

Speech & Language Impairment

Federal Definition

A communication disorder, such as stuttering, impaired articulation, a language impairment, or a voice impairment, that adversely affects a child's educational performance.

State Definition

The Illinois definition is the same as the federal definition stated above.

Diagnostic Criteria

Determinant Factors If the student is not succeeding due to Limited English Proficiency and/or dialectic differences the student is not eligible for services under IDEA.

Exclusionary Factors Deficits cannot be due to environmental, cultural, or economic disadvantages. Speech or language performance that is consistent with developmental levels unless the student requires speech or language services to benefit from their educational program.

Inclusionary Criteria One or more of the following must be indicated:

- Articulation/phonology – an inability to produce sounds correctly in conversational speech, characterized by omissions, distortions, substitutions, addition and/or inaccurate sequencing of speech sounds.
- Language – impairment of comprehension and/or use of a spoken symbol system that may include form, content, or use of language.
- Fluency – abnormal flow of verbal expression characterized by impaired rate and rhythm of connected speech and may be accompanied by struggle behavior.
- Voice – deviation in pitch, intensity, quality, or other attribute which consistently interferes with communication; draws unfavorable attention; adversely affects the speaker or listener; or is inappropriate to the age, sex or culture of the individual.

Adverse Effect Student's IEP requires individual statement of adverse effect.

Adversely affects the student's ability to communication with others, both peers and adults, in the educational setting.