

What a Specific Learning Disability (SLD) IS vs. what it IS NOT

SLD is...	SLD is Not...
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> characterized by an otherwise cognitive ability indicating that the child has areas of strengths at or above the average range along with a specific area or areas of processing weakness(es). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> characterized by generally low or below average cognitive abilities with little or no areas of strength.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> characterized by processing weakness(es) that are linked by research to specific academic weakness(es). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> characterized by processing weakness(es) that are not linked with academic weakness(es).
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> explained by a neurologically-based processing deficit or deficits. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> explained primarily by low or below average cognitive abilities, another disability category or an exclusionary factor.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> characterized as a “within learner” trait. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> explained by external factors such as instructional or environmental variables.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> sometimes in existence with other disability conditions (sensory, language, behavioral). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> primarily explained by another disability and/or condition (Emotional Disability, Intellectual Disability, etc.)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> an educational disability. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> solely a medical or mental health diagnosis.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a disability category under the Alabama Administrative Code and the Federal Regulations of IDEA. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a disability category based on criteria solely from the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual (DSM) or an outside agency’s or independent evaluator’s professional opinion.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a wide range of learning difficulties in relation to academic skills. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> an automatic entitlement for students with any academic difficulties.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> an impairment requiring a comprehensive and individual evaluation by an IEP Team to ensure all SLD Federal, State, and Local Education Agency criteria are met. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> an automatic default category when a child demonstrates lack of progress in the general education setting.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> an educational classification in which a child meets the criteria for SLD, so much so that he/she cannot benefit in the general education curriculum without specially designed instruction and special education support. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> applied when a child meets the SLD criteria but does not require special education support to benefit from general education curriculum.