

Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA)

All schools must follow certain procedures (written in state and federal law) to decide if a child is eligible for special education. These procedures include referral, consent to be evaluated, evaluation, placement, and the writing of an Individual Education Program (IEP). A child with a disability must meet eligibility criteria under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA). The following are disabilities under IDEA. Following each definition is the Wisconsin Administrative Code the definition is drawn from. More information can also be found following the provided links to each disability.

- **Autism (A):** Autism means a developmental disability significantly affecting a child's social interaction and verbal and nonverbal communication, generally evident before age 3, that adversely affects learning and educational performance. Other characteristics often associated with autism are 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 apply if a child's educational performance is adversely affected primarily because the child has an emotional disturbance. **PI 11.36 (8)(a), Wis. Admin. Code .**
<https://dpi.wi.gov/sped/program/autism>
- **Blind and Visually Impaired (BV):** Blind and visually impaired means even after correction a child's visual functioning adversely affects educational performance. The IEP team may identify a child as blind and visually impaired after all of the following events occur: **1.** A teacher of the blind and visually impaired licensed under s. **PI 34.051** conducts a functional vision evaluation which includes a review of medical information from an ophthalmologist or optometrist, formal and informal tests of visual functioning, and a determination of the implications of the blindness or visual impairment on the educational and curricular needs of the child. **2.** An orientation and mobility specialist licensed under s. **PI 34.089** evaluates the child to determine if there are related orientation and mobility needs in home, school, or community environments. A child may meet the criteria under this subdivision even if they do not have orientation and mobility needs. **PI 11.36 (3), Wis. Admin. Code.** <https://dpi.wi.gov/sped/program/vision>
- **Deaf and Hard of Hearing (DHH):** Deaf and hard of hearing means a decreased ability to detect sound in one or both ears with or without amplification, whether permanent or chronically fluctuating, which adversely affects a child's educational performance. This includes academic performance, speech perception, speech production, or communication including language acquisition or expression. A current evaluation by an audiologist licensed under ch. **459, Stats.**, shall be one of the components for an initial evaluation of a child with suspected hearing loss. A teacher of the deaf or hard of hearing licensed under s. **PI 34.050** must be a member of the IEP team when determining eligibility. **PI 11.36 (4), Wis. Admin. Code.**
<https://dpi.wi.gov/sped/program/deaf-hard-of-hearing>
- **Deafblind (DB):** Deafblind means concomitantly deaf or hard of hearing and blind or visually impaired, the combination of which causes severe communication and other developmental and educational needs such that the individual disability-related needs of

the student extend beyond the instruction and supports required for a student who is solely deaf or hard of hearing or blind or visually impaired. PI 11.36 (4m), Wis. Admin. Code. <https://dpi.wi.gov/sped/program/deafblind>

- Emotional Behavioral Disability (EBD): Emotional behavioral disability, means social, emotional or behavioral functioning that so departs from generally accepted, age appropriate ethnic or cultural norms that it adversely affects a child's academic progress, social relationships, personal adjustment, classroom adjustment, self-care or vocational skills. PI 11.36 (7)(a), Wis. Admin. Code. <https://dpi.wi.gov/sped/program/emotional-behavioral-disability>
- Intellectual Disabilities (ID): Intellectual disability means significant limitations both in intellectual functioning and in adaptive behavior as expressed in conceptual, social, and practical adaptive skills and manifested during the developmental period that adversely affects the child's educational performance. PI 11.36 (1)(a), Wis. Admin. Code. <https://dpi.wi.gov/sped/program/intellectual-disabilities>
- Orthopedic Impairment (OI): Orthopedic impairment means a severe orthopedic impairment that adversely affects a child's educational performance. The term includes, but is not limited to, impairments caused by congenital anomaly, such as a clubfoot or absence of some member; impairments caused by disease, such as poliomyelitis or bone tuberculosis; and impairments from other causes, such as cerebral palsy, amputations, and fractures or burns that cause contractures. PI 11.36 (2), Wis. Admin. Code. <https://dpi.wi.gov/sped/program/orthopedic-impairment>
- Other Health Impairment (OHI): Other health impairment means having limited strength, vitality or alertness, due to chronic or acute health problems. The term includes but is not limited to a heart condition, tuberculosis, rheumatic fever, nephritis, asthma, sickle cell anemia, hemophilia, epilepsy, lead poisoning, leukemia, diabetes, or acquired injuries to the brain caused by internal occurrences or degenerative conditions, which adversely affects a child's educational performance. PI 11.36 (10), Wis. Admin. Code. <https://dpi.wi.gov/sped/program/other-health-impairment>
- Significant Developmental Delay (SDD): Significant developmental delay means children, ages 3 through 9 years of age, who are experiencing significant delays in the areas of physical, cognition, communication, social-emotional, or adaptive development. PI 11.36 (11)(a), Wis. Admin. Code. <https://dpi.wi.gov/sped/program/significant-developmental-delay>
- Specific Learning Disability (SLD): Specific learning disability pursuant to s. 115.76 (5) (a) 10., Stats., 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 perform mathematical calculations, including conditions such as perceptual disabilities, brain injury, minimal brain dysfunction, dyslexia and developmental aphasia. The term does not include learning problems that are primarily the result of visual, hearing, motor disabilities, cognitive disabilities, emotional disturbance, cultural factors, environmental, or economic disadvantage. PI 11.36 (6)(a), Wis. Admin. Code. <https://dpi.wi.gov/sped/program/specific-learning-disabilities>

- Speech or Language Impairment (SL): Speech or language impairment means an impairment of speech or sound production, voice, fluency, or language that adversely affects educational performance or social, emotional or vocational development. PI 11.36 (5)(a), Wis. Admin. Code. <https://dpi.wi.gov/sped/program/speech-language>
- Traumatic Brain Injury (TBI): Traumatic brain injury is an acquired injury to the brain caused by an **external** force resulting in total or partial functional disability or psychosocial impairment, or both, that adversely affects a child's educational performance. The term applies to open or closed head injuries resulting in impairments in one or more areas such as cognition; speech and language; memory; attention; reasoning; abstract thinking; communication; judgement; problem solving; sensory; perceptual and motor abilities; psychosocial behavior; physical functions; information processing; and executive functions, such as organizing, evaluating and carrying out goal-directed activities. The term does not apply to brain injuries that are congenital or degenerative, or brain injuries induced by birth trauma. PI 11.36 (9)(a), Wis. Admin. Code. <https://dpi.wi.gov/sped/program/traumatic-brain-injury>