

SLD Eligibility Determination: Introduction to SLD

Key Takeaways

Specific Learning Disability

- One of 13 disability categories recognized by the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA)
- A disorder in one or more of the basic psychological processes involved in understanding or in using language, spoken or written, that may manifest itself in the imperfect ability to listen, think, speak, read, write, spell, or to do mathematical calculations, including conditions such as perceptual disabilities, brain injury, minimal brain dysfunction, dyslexia, and developmental aphasia

Exclusionary Factors

- A specific learning disability does not include learning problems that are primarily the result of visual, hearing, or motor disabilities, of intellectual disability, or emotional disturbance, or environmental, cultural, or economic disadvantage

8 areas of SLD

- Oral expression
- Listening comprehension
- Written expression
- Basic reading skills
- Reading fluency skills
- Reading comprehension
- Mathematics calculation
- Mathematics problem solving

IDEA

- Federal law that makes available a free appropriate public education (FAPE) to eligible children with disabilities throughout the nation and ensures special education and related services to those children

Colorado's Exceptional Children's Educational Act (ECEA)

- Must state must follow IDEA
- Each state may have additional laws and rules
- ECEA is specific requirements regarding how the IDEA and special education is to be implemented across the state

ECEA: SLD Eligibility Criteria

- A child may be determined to have a Specific Learning Disability that prevents the child from receiving reasonable educational benefit from the general education if a body of evidence demonstrates the following criteria are met
 - The child does **not achieve adequately** for the child's age or to meet state-approved grade-level standards and **exhibits significant academic skill deficit(s)** in one or more of the [eight] areas when provided with learning experiences and instruction appropriate for the child's age or state-approved grade-level standards AND
 - The child **does not make sufficient progress** to meet age or state-approved grade-level standards in one or more of the areas identified in Section 2.08(8)(b) (i) when using a process based on the child's **response to scientific, research-based intervention**

Colorado is a “local control” state

- District policy cannot contradict IDEA or ECEA and cannot provide less than what federal and state law requires
- Districts can offer more protections

Response to Intervention (RTI)

- Preventative approach to improving individual outcomes through high-quality universal instruction within a multi-tiered system that connects supports matched to students' academic, social-emotional and behavioral needs
- One element within the larger context of the SLD determination process
- RTI **does not replace** the need for a comprehensive evaluation