SEVERITY RATING SCALES/GUIDELINES FOR
SPEECH/LANGUAGE COMMUNICATION SERVICES

LANGUAGE SEVERITY RATING SCALE

DEFINITION: **Language Impairment:** Any disorder of language that interferes with communication and has a negative effect on student's performance and/or functioning in a typical learning environment. A language impairment may include a disorder in one or more learning processes involved in receptive (understanding) and expressive (use) language.

NOTE: A formal assessment is NOT required to determine severity. However, if a formal assessment has already been completed within the last 6 months, that data would be used to help determine severity and service options.

NOTE: Teacher must review student record when concerns are identified for information about previous assessments, supports, and/or strategies which may still be applicable. If possible, consultation with previous teacher is encouraged.

	No Apparent Problem	Mild	Moderate	Severe
Description of Language	The student's language skills are within the expected language performance range for their age	*student demonstrates effective performance most of the time with minimal or no assistance. *The student's language skills are deficient in at least **one** of the following areas: • Sentence length/complexity • Word order/syntax • Vocabulary/semantics • Word finding • Word form/morphology • Phonology • Social skills/pragmatics • Auditory perception (memory, attention, discrimination, sequencing)	*Student requires more prompts/cues, explanations, progress checks than the typical student in class *The student's language skills are deficient in at least **two** of the following areas: • Sentence length/complexity • Word order/syntax • Vocabulary/semantics • Word finding • Word form/morphology • Phonology • Social skills/pragmatics • Auditory perception (memory, attention, discrimination, sequencing)	*Despite the provision of modifications and supports, student does not demonstrate effective performance a majority of the time. *The student's language skills are deficient in at least **three** of the following areas: • Sentence length/complexity • Word order/syntax • Vocabulary/semantics • Word finding • Word form/morphology • Phonology • Social skills/pragmatics • Auditory perception (memory, attention, discrimination, sequencing)
Impact on Education	Acquisition of academic, social and/or functional skills is **not** affected.	*Acquisition of academic, social, and/or functional skills **may be** affected. *student's receptive or expressive language **minimally** interferes with their primary mode of communication (speech, sign language, device, etc.)	* Acquisition of academic, social, and/or functional skills **is often** affected *student's receptive or expressive language **frequently** interferes with their primary mode of communication (speech, sign language, device, etc.)	* Acquisition of academic, social, and/or functional skills **is impaired.** *student's receptive or expressive language **significantly** interferes with their primary mode of communication (speech, sign language, device, etc.)
Identification of		*Concerns identified by teacher	* Concerns identified by teacher	* Concerns identified by teacher

Needs		observation.	observation and screening.	observation and screening.
		* Concern shared by parent/guardian.	* Concern shared by parent/guardian.	* Concern shared by parent/guardian.
		* Consult with specialty teacher.	* Consult with specialty teacher	* Consult with specialty teacher.
		* Specialty teacher can request screening tools from SLP for teacher use.	* Discuss identification of needs with school Core team (if available).	* Discuss identification of needs with school Core team (if available).
			* Specialty teacher can request screening tools from SLP for teacher use.	
Service Options		* Teacher accesses available resources including universal resources on CA RCSD website http://carcsd.ca/wp-content/uploads/2015/08/Universal-Strategies-for-SLP.pdf	*Teacher accesses available resources including universal resources on CA RCSD website http://carcsd.ca/wp-content/uploads/2015/08/Universal-Strategies-for-SLP.pdf	*Teacher accesses available resources including universal resources on CA RCSD website http://carcsd.ca/wp-content/uploads/2015/08/Universal-Strategies-for-SLP.pdf
		* Teacher continues to monitor.	*Classroom teacher consults with specialty teacher as required.	*Classroom teacher consults with specialty teacher as required.
		*Classroom teacher consults with specialty teacher as required.	*Service options discussed with school Core team (if available).	*Service options discussed with school Core team (if available).
		*Classroom teacher and/or specialty teacher consult with SLP as needed.	*Targeted group	*Targeted groups
		*Parents have option to access private services.	* Partnership with SLP, parent, teacher, and educational assistant (if available), for individualized programming. (Referral required).	* Partnership with SLP, parent, teacher, and educational assistant (if available), for individualized programming. (Referral required).
			*Parents have option to access private services.	*Parents have option to access private services.

Note: Specialty teachers have varying titles across school divisions (LST, SSF, LAT, LIFT, IEF, IC, SSC)

ARTICULATION SEVERITY RATING SCALE

DEFINITION: **Articulation Impairment:** The abnormal production of speech sounds including: substitutions, omissions, distortions, or addition of speech sounds not commensurate with student's chronological age or cultural linguistic background and not related to dialect.

NOTE: A formal assessment is NOT required to determine severity. However, if a formal assessment has already been completed within the last 6 months, that data would be used to help determine severity and service options.

NOTE: Teacher must review student record when concerns are identified for information about previous assessments, supports, and/or strategies which may still be applicable. If possible, consultation with previous teacher is encouraged.

	No Apparent Problem	Mild	Moderate	Severe
Description of Articulation	*No sound errors present or production is developmentally appropriate .	*Speech can be understood by an unfamiliar listener although some errors are noticeable. *Errors consist of substitutions and/or distortions that **are** age appropriate. ***No more** than 2 speech sound errors outside developmental guidelines. *Student is **able** to imitate a speech sound model provided by a teacher or other. *Student produces speech sound errors in **some** words but not others.	*Speech is more difficult to understand to an unfamiliar listener and numerous errors are noticeable. *Errors consist of substitutions and/or distortions that **are not** age appropriate. ***More** than 2 speech sound errors outside developmental guidelines. *Student **has difficulty** imitating a speech sound model provided by a teacher or other. *Student produces speech sound errors in **many** words.	*Speech is not understood by most listeners and numerous errors are noticeable. *Errors consist of substitutions and/or distortions that **are not** age appropriate. ***Numerous** speech sound errors outside developmental guidelines. *Student **is unable** to imitate a speech sound model provided by a teacher or other. *Student produces speech sound errors in **most** words.
Impact on Communication	Does not interfere with communication.	***Minimally** interferes with communication. *The student **may experience some** difficulty with expression and/or comprehension. *The student's spoken message is understood by others **most** of the time.	***Frequently** interferes with communication. *The student **experiences** difficulty with expression and/or comprehension. *The student's spoken message is understood by others **some** of the time.	***Significantly** interferes with and/or prevents communication. *The student **has limited** functional expression and/or comprehension. *The student's spoken message is **rarely** understood by others.

Impact on Education	Acquisition of academic, social and/or functional skills is **not** affected.	*Acquisition of academic, social, and/or functional skills **may be** affected.	*Acquisition of academic, social, and/or functional skills **is usually** affected	*Acquisition of academic, social, and/or functional skills **is impaired.**
Identification of Needs		*Concerns identified by teacher observation, consultation with developmental guide and/or screening. ***SLP Developmental guide is under construction.** * Concern shared by parent/guardian. * Consult with specialty teacher as required. *Classroom teacher can access screening tools directly. ***Screening tools are under construction.**	*Concerns identified by teacher observation and screening. * Concern shared by parent/guardian. * Consult with specialty teacher as required. * Discuss identification of needs with school Core team (if available). ***Screening tools are under construction.**	*Concerns identified by teacher observation and screening. * Concern shared by parent/guardian. * Consult with specialty teacher. * Discuss identification of needs with school Core team (if available).

Service Options		*Teacher accesses available resources including universal resources on CA RCSD website http://carcsd.ca/wp-content/uploads/2015/08/Universal-Strategies-for-SLP.pdf * Teacher continues to monitor. * Classroom teacher consults with specialty teacher as required. *Classroom teacher and/or specialty teacher consult with SLP as needed. *Parents have option to access private services.	*Teacher accesses available resources including universal resources on CA RCSD website http://carcsd.ca/wp-content/uploads/2015/08/Universal-Strategies-for-SLP.pdf *Classroom teacher consults with specialty teacher as required. *Service options discussed with school Core team. (if available) *Targeted group ∗ Individual sessions with an SLP/SLPA for stimulability - short term option before proceeding with an IP * Partnership with SLP, parent, teacher, and educational assistant (if available), for individualized programming. (Referral required). *Parents have option to access private services.	*Teacher accesses available resources including universal resources on CA RCSD website http://carcsd.ca/wp-content/uploads/2015/08/Universal-Strategies-for-SLP.pdf *Classroom teacher consults with specialty teacher as required. *Service options discussed with school Core team.(if available) *Targeted group ∗ Individual sessions with an SLP/SLPA for stimulability - short term option before proceeding with an IP * Partnership with SLP, parent, teacher, and educational assistant (if available), for individualized programming. (Referral required). *Parents have option to access private services.

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VOICE SEVERITY RATING SCALE

DEFINITION: **Voice Disorder:** A condition characterized by abnormal loudness, pitch and/or quality of voice that are inappropriate for an individual's gender, age, cultural background or geographic location. Voice disorders may be organic (resulting from neurological or structural changes of the respiratory or vocal mechanisms) or functional (resulting from inefficient or improper use of the vocal mechanism) in nature.

NOTE: A Speech-Language Pathologist plays a central role in the assessment, diagnosis and treatment of voice disorders. SLPs will typically consider whether a referral to medical specialists (i.e. Ear Nose Throat Specialists) would be appropriate.

NOTE: A formal assessment is NOT required to determine severity. However, if a formal assessment has already been completed within the last 6 months, that data would be used to help determine severity and service options.

NOTE: Teacher must review student record when concerns are identified for information about previous assessments, supports, and/or strategies which may still be applicable. If possible, consultation with previous teacher is encouraged

	No Apparent Problem	Mild	Moderate	Severe
Description of Voice	*Pitch, quality, volume, rate, and resonance are not unusual.	***Noticeable and inconsistent** functioning in one or more of these areas: • raising and lowering of pitch for age and gender • increase or decrease in the intensity/volume of speech • breathiness, harshness, hoarseness, tenseness or other abnormal quality • nasal quality of speech	* **Noticeable and persistent** functioning in one or more of these areas: • raising and lowering of pitch for age and gender • increase or decrease in the intensity/volume of speech • breathiness, harshness, hoarseness, tenseness or other abnormal quality • excessive nasal quality of speech	* **Noticeable, consistent, extreme and inappropriate** functioning in one or more of these areas: • raising and lowering of pitch for age and gender • increase or decrease in the intensity/volume of speech or the loss of the ability to speak • breathiness, harshness, hoarseness, tenseness or other abnormal quality • excessive nasal quality of speech
Impact on Communication		*The voice difference is **not severe enough** to interfere with communication.	*The voice difference **may** interfere with communication and/or impair intelligibility.	*The voice difference **impairs** communication and/or intelligibility.

Impact on Education		*Voice *rarely* distracts listeners from message. **Minimal* impact on social, emotional, and/or academic functioning.	*Voice *does* distract listener from message. **Frequently Interferes* with social, emotional, and/or academic functioning.	*Voice *does* distract listener from message. *Avoidance of speaking situations may be observed. **Significantly* limits social, emotional, and/or academic functioning due to limited ability to communicate appropriately.
Identification of Needs		*Concerns identified by teacher observation. * Concern shared by parent/guardian. * Consult with specialty teacher as required.	*Concerns identified by teacher observation. * Concern shared by parent/guardian. * Consult with specialty teacher as required. * Discuss identification of needs with school Core team (if available).	*Concerns identified by teacher observation. * Concern shared by parent/guardian. * Consult with specialty teacher. * Discuss identification of needs with school Core team (if available).
Service Options		* Teacher continues to monitor. * Classroom teacher consults with specialty teacher as required. *Classroom teacher and/or specialty teacher consult with SLP as needed. *Parents have option to access private services.	*Classroom teacher consults with specialty teacher as required. *Service options discussed with school Core team. (if available) * Partnership with SLP, parent, teacher, and educational assistant (if available), for individualized programming. (Referral required). *Parents have option to access private services.	*Classroom teacher consults with specialty teacher as required. *Service options discussed with school Core team. (if available) * Partnership with SLP, parent, teacher, and educational assistant (if available), for individualized programming. (Referral required). *Parents have option to access private services.

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FLUENCY SEVERITY RATING SCALE

DEFINITION: **Fluency Disorder (stuttering):** An interruption in the flow of speaking characterized by atypical rate, rhythm, and repetitions in sounds, syllables, words, and phrases.

NOTE: A formal assessment is NOT required to determine severity. However, if a formal assessment has already been completed within the last 6 months, that data would be used to help determine severity and service options.

NOTE: Teacher must review student record when concerns are identified for information about previous assessments, supports, and/or strategies which may still be applicable. If possible, consultation with previous teacher is encouraged.

	No Apparent Problem	Mild	Moderate	Severe
Description of Fluency	*Fluency of speech does not draw attention to the student.	*3 to 5% stuttered words of total words spoken with a speech sample of at least 100 words. *Smooth speech predominates.	*6-10% stuttered words of total words spoken with a speech sample of at least 100 words. * This *may* be accompanied by secondary characteristics (i.e. facial grimaces, eye blinks, abnormal changes in pitch/loudness, tapping feet, hand slapping).	*11% or more stuttered words of total words spoken with a speech sample of at least 100 words. * This *is often* accompanied by secondary characteristics (i.e. facial grimaces, eye blinks, abnormal changes in pitch/loudness, tapping feet, hand slapping). * Frustration and avoidance behaviors (i.e. reduced verbal output or avoiding words/situations where disfluency is most common) often present.
Impact on Communication		*The student *rarely expresses awareness* of disfluencies.	*The student *may express awareness* of disfluencies.	*The student *usually expresses awareness* of disfluencies. *Avoidance of speaking situations is observed. *Student may be ridiculed, ignored, or excluded from play or group activities as a result of disfluencies.

Impact on Education		*Minimal listener reaction. *Disfluencies **minimally** interfere with educational functioning.	*Some listener reaction *Disfluencies **frequently** interfere with educational functioning.	*Significant listener reaction * Disfluencies **significantly** interfere with educational functioning. *Student may do poorly on reports, oral assignments, and reading. *Student may withdraw from group learning activities.
Identification of Needs		*Concerns identified by teacher observation. * Concern shared by parent/guardian. * Consult with specialty teacher as required.	*Concerns identified by teacher observation. * Concern shared by parent/guardian. * Consult with specialty teacher as required. * Discuss identification of needs with school Core team (if available).	*Concerns identified by teacher observation. * Concern shared by parent/guardian. * Consult with specialty teacher. * Discuss identification of needs with school Core team (if available).
Service Options		* Teacher continues to monitor. * Classroom teacher consults with specialty teacher as required. *Classroom teacher and/or specialty teacher consult with SLP as needed. *Parents have option to access private services.	*Classroom teacher consults with specialty teacher as required. *Service options discussed with school Core team. (if available) * Partnership with SLP, parent, teacher, and educational assistant (if available), for individualized programming. (Referral required). *Parents have option to access private services.	*Classroom teacher consults with specialty teacher as required. *Service options discussed with school Core team.(if available) * Partnership with SLP, parent, teacher, and educational assistant (if available), for individualized programming. (Referral required). *Parents have option to access private services.

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Sources:
ASHA Guidelines for the Roles and Responsibilities of the School-Based Speech-Language Pathologist
Alberta Health Unit Speech-Language Pathology Standards, October 1993
Tennessee Department of Education "Resource Packet Speech and Language Impairments Severity Rating Scales, 04/09"
Maine Department of Education "Severity Rating Scales/Guidelines for Speech/Language Communication Services, 08/10"