

## Criteria for Identifying Students with Other Health Impairment

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

### **State Definition:**

*Regulations Governing Special Education Programs For Children With Disabilities in Virginia (2009)*, define Other Health Impairment by the following "having limited strength, vitality or alertness, including a heightened alertness to environmental stimuli, that results in limited alertness with respect to the educational environment, that (i) is due to chronic or acute health problems such as asthma, attention deficit disorder or attention deficit hyperactivity disorder, diabetes, epilepsy, a heart condition, hemophilia, lead poisoning, leukemia, nephritis, rheumatic fever, sickle cell anemia, and Tourette's Syndrome; and (ii) adversely affects a child's educational performance."

### **Assessments:**

If the student is suspected of having ADHD under the category of OHI, then assessments should include, but are not limited to, the following:

- 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 and processing performance.
- Educational – (when appropriate) 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.
- Classroom Educational Documentation - Written report from classroom teacher(s) describing the child's level of academic, developmental, social, or adaptive level of functioning including strengths, weaknesses, and other factors which affect educational performance.
- 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.

- 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.
- Hearing Screening – Written report to assess the child’s hearing.

**Eligibility Criteria:**

The following criteria should be met when determining whether a student with an Other Health Impairment:

1. The child’s age falls within 2-21 years of age, inclusive.
2. A chronic or acute health impairment resulting in limited strength, vitality or alertness, including a heightened alertness to environmental stimuli exists and is documented through medical evidence.

Definition of terms:

Acute: term used to describe disorders or symptoms that run a short course.

Chronic: term used to describe long-lasting diseases or conditions.

3. The health impairment has an adverse effect on educational performance.

Evidence must exist that the effects of the health impairment result in academic achievement and classroom performance which are significantly below expected levels based on the student’s age and assessed ability.

Anecdotal records, parent information and teacher reports are to be considered.

It is appropriate to consider the impact of the health impairment on achievement and ability assessment data. This may include the impact of symptoms, treatments and/or medications associated with the health impairment. If such contributing factors exist, assessment data is to be interpreted with caution.

4. The child needs special education

Students with health impairments whose educational needs cannot be met through regular classroom modifications and/or reasonable accommodations in their school program and services may meet the criteria for Other Health Impairments.