

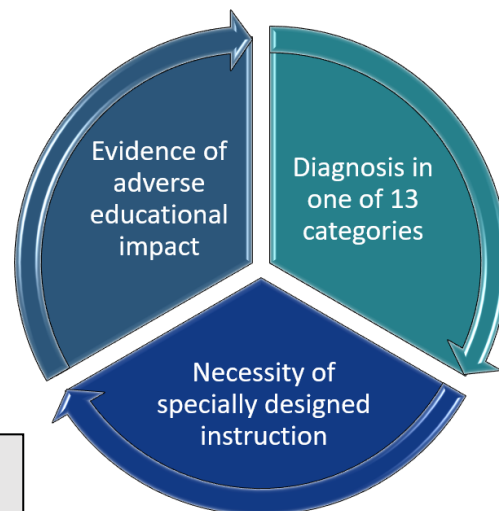


# SCHOOL-BASED SLPS INFO SERIES

## TOPIC #2: EDUCATIONAL IMPACT

### WHAT IS ADVERSE EDUCATIONAL IMPACT?

“Adverse educational impact” means that a student’s speech or language impairment adversely affects their academic or functional performance in school.



### Resources Used to Determine Educational Impact

- PA Core Standards, Career Readiness and Work Standards, and Dynamic Learning Maps (DLM) Essential Elements
- Anecdotal, qualitative, and quantitative data from educational team members, including the student, family, teachers, and related service providers
  - Student, family, and teacher interviews
  - Observations that include data collection
- Artifacts from the classroom: assignments, writing samples, projects, test scores, etc.
- Assessment summaries

### Academic Evidence

- Homework
- Journals/Narratives
- Work samples
- Spelling tests (articulation)
- Literacy intervention data
- Data from MTSS, RTI, etc.
- Curricular and state assessment data
- Evidence of receptive language difficulties, such as difficulty with math word problems

### Functional Performance Data

- Social interactions with teachers and peers
- Participation and engagement in the classroom environment
- Intelligibility
- Social/emotional concerns
- Assignment completion
- Following directions
- Behavior

Be cautious using grades to demonstrate educational impact: many factors influence grades. Rather, use a variety of data and evidence to make this determination.

# FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

## **Why is it important to determine whether a disability is impacting education?**

Determining educational impact is the law. While some students require special education services, including speech-language services, in order to access and engage in education, some students do not. It is the fundamental right of every student to receive a free and appropriate public education, but it is also their right to participate in the regular education curriculum to the greatest extent possible.

## **Why should we avoid finding students eligible for speech-language services if they do not demonstrate adverse educational impact?**

There are many possible negative ramifications to the overqualification of students for special education programming, including speech-language services. Inappropriate identification of students can result in financial overload of federal, state and local systems, lower educational expectations and fewer opportunities for students, and higher caseloads for SLPs, among other ramifications.

## **Is it possible for a student to be eligible for speech-language services in a medically-based program, but not eligible in the schools?**

Yes. Eligibility for services in the schools may differ from eligibility in medically-based programs, including hospitals, clinics, and private practice. Qualification for services in the medical world may be based on factors such as medical diagnosis and availability of funding. Eligibility in the educational world requires a diagnosis in one of the thirteen disability categories of IDEA, a need for specially designed instruction, and evidence of adverse educational impact. When a student is found eligible for speech-language services, these services are included as a part of a Free and Appropriate Public Education (FAPE).

## **My student's family does not understand why their child is not eligible to receive speech-language services in school, even though they receive them in an outside clinic. What do I do?**

Families want what is best for their children and they may sometimes become worried at the thought of their children not receiving speech-language services in the school. This might lead them to ask for services even when their children are not actually eligible. The first step to address this issue is to build a strong relationship with the family. If you already have a trusting and respectful relationship, it will be easier for both sides to discuss your rationale. Explain how eligibility works and that their child does not demonstrate all three criteria for eligibility. If there is no evidence of educational impact, show them the data that you examined to come to this conclusion. Share your expertise, but remember that these decisions are team-based. You are not in this alone.

## **If a student does not qualify for services based on educational impact but they do demonstrate a speech-language difficulty, can I provide the family with suggestions on how to help their child at home?**

If families ask for advice on how to help their children at home, you may provide it, as long as this is approved by your LEA. Talk to your supervisor if you are not sure what to do.

### **EXAMPLES OF CIRCUMSTANCES IN WHICH THERE IS NO DEMONSTRATED EDUCATIONAL IMPACT**

- A student who demonstrates /r/ articulation errors, but who reads well, participates in class, has social relationships, does not demonstrate /r/-based spelling errors, and says that the errors do not bother him.
- A student who has a fluency disorder, but does not demonstrate blocks, is comfortable with her stuttering, and speaks securely with peers, teachers, and in discussion groups.

