

Eligibility for Speech and Language Impairment

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Speech or language impairment refers to a communication disorder, such as stuttering, impaired articulation, language or voice impairment that adversely affects a child's educational performance.

Fluency

- interruption in the flow of speech characterized by an atypical rate, or rhythm, and/or repetitions in sounds, syllables, words and phrases that significantly reduces the speaker's ability to participate within the learning environment. Excessive tension, struggling behaviors and secondary characteristics may accompany fluency impairments. Secondary characteristics are defined as ritualistic behaviors or movements that accompany dysfluencies.

Articulation

- atypical production of speech sounds that interferes with intelligibility in conversational speech and obstructs learning, successful verbal communication in the educational setting.
- Does not include:
- A) Inconsistent or situational errors;
- B) Communication problems primarily from regional, dialectic, and/or cultural differences;
- C) Speech sound errors at or above age level according to established research-based developmental norms, speech that is intelligible and without documented evidence of adverse affect on educational performance;
- D) Physical structures (e.g., missing teeth, unrepaired cleft lip and/or palate) are the primary cause of the speech sound impairment; or
- E) Children who exhibit tongue thrust behavior without an associated speech sound impairment

Language

- impaired comprehension and/or use of spoken language which may also impair written and/or other symbol systems and is negatively impacting the child's ability to participate in the classroom environment. The impairment may involve, in any combination, the form of language, the content of language and/or the use of language in communication that is adversely affecting the child's educational performance.

Voice

- interruption in one or more processes of pitch, quality, intensity, or resonance resonance that significantly reduces the speaker's ability to communicate effectively.

Evaluation

1. Response to prior evidenced based intervention
2. Comprehensive evaluation performed by certified or licensed Speech Language Pathologist.
3. Full and individual evaluation for each area of disability; sufficient to identify all of the child's special education and related services needs.
4. Variety of assessment tools and strategies used to gather functional, developmental and academic information.

Eligibility

- The Speech-Language Pathologist determines the presence or absence of speech-language impairment based on Georgia rules and regulations for special education, [34 C.F.R. § 300.8(c)(11)]
- Documentation of an adverse affect of the impairment on the child's educational performance
- The team determines that the child is a child with a disability [34 C.F.R. 300.304(b)(1)] and is eligible for special education and appropriate specialized instruction needed to access the student's curriculum. [34 C.F.R. 300.8(b)(2)]