

Tomball Independent School District Department of Special Services

Structured Learning Lab (SLL)

Elementary and Intermediate Program Guidelines

Program Purpose:

The Structured Learning Lab (SLL) program is designed to serve students who have been identified as having deficits in pragmatics, effective communication, social relationships and behavior that impact progress in the general education setting. Program components include highly structured, individualized programming, communication and language training, social skills training, utilization of natural environments for instruction, positive behavioral programming, educationally based sensory activities, and when appropriate, inclusion with same age peers in general education settings.

Population Served:

The program serves students from Kindergarten to Grade 6 with significant educational needs related to having been identified in the areas of pragmatics, effective communication, social relationships and behavior that impact progress in the general education setting. Individuals appropriate for this special program are those who require a highly restrictive special education setting. Special education services are designed to support students demonstrating characteristics which may include:

- Significant deficits in reciprocal social interaction (for developmental level).
- Significant deficits in verbal and nonverbal communication (for developmental level).
- Restricted repertoire of activities and interests.
- Apparent sensory deficits as evidenced by under-or-over-responsiveness to touch, light, sound, or pain.
- Uneven acquisition of skills and difficulty integrating and generalizing acquired skills.
- Repetitive, self-stimulatory, and other behaviors including but not limited to obsessive-compulsive, ritualistic, non-compliant, and/or self-injurious behaviors.

Curriculum:

Special education teachers have access to and are trained in a variety of research-based curricula including Unique Learning Systems, Vizzle, various social skills curriculum,

and the general education curriculum. Progress monitoring of individual goals and objectives and student needs guide educational and curricular decisions.

Service Delivery Models:

Currently Tomball ISD offers the SLL program at the following campuses for Kindergarten through 6th grade students (Grand Oaks Elementary, Lakewood Elementary, Creekview Elementary, Wildwood Elementary, and Canyon Pointe Elementary) and one intermediate program (Oakcrest Intermediate). A continuum of services is offered within each SLL Program. Such services range from a focus on functional skills (for students pursuing remedial academic, life skills, and community skills) to transition support for students working towards a full inclusion model with a focus on success with academic skills. Services are provided in inclusive and self-contained settings, as appropriate. Individual student goals, services and placement are determined by the ARD committee.

Additionally, students with needs having been identified in the areas of pragmatics, effective communication, social relationships and behavior typically require specific teaching of appropriate social skills. Therefore, this program has community-based instruction built into the curriculum and is designed to assist students in generalizing those skills in the community setting. In home training and/or parent training is considered for each student in the program.

Program Supports:

Students appropriate for SLL classrooms typically require a lower staff to student ratio than is available in less restrictive environments and a smaller class size. This ratio is based on the student's developmental and learning levels (acquisition, fluency, generalization, maintenance) appropriate to identified activities. Students in the SLL program typically participate in a special education setting more than 50% of the instructional day.

Classrooms are supported by a certified special education teacher and trained paraprofessionals. Services may be provided by Licensed Specialists in School Psychology, Occupational Therapists, Physical Therapists, Speech-Language Pathologists, Certified Teacher of the Visually Impaired, Orientation and Mobility Specialists and Adapted Physical Education teachers. Additional support may be provided by the district-wide Behavior Coach, Program Specialists, campus and district Administrators.

Placement Considerations:

SLL is a restrictive placement and therefore should only be considered when the student's needs cannot be supported at their home campus. Although a student may have been identified as having educational needs in the areas of pragmatics, effective communication, social relationships and behavior by a multidisciplinary team, they may not require this restrictive of a setting. Moving a student off of their home campus should only be recommended after all other options have been considered and documented.

Tomball ISD procedures for program placement must be followed. Prior to placement in SLL, the following should be considered:

1. Age and grade of student
2. Current behavioral, functional and learning levels
3. Student's goals and objectives must address deficits in the areas of behavior, communication, and social skills.
4. Behavior and social deficits should be significant enough to warrant a Behavior Intervention Plan.