

Service Delivery Models

“Service delivery is a dynamic concept and should change as the needs of the students change. No one service delivery model should be used exclusively during treatment.”
(ASHA, 1999)

Service delivery to students is the most visible part of IDEA 2004 and is the speech-language pathologist’s most important role with students who have identified communication disorders (speech impairment). Service delivery is more than simply providing therapy, and includes services provided *to and on behalf of* students with disabilities [CFR §300.320(a) (4) emphasis added]. Good service delivery systems will allow your district/SSA to comply with the requirements in IDEA 2004 for a continuum of options, services in the least restrictive environment, and providing access to the general education curriculum.

Information about alternative service delivery and service delivery options has been available for well over a decade, yet speech-language therapy caseloads have remained essentially unchanged. The vast majority of students enrolled in speech therapy in Texas public schools receive pull-out therapy twice each week for 20-30 minutes per session. Use of a variety of service delivery models allows the speech-language pathologist to plan intervention and services to meet individual needs of students, to collaborate with other educational professionals, and to maximize effectiveness of therapy services with students.

There are five broad categories of service delivery within which students receive services. The arrangement of time, resources, location of service, and collaboration among educators comprise the service delivery model/s that will best meet individual student needs.

1. Pull-out

Services are provided individually and/or in small groups in the speech therapy room or a setting other than the classroom. This setting is restrictive and needs documentation in the IEP of the rationale for removal from the classroom. Pull-out service is by far the most common service delivery model used in Texas schools.

2. Classroom-based

Services are provided to students within the classroom and other natural school environments. This model is also known as integrated services, curriculum-based, inclusive services, transdisciplinary or interdisciplinary services. The SLP provides curriculum-based intervention while using materials from the classroom in the least restrictive environment. There are a variety of service delivery configurations included in the classroom-based service delivery model: team teaching, complementary teaching, supportive teaching, parallel teaching, remedial teaching, and station teaching.

3. Self-contained

The speech-language pathologist is the classroom teacher responsible for providing both instruction of the classroom curriculum and speech-language remediation as listed in the student's IEP. Preschool speech classes and communication skills labs are the most commonly used self-contained service delivery model.

4. Community-based

The speech-language pathologist provides services in the home or community setting for the purpose of maximizing functional communication. This service delivery model may be direct or indirect, depending on the student's IEP, and is most often utilized as students transition into post high school employment.

5. Indirect services

The speech-language pathologist performs activities that support the student's educational program in the least restrictive environment. Indirect services may also be needed to support the provision of direct speech-language therapy services. Indirect services are student-specific activities provided for and on behalf of students with IEPs for speech therapy. Indirect service delivery configurations include: monitor, consultation, collaborative consultation, curriculum support, contextual support, instructional support, and assistive technology/augmentative communication support.

Resources:

Guidelines for the Roles and Responsibilities of the School Based Speech-Language Pathologist. (1999). American Speech-Language-Hearing Association. www.asha.org

Director's Desk Reference ~ Quality Speech-Language Services. (2006). Judy Rudebusch, JoAnn Wiechmann, Cherry Wright. www.learninglegacyinc.com

Making a Difference for America's Children: Speech-Language Pathologists in Public Schools. (2001). Barbara Moore-Brown, Judy Montgomery. www.ThinkingPublications.com