

Autism

Lackland Independent School District

#015913

Areas of Eligibility - Autism Operating Procedures

AUTISM

Students with autism typically have a developmental disability *significantly* impacting verbal and nonverbal communication and social interaction which adversely affects a student's educational performance. This delay generally manifests prior to the age 3.¹

A student may not be determined eligible as a student with autism if the student's educational performance is adversely affected primarily because the student has an emotional disturbance.²

The written evaluation report by the group of qualified professionals must include specific recommendations for behavioral interventions and strategies.³

Additional characteristics associated with autism may include—

- engagement in repetitive activities and stereotyped movements;
- resistance to environmental change or change in daily routines; and/or
- unusual responses to sensory experiences.

A student who manifests the characteristics of autism after age 3 could be identified as having autism if the criteria in this section are identified.⁴

The definitions of conditions or categories that are used for purposes of establishing an individual's eligibility for mental health services, as found in the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders (DSM), are not synonymous with criteria used for determining whether a child is a "child with a disability" for purposes of establishing eligibility for services under the IDEA.⁵ The group of qualified professionals conducting an evaluation of a student suspected of having autism will conduct assessments and observations, and collect data, as necessary for the ARD Committee to make an eligibility determination.

¹ 34 C.F.R. § 300.8(c)(1)

² 34 C.F.R. § 300.8(c)(1)(ii)

³ 19 TEX. ADMIN. CODE §89.1040(c)(1)

⁴ 34 C.F.R. § 300.8(c)(1)(iii)

⁵ *Letter to Coe* (OSEP 9/14/1999)