

# New Mexico TEAM Professional Development Module: Developmental Delay

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## **[Slide 1]: Welcome**

Welcome to the New Mexico TEAM technical assistance module on making eligibility determinations under the category of developmental delay. This module will review the guidance of the NM TEAM section on developmental delay, also known as DD. During this module, you will sometimes be referred back to a different module or other resources for additional information. We encourage you to have a copy of the NM TEAM available and open to the section on DD for reference during this module.

## **[Slide 2]: Learner Objectives**

After successfully completing this module, you will have the knowledge to use evaluation data effectively to make an eligibility determination under the category of DD. Specifically, you will be able to: understand the federal and New Mexico definitions of DD, identify some common characteristics of DD and the associated educational impact, and recognize special considerations for assessment for children with known or suspected DD. Additionally, you will understand the highly recommended and potential components of an evaluation for DD, know the criteria required for eligibility under the category of DD, and understand how to document the team's eligibility determination decisions.

## **[Slides 3-4]: Definition**

[Slide 3]: When teams are making eligibility determination decisions, IDEA outlines a two-step approach. Each of these steps involves responding to a specific question—the first question is “Does the child have a disability as defined by IDEA?” and the second question is “Does the child require specially designed instruction as a result of this disability?”

This module will walk you through answering those two questions. First, we'll talk about the definition of DD, as defined by IDEA and in the state of New Mexico, to help you begin to better understand the disability itself. Next, we'll talk about the impact of the disability on educational performance to help you understand when a child might require specially designed instruction as a result of DD. Later, after establishing this basic framework, we'll talk more specifically about the evaluation components and the eligibility determination decisions.

IDEA's definitions of disability terms are the cornerstones of eligibility determination decisions. In addition, the New Mexico Administrative Code, or NMAC, further elaborates on the IDEA definition. These definitions, combined with comprehensive assessment data, including detailed information about the child's background, educational strengths and needs, and other pertinent factors, helps schools, educators, and parents determine if the child is eligible for and in need of special education and related services. Please take a moment to read the IDEA definition of DD.

[Slide 4]: Now please read the NMAC definition of DD and then we'll take a closer look at these two definitions.

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[Slide 5]: Now let's take a closer look at these two definitions together to better help teams understand how IDEA and NMAC relate. These definitions of the disability will help teams answer the question: "Does the child have a disability as defined by IDEA and NMAC?"

DD is an eligibility category that can only be used for children who are aged three through nine. This includes children who will turn three at anytime during the school year. In New Mexico, local education agencies, or LEAs, have the option to decide whether to use the eligibility category of DD, but if they use it, they cannot make the age range narrower than three through nine. Additionally, it is essential that this category is only used for children who do not qualify under any other IDEA eligibility category.

[Slide 6]: Children with DD have significant delays in development in at least one of five areas: communication development, cognitive development, physical development, social or emotional development, or adaptive development.

[Slide 7]: In New Mexico, that means that the child must have a documented delay in one or more of **those** areas that is at least two standard deviations below the mean on one or more standardized measures or 30 percent below chronological age. Please remember that academic achievement deficits are not one of the five areas under which a child can be found eligible for special education and related services under the category of DD. We'll talk more about the specific characteristics of DD later.

It is important to remember that this disability must adversely affect the child's educational performance in order for him to be found eligible for special education and related services. We'll talk about this second step to eligibility determination decisions by first talking about educational performance in general and then looking specifically at issues related to DD.

### **[Slides 8-14]: Educational Performance**

[Slide 8]: To determine the impact of a disability on a child's educational performance, the team needs to answer the question: "Does the child require specially designed instruction as a result of this disability?" If a child with a disability does not require specially designed instruction, then the child would not qualify under IDEA and teams should consider the implementation of a Section 504 plan or other classroom interventions to address the child's needs.

[Slide 9]: According to IDEA, specially designed instruction means adapting, as appropriate, the content, methodology, or delivery of instruction to meet the unique needs that result from a child's disability. This includes special education.

[Slide 10] In New Mexico, services provided by a speech-language pathologist may also be considered special education, not simply a related service, if the services meet the requirements outlined in the New Mexico Administrative Code, typically referred to as NMAC.

[Slide 11]: When evaluating a child for potential eligibility for special education and related services under the eligibility category of DD, according to IDEA, it is important that teams remember to consider

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three aspects of the child's educational performance. This includes the child's ability to: be involved and make progress in the general education curriculum, participate in extracurricular and other nonacademic activities, and be educated and participate with other children with and without disabilities.

[Slide 12]: Teams are probably most familiar and most comfortable with the first of these areas: determining if a child's disability results in a need for specially designed instruction in order to be involved in and make progress in the general education curriculum. While this includes academic progress, it may also include social skills, problem solving, communication, and other general curriculum areas. Particularly for young children, this includes their ability to be involved in and make progress in developmentally appropriate activities.

[Slide 13]: Second, it is also important for teams to consider whether a child needs specially designed instruction in order to participate in extracurricular and nonacademic activities, such as recess, school-sponsored after-school programs and other school-related activities. For example, a child with DD may be performing satisfactorily in classroom activities because of the amount of supports inherent in the classroom environment. However, this child may have difficulty with participation in extracurricular activities because of the interaction between his disability and the nature of the activities. According to IDEA, this child may be found eligible for special education and related services because of the impact of his disability on his ability to participate in these activities. An example of this might be a child with DD who requires supplementary aids and services to participate in after-school clubs. It is important to recognize that IDEA doesn't guarantee children access to competitive teams or groups *because* of their disability. However, they should be permitted the same opportunity as other children to try out for the activities and/or teams.

[Slide 14]: The third and final area for teams to consider is the child's ability to be educated and participate with other children, including those with and without disabilities. This is essentially a question of educational environment. For example, a child with DD may be able to access the general **curriculum** and participate in extracurricular activities, but because of his disability, it may be especially difficult for him to be educated in the general education classroom. This is not a discussion about where services will be delivered, but what services are necessary. For example, an eligibility determination team, also known as an EDT, may determine that a child with challenging behaviors needs specially designed instruction in order to develop and support appropriate classroom behaviors and interactions. Other examples include a child with attention difficulties who requires specially designed instruction to learn strategies to improve his attention and focus in the classroom, or a child who needs specially designed instruction in the form of social skills interventions in order to participate in activities with peers. Where the first question teams ask relates to access to curriculum, this question addresses the educational setting for the child. For young children, teams should consider environments that other children with and without disabilities are involved in.

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Now that we've talked in general about educational performance, let's look specifically at the possible adverse effects of DD on a child's education.

### **[Slides 15-22]: Characteristics and Educational Impact**

[Slide 15]: We're going to highlight some of the developmental areas that are commonly impacted by DD to help teams identify characteristics that may suggest that a child has DD. As we discuss the different areas, we will highlight characteristics and educational impact for both preschool-aged and school-aged children with DD up through the age of 9. Although we're examining the same developmental areas for both age groups, the characteristics may be manifested in different ways depending on the developmental level of the child and the demands of the environment. It is important to recognize that the effects of DD will vary considerably, depending in large part upon the interaction between the child's characteristics, and the school, family, and community supports.

Before we get started, it is important that we clarify the use of terms. Some people refer to children who demonstrate a delay in only one of the five areas by describing the area itself. For example, a child who only has delays in physical development may be referred to as "motor-only." This leads to significant confusion, as this can be interpreted as referring to the services the child needs instead of the delays that he is experiencing. A child who only demonstrates DD in the area of physical development (or motor) may require a variety of services, including special education, physical and occupational therapy, and speech-language pathology services. By referring to this child as "motor-only," the complexity and richness of his disability is lost. Because of the common confusion regarding terms like "motor-only," we will not be using them in any modules and recommend that districts not use these terms.

[Slide 16]: To identify the educational impact for a child with DD, the EDT must address the question of "How do the characteristics of the disability manifest in the child's natural environments (including home, classroom, recess, and others)?"

[Slide 17]: This determination needs to be made at a very individual level for each child and must be based on comprehensive information about the child and his environments, including information gained from observing a child's functional and academic performance across a variety of settings. The educational impact of DD is identified by examining the manifestation of any discrepancies between the demands of the setting and the child's abilities.

The characteristics under the category of DD are organized around the five domains outlined in IDEA and NMAC: physical/motor, cognition, communication, social/emotional, and adaptive. These domains each include a range of skills that may be impacted by DD. Although many children with DD will show difficulties across multiple areas, to be found eligible under the category of DD, a child must demonstrate a significant delay in at least one of the following areas.

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[Slide 17]: When we are looking at the domain of physical/motor development, for example, we find that preschoolers with DD may have difficulty exploring and learning from the environment or completing everyday tasks like getting dressed and feeding themselves. School-aged children, on the other hand, may also have difficulty in these areas, but they may also demonstrate difficulty moving through the school environment, sitting at a desk, and participating in physical education activities. Please remember that children who demonstrate significant delays in the area of physical/motor development due to a disability such as spina bifida, cerebral palsy, and others, may be eligible for special education and related services under the eligibility category of Other Health Impairment, so the category of DD would not be appropriate for these children.

[Slide 19]: When looking at the domain of cognition, preschool children with DD may have difficulty learning new information like colors, shapes, and letters, initiating and completing tasks, and following directions. Similar difficulties are seen in school-aged children who may also have difficulty learning new information at an appropriate rate or applying information to initiate and complete tasks. Again, if the child's difficulties lie primarily in the area of cognition, EDTs should consider other eligibility categories such as intellectual disability. If the child meets eligibility under any other category, then the eligibility category of DD should not be used.

[Slide 20]: Children with DD may demonstrate significant delays within the domain of communication. For preschoolers with DD, we may see difficulty engaging in appropriate social interaction, understanding and using vocabulary, and engaging in coordinated attention with others. School-aged children may also have difficulty with more complex tasks such as appropriate social interactions and communication in academic settings. Children with delays that are specifically or primarily in the area of communication may be eligible for special education and related services under another eligibility category such as speech or language impairment. In this case, they would not be eligible under the eligibility category of DD.

[Slide 21]: In the domain of social/emotional development, children with DD may demonstrate difficulties establishing and maintaining relationships with caregivers at home and at school during their preschool years. In the school years, we might also see difficulty with relationships with peers, complying with school and community expectations, and demonstrating more complex skills such as empathy. Children with significant challenges that are specifically in the area of behavioral and social/emotional may be eligible for special education and related services under the eligibility category emotional disturbance. In this case, they would not be eligible under the eligibility category of DD.

[Slide 22]: Finally, in the area of adaptive development, children with DD may demonstrate difficulty managing themselves and their needs, including daily-living and self-help skills, learning from play, maintaining relationships, and engaging in self-directed activities. These difficulties may become more evident as the child gets older and the demands placed on them increase.

Please refer to the "Characteristics and Educational Impact" section of the NM TEAM for more detailed information in each of these areas, but remember that the characteristics presented in NM TEAM are

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not meant to be exhaustive nor is the NM TEAM suggesting that all children with DD will demonstrate all of the presented characteristics. It is important for teams to recognize that these characteristics may lead to limited opportunities for engaging in age-appropriate activities, opportunities to be educated with peers, and the learning that accompanies these activities.

### **[Slides 23-25]: Special Considerations for Assessment**

[Slide 23]: It is important for EDTs to be aware of issues related to evaluating young children and children with known or suspected disabilities, regardless of the eligibility categories being considered. For example, when evaluating young children, it is imperative that the impact of the family, home environment, home language, and developmental history be considered. Specifically, EDTs must determine that a possible lack of exposure to developmentally appropriate activities is not the *primary* reason for the child's difficulties. In addition, for a child with a known or suspected disability, EDTs must ensure that the assessment results accurately reflect the areas being assessed. For example, be careful that you are not measuring the child's sensory, motor, or speaking skills, unless those are the skills you *wish* to assess. Please review NM TEAM section 6 for more information on these issues.

[Slide 24]: Like all of the eligibility categories, DD has unique characteristics that can influence the evaluation process. First, some children under the age of 3 are receiving services through Part C of IDEA because they are considered to be "at risk" for developmental problems. However, under Part B of IDEA, which covers children starting at age 3, children must demonstrate a disability, not simply be at risk for one. Teams must remember that qualification criteria under Part C are different than under Part B, so children receiving Part C services may or may not be eligible for services under Part B.

[Slide 25]: Second, although collaboration between professionals and the child's parents should form the basis of all evaluations, it is particularly relevant in the case of DD. Transitions between and across settings, such as between home and school, school and early intervention, etc., can affect a child's performance of skills. It is only by collecting information from a variety of people across settings that EDTs will be able to comprehensively and accurately describe a child's strengths and needs.

### **[Slides 26-30]: Initial Evaluation: Developmental Delay**

[Slide 26]: To answer the questions on the eligibility determination worksheets and make eligibility decisions, it is important to discuss the evaluation components that are outlined in the NM TEAM. A number of the components are the same across most, if not all, of the eligibility categories. These components are outlined and discussed in the Conducting Initial Evaluations Module.

Highly recommended evaluation components for DD are listed on the screen in front of you and in the NM TEAM under the DD section. All of the highly recommended components are important and should be addressed in an evaluation, but some of the elements need to be discussed in a bit more depth to help evaluators more clearly understand the component within the context of DD.

Please remember that the assessments chosen must be tailored to assess specific areas of suspected disability and educational need. Assessment of children for whom DD is suspected should be

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multidisciplinary and comprehensive and conducted by individuals experienced in evaluating young children. There is no single definitive assessment for suspected DD. Thus, the use of multiple tools, as well as the professional judgment and skill of the professionals who conducted the evaluation, will ensure accurate findings. Please remember that the NM TEAM provides information about common characteristics of children with DD—this information can help EDTs identify if DD may be an appropriate eligibility category for consideration.

It is essential that EDTs remember that eligibility under all other eligibility categories must be excluded before DD can be considered. As a result, like with all children, it is essential to conduct a thorough and comprehensive evaluation in order to collect the data necessary to consider all appropriate eligibility categories before considering eligibility under DD.

Let's start by talking about the information gathered during a review of existing data, the child's history, and direct observations of the child's behavior. When evaluating a child for suspected DD, EDTs should pay particular attention to information suggesting that the child has demonstrated difficulties in one or more areas of development for some period of time. For example, the EDTs should gather information regarding when the child met various developmental milestones in order to describe the nature of the child's difficulties. In addition, the EDT should obtain medical information that may indicate that the child has a specific health or developmental problem. This may provide information that would guide EDTs in identifying other eligibility categories that may be more appropriate for the child. For example, if a child has autism, Down syndrome, cerebral palsy, or another identifiable condition, it is likely that they would more appropriately be found eligible for special education and related services under another eligibility category.

[Slide 27]: Other areas of assessment will depend on the referral reason and the identified areas of need. Data used during the consideration of other eligibility categories will be considered here and will include assessments in one or more of the following areas: motor skills; cognitive abilities; speech, language, and communication; social/emotional; or adaptive behavior skills.

[Slide 28]: Evaluators often have questions regarding appropriate assessment of pre-academic skills. Although it is not within the scope of this module to recommend specific assessment methods, we encourage evaluators to remember that not only are there standardized assessments of early learning skills, but that a comprehensive assessment should also include appropriate informal measures. Many pre-academic skills can be assessed without the use of formal, standardized assessments, and the data gathered can be used to support eligibility determination decisions.

EDTs should recognize that the academic or pre-academic performance of children with DD may or may not be impacted. Some children with DD may perform well on classroom-based activities related to colors, numbers, shapes, etc., on standards-based assessments, standardized academic achievement tests, and other assessments, but may have significant difficulty participating in learning activities with their peers and adults. EDTs must understand that a child does not need to demonstrate academic

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achievement deficits to be found eligible for special education and related services under the category of DD, but they **do** need to show significant educational impact.

[Slide 29]: EDTs should be aware that, in general, evaluation data used to determine eligibility must be less than six months old. In addition, no single data source, like screening data, can be used to make an eligibility determination. Teams should consider any available information provided by Part C services providers, but this cannot be the sole source of evaluation data used to make eligibility determinations under Part B.

[Slide 30]: Finally, it is important to recognize that decisions regarding transition assessments need to be highly individualized for each child and situation. In New Mexico, transition planning must be documented on the first IEP in effect when the child turns 14 or during their 8<sup>th</sup> grade year, whichever comes sooner. This type of transition planning specifically relates to the child's progression from the public schools to post-secondary settings, so it isn't appropriate for children with DD. However, EDTs should recognize that transitions occur throughout a child's school tenure, including transitions from preschool to elementary school, between schools, and so on. EDTs should ensure that they have the information necessary to support children through all of these critical transitions, as appropriate for each individual child.

### **[Slide 31]: Potential Additional Components**

There are not any potential additional components outlined for the eligibility category of DD. However it is the responsibility of the team to answer any questions that may arise throughout the evaluation process, including what eligibility category best describes the child's primary disability and what supports and services the child needs. An eligibility determination under the category of DD involves excluding all other eligibility categories, so EDTs must ensure that they have collected the appropriate data to make this determination.

### **[Slides 32-48]: Eligibility Determination Process for Developmental Delay**

[Slide 32]: Before we examine criteria that are specific to the eligibility determination decision for DD, we would like to remind you that general information regarding the eligibility process and use of the eligibility determination worksheets is presented in the module, "Eligibility Determination and Use of Eligibility Determination Worksheets." We encourage you to listen to that module and to review the information presented in the NM TEAM in "Section Six. Essential Components of Eligibility Determination."

For this discussion, you will find it helpful to refer specifically to the "Eligibility Determination" and "Eligibility Determination Worksheets" sections within the DD chapter of the NM TEAM.

[Slide 33]: Before discussing the eligibility determination process in detail, there are a few relevant reminders: first, the eligibility category of DD can only be used for children from ages three through nine. This includes children who will turn three during the school year.

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[Slide 34]: Second, a child must be reevaluated during the school year in which they turn nine because they are no longer eligible under this category when they become 10 years old.

[Slide 35]: Finally, children can only be found eligible for special education and related services under the eligibility category of DD if they are not eligible under any other IDEA eligibility category.

[Slide 36]: To determine that a child is eligible for special education and related services as a child with DD, an EDT must first determine that the child is a child with a disability, and second that the child demonstrates a need for specialized instruction as a result of his disability.

[Slide 37]: The Eligibility Determination Worksheets are structured to guide the EDT in making these decisions. They provide a detailed road map to guide teams not only in working through the process, but also in documenting their decisions. We will use the DD worksheet as a guide for the rest of this discussion.

[Slide 38]: First, the EDT must document relevant identifying information and the assessment and evaluation data they have collected and will be using in the eligibility determination process. This information should reflect data collected from multiple data sources.

[Slide 39]: Second, under the “Determine the presence of a disability” section, the EDT will address four questions that specifically relate to determining if a child has DD.

[Slide 40]: The first two questions, questions 1 and 2, which are consistent across almost all of the eligibility categories, require that the EDT discuss determinant factors related to the child’s performance, specifically the lack of appropriate instruction in reading and math, as well as limited English proficiency. For many young children, this should include their opportunities to participate in developmentally appropriate activities. Essentially EDTs must consider all of the factors contributing to the child’s difficulties and decide which factors are the primary cause or causes of the child’s difficulties. Like all decisions, these decisions must be made based on comprehensive evaluation data and with the input of all of the members of the EDT. It is important that EDTs recognize that a child may have experienced a lack of appropriate instruction or opportunities to participate in developmentally appropriate activities and/or have limited English proficiency, but if these factors are not the primary reasons for the child’s difficulties, they would not be considered determinant factors. Once the EDT has ruled out either of these factors, they check “Yes” on the Worksheet. This communicates that “Yes, they have eliminated the possibility that one of these factors is a determinant factor.” If the EDT is considering more than one potential eligibility category, these first two question would be answered the same and use the same documentation across all of the categories. EDTs may find it useful to complete multiple worksheets simultaneously if they are considering more than one eligibility category. Additionally, as mentioned, EDTs should remember that lack of appropriate instruction for preschool-aged children is considered to be a lack of opportunities to participate in developmentally appropriate activities. It is important to remember that the lack of opportunities must be due to a reason other than the nature of the child’s disability in order for it to be considered a determinant factor. For example, it

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may be that a young child has significant behavioral challenges that make it difficult for the family to involve the child in family and community activities. In this situation, even though the child has had a lack of opportunity to participate in these activities, EDTs should not consider this as the determinant factor for the child's learning difficulties. Rather, this information might be helpful and used as further documentation to support a decision that indicates that a child is eligible for special education and related services.

[Slide 41]: The third question relates specifically to the eligibility criteria for DD. In order to be found eligible under this category, the child must have a documented delay in development that is at least two standard deviations below the mean or 30 percent below chronological age in at least one of five areas of development: physical, cognitive, communication, social or emotional, or adaptive. EDTs need to be aware that changes in NMAC in 2009 specify that a child may not be found eligible for special education and related services under the eligibility category of DD based on the use of professional judgment alone. Although professional judgment is an essential consideration at all stages of every evaluation, it cannot form the sole basis of an eligibility determination decision.

[Slide 42]: The fourth and final question to be addressed is also consistent across all eligibility categories, like the determinant factors. In this case, the EDT is determining if any other eligibility category better describes the child's disability. If any other category describes the child's disability, the EDT should not even consider DD as a possible eligibility category. This is an essential consideration under the category of DD.

It is possible that a child demonstrates more than one disability, but if the EDT determines that DD **best** describes the child's disability, they would respond, "Yes, we've determined that no other category better describes the child's disability." On the other hand, if the child has DD but also has any other disability, the EDT would answer "No, we've determined that another category better describes this child's disability." In either case, it is likely that the EDT will need to complete the "Determine the presence of a disability" section on one or more worksheets for the other eligibility categories being considered.

In addition to answering each of the questions "yes" or "no" in this section, it is critical that the EDT briefly describe the documentation that supported each of their decisions.

[Slide 43]: Each of the four questions serves as a stopping point in the process if the EDT answers "no." Once the EDT has answered "no" to any of the four questions, they have determined that the child is not a child with DD. If this occurs, the EDT should stop moving through those four questions. If the EDT has already completed the "Determine the presence of a disability" section for other potential categories, the EDT should move to the "Determination of eligibility for special education and related services" section of the worksheet. At this point, the EDT will document the determination that "The child is not eligible under the eligibility category of DD." They also need to indicate why that decision was reached by indicating either that the child doesn't have DD or that a different category best describes the child's disability. The process then stops for this eligibility category.

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The response to all of the four questions in this section of the worksheet must be “yes” in order to proceed to the section of the worksheet, “Determination of the need for specially designed instruction.” Remember, if you have even one “no” response, you skip over the “Determination of the need for specially designed instruction” section.

[Slide 44]: To determine the need for specially designed instruction, using the assessment and evaluation data collected, the EDT must determine if, as a result of DD, the child requires special education and related services in one or more areas outlined in IDEA.

[Slide 45]: These areas include: being involved in and making progress in the general education curriculum or developmentally appropriate activities; participating in extracurricular and other nonacademic activities; and/or being educated and participating with other children with and without disabilities. This is often an area of confusion for EDTs when considering the eligibility category of DD. This seems to be a particular issue when evaluating children with motor-based disabilities. For example, when determining eligibility for a child with a motor-based DD, teams often try to start the eligibility determination discussion by talking about the need for specific services, like occupational therapy. However, these decisions must be addressed during IEP meetings, not as a part of the eligibility determination process. Instead, the eligibility determination conversation must focus on the child’s need for specially designed instruction. Please remember that specially designed instruction can include special education services and sometimes services provided by a speech-language pathologist. It means adapting, as appropriate, the content, methodology, or delivery of instruction to meet the unique needs that result from a child’s disability. Specially designed instruction does not include services provided by related service providers such as occupational and physical therapists. Remember: without a need for specially designed instruction, a child cannot be found eligible for special education and related services under any eligibility category, including DD.

The EDT must answer “yes” to at least one of the questions in this section of the worksheet to say that the child requires specially designed instruction because of needs resulting from DD.

[Slide 46]: After answering these three questions, the EDT moves into the final phase of the eligibility determination process—documenting the final eligibility determination decision. This section of the worksheet, “Determination of eligibility for special education and related services,” allows EDTs to document that either the child is eligible for special education and related services under the category of DD, is not eligible under the category of DD, or that more information needs to be collected to make a determination.

[Slide 47]: If the EDT determines that the results of the evaluation indicate that the child requires specially designed instruction as a result of DD, the child would be eligible under the category of DD.

[Slide 48]: If the EDT determines that the child is not eligible under the category of DD, they must indicate the rationale for that decision by checking one of the four options within that decision. These options allow EDTs to document either that the child doesn’t have DD or any other disability, that the

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child does not have DD, but is eligible under another eligibility category, or that the child has DD, but doesn't demonstrate a need for specially designed instruction. Although the DD section of the NM TEAM indicates that the EDT may determine that, although a child has DD, he is eligible under another eligibility category, this question is actually not a choice when determining eligibility under this category. For other eligibility categories, this question relates to the issue of primary and secondary disabilities, however DD should not be considered in this discussion. If another eligibility category describes the child, the eligibility category of DD should not be considered. In other words, it is not appropriate to indicate that a child has autism and DD, DD and intellectual disability, speech or language impairment and DD, and so forth.

EDTs should clearly read the questions presented on the worksheet and determine which situation most accurately describes the child being evaluated. Any child who is found to be "not eligible" for special education and related services must be referred to the SAT.

Finally, if the EDT is unable to make an eligibility determination, they may identify additional information that need to be gathered. They would then reconvene later to make the final eligibility determination decision.

### **[Slide 49]: Reevaluation and Discontinuation of Services**

The Reevaluation worksheets in the NM TEAM will support the EDT through the documentation and decision-making process during reevaluations.

EDTs must remember that a child eligible for special education and related services under the eligibility category of DD must be reevaluated during the school year in which they turn nine. They are no longer eligible under this category once they turn 10. A child who does not qualify under any other eligibility category at the age of 10 will no longer be eligible for special education and related services. Finally, EDTs must remember that the child must meet **initial** eligibility criteria to be found eligible for special education and related services under another category.

### **[Slide 50]: Closing**

Thank you for participating in this NM TEAM training module. We hope this information has been helpful in clarifying and expanding on the information presented in the manual.