



Siskiyou County Office of Education

**Special Schools & Services
Speech/Language Services Policy**

Updated
11/1/2013

*Siskiyou County Office of Education
609 South Gold Street
Yreka, CA 96097*

SPEECH/LANGUAGE SERVICES POLICY

Overview

The Siskiyou County Office of Education provides Speech/Language therapy services to all of the schools in Siskiyou County. As a result, our Speech/Language Specialists are itinerant in their school assignments. The itinerant nature of these assignments presents some challenges for both the Specialist and the School. These challenges include the travel needed to provide many of the schools with services, resulting in primarily one time weekly visits to the School site. Because the Specialist is not on-site for most of the week, the other major challenge is often limited communication opportunities. These difficulties can be between School and Specialist and/or Specialist and Parent. In order to help improve communication and maintain the high level of Speech/Language services that SCOE is striving to provide, the following guidelines need to be followed.

Referrals

Unlike clinical Speech Pathology, Speech/Language services in a School setting have to have an educational basis. In other words, a speech or language “problem” or difference, whether it involves articulation or language, does not automatically require Special Education with Specialist intervention. If there is no negative impact on learning as a result of this communication “problem”, there is no need for Specialist intervention. It is up to the School to address all possible Special Education referrals through an SST or RtI process, including verbal or written requests from Parents or Doctors. At an SST meeting, the team can address the concerns about the student and, with input from the Specialist, determine what classroom strategies or accommodations may be implemented to improve communication. (See attached Teacher Observation for Speech Consultation.)

Once the SST process has been engaged and classroom interventions have been implemented, the team can decide about further action. If interventions are successful, no further action is needed. If unsuccessful, the Team, including the Specialist, may decide to make a referral for an evaluation to determine Special Education eligibility under the Speech/Language Impaired category. The same process applies for students already eligible for an IEP under a category other than SLI i.e. the IEP team oversees any interventions/accommodations before requesting a Speech/Language Assessment.

In the event that a signed Assessment Plan is presented to the Speech/Language Specialist without prior input and agreement, an SST member or the Case Manager for the student will hold a meeting with the Parent/Guardian and Specialist to discuss the error and determine whether such an assessment is warranted.

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Students on IEPs with Other Qualifying Disabilities

When a student has a Case Manager that is not the Speech/Language Specialist, the Case Manager, as with the SST process, must get input and approval from the Specialist before initiating an Assessment Plan that includes a Speech/Language Assessment. Again, the Specialist must be informed and presented a signed copy of any such agreed upon Assessment Plan as quickly as possible in order to allow time for scheduling and testing.

The same process applies whether the referral is an initial or a triennial re-evaluation

Timelines

The result of the decision to evaluate for possible Special Education eligibility begins a Federally Mandated timeline process to complete the evaluation and hold an IEP meeting. Once a decision to evaluate is made by the Specialist, an IEP Assessment Plan is developed and is signed by the Parent, the Specialist has 60 days to complete the evaluation and hold an IEP meeting to determine eligibility or non-eligibility. If the student is eligible, the Specialist will enroll the student and begin to provide the services listed in the IEP.

Progress Reports

All IEP progress reports are to be updated and sent home by the Case Manager. If the student is only receiving Speech/Language Services, the Specialist is responsible for sending copies of the report to Parents/Guardians. All reports are to be updated on or before report card dates and go home along with the school's report cards. In the case where the Specialist is not the Case Manager, the Specialist is obligated to update their goals with sufficient time for the Case Manager to affirm the progress report and send a copy home to the family. The Case Manager will notify the Specialist of the date all updates are needed.

Therapy Times/Scheduling IEP Meetings

As noted above, the difficulty with communication can impact the scheduling of meetings and services. Specialists will make every effort to work with the school when setting up the schedule for therapy times but may have limited flexibility due to caseload and travel requirements.

In the scheduling of IEP meetings, if the Specialist is the Case Manager, it is the responsibility of that Specialist to contact school personnel who need to attend the meeting. This contact needs to be completed in a timely and considerate manner. Special Education meetings require the attendance of the Specialist, Parent, General Education Teacher, and Nursing input, as well as any other areas of concern that are being addressed in a meeting. Similarly, when another person other than the Speech/Language Specialist is the Case Manager, the Specialist needs sufficient notice in order to schedule the meeting. If the meeting must take place on a day the Specialist is not regularly at the School, the Specialist cannot be expected to attend. In those cases,

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arrangements for the Specialist to participate by conference call can be made, if acceptable to the Specialist. In other instances, the Specialist can be excused after contacting the Parent to share pertinent, communication related information.

Disputes Between the School and Specialist

If a disagreement between the School and the Specialist arises, concerning compliance with any of the above described procedures and cannot be satisfactorily settled, the School or the Specialist will contact SCOE Program Manager/Speech and Language Supervisor, Steven Martin at 842-8448 or smartin@siskiyoucoe.net.

*Please place in
Therapist's box
when completed

TEACHER OBSERVATION FOR SPEECH CONSULTATION

Teacher: _____ Date: _____
Student's Name: _____ Birthdate: _____
Grade: _____ Track: _____ Primary Language: _____ LEP _____ NEP _____ FEP _____
Problem: _____

Reason for referral:

LANGUAGE

- _____ Limited vocabulary
- _____ Uses words incorrectly
- _____ Doesn't understand prepositions
- _____ Uses only single words or sentence fragments
- _____ Takes a long time before speaking, revises sentences, often pauses during conversation
- _____ Difficulty formulating/sequencing ideas on a topic
- _____ Makes inappropriate comments/poor peer relations

AUDITORY MEMORY/PERCEPTION

- _____ Difficulty following classroom directions
- _____ Asks for repetitions
- _____ Poor retention of information
- _____ Doesn't recognize rhyming words
- _____ Difficulty differentiating similar sounding words

ARTICULATION, FLUENCY, VOICE

- _____ Substitutes/omits sounds: _____
- _____ Dysfluency: repeats/holds out sounds or words
- _____ Voice is too low/high for age
- _____ Voice quality is too nasal/denasal
- _____ Voice is hoarse for periods longer than 3 weeks

Modifications tried within current program:

- _____ Teach categorization or classification activities
- _____ Teach synonyms/antonyms
- _____ Expand and model student's verbal expression
- _____ Introduce and review lesson vocabulary prior to lesson
- _____ Retell stories; verbally summarize directions/chapters
- _____ Stimulate expression by asking WH questions
- _____ Have students formulate sentences or questions when provided a word or statement
- _____ Keep directions simple, use short sentences
- _____ Ask to paraphrase/repeat directions
- _____ Check for understanding
- _____ Provide sound discrimination/awareness activities
- _____ Provide modeling
- _____ Discourage interruptions
- _____ Remove time pressures in speaking
- _____ Seek medical intervention/school nurse
- _____ Consult with parents: Is problem noticeable? Continual? Seasonal?

Degree of problem: Constant _____ Occasional _____ Explain: _____

Position of students in classroom: Good learner _____ Average _____ Slow _____

Interferes with learning _____ Other Activities _____

Student awareness: unaware/indifferent _____ Embarrassed _____

How do peers react to problem?: _____

Parent's request: _____ Is parent aware of referral: _____

Comments: _____