverse effect on educational <u>(academic and/or functional)</u> performance, and          (B) Require specially designed instruction.</p>
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