Special Education Program Overview and Improvement Planning

Exceptionality: Language Impairment

Placement: Regular Class with Withdrawal Assistance

A. Definition[1]:

The Ministry of Education defines Language Impairment (LI) as:

"A learning disorder characterized by an impairment in comprehension and/or use of verbal communication or the written or other symbol system of communication which may be associated with neurological, psychological, physical or sensory factors, and which may:
- include one or more of the form, content and function of language in communication;
- Include one or more of the following: language delay, dysfluency, voice and articulation development, which may or may not be organically or functionally based."

B. Placement options:

❐ Indirect Support
❐ Regular Class with Resource Assistance
☑ **Regular Class with Withdrawal Assistance[2]**
❐ Special Education Placement with Partial Integration–Intensive Support Program (ISP)
❏ Full-Time Special Education Placement

C. Description:

This placement is available to elementary and secondary students with Language Impairment who have ***at least moderate receptive and/or expressive oral language difficulties, and significant academic needs***. The ***primary area of need for these students is oral language***. Literacy skills are often impacted. Some students with LI may also present with significant speech impairments (relating to articulation, oral-motor functioning, and stuttering) which impact upon the student's ability to communicate orally and which may also be formally identified.

For elementary students, the goal of the Withdrawal Support is to improve oral communication and enhance academic achievement through strategic instruction in core curriculum areas (typically language and/or math) as described in the student's Individual Education Plan (IEP). When

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[1] Ministry of Education (2001)
[2] Where the student is placed in a regular class and receives instruction outside the classroom, for less than 50% of the school day, from a qualified special education teacher.

withdrawn to the special education class, instruction is delivered by a special education teacher in a designated classroom. Withdrawal support is provided for less than 50 percent of the school day. For the balance of the school day each student receives instruction within their regular classroom.

For secondary students, the goal of the Withdrawal Support is to improve oral communication and achieve curriculum expectations across the subject areas. The student is withdrawn to a special education class (e.g., Resource Room or alternate setting) where strategic instruction is provided by a special education teacher. The instruction includes relevant curriculum areas and learning strategies as described in the IEP. Withdrawal support is provided for less than 50 percent of the school day. The student's timetable may or may not indicate a *resource* period.

For elementary and secondary students, oral language is a vehicle for learning and achievement across all subject areas. The needs of students with Language Impairment may be apparent across many or all curriculum areas. Therefore, oral language learning opportunities are embedded across all subject areas through differentiated instruction.

Important instructional components include Ontario Curriculum and alternative curriculum to address oral language (speaking and understanding), literacy skills, social skills, study skills, and self-advocacy.

D. Planning Components:

Key Contact(s): System Design - Chief Speech-Language Pathologist Program Operation – Chief Speech-Language Pathologist		
1. PROGRAM DESIGN, ADMINISTRATION AND INSTRUCTION		
Components	**Description**	**Responsibility**
Grades	• JK – Grade 12	• Principal
Group size	• Depending on the needs of the students and school	• Principal • Area Superintendent
Time & Frequency	• Depending on student need • Less than 50% withdrawal from regular class • Secondary students may attend the resource room during a resource period designated on their timetable, or during other periods on their timetable	• Principal • Regular Classroom and Special Education Teacher • SBSLT (SBS + JT) [3]
Facility	• Regular size classroom	• Principal

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[3] School Based Support Learning Team (SBSLT) includes members of the School Based Support Team and the Joint Team

Requirements	• Access to networked computers	• Area Superintendent
Transportation	• Offered in home school • Bussing as per board policy	• Principal • Transportation Department
School Selection criteria	• N/A	
Locations/schools involved	• Student attends home school	• Principal
Accountability Framework	• Framework program review committee for accountability and continuous improvement • Goals will be set by the committee, in accordance with overall goals from the Special Services Department, using the goal format approved by the board	• Superintendent of Special Services • Accountability Framework Committee

2. STUDENTS		
Components	**Description**	**Responsibility**
Early Identification	• According to TCDSB Early Identification of Children's Learning Needs Strategy for JK to Gr.1 • P/PM 11, Early Identification of Children's Learning Needs Strategy • Intake meetings, case conferences, consultations • School-Based Support Learning Team[4] meetings (SBSLT) • Early Intervention conferences with JK-grade 1 teachers • Kindergarten Language Program (KLP), as appropriate	• Superintendent, Special Services • Principal • Chief Speech-Language Pathologist • Classroom teacher • SBSLT (SBS + JT) • Speech-Language Pathologist
Referral	• Recommendation by SBSLT for speech and language assessment • Speech-Language Pathologist conducts the assessment, determines the level of need and nature of the impairment, and shares findings with the SBSLT • SBSLT makes a referral for Withdrawal Assistance based on: o speech and language assessment, and other assessments as appropriate	• Principal chairs SBSLT meeting • Classroom teacher • Speech-Language Pathologist • SBSLT

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[4] School Based Support Learning Team (SBSLT) includes members of the School Based Support Team and the Joint Team

	- need for strategic withdrawal support in order to develop communication skills and achieve academic success - student's response to previous interventions if appropriate - parent input	
Identification by Identification, Placement and Review Committee (IPRC)	Criteria for Identification: - Assessed by a speech-language pathologist – **primary area of need is oral language** - Presents with at least moderate expressive and/or receptive language difficulties in the presence of typical development in other areas - Demonstrates significant academic needs according to the classroom teacher that require accommodations and modifications - Parent/guardian consent - Student consent, as appropriate	- School Principal or Parent may request the IPRC - Area Principal chairs the IPRC - Speech-Language Pathologist attends the IPRC to speak to assessment results - SBSLT members as appropriate - Teacher and Principal attend - Parent/Guardian - Student, if older than 16 years of age
Placement decisions by Identification, Placement and Review Committee (IPRC)	- IPRCs are optional for students to receive school-based support in the manner of withdrawal by the special education teacher - Criteria for placement in Regular Class with Withdrawal Support: - at least moderate expressive-receptive oral language difficulties - significant academic need - student requires strategic support in order to access the curriculum due to language difficulties - Parent/guardian consent - Student consent, as appropriate	See above
Admission	By IPRC decision	- Principal - SBSLT members, as appropriate
IPRC - Review	Annual reviews are required; they may be waived by parents/guardians under specific Ministry and TCDSB guidelines	- Principal chairs - Parent/Guardian - Special Education Teacher, Regular Classroom Teacher(s)

Individual Education Plan (IEP)	• An IEP is developed for an identified student to outline accommodations, modifications and alternative curriculum expectations, as appropriate • IEPs are updated at every reporting period as needed	• Principal • Teachers • Consultation from the SBSLT as appropriate • With input from parents
Assessment to inform student learning (assessment for/as/of learning)	• As outlined in *Growing Success (2010)* • Elementary and secondary curricular assessments as outlined by Curriculum and Accountability, appropriate to grade level • Other standardized assessments as applicable (e.g., EQAO, CAT4) • Assessment of individual expectations, as outlined in the IEP	• Principal • Special Education Teacher, regular class Teacher • C/A resource staff • Consultation with SBSLT members as appropriate • Speech and Language Department staff
Formal assessment to inform student learning (e.g. speech-language,psychology)	• All students receive a Speech and Language assessment prior to identification with Language Impairment • Cognitive assessments may also be provided	• SBSLT members

Components	Description	Responsibility
TRANSITION PROCESS:		

Demission/Change of Placement	• For exceptional students, demission and change of placement can only be determined by the IPRC
	• Decision to demit from withdrawal support may be based on:
	   ○ Classroom based assessment data
	   ○ Additional assessment data (e.g., data integration platform)
	   ○ New formal assessment data where available
	   ○ SBSLT recommendation
	   ○ Parental input/request
	   ○ Student request, if appropriate
	• Students whose placements or identifications are changed may also retain their LI identification if it continues to be appropriate (e.g., dual identifications of LI & LD are appropriate for students who fit both criteria)
		• Area Principal chairs the review IPRC meeting
		• School Principal chairs the SBSLT meeting
		• Classroom teacher; Special Education Teacher
		• Participation of SBSLT members as appropriate
		• Speech-Language Pathologist
		• Parent participation

Transition	• Transition planning is required for all students with an IEP(PPM 156)	• Principal

	• As documented in the IEP for identified students who are 14 years of age or older • Exchange of information meetings; Grade 8 to Grade 9, as per board policy • Consideration is given to transition to post-secondary	• Teacher • Parent • student if 16 years or older • SBSLT • other elementary and secondary school staff as appropriate

3. PERSONNEL AND PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT		
Components	**Description**	**Responsibility**
Staff qualifications/training requirements	• Classroom teacher and special education teacher qualifications consistent with board policy and Ministry requirements • Special Education Teachers require Special Education Part 1 qualifications	• School Principal • Area Superintendent • Teacher
Professional learning opportunities (e.g., training, mentoring, etc.)	The following opportunities may be available: • IEP training and updates • Training in Assistive Technology use • Training in Data Integration Platform (DIP) use • PD opportunities offered by TCDSB Special Services, Curriculum and Accountability, and Student Success central teams • PD opportunities offered at the local school level by members of the SBSLT • SBSLT to provide support and mentoring as needed • A professional learning series on Language Impairment is provided periodically for special education teachers (SETs) • Other PD opportunities outside of TCDSB	• Principal • Teacher • TCDSB Special Services, Curriculum & Accountability, Student Success central teams • SBSLT • Chief of Speech-Language Pathologists
Reflective practice: tools to inform teacher learning and practice	• May be used periodically by school teams, and groups of regular classroom and Special Education teachers to guide practice, with participation of the Educational Research Department	• School Principal • Teachers • Special Services central staff • Educational Research

		Department
Staff Appraisal	• Teacher Performance Appraisal (TPA) • EA and CYW Appraisal, if appropriate	• School Principal

Components	Description	Responsibility
Resources:		
Classroom resources/materials	• School block and Special Services funding • Elementary and secondary curricular resources (literacy, numeracy) • Ministry of Education documents • Supplementary oral language, literacy and math resources • Alternative curriculum resources (i.e., for social skills and self-advocacy) • TCDSB Speech and Language Department resource documents	• School Principal • Teachers • Chief Speech Language Pathologist • Area Superintendent • Consultation with SBSLT
Special Education Amount (SEA)	• Based on individual learning needs, as recommended by a relevant qualified professional • Equipment must be essential for access to the curriculum for a claim to be made (must meet Ministry of Education SEA criteria)	• Teachers • School Principal • Superintendent, Special Services • SBSLT staff • Information Technology staff, as required
Special Incidence Portion (SIP)	• N/A	
Professional Support Central/Regional/ External	• Ongoing program and student support is provided by SBSLT members • Consultation and direct support as appropriate by TCDSB staff including the school SLP, psychology, social work, APT/PAT • Consultation support by TCDSB central team staff (e.g., Special Services, Curriculum & Accountability, Student Success) • Community/outside agency support is governed by the TCDSB Third Party Protocol and Partnership Agreements	• School Principal • Teacher • SBSLT staff as appropriate • Special Services, Curriculum and Accountability, Student Success central teams • Speech and Language Department
Support documents	• TCDSB Special Services document • Learning for All (Ministry of Education, 2009) • Education for All (Ministry of Education, 2005)	• Special Services Department and Superintendent • Curriculum & Accountability

	• Student Success High Yield Strategies (TCDSB, 2010) • Supporting Student Success in Literacy (TCDSB, 2009) • Differentiated Instruction Resources and kits from Ministry of Education • Special Education Guide for Educators (Ministry of Education, 2001) • Transition Resource Guide (Ministry of Education, 2002) • IEP Resource Guide (Ministry of Education, 2004) • Speech and Language Department resources (e.g., Supporting Students with Language Impairment in the Junior/Intermediate Grades) • Documents on evidence-based intervention practices; e.g., research articles, websites, descriptive pamphlets, etc.	Department • Student Success

4. PARENTS		
Components	**Description**	**Responsibility**
Home School Communication	• Ongoing communication between Regular Class Teacher, Special Education Teacher and parent/guardian • Parent-teacher interviews • IPRC's and Annual Reviews	• Regular Class Teacher • Special Education Teacher • School Principal • Parent
Shared Solutions	• Follow process outlined in Shared Solutions (Ministry of Education)	• Teacher • Special Education Teacher • Parent • Principal • Superintendent of Special Services • Area Superintendent
Parent Guide	• TCDSB Special Education Parent Guide • Helping Students with Speech and Language Impairments: Parent Guide to Supporting Success at School [5]	• School Principal • Superintendent, Special Services •
Parent Involvement	• Ongoing communication	• School Principal

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[5] Ontario Association for Families of Children with Communication Disorders (2009)

	• Parent evening sessions – curriculum nights • Individual Education Plan (IEP) • Parents participate in Identification Placement Review Committee (IPRC) meetings • Parent Teacher Interviews • School and School Board Information Fairs	• Teachers • Superintend of Special Services

5. COMMUNICATION		
Components	**Description**	**Responsibility**
External	• TCDSB Website/Portal • Special Education Advisory Committee • TCDSB Department Brochures • Information Fair • TCDSB Special Services Parent Guide	• Superintendent of Special Services • Communication Department • Chief Speech Language Pathologist
Internal	• TCDSB Website/Portal • Email • Director's Bulletin • TCDSB Policy and Procedures	• Superintendent of Special Services • Principal • Communication Department • Chief Speech Language Pathologist