



Special Education Program Overview and Improvement Planning

Exceptionality: Language Impairment

Placement: Special Education Class with Partial Integration – Intensive Support Program

A. Definition¹:

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
- Special Education Placement with Partial Integration–Intensive Support Program (ISP)²**
- Full-Time Special Education Placement

C. Description:

Placement in the Language Impairment Intensive Support Program is available to some elementary students who present with moderately-to-profoundly delayed oral and written language skills and evidence of average non-verbal cognitive skills. The primary area of need for these students is oral language and they require an intensive support program to access the curriculum due to their oral language difficulties. 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.

The program goal is to improve oral communication and enhance academic achievement through specialized instruction, as outlined in the student’s IEP, that is provided as early as possible in a student’s academic career. Explicit oral language instruction is a distinct instructional activity in the

¹ Ministry of Education (2001)

² The student is placed by the IPRC in a special education class in which the student-teacher ratio conforms to regulation 298, section 31, for at least 50% of the school day, but is integrated with a regular class for at least one instructional period (Ministry of Education, 2001)

intensive support program. Instruction is delivered by a special education teacher in a dedicated classroom for a minimum of 50 percent of the school day. For the balance of the school day each student receives instruction within the regular classroom (integration). The regular class and LI ISP teacher work collaboratively to support student success in integrated program areas. Careful consideration should be given to provide meaningful integration opportunities for students with LI that allow them to actively participate in learning opportunities with peers and to benefit from positive peer modeling of oral language and social skills.

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Most LI ISP programs are for Primary and/or Junior students • A small number of Intermediate programs are available 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Superintendent, Special Services • Principal
Group size	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • As per Ministry of Education Regulation 298 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Superintendent, Special Services • Principal
Time & Frequency	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Students attend the ISP daily, for a minimum of 50% of the day • All students are integrated into the regular class for at least 1 period per day • Integration is scheduled based on student strengths, needs and interests, and classroom timetables 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Principal • Regular Classroom and Special Education Teacher • SBSLT (SBS + JT)³
Facility	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A dedicated regular size classroom 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • School Principal

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

Requirements	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Desks and chairs for teacher, EA and up to 10 students • Project tables for group work • Access to networked computers 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Area Superintendent
Transportation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bussing is provided as per TCDSB policy 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Principal (home school) • Transportation Department
School Selection criteria	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Programs are located across the system, with consideration given to geographic location and school space availability • Consideration of clustering with KLP locations for development of professional learning communities • Availability of appropriate integration opportunities for LI students (with consideration of regular class size and number of students) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Area Superintendent • Superintendent of Special Services • Principal
Locations/schools involved	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Across the system, in each superintendency (see attached list for current year) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Area Superintendent • Superintendent of Special Services • Principal
Accountability Framework	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Superintendent, Special Services • Accountability Framework Committee

2. STUDENTS		
Components	Description	Responsibility
Early Identification	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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 Team⁴ meeting (SBSLT) • Early Intervention conferences with JK-grade 1 teachers • Kindergarten Language Program (KLP), as appropriate 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Chief Speech-Language Pathologist • Principal • Classroom teacher • SBSLT (SBS + JT)
Referral	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recommendation by SBSLT for speech and language assessment 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Principal chairs SBSLT

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

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Speech-Language Pathologist (SLP) conducts the assessment, determines the level of need and nature of the impairment, and shares findings with the SBSLT • SBSLT makes a referral to LI ISP based on: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ speech and language assessment, cognitive assessment and other assessments as appropriate ○ need for intensive support program in order to access the curriculum due to their oral language difficulty ○ student’s response to previous interventions if appropriate ○ parent input • IEP is preferred for consideration of referral to LI ISP • Kindergarten Language Program staff recommend some KLP students for LI ISP; this recommendation is made to the SBSLT at the home school 	meeting <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Classroom teacher/KLP teacher • Speech-Language Pathologist • Psychology • SBSLT
Identification by Identification, Placement and Review Committee (IPRC)	<u>Criteria for Identification</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identification of LI is appropriate for students who have moderate to profound oral language difficulties as reported in the SLP assessment report • Language difficulties must be seen as the primary area of weakness (i.e., language impairment is not secondary to developmental delay) • Demonstrates significant academic needs according to classroom teacher(s) • Parent/guardian consent • Student consent, as appropriate 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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)	<u>Criteria for Placement in the ISP</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Assessed by a speech-language pathologist – primary area of need is oral language • Presents with moderate to severe expressive and/or receptive language difficulties in the presence of typical development in other 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • See above

	<p>areas</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Demonstrates significant academic needs according to the classroom teacher that require accommodations and modifications • School-based interventions (tier 2 e.g., KLP, 5th Block, other) have been implemented and monitored over a reasonable period of time • Requires intensive support in a special education class in order to access the curriculum • Difficulties are not due to ongoing hearing loss or second language issues • Behaviour/emotional difficulties (if any) do not interfere with programming • Evidence of average non-verbal cognitive ability • assessed by psychology staff using developmentally appropriate measures, <i>or</i> • assessed by a speech-language pathologist or psychology staff using an approved developmental profile <i>for students enrolled in the KLP only</i>⁵ • The recommendation for LI ISP is made by the SBSLT • Parent/guardian consent • Student consent, as appropriate 	
Admission	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • By IPRC decision 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Principal • SBSLT as appropriate
IPRC - Review	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Annual reviews are required; they may be waived by parents/guardians under specific Ministry and TCDSB guidelines 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Area Principal chairs the review • Parent/Guardian • Special Education Teacher, Regular Classroom Teacher(s) • Speech-Language Pathologist attends the review along with one or

⁵ The Kindergarten Language Program is a tier 2 program for SK students with oral language difficulties. Intensive support (1/2 days) is provided by a classroom teacher and SLP 2 times per week to groups of 8 students. Students attend the KLP in addition to their regular kindergarten class. There is considerable opportunity for observation of responsiveness to intervention and student strengths and needs across multiple domains. Students who continue to require intensive support despite having participated in the KLP may be recommended for an LI ISP provided that there is evidence of average non-verbal cognitive ability.

		more additional SBSLT members as appropriate
Individual Education Plan (IEP)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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 • 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Principal • Teachers • Consultation from the SBSLT as appropriate • With input from parents
Assessment to inform student learning (assessment for/as/of learning)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • As outlined in <i>Growing Success (2010)</i> • 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 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Principal • Special Education Teacher, regular class Teacher • C/A resource staff • Consultation with SBSLT members as appropriate
Formal assessment to inform student learning (e.g. speech-language, psychology)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All students receive a Speech and Language assessment prior to entry in the LI ISP • Cognitive assessments are used to support programming and assist with transition planning, as appropriate 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SBSLT members

Components	Description	Responsibility
TRANSITION PROCESS:		
Demission/Change of Placement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • For exceptional students, demission and change of placement can only be determined by the IPRC • Students are typically demitted by the IPRC after two years of intensive support • Decision to demit from ISP may be based on: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ 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 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Students whose placements or identifications are changed may <u>retain</u> their LI identification as appropriate. Dual identifications of LI & LD are appropriate for students who fit both criteria. 	
Transition	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • As documented in the IEP for identified students who are 14 years of age or older • Careful consideration is required for students transitioning into and out of the LI ISP, and from year to year within the ISP • A case conference is recommended on Admission and Demission • Ongoing communication is required between LI ISP teachers, SBSLT staff who support the student, and the staff involved in the next placement • Exchange of information meetings; Grade 8 to Grade 9, as per board policy • Consideration is given to transition to post-secondary 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Principal coordinates the transition process • Teachers • 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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Classroom teacher and special education teacher qualifications consistent with board policy and Ministry requirements • Special Education Teachers require Special Education Part 1 qualifications 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • School Principal • Area Superintendent • Teachers
Professional learning opportunities (e.g., training, mentoring, etc.)	<p>The following opportunities may be offered as resources and interest allow</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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 • Professional Learning Series on Language Impairment is provided periodically for teachers in the ISP program <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Teachers new to the ISP are given priority status in registering for the course • All course materials are available electronically 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Principal • Teachers • TCDSB Special Services, Curriculum & Accountability, Student Success central teams • SBSLT • Speech and Language Department

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> LI teacher networking/mentoring opportunities are incorporated Training in Empower Reading Other PD opportunities outside of TCDSB 	
Reflective practice: tools to inform teacher learning and practice	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 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 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> School Principal Teachers Educational Research Department Special Services central staff
Staff Appraisal	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Teacher Performance Appraisal (TPA) EA and CYW Appraisal, if appropriate 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> School Principal

Components	Description	Responsibility
Resources:		
Classroom resources/materials	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> School block and Special Services funding Elementary and secondary curricular resources (literacy, numeracy) Ministry of Education documents (<i><u>insert link to list of documents</u></i>) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> School Principal Teachers Area Superintendent Consultation with SBSLT
Special Education Amount (SEA)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 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) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Teachers School Principal Superintendent, Special Services SBSLT staff Information Technology staff, as required
Special Incidence Portion (SIP)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Application for funding submitted for students with intensive safety and/or health needs according to Ministry of Education SIP criteria 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Principal Teacher Superintendent, Special Services Area Superintendent Support by SBSLT and special services staff

Professional Support Central/Regional/ External	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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 • The focus of the support is on differentiating instruction and enhancing oral language and literacy learning opportunities in the classroom • 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 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • School Principal • Teacher • SBSLT staff as appropriate • Special Services, Curriculum and Accountability, Student Success central teams • Speech and Language and other SBSLT staff as appropriate
Support documents	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • TCDSB Special Services document • Learning for All (Ministry of Education, 2009) • Education for All (Ministry of Education, 2005) • 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) • Documents on evidence-based intervention practices; e.g., research articles, websites, descriptive pamphlets, etc. • Speech and Language Department resources (e.g., Supporting Students with Language Impairment in the Junior/Intermediate Grades) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Special Services Department and Superintendent • Curriculum & Accountability Department • Student Success

4. PARENTS		
Components	Description	Responsibility
Home-School Communication	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ongoing communication between Regular Class Teacher, Special Education Teacher and parent/guardian • Parent-teacher interviews • IPRC's and Annual Reviews 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Regular Class Teacher • Special Education Teacher • School Principal • Parent
Shared Solutions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Follow process outlined in Shared Solutions (Ministry of Education) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Teacher

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Special Education Teacher • Parent • Principal • Superintendent of Special Services • Area Superintendent
Parent Guide	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • LI Program Brochure for parents • Speech and Language Department Brochure • Helping Students with Speech and Language Impairments: Parent Guide to Supporting Success at School ⁶ • TCDSB Special Education Parent Guide 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Chief Speech Language Pathologist • School Principal • Superintendent of Special Services
Parent Involvement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ongoing communication • 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 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • School Principal • Teachers •

5. COMMUNICATION		
Components	Description	Responsibility
External	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • TCDSB Website/Portal • Special Education Advisory Committee • TCDSB Department Brochures • Information Fair • TCDSB Special Services Parent Guide 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Superintendent of Special Services • Chief Speech-Language Pathologist • Communication Department
Internal	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • TCDSB Website/Portal • Email 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Superintendent of Special Services

⁶ Ontario Association for Families of Children with Communication Disorders (2009)

	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Director's Bulletin• TCDSB Policy and Procedures	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Principal• Communication Department
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