

Criteria for the Identification of Students with a Hearing Impairment or Deafness

Recognizing the many factors involved in appropriately identifying students with Hearing Impairments (HI), Middlesex County Public Schools' Office of Special Education, has established criteria to be used by eligibility committees for the purpose of decision-making.

Definition

Regulations Governing Special Education Programs For Children With Disabilities in Virginia (2009), defines a **“hearing impairment”** as, “an impairment in hearing, whether permanent or fluctuating, that adversely affects a child’s educational performance but that is not included under the definition of deafness.” **“Deafness”** is defined as “a hearing impairment that is so severe that the child is impaired in processing linguistic information through hearing, with or without amplification, that adversely affects the child’s educational performance.”

Assessments:

If the student is suspected of having a hearing impairment or of being deaf, then assessments should include, but are not limited to, the following:

- **Classroom Educational Documentation** – Written report from classroom teacher(s) describing the child’s level of academic, developmental, social, or adaptive functioning including strengths, weaknesses, and other factors which affect educational performance.
- **Psychological** – Written report from a qualified school psychologist or other qualified professional based on the use of a battery of appropriate instruments which may assess cognition, emotionality, processing performance, adaptive skills, and social skills.
- **Educational** – Written report describing current educational performance/achievement and identifying instructional strengths and weaknesses in academic skills and processing performance.
- **Developmental (ages 2-5)** – (when appropriate) Written report of an assessment of how the child functions in the major areas of physical development, cognitive development, communication development, social or emotional development, and/or adaptive development.
- **Sociocultural** – Written report from a qualified visiting teacher or school social worker based on the use of information collected through social appraisal

instruments, which will include background and social/adaptive behavior in the home, school, and community.

- Observation – Written report of the child’s academic performance and behavior in the child’s learning environment (including the general education classroom setting) to document the child’s academic performance and behavior in the areas of difficulty. NOTE: This observation should take place in a class where perceived weaknesses are indicated. *In case of a child less than school age or out of school, a group member shall observe the child in an environment appropriate for a child of that age.
- Audiological – Written report by a qualified audiologist licensed by the Board of Audiology and Speech-Language Pathology to assess the child’s hearing.

Eligibility Criteria:

The following criteria must be met when determining a student eligible for services for students with a hearing impairment:

1. The child’s age falls within 2-21 years of age, inclusive.
2. The child has a hearing loss documented by a certified audiologist

Any of the following disorders are considered as disabling conditions if they adversely affect a child’s educational performance and the child needs special education:
 - a. Sensorineural hearing loss
 - b. Chronic conductive hearing loss
 - c. Intermittent (temporary) conductive hearing loss
 - d. Mixed hearing loss
3. The child’s educational performance is adversely affected. Adverse educational performance may be documented through: (a) academic achievement; (b) test performance data; (c) performance on supplementary educational testing (including measures of linguistic competence); (d) information gathered from interviews with teachers, school personnel, parents, outside agency personnel and the student concerning verbal performance as commensurate with written performance, student interaction with peers, student self-concept and emotional adjustment/social interaction.
4. Performance in speech/language skills

5. The student requires instruction to address identified deficit areas that cannot reasonably be provided solely through regular education.

NOTE: If the hearing deficit is so severe that the child is impaired in processing linguistic information through hearing, with or without amplification, then the disability of “deafness” should be considered for the student.

The following criteria must be met when determining a student eligible for services for the programs serving students with deafness.

1. A written report from a qualified audiologist that documents deafness.
2. A hearing impairment that is so severe that the student is impaired in processing linguistic information through hearing, with or without amplification.
3. The evaluation information confirms there is an adverse effect on the student’s educational performance.
4. The student requires instruction to address identified deficit areas that cannot reasonably be provided solely through regular education.

NOTE: Eligibility for special education services must not be made on the basis of hearing loss alone.