

**SKANEATELES CENTRAL SCHOOL DISTRICT**  
**SPEECH/LANGUAGE SERVICES**  
**45 West Elizabeth Street**  
**Skaneateles, NY 13152**

**GUIDELINES FOR SPEECH/LANGUAGE SERVICES**

- Special Education Support Services (CSE)
- Speech Improvement Support Services (General Education)

**Speech Language Pathologists (SLPs) within the Skaneateles Central School District provide therapy to students with language, articulation, fluency and/or voice difficulties based on specific criteria and severity of needs. These services include students with speech and/or language therapy services as documented on the Individualized Education Program (IEP).**

When time and caseload allows, Speech Improvement therapy may be provided as a regular education support service (i.e. “Speech Improvement”- is defined as a service to students who do NOT meet eligibility requirements for Special Education). Availability of Speech Improvement services is also dependent upon severity of student need in the area of speech and/or language (see eligibility criteria below).

**Disclaimer: It is important to note that there is NO GUARANTEE that SLPs will be able to provide Speech Improvement services to students who do not meet eligibility requirements for Special Education.** The availability of Speech Improvement services fluctuates from year to year, and even during the school year, depending on caseloads.

In order to assure that services are delivered appropriately, these guidelines should be used with consideration of the student’s unique individual differences, severity of need, and/or the professional judgment of the Speech Language Pathologist.

**PURPOSE**

Guidelines have been developed to provide the following:

- A clear statement defining the components of communication disorders and differences.
- A consistent delivery of language and/or speech services in the Skaneateles School District.
- Services can be provided under two domains:
  - Special Education service as documented in the child’s IEP.
  - Speech Improvement service as a general education service.
- A consistent procedure to determine the severity of a student's speech-language needs and management strategies.
- A rationale for determining the frequency of services.
- A rationale for determining the termination of services.

## **IMPLEMENTATION**

The guidelines are to be used in the following ways:

- As a basis for recommendation of services by Speech-Language Pathologists.
- As a source of information for District Staff
- As a guideline for the Committees on Special Education.
- As a reference for decision-making by the School Based Intervention Team (SBIT)
- As a reference guide for parents, teachers, and support staff

## **DOMAINS ADDRESSED WITHIN SPEECH/LANGUAGE THERAPY**

For further information regarding the specific domains included within speech and language therapy, refer to the chart: DOMAINS OF SPEECH/LANGUAGE THERAPY. The domains are articulation, language (phonology, morphology, syntax, semantics, and pragmatics), voice, and fluency.

## **COMMUNICATION DIFFERENCE/DIALECT**

The variation of a language system used by a group of individuals which reflects and is determined by shared regional, social, or cultural/ethnic factors. A regional, social or cultural/ethnic variation of a language system should not be considered a disorder of speech/language.

## **ELIGIBILITY FOR SPEECH AND LANGUAGE THERAPY SERVICES**

### **Who is eligible for speech/language therapy in the public schools?**

According to New York State, “Speech or language impairment means a communication disorder, such as stuttering, impaired articulation, a language impairment or a voice impairment, that adversely affects a student's educational performance”.

\*For more information go to:

<http://www.p12.nysed.gov/specialed/lawsregs/documents/regulations-part-200-201-oct-2016.pdf>

### **GENERAL CONSIDERATIONS FOR ELIGIBILITY:**

- Eligibility for speech and/or language Special Education services is governed by NYS Special Education regulations.
- Once the Committee on Special Education (CSE) determines eligibility, the following guidelines can be considered when determining service delivery including frequency, group size and duration.
- It is important to note that during a comprehensive evaluation, multiple data points are reviewed to determine eligibility. One low score is NOT generally sufficient to determine eligibility.
- As per NYS regulation, a student will not qualify as Speech Impaired if poor language functioning can be attributed to medical/family history, cultural, environmental or experiential factors.
- Students at the middle school and high school levels who self-refer will be considered for screening as deemed appropriate by the building SBIT team. (consult with school Psychologist)
- Regular attendance is necessary for students who have speech mandated by their IEP. Criteria for services is set by the CSE committee and located on IEP.

## **CONSIDERATIONS FOR GROUP SIZE**

Speech/Language Pathologists should determine group size (up to 5 students) based on the following considerations:

- type of disability
- severity of disability
- severity of behavior
- scheduling demands of student(s)
- physical needs of students
- model of delivery

If time and caseload permit, school speech/language pathologists (SLPs) may provide services to other children whose problems are not severe enough to meet the above criteria. Students may be serviced under Speech Improvement guidelines.

If students do not meet eligibility criteria for services and parents continue to have concerns, they may consult with school SLPs for further guidance and resources.

## **GENERAL CONSIDERATIONS FOR EXIT CRITERIA FOR SPEECH SERVICES PROVIDED UNDER SPECIAL EDUCATION**

The following criteria are considerations for dismissal:

- The speech/language disorder no longer adversely affects the student's educational, social and/or emotional performance.
- Student scores in the average range on speech/language standardized assessments.
- Speech/Language goals have been met as per the IEP.
- The student can attain goals and objectives in other special education programs.
- Parents, students, teachers, SLPs have agreed to the discontinuation of services and the CSE has met and approved the discontinuation.
- The student does not exhibit transfer of skills and/or there is no progress/generalization (2+ years). Alternatively, other means of service can be provided to teach the skills in varied academic settings such as Resource, Consultant teacher, and/or classroom.
- The student has participated over a number of years and has demonstrated minimal progress in his/her speech/language abilities.
- The student has become a functional communicator within the domains of their speech and/or language deficits.
  - This would include the proficient use of an assistive/augmentative communication (AAC) system (i.e. picture exchange, sign language, technology use).
- The student is not motivated to continue to attend and/or participate in speech/language services, after implementation of behavior management strategies to improve those focus areas.
- The student's behavior interferes with the improvement of his/her communication skills, after behavior management plans have proved unsuccessful.
- Further improvement is precluded by the interference of physiological factors. (i.e. cleft palate, dental structure, etc.)
- Parent revokes consent for services.

## **GENERAL CONSIDERATIONS FOR ENTRANCE CRITERIA FOR SPEECH IMPROVEMENT (General Education)**

If caseloads permit, Speech Improvement will be considered for students who meet one or more of the following criteria. Meeting one or more of these criteria does not automatically qualify a student for Speech Improvement. Available data for each student referred will be reviewed individually to determine the need for and appropriateness of Speech Improvement services.

- A score below the 25<sup>th</sup> percentile on standardized articulation, language, and/or fluency screening/assessment tools.
- Academic and/or social impact.
- Referral from School Based Intervention Team (SBIT) committee.
- Data from new student entrance screening that indicates the need for an RtI service/support (response to intervention/Speech Improvement) prior to a referral to the Committee on Special Education (CSE)

\*Students demonstrating deviant (atypical) articulation processes as determined by clinical judgment may be eligible for Speech Improvement services, despite performance on standardized measures. Deviant (atypical) articulation processes are distinguishable from typical developmental processes and often do not resolve on their own without direct therapy. This is determined on a case-by-case basis.\*

## **GENERAL CONSIDERATIONS FOR EXIT CRITERIA FOR SPEECH IMPROVEMENT SERVICES**

After documented interventions have been provided, the student may be considered for discontinuation of Speech Improvement services. The following criteria may be considered for dismissal:

1. Age appropriate sound production, fluency skills across academic settings including conversational speech.
2. Age appropriate language skills or other means of service can be provided to teach the skills across academic settings (AIS, classroom teacher).
3. Scores above the 25<sup>th</sup>% percentile using standardized assessments in the documented targeted area.

References:

<http://www.asha.org/policy/RP1993-00208.htm>

<http://www.p12.nysed.gov/specialed/lawsregs/documents/regulations-part-200-201-oct-2016.pdf>