

FACT SHEET



Autism

Evaluation for Special Education

The Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), in 2004, includes important procedures which schools must use when evaluating eligibility for special education services. An initial evaluation involves the use of a variety of assessment tools and strategies to gather relevant functional, developmental, and academic information to assist in determining if the child is eligible for special education. A two-pronged test for eligibility is used in making the determination: (1) whether the child is a child with an exceptionality (disability or giftedness) as defined in federal and state laws and regulations; and (2) by reason thereof, has a need for special education and related services. Having information, assessments, or diagnosis from sources external to the school is

helpful but is not sufficient to determine

eligibility for special education under IDEA.

A child must NOT be determined to be a child with an exceptionality if: (a) the determinant factor is: lack of appropriate instruction in reading, including the essential components of reading instruction (defined in the Elementary and Secondary Education Act as phonemic awareness, phonics, vocabulary development, reading fluency including oral reading skills, and reading comprehension strategies); lack of appropriate instruction in math; or Limited English proficiency; and (b) the child does not otherwise meet the eligibility criteria as a child with an exceptionality.

Autism

Autism means a developmental disability significantly affecting verbal and nonverbal communication and social interaction, generally evident before age three but not necessarily so, that adversely affects a child's educational



performance. Other characteristics often associated with autism are engagement in repetitive activities and stereotyped movements, resistance to environmental change or change in daily routines, and

unusual responses to sensory experiences. The term shall not apply if a child's educational performance is adversely affected primarily because the child has an emotional disability. KAR 91-40-1(f).

More Information and Resources

[KSDE Kansas Special Education Process Handbook](#)

[KSDE Kansas Eligibility Indicators](#)

[Kansas Technical Assistance System Network \(TASN\) ATBS](#)

[Autism Society](#)

[Autism Speaks](#)

[OSEP Fast Facts: Children Identified with Autism](#)

For more information, contact:

Special Education and Title Services Team
1-(800) 203-9462 (Kansas Residents Only)
(785) 296-7454
Special.Education@ksde.gov



Kansas State Department of Education
900 S.W. Jackson Street, Suite 102
Topeka, Kansas 66612-1212
(785) 296-3201
www.ksde.gov

The Kansas State Department of Education does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, disability or age in its programs and activities and provides equal access to the Boy Scouts and other designated youth groups. The following person has been designated to handle inquiries regarding the nondiscrimination policies: KSDE General Counsel, Office of General Counsel, KSDE, Landon State Office Building, 900 S.W. Jackson, Suite 102, Topeka, KS 66612, (785) 296-3201.

February 2025