

Autism Spectrum Disorders: Assessment Planning Requirements

Autism Spectrum Disorders (ASD) means a range of pervasive developmental disorders, with onset in childhood, that adversely affect a student's functioning and result in the need for special education instruction and related services. ASD is a disability category characterized by an uneven developmental profile and a pattern of qualitative impairments in several areas of development, including social interaction, along with communication and/or the presence of restricted, repetitive, and stereotyped patterns of behavior, interests, and activities. These core features may present themselves in a wide variety of combinations that range from mild to severe, and the number of behavioral indicators present may vary.

Required team members: BRIC Autism Spectrum Disorders Consultant, Special Education Teacher, Speech Language Pathologist, Occupational Therapist, Regular Education Teacher, Parent

	Initial Evaluation	Reevaluation
Intellectual Functioning	NOT required for ASD initial eligibility determination. Address if there are individual student concerns.	NOT required for ASD reevaluation eligibility determination. Address if there are individual student concerns.
Academic Performance	NOT required for ASD initial eligibility determination. Address if there are individual student concerns.	NOT required for ASD reevaluation eligibility determination. Address if there are individual student concerns.
Social/Emotional/ Behavioral Skills	<p>Behavioral Indicators: REQUIRED for ASD initial eligibility determination - The team shall document behavioral indicators through at least two of these methods: structured interviews with parents, autism checklists, communication and developmental rating scales, functional behavior assessments, application of diagnostic criteria from the current Diagnostic and Statistical Manual (DSM), informal and standardized evaluation instruments, or intellectual testing.</p> <p>Observation: TWO systematic observations ARE required, at minimum, on two different days in two different settings which focus on documenting needs and the student's level of functioning in the three core areas (social interaction, communication, restricted, repetitive, or stereotyped patterns of behavior, interests, and activities).</p>	<p>Behavioral Indicators: REQUIRED for ASD reevaluation eligibility determination - The team shall document behavioral indicators through at least two of these methods: structured interviews with parents, autism checklists, communication and developmental rating scales, functional behavior assessments, application of diagnostic criteria from the current Diagnostic and Statistical Manual (DSM), informal and standardized evaluation instruments, or intellectual testing based on individual student concerns.</p>
Functional Skills	NOT required for ASD initial eligibility determination. Address if there are individual student concerns.	NOT required for ASD reevaluation eligibility determination. Address if there are individual student concerns.

	Initial Evaluation	Reevaluation
Communication Skills	Communication information is NOT required for ASD initial eligibility determination. Address if there are individual student concerns. Best practice also involves the inclusion of the speech language pathologist to address pragmatic language concerns and any communication needs.	NOT required for ASD reevaluation eligibility determination. Address if there are individual student concerns.
Motor Ability	NOT required for ASD initial eligibility determination. Address if there are individual student concerns.	NOT required for ASD reevaluation eligibility determination. Address if there are individual student concerns.
Sensory Status	Review and/or update the student's hearing and vision screening information is best practice, although sensory information is NOT required for ASD initial eligibility determination. Address if there are individual student concerns. Best practice also involves the inclusion of the occupational therapist to address sensory needs.	Review and/or update the student's hearing and vision screening information. Sensory information is NOT required for ASD reevaluation eligibility determination. Address if there are individual student concerns.
Health/Physical Status	NOT required for ASD initial eligibility determination. Address if there are individual student concerns.	NOT required for ASD reevaluation eligibility determination. Address if there are individual student concerns.
Transition	Transition planning MUST occur by grade 10. If completing transition planning, use at least 2 sources of data.	Transition planning MUST occur by grade 10. If completing transition planning, use at least 2 sources of data.

Team membership: The team determining eligibility and educational programming must include at least one professional with experience and expertise in the area of ASD due to the complexity of this disability and the specialized intervention methods. The team must include a school professional knowledgeable of the range of possible special education eligibility criteria.

Implementation: Students with various educational profiles and related clinical diagnoses may meet the criteria of ASD under subpart 3. However, a clinical or medical diagnosis is not required for a student to be eligible for special education services, and even with a clinical or medical diagnosis, a student must meet the criteria in subpart 3 to be eligible.