

School Speech and Language Pathologist PK-12 Program Framework Guidelines

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Introduction

The fundamental purpose of a teacher preparation program approved by the Pennsylvania Department of Education is to admit, prepare, and support candidates for the teaching profession who, upon graduation, have the knowledge and skills to enable PK-12 students in Pennsylvania to achieve academic success. Approved Pennsylvania Education Program Providers (EPPs) design and deliver **School Speech and Language Pathologist for the PK-12 certificate** to prepare candidates to teach in a School Speech and Language Pathologist setting as specified in [CSPG 86](#) for School Speech and Language Pathologist PK-12. Furthermore, the preparation program for School Speech and Language Pathologist will provide candidates with the skills, knowledge, and competencies necessary to meet the needs of students working collaboratively with other professionals and provide instruction/interventions to students in the following areas:

- Diagnosis, prognosis, prescription, remediation and the intervention of speech, language, and swallowing disorders.
- Evaluate and treat children who have difficulty speaking, listening, reading, writing, or swallowing.
- Optimize an individual's ability to communicate and swallow, thereby improving quality of life and educational achievement.

Teachers in the PK-12 level are expected to have knowledge of the subject matter they teach in the Speech and Language Impaired setting. Candidates interested in teaching at the PK-12 level must be prepared to “unpack” complex issues and procedures to their foundational elements, yet also be able to motivate and challenge students with a variety of evolving applications of the subject matter. This expertise may result from a teacher education program that requires subject matter coursework, or it may be a result of an undergraduate major in the subject area that is accompanied or followed by a teacher preparation program.

The School Speech and Language Pathologist PK-12 Preparation Program is a compilation of coursework, competencies, and field experiences to allow the candidate to gain expertise in teaching and identifying the needs of different disability populations. Note, the School Speech and Language Pathologist PK-12 Preparation Program does not include training for specialized therapists/teachers such as teachers of the Deaf and Hard of Hearing or teachers of the Blind or Visually Impaired.

This document has been created to provide the **School Speech and Language Pathologist PK-12 Candidate Competencies**. To develop a School Speech and Language Pathologist (PK-12) Preparation Program, EPPs should utilize the material contained in this document and consult these existing guidelines:

- [Accommodations and Adaptations and ELL Program Framework Guidelines](#);
- [Common Ground Framework Guidelines](#);
- [Structured Literacy \(SL\) Program Framework Guidelines](#); and

- [Professional Ethics \(PE\) Program Framework Guidelines.](#)

Program Design and Delivery

Differences between a Speech and Language Impaired PK-12 Instructional I Certificate Program and a School Speech and Language Pathologist PK-12 Educational Specialist I Certificate Program

Speech and Language Impaired PK-12 Instructional I Certificate Program

- Candidates for the Instructional I Certificate will be required to take the Praxis “Fundamental Subjects: Content Knowledge” (5511) (if an initial PA certification) and “Speech Language Pathology” (5331).
- The Instructional Certificate does not require state licensure with the Pennsylvania State Board of Examiners in Speech-Language Pathology and Audiology.

School Speech and Language Pathologist PK-12 Educational Specialist I Certificate Program

- Candidates for the Educational Specialist Certificate who do not have state licensure with the Pennsylvania State Board of Examiners in Speech-Language Pathology and Audiology will be required to take only the Praxis “Speech Language Pathology” (5331).

Pathway between Speech and Language Impaired PK-12 Instructional I Certificate Program and a School Speech and Language Pathologist PK-12 Educational Specialist I Certificate Program

To add a Speech and Language Impaired PK-12 Instructional I Certificate with an existing School Speech and Language Pathologist PK-12 Educational Specialist I Certificate, the candidate:

- Must have the EPP evaluate the program and determine coursework that may be needed to allow the program to recommend the applicant for the Speech and Language Impaired PK-12 Instructional I Certificate;
- Must complete the course or courses identified with specific outcomes that meets the outcomes of the PDE-430 form; and
- Must have a higher ranking supervisor or university representative from an accredited program in Speech-Language Pathology or Communication Disorders sign the PDE-430 form.
- Note: If the candidate has previously achieved Educational Specialist II, they will receive an Instructional I in accordance with regulation and policy. The candidate should consult with their employer about this change.

To add a School Speech and Language Pathologist PK-12 Educational Specialist I Certificate with an existing Speech and Language Impaired PK-12 Instructional I Certificate, the candidate:

- Must have the EPP evaluate the program and determine coursework that relates to the Speech and Language Impaired PK-12 Educational Specialist I Certificate;
- Must have a higher ranking supervisor or university representative from an accredited program in Speech-Language Pathology or Communication Disorders sign the change.
- Note: If the candidate has achieved Instructional II, they will receive an Education Specialist I. The candidate should consult with their employer about this change.

Candidate Competencies

This section outlines the competencies required for certification by Chapter 354 regulations: “The preparing institution shall ensure that candidates complete a well-planned sequence of professional educator courses and field experiences to develop an understanding of the structure, skills, core concepts, facts, methods of inquiry and application of technology related to each academic discipline the candidates plan to teach.” (22 Pa. Code § 354.25(b)(3)).

The candidate for certification must have completed an accredited master’s program of study in Speech and Language Impaired or Communication Disorders that includes academic coursework and supervised clinical experience sufficient in depth and breadth to achieve the specified knowledge and skills stipulated in these guidelines.

I. Basic Communication Processes

- A. Demonstrate knowledge of the biological sciences, physical sciences, statistics, and the social/behavioral sciences, and apply the knowledge to assess and intervene with students who have a speech, language, or swallowing impairment.
- B. Demonstrate knowledge of basic human communication and swallowing processes, including the appropriate biological, neurological, acoustic, psychological, developmental, and linguistic, and cultural bases for students who have a speech, language, or swallowing impairment.
- C. Demonstrate the ability to integrate information pertaining to normal and abnormal human development from birth to 22.

II. Disorders and Differences

- A. The candidate will demonstrate and apply knowledge of communication and swallowing disorders and differences, including

the appropriate etiologies, characteristics, anatomical/physiological, acoustic, psychological, developmental, and linguistic, and cultural correlates in the 'Specific Assessment and Intervention Areas' (B1).

- B. For each of the areas specified in the 'Specific Assessment, and Intervention Areas' listed below, the candidate must have demonstrated current knowledge of the principles and methods of prevention, assessment, and intervention for students with communication and swallowing disorders, including consideration of anatomical/physiological, psychological, developmental, linguistic, and cultural correlates.

1. Specific Assessment and Intervention Areas Listing

Speech-Language Pathologists address typical and atypical communication and swallowing in the following areas (per ASHA CFCC 2020 Standards):

- a. Speech sound production, to encompass articulation, motor planning and execution, phonology, and accent modification.
- b. Fluency and fluency disorders
- c. Voice and resonance, including respiration and phonation.
- d. Receptive and expressive language, including phonology, morphology, syntax, semantics, pragmatics (language use and social aspects of communication), prelinguistic communication, paralinguistic communication (e.g., gestures, signs, body language), and literacy in speaking, listening, reading, and writing
- e. Hearing, including the impact on speech and language.
- f. Swallowing/feeding, including (a) structure and function of orofacial myology and (b) oral, pharyngeal, laryngeal, pulmonary, esophageal, gastrointestinal, and related functions across the life span
- g. Cognitive aspects of communication, including attention, memory, sequencing, problem solving, and executive functioning
- h. Social aspects of communication, including challenging behavior, ineffective social skills, and lack of communication opportunities
- i. Augmentative and alternative communication modalities

III. Assessment-Evaluation

- A. Promote equitable access to education through involvement in school initiatives designed to increase student educational outcomes/progress, by using evidence-based practice in prevention

and assessment approaches. Examples include, but are not limited to, tiered interventions, and positive behavior intervention supports.

- B. Conduct assessments in collaboration with others that help to identify students with communication disorders, as well as to inform instruction and intervention, consistent with evidence-based practice.
- C. Use Specific Assessment and Evaluation Protocols:
 - 1. Conduct screening and prevention procedures (including prevention activities) including screening individuals for hearing loss or middle ear pathology using conventional pure-tone audiometry, otoacoustic emissions screening, and/or screening tympanometry.
 - 2. Collect case history information and integrate information from students, family, caregivers, teachers, and relevant others, including other professionals.
 - 3. Select and administer appropriate evaluation procedures, such as observations, speech and language sampling, dynamic assessment, non-standardized and standardized tests, and instrumental procedures.
 - 4. Adapt evaluation procedures with respect to cultural influences, life experiences, and linguistic differences.
 - 5. Interpret, integrate, and synthesize comprehensive assessment information to develop diagnoses and make appropriate recommendations for intervention.
 - 6. Adhere to Pennsylvania evaluation timelines and complete administrative and reporting functions necessary to support evaluation.
 - 7. Consult with necessary multidisciplinary team members for additional needs or services as necessary.
- D. Implement assessment and evaluation competencies for each of the Specific Assessment and Intervention Areas (B1). The candidate must have demonstrated current knowledge and application of the principles and methods of prevention, assessment, and intervention for students with communication and swallowing disorders, including consideration of anatomical/physiological, psychological, developmental, and linguistic and cultural correlates.

IV. Intervention

- A. Provide intervention that is appropriate to the age and learning needs of each student that is selected through an evidence-based decision-making process in a variety of service delivery models.
- B. Configure school-wide programs that employ a continuum of service delivery models in the least restrictive environment for students with

disabilities and provide tiered services as directed by their school system.

- C. Develop setting appropriate intervention plans with measurable and achievable goals that meet students' educational needs. Collaborate with students and relevant others in the planning process.
- D. Implement intervention plans that involve students and relevant others in the intervention process.
- E. Select/develop and use appropriate materials and instrumentation for prevention and intervention.
- F. Measure and evaluate students' performance and progress.
- G. Modify intervention plans, strategies, materials, or instrumentation as appropriate to meet the educational needs of students.
- H. Complete administrative and reporting functions necessary to support intervention.
- I. Consult with necessary multidisciplinary team members for additional needs or services as necessary.
- J. Utilize student involvement in the intervention process to promote personal responsibility and ownership of communication improvement goals by actively engaging students in goal planning, behavior management, intervention implementation, monitoring of progress, and self-advocacy appropriate to the age and ability level.
- K. Provide educationally relevant services to each of the Specific Intervention Areas:
 - 1. Use data to guide clinical decision making and determine the effectiveness of services.
 - 2. Make service delivery decisions (e.g., eligibility, frequency, duration, location, continued eligibility).
 - 3. Determine appropriate context(s) for service delivery.
 - 4. Document provision of services in accordance with accepted procedures appropriate for the educational setting.
 - 5. Participate in Individual Education Plan and other multidisciplinary teams.
 - 6. Provide intervention and support services for students diagnosed with communication and swallowing disorders.
 - 7. Use instrumentation to observe, collect data, and measure parameters of communication and swallowing. Counsel students, their families, educators, and other persons in the community regarding acceptance, adaptation, and decision making about communication and swallowing disorders.
 - 8. Facilitate the process of obtaining equipment and services, and providing associated training related to communication and swallowing disorders.

9. Serve as case managers and/or members of multidisciplinary teams (e.g., individualized family service plan and individualized education program teams, transition planning teams).

V. Professional Skills and Attributes

- A. Meet federal and state mandates, as well as local policies in performance of their duties.
- B. Implement data-based decision making, including gathering and interpreting data with individual students, as well as overall program evaluation.
- C. Communicate effectively, recognizing the needs, values, preferred mode of communication and cultural/linguistic background of the client/patient, family, caregivers, and relevant others.
- D. Adhere to standards of ethical conduct.
- E. Implement processes used in research and of the integration or research principles into evidence-based clinical practice.
- F. Maintain demonstrated knowledge of contemporary professional issues.
- G. Demonstrate knowledge of entry level and advanced certifications, licensure, and other relevant professional credentials, as well as local, state, and national regulations and policies relevant to professional practice.
- H. Demonstrate skills in oral and written, or other forms of communication sufficient for entry into professional practice.
- I. Collaborate with other professionals and provide services to support the instructional program at the school.

Field Experiences

Supervised practicum must include experience with populations ranging from PreK-22 and from culturally/linguistically diverse backgrounds, with various types and severities of communication and/or swallowing disorders and differences. Appropriately credentialed speech-language pathologists must provide direct and indirect supervision throughout the fieldwork experience. Practicum must provide opportunities for candidates to meet competencies in this document and provide documentation of the competencies being met.

Verification of Experience with Students PreK-12

Candidates for the Educational Specialist Certificate for School Speech and Language Pathologist must have demonstrated experience in assessment and intervention with student populations in PreK-12 and from culturally/linguistically diverse backgrounds, with various

types and severities of communication and/or swallowing disorders and differences. The program must verify that the candidate meets competencies for certification.

Testing Requirements

Candidates for the Educational Specialist Certificate for School Speech and Language Pathologist must receive a passing score on the Praxis II "Speech-Language Pathology" test.

The Pennsylvania Department of Education wishes to recognize the following organization and individuals in the development of these competencies:

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