

Roles and Responsibilities of Speech Language Pathologists in the Public Schools 2022

Speech-Language Pathologists (SLPs) have an integral role in education and are essential members of school faculties.

When considering the roles and responsibilities of SLPs in the schools, it is important to consider not only caseload (size and severity) or number of students with IEPs or IFSPs who are served through direct/indirect service options, but also workload or all activities related to student services that are required and performed.

The SLPs range of responsibilities include:

- Prevention, including involvement in MTSS/RTI
- Assessment for initial referrals and re-evaluations
- Evidence based intervention appropriate to age and learning needs (see below)
- Program design to allow for a continuum of service delivery models in the least restrictive environment
- Data collection and analysis for individual students and programs
- Compliance with federal and state mandates and local policies and accompanying required paperwork, including but not limited to:
 - MTSS/RTI meetings
 - ARD Process
 - IEP development
 - Treatment Plans
 - Medicaid billing
 - Therapy logs
 - Attendance
 - Evaluation Report writing
 - Data collection
 - Progress reports
 - Case Management
 - Due Process
- Collaboration with:
 - School personnel, including general education teachers, educational diagnosticians, reading specialists, literacy coaches, special education teachers, OTs, PTs, school psychologists, audiologists, guidance counselors, social workers and others campus and district administrators
 - Universities, including supervision of Clinical Fellows
 - Community, including a variety of agencies, physicians, private therapists, social service agencies, vocational rehabilitation services

- Families
- Students, including goal planning, interest in implementation, monitoring of progress, self-advocacy appropriate to age and ability level
- Leadership, including advocating for the profession, supervision/mentorship, professional development, parent training, and research

SLPs serve a range of communication disorders with numerous etiologies. Areas of Intervention include:

- Language disorders, including semantics, morphology, syntax, pragmatics/social communication
- Autism spectrum disorders
- Speech sound disorders
- Acquired brain injury
- Auditory processing disorders
- Childhood apraxia
- Cognitive communication disorders
- Dysphagia (typically associated with the medically fragile)
- Fluency disorders
- Hearing loss
- Nonverbal, augmentative and alternative communication
- Literacy, including reading and writing
- Selective mutism
- Voice or resonance disorders

The SLPs weekly schedule includes, at a minimum:

- Pull-out therapy
- Classroom based intervention/integrated services
- Diagnostic evaluations
- IEP Meetings
- Supervision, including Clinical Fellows and SLP Assistants, as assigned
- Collaborative consultation with other professionals and families
- MTSS/RTI activities
- AAC technological support
- Telepractice
- Travel between/among campuses, as assigned

Service Delivery Models – SLPs deliver services using a variety of models. Service delivery is a dynamic concept and should change as the needs of students change. No one service delivery model should be used exclusively during treatment (ASHA, 1999). Service delivery includes services provided to and on behalf of students with disabilities and includes a continuum of options, services in

the least restrictive environment, and providing access to the general education curriculum. Based on individual student needs, changes can be made to:

- Setting or location
 - pull-out
 - classroom-based
 - self-contained
 - community-based
 - indirect services
- Dosage – frequency, intensity and duration
 - Traditional weekly schedule
 - Receding schedule
 - Cyclical schedule
 - Block schedule
 - Blast or Burst schedule
- Format or type of session
 - Individual
 - In a group
 - Via consultation with other staff and/or family or caregiver
- Person who administers treatment
 - SLP
 - SLP-Assistant
 - Teacher
 - Parent or caregiver

References:

Guidelines for the Roles and Responsibilities of the School Based Speech-Language Pathologist (1999). ASHA.

School-Based Service Delivery in Speech-Language Pathology (2022). ASHA.