

## DRAFT

### **6A-6.03023 Special Programs for Students Who Are Autistic.**

(1) ~~Autistic. One who has a disability reflected in severe disorders of communication, behavior socialization and academic skills, and whose disability was evident in the early developmental stages of childhood. The autistic child appears to suffer primarily from a pervasive impairment of cognitive and perceptual functioning, the consequences of which are manifested by limited ability to understand, communicate, learn, and participate in social relationships.~~

(2) ~~Criteria for eligibility. The following criteria, consistent with the definition, shall be used to determine each student's eligibility for a special program:~~

~~(a) Evidence of onset of disorder at birth or during the first three (3) years of life;~~

~~(b) Evidence of severely delayed or absent speech and language skills;~~

~~(c) Evidence of impaired or complete lack of emotional/social relationships;~~

~~(d) Evidence of abnormal responses to stimuli which may involve any or all of the sensory modalities; and~~

~~(e) Evidence of a severe functional retardation which may be accompanied by normal or superior abilities in some areas.~~

~~(3) Procedures for student evaluation. The minimum evaluation for determining eligibility shall include the following:~~

~~(a) Documented and dated anecdotal records of behavioral observations, if required by the district program administrator, based on criteria specified in the district procedures document;~~

~~(b) Documented evidence that a social and developmental history has been compiled directly from the parent or guardian;~~

~~(c) A comprehensive psychological evaluation conducted by a certified school psychologist, licensed psychologist or psychiatrist, which shall include an individual evaluation of intellectual ability and potential, behavioral observations, and an educational evaluation, if appropriate;~~

~~(d) A physical evaluation which will include a neurological evaluation if deemed necessary by the examining physician or psychologist;~~

~~(e) An evaluation of sensory functioning including vision and hearing; and~~

~~(f) An evaluation of speech and language development.~~

~~Specific Authority 228.041(18)(19), 229.053(1), 230.23(4)(m), 236.081(1)(c) FS. Law Implemented 228.041(19)(20), 229.565(2)(b)(c), 230.23(4)(m)4., 232.01(1)(f), 236.081(1)(c) FS. History—New 7-2-79, Formerly 6A-6.3023.~~

## DRAFT

### **6A-6.03023 Exceptional Student Education for Students With Autism Spectrum Disorder**

(1) Students with autism spectrum disorder. Autism Spectrum Disorder is defined to be a range of pervasive developmental disorders with onset in early childhood that adversely affect a student's functioning and result in the need for specially designed instruction and related services. Autism Spectrum Disorder is characterized by an uneven developmental profile and a pattern of qualitative impairments in social interaction, communication, and the presence of restrictive, repetitive, and/or stereotyped patterns of behavior, interests, or activities. These characteristics may be manifested in a variety of combinations and may range from mild to severe. Autism Spectrum Disorder may include Autistic Disorder, Pervasive Developmental Disorder Not Otherwise Specified, Asperger's Disorder, or other related pervasive developmental disorders.

(2) Criteria for eligibility. A student with autism spectrum disorder is eligible for exceptional student education

(a) if all of the following criteria are met:

1. Onset in early childhood refers to onset that typically, but not necessarily, occurs prior to the age of three.
2. Uneven developmental profile as evidenced by current or previously exhibited inconsistencies across or within the developmental domains of language, social, adaptive behavior, or cognitive skills.
3. Impairment in social interaction is evidenced by delayed, absent, or atypical ability to relate to people or the environment. This may include, but not be limited to, limited joint-attention and limited use of facial expressions directed toward others; demonstrated difficulties in showing or bringing things to others to indicate an interest in the activity; demonstrated difficulties in relating to people, objects, and events; extreme inability to make and keep friends; significant vulnerability and safety issues due to social naiveté; apparent preference for isolated or solitary activities; demonstrated difficulties in interpreting others' behaviors and social cues.
4. Impairment in verbal and/or nonverbal language or social communication skills is evidenced by one or more behavioral indicators such as: failing to use a finger to point or request; using others' hand or body as a tool; demonstrating a lack of spontaneous imitations or lack of varied imaginative play; absence or delay of spoken language; limited understanding and use of nonverbal communication skills such as gestures, facial expressions, or voice tone; odd production of speech related to intonation, volume, rhythm, or rate; repetitive or unconventional language or the inability to initiate or maintain a conversation when speech is present.
5. Restrictive, repetitive, and/or stereotyped patterns of behavior, interests, or activities are evidenced by one or more behavioral indicators: insistence on following rules or rituals; demonstrating distress or resistance to changes in activity; repetitive hand or body mannerisms; lack of true imaginative play versus reenactment; over-reaction or under-reaction to sensory stimuli; rigid or rule-bound thinking; and encompassing preoccupation with one or more stereotyped or restricted patterns of interest that is not typical either in intensity or focus.

(b) the student needs special education as defined in rule 6A-6.03411(1)(c), FAC.

(3) Prior to evaluation the requirements in rule 6A-6.0331(1)-(3), FAC, must be met.

Specific Authority 1001.02(1), 1003.57(5) FS. Law Implemented 1001.03, 1003.57(5), 1003.01(3), 1003.21(1), and 1011.62(1)(c) FS. History - New 7-2-79, Formerly 6A-6.3023. Amended XXXXX