

Criteria for the Identification of Students with an Orthopedic Impairment

Recognizing the many factors involved in appropriately identifying students with Orthopedic Impairment (OI), 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 Orthopedic Impairment by the following; "a severe orthopedic impairment that adversely affects a child's educational performance. The term includes impairments caused by congenital anomaly (e.g., club foot, absence of some member), impairments caused by disease (e.g., poliomyelitis, bone tuberculosis), and impairments from other causes (e.g., cerebral palsy, amputations, and fractures or burns that cause contractures)."

Assessments:

If the student is suspected of having an orthopedic impairment, then assessments should include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Medical – Written report from a licensed physician or nurse practitioner to determine a child's medically related disability. Documentation of past medical records, if available, indicating the nature and extent of the orthopedic impairment should also be included. *NOTE: If the student receives ongoing medical intervention and/or treatment, it may be more appropriate to request a copy of those records rather than a medical evaluation.*
- Physical Therapy Evaluation and/or Occupational Therapy Evaluation - Written report by a licensed or registered therapist with information based on a standardized motor assessment that may include the areas of fine motor, gross motor, and self-help (when appropriate).
- 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.
- Hearing Screening – Written report to assess the child’s hearing.

Eligibility Criteria:

The following criteria must be met when determining a student eligible for services for students with an orthopedic impairment requires special education services:

1. The child’s age falls within 2-21 years of age, inclusive.
2. The student has a documented orthopedic impairment. This is supported by information from a licensed physician or nurse practitioner. The information may be from past medical documentation. A current physical examination may not be necessary in all cases.
2. The functional disability or impairment has an adverse effect on educational performance and the student requires instruction and/or support to benefit from education. These services cannot be reasonably provided solely through regular education.
3. The student has functional deficits or motor impairments in one or more of the three motor areas (fine motor, gross motor, self-help) as documented by a score of 2 or more standard deviations below the mean.
4. The student’s condition is permanent, or is expected to last for more than 60 calendar days.
5. The child needs special education. Students with orthopedic 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 Orthopedic Impairments.