SPEECH or LANGUAGE DISABILITY

Clarifications for Speech or Language Disability (SoL)
▪ A speech-language pathologist (SLP) must be a part of the team making the decision regarding speech or language disability. ▪ This eligibility category pertains to students who have significant difficulties with the oral communication system. ▪ Multiple sources of data (see "Variety of assessment tools and strategies") must be considered in addition to performance on formal tests. Determination of a disability should not be based solely on results gathered from the SLP. ▪ In order for a speech or language impairment to be considered a disability, it MUST have an adverse effect on progress in the general education curriculum. ▪ Speech or language skills that are dialectal, cultural, or ethnic in nature are NOT a disability.

Evidence of a disability	**Descriptors of Evidence**	**Data sources** (suggested ways of gathering data from a variety of sources)	**Documentation:** Use jargon free language. Documentation must be from a variety of sources Identify the sources of information and explain evidence.
(Required) **Developmental or cognitive abilities.**	Developmental level or cognitive abilities.	Multiple assessment approaches: ● Standardized testing. ● Play assessment/observation. ● Language sample. ● Dynamic assessment. ● Narrative retell. ● Criterion referenced tests. ● Curriculum-based measures. Rating scales or checklists. Medical, developmental, or social history. Parent or teacher interview/reports.	Clearly state how ALL data leads to the determination of student's ability level. Cognitive abilities do not need to be a "test." Ability level may be inferred from everyday behaviors (e.g., ability to problem-solve, process information, etc.). However, there must be input from multiple informants and sources.
(Required) Evidence of at least one descriptor of the student's oral communication system must be selected. **Articulation.**	Significant problem in the comprehension or production or both of an oral communication system that is NOT consistent with other developmental or cognitive abilities. **Articulation:** Atypical production of speech sounds characterized by: substitutions distortions additions or omissions that interfere with intelligibility of speech.	Articulation test. Test of phonological skills. Objective analysis of intelligibility. Input and interview of other listeners (e.g., teachers, parents, peers, etc.). Observation in the natural setting.	Clearly state how **ALL** data leads to the conclusion of a significant speech disability (articulation or phonological disorder) that is NOT commensurate with the student's other developmental or cognitive abilities.

Voice.	**Phonological disorder:** An impairment in the student's communication system to orally sequence sounds in words, phrases and sentences.		
	Voice disorder: The absence of voice or presence of abnormal quality, pitch, resonance, loudness, or duration of phonation.	Rating scales or checklists. Record review. Observation in the natural setting. Interviews. Medical history.	Clearly state how **ALL** data leads to the conclusion of a significant speech (voice disorder) disability that is NOT commensurate with the student's other developmental or cognitive abilities.
Fluency.	**Fluency disorder:** Deviations in the continuity smoothness rhythm or effort in spoken communication. These patterns may also be accompanied by excessive tension and or secondary behaviors such as avoidance or struggle.	Rating scales or checklists. Record review. Speech sample. Observation in the natural setting. Interviews. Developmental history.	Clearly state how **ALL** data leads to the conclusion of a significant speech (fluency disorder) disability that is NOT commensurate with the student's other developmental or cognitive abilities.
Oral Language.	A discrepancy of 1.5 standard deviations between the student's estimated cognitive level and performance on at least two standardized measures in the areas of semantics, grammar, or both. Language conditions: The breakdown in communication as characterized by problems in understanding or in using spoken language. These include: Morphology – The system that governs the internal structure of words and construction of word forms. Syntax – The system governing the order and combination of words to form sentences and the relationships among the elements in a sentence. Semantics – The system that governs the meanings of words and sentences.	Standardized tests. Rating scales or checklists. Record review. Language sample. Observation in the natural setting. Interviews. Developmental history.	Clearly state how **ALL** data leads to the conclusion of a significant oral language disability that is NOT commensurate with the student's other developmental or cognitive abilities. Documentation from a variety of sources indicating that language skills are not commensurate with developmental level (age expectations) or are significantly below that of cognitive abilities.

(Required) **Adverse effect of the speech or language impairment.**	All findings should lead to the conclusion that the unique behaviors/challenges the student is experiencing is associated with the disability and are occurring frequently and at a level of intensity that adversely affects performance in the PRESENT educational setting or natural environment.	Clearly state how **ALL** data leads to the conclusion of the speech or language disability adversely affecting the student's performance in the educational setting or natural environment. (see * Identifying the adverse effect …")
(Required) **Exclusionary factors.**	All questions must be answered and considered when determining the primary cause for the student's learning difficulties. ● Was the information gathered from a variety of informants and measured using various tools? One test or one source of information must not be used in the determination of special education eligibility. ● Appropriate instruction and English proficiency – Both must be ruled out as the **primary** cause of the learning difficulty. o Appropriate Instruction - Did the student receive appropriate instruction in reading and math? (Consider attendance, standards based instruction, targeted interventions tried and results of interventions, etc.) *Preschool students: "appropriate Instruction" means exposure to developmentally appropriate early literacy and numeracy activities),* o English Proficiency - Was English proficiency addressed and ruled out as the primary cause of the learning difficulty?	
ESSENTIAL CONDITIONS and NEED FOR SPECIAL EDUCATION		
(Required) **Need for special education and related services.**	Connect the student's performance and needs to the eligibility category selected. Determine and identify the specially designed instruction needed to make progress in the general education curriculum. (Specially designed instruction means that the student must have adapted content, methodology or delivery of instruction.)	Summarize findings with a concluding statement that connects the disability with the impact on education and the need for special education. Describe the nature and extent of the student's need for specially designed instruction. What does the student need in the areas of instruction, curriculum, and/or environment? Identify the instructional strategies, accommodations, and modifications that the student needs to be involved in and progress in the general education curriculum.

***Identifying the ADVERSE EFFECT of the disability on education and the connection to the need for special education**			
Challenges because of the disability	**Area(s) affected.**	**How areas are affected**	**Need for specially designed instruction**
What are the unique difficulties or challenges the student is experiencing because of the speech or language disability?	● Is **academic learning** affected? ● Is **independent functioning** affected? ● Are **social/emotional** interactions affected?	In what ways are the defined areas affected? *(Must be unique to the student.)*	Does the student need interventions that significantly differ in intensity & duration from what can be provided solely through general education resources and services currently in place? Is the need for specially designed instruction connected to the category for which the student was found eligible? What specially designed instruction does the student need?