

South Orangetown Central School District
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Building Level Speech/Language Services Criteria Kindergarten – Grade 12

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Tappan Zee High School South Orangetown Middle School Cottage Lane Elementary School
Tappan Zee Elementary School William O. Schaefer Elementary School Early Childhood Program

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The South Orangetown Central School system is dedicated to providing our students with the skills necessary to attain goals within the global community. We have committed ourselves to extend the most supportive services in the early years (kindergarten through grade 5) in order to maximize development during this formative time.

Speech and language services will be provided to classified students upon recommendation for services from the Committee on Special Education. Building Level Speech Services are an additional support offered to non-classified students as scheduling allows.

What is building level support in speech and language?

Definition:

- Building level speech/language services are speech/language therapy services that are provided to students as a pre referral intervention as determined by the building's Child Study Team (CST) or Response to Intervention Team (RTI).
- Services are typically provided once weekly, within a group (maximum of 5 students), during the course of the typical school day.
- The speech/language profiles of students receiving building level support reflect skills that are not commensurate with chronological age and may or may not negatively impact access to the educational curriculum.
- Need for services are typically reviewed at the end of each marking period.

How is building level speech support presented in each school?

William O. Schaefer Elementary School

Kindergarten and First Grade

- Kindergarten / First Grade: The articulation skills of all students are screened as part of the building's kindergarten screening process. Students whose sound profile reflect delays outside of the range of typical development and/or negatively impact intelligibility are referred to the building's CST or RTI Team for consideration of Building Level Services.

- A Kindergarten student demonstrating age appropriate developmental errors, and therefore not a candidate for Building Level Speech Services, is re-screened in the fall of the first grade year before being referred to the building's CST or RTI team for consideration for services at the building level.
- A student's articulation / language system can be screened at the request of teachers/parents at any time of the school year. Requests for screenings will be brought forth to the building's RTI team or CST for consideration and review. Results of screenings may warrant more in depth assessment and referral to either the CST or RTI team.
- Parents receive written notification of student's eligibility for building level services.
- Parents receive notice of student's progress along with report cards at the end of each marking period (January, April, June).

Tappan Zee Elementary School

Second and Third Grade:

- A student's articulation / language system can be screened at the request of teachers/parents at any time of the school year. Requests for screenings will be brought forth to the building's RTI team or CST for consideration and review. Results of screening may warrant more in depth assessment and referral to either the RTI team or CST.
- Parents receive written notification of student's eligibility for building level services.
- Parents receive notice of student's progress along with report cards at the end of each marking period (January, April, June).

Cottage Lane Elementary School

Fourth and Fifth Grades:

- A student's articulation / language system can be screened at the request of teachers/parents at any time of the school year. Requests for

screenings will be brought forth to the building's RTI team or CST for consideration and review. Results of screening may warrant more in depth assessment and referral to either the RTI team or CST.

- Parents receive written notification of student's eligibility for building level services.
- Parents receive notice of student's progress along with report cards at the end of each marking period (January, April, June).

Secondary Schools (South Orangetown Middle School and Tappan Zee High School)

Sixth through Twelfth Grades:

- A student's articulation / language system can be screened at the request of teachers/parents at any time of the school year. Requests for screenings will be brought forth to the building's RTI team or CST for consideration and review. Results of screening may warrant more in depth assessment and referral to either the RTI team or CST.
- The need and benefits of speech/language services will be assessed by the RTI team or CST on an individual basis. Other considerations, such as scheduling, will also be considered and weighed in making a determination.

What areas of speech/language are considered when deciding if Building Level Speech Services are warranted?

Areas of Consideration:

Articulation:

Articulation is the term used to describe a student's production of speech sounds for a given age. Speech sounds are acquired along a continuum of development. Not all speech sounds are produced correctly at the same time. For most students, speech sounds are correctly produced by the age of seven. Some children have difficulty acquiring one sound while other children have difficulty with a whole group of sounds. Errors that occur in sounds along the continuum are considered developmental in nature and not indicative of a

significant delay. These sounds are expected to emerge as the student's system matures. For other students, development is slower and errors persist for a longer period of time. These errors may be noted as omissions of sounds or syllables, substitutions of one sound for another, or, as distortions of sounds. The type of error pattern exhibited determines the extent of the delay (if any).

Speech is acquired according to patterns of acquisition. These patterns are also referred to as phonological processes. We know that by age three, the following processes should have been eliminated:

1. Unstressed syllable deletion. Children will leave out the unstressed syllable in a word (tephone / telephone).
2. Final consonant deletion. Children will leave off the last consonant of a word. (boo for book)
3. Consonant Assimilation. One consonant in the word influences another. (beb/bed; coke/coat)
4. Reduplication. The child repeats the first syllable twice. (baba/bottle)
5. Velar Fronting. The phonemes /k/ and /g/ are substituted by sounds made in the front of the mouth (tate/cake; tup/cup).

By ages five and six (kindergarten), the following processes should have been eliminated:

1. Cluster Reduction. A consonant in a cluster is omitted. The omission is considered to be either "marked" (primary sound is omitted as in no/snow), or "unmarked" (secondary sound is deleted as in sing/swing; so/snow). Marked cluster reductions represent "typical" error patterns. Unmarked cluster reductions represent "unusual" error patterns.
2. Epenthesis: A vowel is misplaced or inserted in a word (balack/black).
3. Gliding: /l/ is replaced by /w/ or /j/ (wook/look; jook/look).
4. Stopping of fricatives: Fricative phonemes (sounds made with sustained airflow) are replaced by stop consonants. (toup/soup; too/shoe).
5. Stopping of affricates: Affricate phonemes are replaced by stop consonants (top/chop).

Sounds emerge along a continuum of development. By the age of six, most children's sound systems contain most later developing consonants including /l/, /sh/, /ch/, /s/, /z/, /v/, and /j/. By the age of seven, most sound systems contain /th/ and /r/, including /r/ vowels.

Dialectal variations of English do not constitute an articulation disorder (American Speech/Language Hearing Association, 1983). It is the role of the speech-language pathologist to treat only those features or characteristics that are true errors and not attributable to other communication variances (American Speech/Language Hearing Association, 1983).

Language: A student's language system consists of the comprehension and expression of spoken or written language for communication. The areas considered in relation to a student's chronological age include linguistic content (understanding), linguistic form (grammatical structures; verbal expression) and pragmatics (use of language for communication).

Fluency: Fluency consists of the flow of verbal expression. Fluency is of concern to the school speech/language therapist when any impairment in rate and/or rhythm adversely affects the student's participation within the educational setting. Struggle patterns may or may not be present.

Voice: At times, students exhibit the abnormal production of voice characterized by deviant initiation/duration, tonal quality, pitch, loudness and / or resonance. Within the school setting, it is the role of the speech therapists to promote healthy vocal use. Mild hoarseness encountered in primary grade children, where a history of upper respiratory disease or upper respiratory allergy exists, is not a sole basis for verification of a voice disorder adversely affecting school performance.

What factors are considered when deciding upon dismissal from services?

Dismissal Criteria:

- The student has attained a level of performance commensurate with expectations given his/her clinical condition such as cognitive functioning, structural anomalies, neurological issues and/or hearing impairment.
- A speech/language delay is no longer demonstrated.
- The student has maintained the same level of performance over a period of time, despite the use of a variety of intervention strategies designed to stimulate progress, indicating to the building teams that the student cannot reasonably benefit from continued service.

- The student is unwilling to participate in treatment; treatment attendance has been inconsistent or poor, and efforts to address these factors have not been successful.
- The student demonstrates behavior that interferes with improvement or participation in treatment (e.g., noncompliance), providing that efforts to address the interfering behavior have been unsuccessful.
- Parents request to withdraw student from services.
- In the area of articulation, the student has demonstrated mastery of sounds within words at the sentence and/or connected speech levels within structured therapy. The student has demonstrated knowledge and use of the skills necessary to improve intelligibility. Carryover into spontaneous speech outside of the therapy room may or may not have emerged.
- Recommendations for dismissal are made to each building's CST or RTI team. Parents are informed (verbally or through written communication such as the report card).

What happens when a student transitions to the next elementary school building?

Referral to Building Level Speech Services is done through the process of each building's Child Study Team or Response to Intervention Team. **Referrals for building level services are not made from one building to another.** It is the responsibility of each building's team to review cases and determine eligibility for services during that current school year.

References

American Speech-Language-Hearing Association. (1983). Position paper on social dialects. ASHA, 25(9), 23-24.