**EMOTIONAL DISTURBANCE**

DETERMINATION OF DISABILITY: *(student’s name) meets/does not* meet special education eligibility under the category of Emotional Disturbance due to (list areas checked) which has had a significant impact on (*student’s name*)’s educational performance. Data for determining eligibility was gathered from (list multiple sources of information, e.g., observations, teacher and parent report, behavior rating scales (BASC or Achenbach), file review, NDSA scores, MAP scores, intellectual assessments, academic assessments, curriculum based assessments, Functional Behavior Analysis, etc.)

1. A student is eligible for special education in the area of Emotional Disturbance when there is documentation that indicates that he or she exhibits (**ONE OR MORE of the following must be evident**):

☐ An inability to learn that cannot be explained by intellectual, sensory, or health factors (e.g. does student’s intellectual ability appear average).

☐ An inability to build or maintain satisfactory interpersonal relationships with peers or teachers (e.g. pervasive inability to develop relationships across settings and situations with at least one being observed in the school setting with more than one teacher or peer group, may include the inability to show sympathy, empathy, maintain relationships, or be constructively assertive; may also include physical and verbal aggressions, lack of affect, distorted emotions towards others, demands for attention and withdrawal from social interactions)

☐ Inappropriate types of behavior or feelings under normal circumstances (e.g. consistent anxiety-based or fear-driven avoidance of meaningful, school-based interactions, feelings deviate significantly from other students of the same age, gender, and culture; these behaviors must be occurring under normal circumstances, and not in relation to extreme stress, changes, or events; may include behaviors such as withdrawal, fantasizing, emotional conflict in art or written work, or bizarre, acting out, excessive dependence/over-closeness, confused verbalizations, or difficulty with self-regulation)

☐ A general pervasive mood of unhappiness or depression (e.g., occurs across all settings and not the effect of situational trauma; characteristics may include irritable mood, significant and unexpected changes in weight, insomnia or hypersomnia nearly every day, fatigue nearly every day, feelings of worthlessness or guilt nearly every day, indecisiveness nearly every day, reoccurring thoughts of death or suicide)

☐ A tendency to develop physical symptoms or fears associated with personal or school problems (e.g. physical symptoms developed as a reaction to emotional problems with no known medical cause, such as excessive absences, tardiness, refusal to attend school, self-mutilation, hallucinations, panic attacks characterized by physical symptoms)

(Emotional Disturbance may include schizophrenia. Emotional Disturbance does not apply to children who are socially maladjusted, unless it is determined that they have an emotional disturbance.)

2. And these factors (**ALL must be evident**):

☐ Has been displayed over a long period of time (e.g. significant amount of time, standard of 6 months to avoid those who may be reacting to situational trauma, assuming interventions have been implemented and proven ineffective during that time period)

☐ Has displayed a **marked degree** (e.g. behavior should be observed by more than one persons across a variety of settings; noticeable and predictable patterns; significant in rate, frequency, intensity, or duration; behavioral interventions targeted to area(s) of concern should be implemented and documented with consistent data collection (FBA), not a secondary condition attribute to substance abuse, medication, or a general medical condition)

☐ Has adversely affected educational performance (e.g. academic performance issues such as grade changes, inconsistent performance, excessive time to complete assignments to maintain grades; impaired or inappropriate social relations, consideration as to whether the behavior adversely affects the education of others)

☐ The team has considered and ruled out social maladjustment (social maladjustment is defined as a persistent pattern of conduct in which the basic rights of others and other age-appropriate societal norms are violated). (See attached Social Maladjustment Form)

Data for determining eligibility was gathered from (List multiple resources):

☐ Cumulative file review

☐ Medical reports

☐ Three observations

 Date:\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

 Date:\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_
 Date:\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

☐ Tests (Speech Assessments, Visual/Motor/Sensory Assessments, Vision and Hearing Assessments, Academic Assessments, Adaptive Behavior Scales, Behavioral Checklists, etc.)

☐ Data gathered from:

 ☐ Functional Behavior Assessment

☐ Other:\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

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| *Common Characteristics* |
| **Social Maladjustment** | **Emotional Disturbance** |
| **Social Relationships** |
| 1. Peer relationships are usually intact. Often unsympathetic and remorseless in relation to others. | 1. Peer relationships are often short-lived, a source of anxiety, and chaotic. |
| 2. Often a member of a subculture group that is antisocial. | 2. Tends to have difficulty establishing or maintaining group membership. |
| 3. Often shilled at manipulating others; frequently quarrelsome. | 3. Often alienated because of the intensity of the need for attention or the bizarreness of ideas and/or behaviors. |
| 4. Conflicts are characterized by power struggles, primarily with authority figures (e.g., parents, school personnel, and police). Often displays hostility and may engage in impulsive, criminal acts. | 4. Conflict and tension often characterizes relationships. |
| **Interpersonal Dynamics** |
| 1. Often displays a positive self-concept, except in school situations. | 1. Often characterized by a pervasively poor self-concept. |
| 2. Tends to be independent and appear self-assured. Often displays charming, likeable personality. | 2. Often overly dependent or impulsively defiant. |
| 3. Lacks appropriate guilt; may show courage or responsibility but often toward undesirable ends. Generally reacts to situations with appropriate affect. | 3. Is generally anxious, fearful; mood swings from depression to high activity. Frequently has inappropriate affect or may react to situations with inappropriate affect. |
| 4. Often blames others for his or her problems, but otherwise is reality oriented. | 4. Frequent denial and confusion; often distorts reality with regard to self-interest. |
| 5. Often a risk taker or “daredevil.” | 5. Resists making choices or decisions. |
| 6. Substance abuse more likely with peers. | 6. Substance abuse more likely individually. |
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| **Educational Performance** |
| 1. Tends to dislike school except as a place for social contacts. | 1. School is often a source of confusion and anxiety. |
| 2. Frequently truant. | 2. Truancy related to somatic complaints. |
| 3. Frequently avoids school achievement, even in areas of competence. | 3. Achievement is often uneven. |
| 4. Tends to rebel against rules and structure. | 4. Often responds well to structure in the educational setting. |