

## **Is There a Disability???**

A disabling condition is characterized by significant delays, impairments, or limitations in the student's **capacity**(ies). To make this determination, the Team should consider all of the following as indices of limited, impaired, or delayed capacity:

- A pattern of difficulty that persists beyond age expectations;
- A pattern of difficulty across settings;
- A pattern of difficulty that is not solely the result of cultural, linguistic, or socioeconomic differences; and
- A pattern of difficulty that persists despite instructional support activities.

Definitions for each of the disabilities recognized by the Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education are included on the next page of this link.

Labeling a student as having a disability is not taken lightly. There can be many different reasons why a student may not be making effective progress in school. Not making effective progress does not necessarily mean that the student has a disability.

If after conducting assessments, the Team determines that the student does NOT have a disability, he/she will not be eligible to receive special education services. However, the District Curriculum Accommodation Plan is in place to address the diverse learning styles of all students within our general education program.