

## **DEI Evaluation Team Bulletin #9<sup>1</sup>**

### **DEI Evaluation Rounds 5-6 Disability Description Guide**

**1. Attention-Deficit/Hyperactivity Disorders;**\*

ADD and ADHD are neurological disabilities involving learning and behavior. These disabilities affect how the brain regulates attention, manages impulse control, and directs executive functions, which control cognitive tasks, motor activity, and social interactions. Hyperactivity is frequently present.

**2. Blindness or Low Vision;**\*

The following terms describe students with visual disabilities: 1. "Totally blind" individuals must learn and interact with the world via Braille, haptic feedback, or other nonvisual means; "Legally blind" indicates that an individual has less than 20/200 vision in the more functional eye or a very limited field of vision (20 degrees at its widest point); and, 3. "Low vision" refers to a severe vision loss in distance and near vision.

**3. Brain Injuries;**\*

Brain injury can affect attention, communication, emotional regulation, learning, movement, and many other activities. Brain injury can occur in many ways. Traumatic brain injury typically results from accidents; however, insufficient oxygen, stroke, poisoning, or infection can also cause brain injury.

**4. Deaf/Hard-of-Hearing;**\*

Individuals who are deaf or hard of hearing require different accommodations depending on several factors, including the degree of hearing loss, the age of onset, and the language or communication system they use. They may use a variety of communication methods, including lip reading, cued speech, signed English and/or American Sign Language.

**5. Learning Disabilities;**\*

Learning disabilities are neurological disabilities that alter the acquisition and use of listening, speaking, reading, writing, reasoning, or mathematical skills. Learning disabilities affect the manner in which individuals with average or above average intellectual abilities process and/or express information. The effects can change depending upon learning demands and environments and can manifest in a single academic area or affect performance across many subject areas and disciplines.

**6. Medical Disabilities;**\*

Medical disabilities include chronic conditions and other health conditions with long-term effects for one or more of the body's systems. These disabilities can affect respiration, the immune response, movement, neurology, circulation, and other body activities.

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<sup>1</sup> To access Bulletins 1-5, go to <http://socialdynamicsllc.com>, click on the "DEI" button (top of screen), "DEI Forum" and then "DEI Document Library" (top of screen).

**7. Physical Disabilities;**\*

Physical disabilities affect movement, coordination of the body, and engagement in physical activities. A variety of physical disabilities can result from congenital conditions, accidents, or progressive neuromuscular diseases. These disabilities can include conditions such as missing limbs, spinal cord injury (paraplegia or quadriplegia), cerebral palsy, and spina bifida. Other common physical disabilities include amputation, muscular dystrophy, cystic fibrosis, paralysis, polio/post polio, and stroke.

**8. Mental Health Disabilities;**\*

Mental Health disabilities include anxiety, depression, post-traumatic stress disorder, schizophrenia, and other conditions diagnosed by a psychologist or psychiatrist. These disabilities can affect psychological state, mood, energy level, emotional regulation, and other mental functions. Mental health disabilities may persist over time and can change in response to particular situations and events.

**9. Speech and Language Disabilities \***

Speech and language disabilities affect communication and related areas such as oral motor function. They can include problems with articulation or vocal strength to complete absence of voice. Speech and language disabilities can also affect projection, fluency (e.g., stuttering and stammering), articulation of particular words or terms, and auditory processing. Some causes of communication disorders include hearing loss, learning disabilities cerebral palsy, brain injury, drug abuse, and other neurological, developmental, emotional, and physical conditions. Frequently, however, the cause is unknown. Some individuals with speech and language disabilities may use augmentative and alternative communication, such as letter boards, sign language, and symbols.

**10. Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities\*\***

*Intellectual disability* results in difficulties in **intellectual functioning** and **adaptive behavior**, which affects many everyday social and practical skills. Developmental disabilities are a group of disabilities originating before age 18 that affect physical, learning, language, or behavior areas. Down Syndrome is an example of a developmental disability.

**11. Autism Spectrum Disorder\*\*\***

Autism spectrum disorder (ASD) refers to a complex neurological-developmental disability originating in early childhood. Autism affects many facets of brain activity and involves varying degrees of difficulty with social interaction and verbal and nonverbal communication. This disability can also affect other areas of living, including the senses (i.e., smell, sound, sight, touch, taste). Adults and children diagnosed with ASD have associated atypical communication, interaction, behavior, problem solving, learning, and overall thinking. The word spectrum refers to the large diversity of autism and the wide range of support needs for activities of living.

\* Definition adapted from ([http://web.jhu.edu/disabilities/faculty/types\\_of\\_disabilities/index.html](http://web.jhu.edu/disabilities/faculty/types_of_disabilities/index.html))

\*\* Definition adapted from (<http://www.cdc.gov/ncbddd/developmentaldisabilities/facts.html>) and (<http://aaid.org/intellectual-disability/definition#.Vk9zgIirQdU>)

\*\*\* Definition adapted from ([http://www.ninds.nih.gov/disorders/autism/detail\\_autism.htm](http://www.ninds.nih.gov/disorders/autism/detail_autism.htm)) and (<http://www.cdc.gov/ncbddd/autism/facts.html>)