



CONNECTICUT SEED

Student and Educator Support Specialists Guidance Document

Speech/Language Pathologists

This document provides guidance to administrators and Student and Educator Support Specialists (SESS) on the application of the Connecticut SEED educator evaluation system to **Speech/Language Pathologists**. Student and Educator Support Specialists are those individuals who by the nature of their job description do not have traditional classrooms, but serve a “caseload” of students, staff or families. In addition, they often are not directly responsible for content instruction nor do state standardized assessments directly measure their impact on students. The following document provides guidance on the evaluation of **Speech/Language Pathologists** in public school settings.

OVERVIEW:

- The most commonly used name:
 - Speech/Language Pathologist
- Roles of Speech/Language Pathologists:

Speech/Language Pathologists have a unique but integral role in the school community. They provide appropriate assessment and treatment of students ranging from prekindergarten through high school. They may also provide services to students within specialized programs that are part of the public school district. Unlike classroom teachers, they are often "itinerant" meaning they are responsible not only for a diverse range of ages and grade levels within a school, but frequently are responsible for students in more than one school within a school district. As a result, administrative expectations for an SLP's role and responsibility can vary from building to building and may include broad based school wide initiatives as well as early intervention and services to mandated students. SLPs support students who exhibit a wide range of disorders while ensuring that any treatment plans are designed specifically to support the students in the context of their educational program. Often they are working in collaboration with other Student and Educator Support Specialists (special education teachers, psychologists, social workers, occupation therapists, physical therapists, behavior specialists etc.) and para-educators to provide a highly specialized and integrated program of support. SLPs use their rich knowledge of language processes to develop and implement strategies to support the acquisition of literacy skills for all students, making them a valuable team member in prevention and early intervention. Although service delivery models may vary (individual or small group pull out, team-taught resource group, inclusion/push in services) all SLPs use evidence based decision making based on data collection and analysis to guide effective intervention. SLPs are responsible for compliance with federal and state mandates including Individualized Education Program (IEP) development, Medicaid billing, report writing and treatment plan development. This broad range of roles and responsibilities presents a challenge when considering caseload size. Referencing numbers of students alone is ineffective when considering a reasonable workload. A workload analysis approach (see ASHA position statement) more accurately reflects the complex interaction of many factors. These include the number of hours of service, scope and depth of treatment plans, assessment, early intervention, compliance responsibilities, collaboration with staff and families key to successful program implementation, service delivery model (itinerant) and school community initiatives. Workload varies from school to school and district to district.

In the context of the Connecticut SEED educator evaluation system, educators will work in conjunction with their evaluators to identify objectives for student learning and corresponding measures of student performance to evaluate progress made towards those learning objectives. Educators will draft Student Learning Objectives (SLOs) that specify:

1. a learning objective focus statement;
2. baseline or trend data relative to that objective;
3. the population of students that will be assessed on the objective (e.g. caseload, grade level, course, etc...);
4. the standards and learning content that are represented by the objective;
5. the length of time across which intervention will occur in order to support students in obtaining the objective;
6. assessments that will be used to evaluate student performance;
7. quantitative indicators of academic growth and development (IAGDs) based on student performance on assessments; and
8. instructional strategies that will be employed to support students in realizing the learning objective.

The following pages provide sample SLO focus statements and corresponding IAGDs that may be appropriate for **Speech/Language Pathologists** given their unique role within school settings.

Sample 1

- **STUDENT LEARNING OBJECTIVE (SLO) FOCUS STATEMENT**
 - **INDICATORS OF ACADEMIC GROWTH AND DEVELOPMENT (IAGD)**
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Subject Area: Speech/Language

Population of Students: Pre –K and K students receiving speech/language services

Student Learning Objective Focus Statement:

Students will increase their ability to comprehend and respond to “wh-“ questions regarding a story or event.

Baseline Data:

14 students in grades Pre-K and K cannot respond appropriately to questions using the district developed assessment.

Rationale:

Students demonstrate comprehension of language by answering questions regarding what they have heard or read recognizing that a teacher may need to adjust or scaffold language. This SLO links to the Common Core English Language Arts standards: listening to or reading text and answering questions, participating in class discussions by listening, sharing ideas and asking questions.

Indicator(s) of Academic Growth and Development:

1. By June 2013, 12/14 students will respond appropriately to “who”, “what”, “where”, “when” and “why” questions regarding a story or event as measured by a district developed assessment.

Standards and Learning Content:

Common Core State Standards (CCSS) ELA & Literacy:

L.K.1d: Understand and use question words (interrogatives) (e.g., *who, what, where, when, why, how*).

Common Core State Standards (CCSS) ELA & Literacy:

SL.K.3: Ask and answer questions in order to seek help, get information, or clarify something that is not understood.

Sample 2

- **STUDENT LEARNING OBJECTIVE (SLO) FOCUS STATEMENT**
 - **INDICATORS OF ACADEMIC GROWTH AND DEVELOPMENT (IAGD)**
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Subject Area: Speech/Language

Population of Students: Pre-K and K students receiving speech/language services for syntax acquisition and/or speech production.

Student Learning Objective Focus Statement:

Students will improve their expressive language skills in the areas of acquisition of syntax and speech sound production.

Baseline Data:

14 students in grades Pre-K and K are identified with significant delays in the use of syntax and mean length of utterance, and receptive and expressive language skills as measured by the Goldman Fristoe Test of Articulation and the Preschool Language Scale-5.

9 students in grades Pre-K and K are identified with significant delays in production of speech sounds.

Rationale:

Expressive language refers to both a student's ability to produce organized sentences using developmentally appropriate word order rules as well as the intelligibility of the student's speech, i.e., producing developmentally appropriate speech sounds in words in connected speech. Many studies have shown the link between oral language skills and the development of literacy. Our knowledge of syntax (word order rules) allows students to predict words in context that may not be familiar and derive meaning from text. The intelligibility of a student's speech influences his ability to be understood by others impacting his ability to access his regular education curriculum and increase, demonstrate and share acquired knowledge.

Indicator(s) of Academic Growth and Development:

1. 12 of 14 students receiving services for delays in acquisition of syntax will acquire 3 new sentence forms as measured by an increase in MLU (mean length of utterance) and Brown's 5 stages of Language Development as measured by a classroom language sample and the Preschool Language Scale-5.
2. 8 of 9 students receiving services for deficits in speech sounds production will produce 4 new developmentally appropriate speech sounds in words within connected speech as measured by a classroom based speech sample and The Goldman Fristoe Test of Articulation.

Standards and Learning Content:

Common Core State Standard (CCSS) ELA & Literacy:

SL.K.6: Speak audibly and express thoughts, feelings, and ideas clearly.

Sample 3

- **STUDENT LEARNING OBJECTIVE (SLO) FOCUS STATEMENT**
 - **INDICATORS OF ACADEMIC GROWTH AND DEVELOPMENT (IAGD)**
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Subject Area: Speech/Language

Population of Students: Pre-K and K students receiving speech/language services

Student Learning Objective Focus Statement:

Preschool and kindergarten students within my caseload will increase their knowledge of reading curriculum based vocabulary.

Baseline Data:

19 student in grades Pre-K and K scored below age level on the Peabody Picture Vocabulary Test.

Rationale:

Research in early literacy development highlights the critical relationship between oral language and reading. In 2009, the National Early Literacy Panel (NELP) found that oral language (vocabulary and listening comprehension) along with print concepts, alphabet knowledge and phonological awareness skills are critical predictors of later literacy success. Many studies have found that vocabulary size in kindergarten and grade 1 predicts reading comprehension at the end of grades 2 and 3. Children's acquisition of vocabulary is not based on age but on experiences. Many children with speech and language disabilities have had limited oral language experiences on which to build the foundational vocabulary necessary to access literature used in the context of their school curriculum. This SLO attempts to address the link between oral language and literacy.

Indicator(s) of Academic Growth and Development:

1. 80% of preschool and kindergarten students on my caseload will expand their vocabulary skills to increase understanding and use of 25 nouns, verbs, and descriptors within the context of their reading curriculum books as measured by a vocabulary checklist and the Peabody Picture Vocabulary Test (PPVT 2).
2. 20% of preschool and kindergarten students on my caseload will expand their vocabulary skills to increase understanding and use of 15 nouns, verbs and descriptors within the context of their reading curriculum books as measured by a vocabulary checklist and Peabody Picture Vocabulary Test (PPVT 2).

Standards and Learning Content:

Common Core State Standard (CCSS) ELA & Literacy:

RL.K.4: Ask and answer questions about unknown words in text

Common Core State Standard (CCSS) ELA & Literacy:

L.K.1b: Use frequently occurring nouns and verbs

Sample 4

- **STUDENT LEARNING OBJECTIVE (SLO) FOCUS STATEMENT**
 - **INDICATORS OF ACADEMIC GROWTH AND DEVELOPMENT (IAGD)**
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Subject Area: Speech/Language

Population of Students: Students receiving speech/language services with articulation disorders

Student Learning Objective Focus Statement:

Students will demonstrate improvement in the ability to decode words.

Baseline Data:

15 students on my caseload have been identified with articulation disorders and fall into the below basic to basic range on the District Literacy Profile.

Rationale:

Research indicates that children with articulation disorders demonstrate delayed skills in the area of phoneme encoding and decoding.

Indicator(s) of Academic Growth and Development:

1. 85% of students being monitored will improve in the areas of letter sound identification, initial, medial and final sound isolation, phoneme blending, and phoneme segmentation from below basic in all areas as measured by the District Literacy Profile.

Standards and Learning Content:

Common Core State Standard (CCSS) ELA & Literacy:
Reading Foundation Skills

Sample 5

- **STUDENT LEARNING OBJECTIVE (SLO) FOCUS STATEMENT**
 - **INDICATORS OF ACADEMIC GROWTH AND DEVELOPMENT (IAGD)**
-

Subject Area: Speech/Language

Population of Students: 15 students targeted for improvement in reading comprehension

Student Learning Objective Focus Statement:

Students will demonstrate improvement in the area of reading comprehension.

Baseline Data:

15 students on my caseload have DRA and DRP scores significantly below expectations for their grade level.

Rationale:

Students with language disorders have difficulty verbally responding to comprehension questions which results in decreased scores on the DRA and DRP.

Indicator(s) of Academic Growth and Development:

1. 85% of students being monitored will improve their DRA and DRP scores in the area of comprehension, story recall and answering “who”, “where”, “when”, “why” and “how” questions as measured by an increase in their DRA score by 4 levels from their baseline.

Standards and Learning Content:

Common Core State Standard (CCSS) ELA-Literacy:
Reading Standards for Literature

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR CUSTOMIZING THE OBSERVATION RUBRIC:

It is recommended that observation of Speech/Language Pathologists be conducted using the modified Common Core of Teaching Rubric for Effective Teaching for Student Educator and Support Specialists. In addition, documents such as The Performance Assessment of Contributions and Effectiveness of Speech-Language Pathologists (PACE), (1997-2013) from the American Speech/Language Hearing Association (ASHA) should be used as guidance.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR STUDENT, PARENT AND PEER FEEDBACK:

It is recommended that districts use the “Classroom Teacher Checklist”, “Student Checklist”, and “Parent Checklist” designed by ASHA in the PACE model.

RESOURCES:

The American Speech/Language Hearing Association (1997-2013). *Performance assessment of contributions and effectiveness of Speech/Language Pathologists*
Retrieved from <http://www.asha.org/uploadedfiles/slpperformance-assessment-contributions-effectiveness.pdf>

The American Speech/language Hearing Association (2002b). *A workload analysis approach for establishing speech/language caseload standards in the schools.*
Retrieved from <http://www.asha.org/policy>

The American Speech/Language Hearing Association (2002c). *A workload analysis approach for establishing speech/language caseload standards in the schools.*
Retrieved from <http://www.asha.org/policy>

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