

Specific Learning Disabilities

Guidance for West Virginia
Schools and Districts





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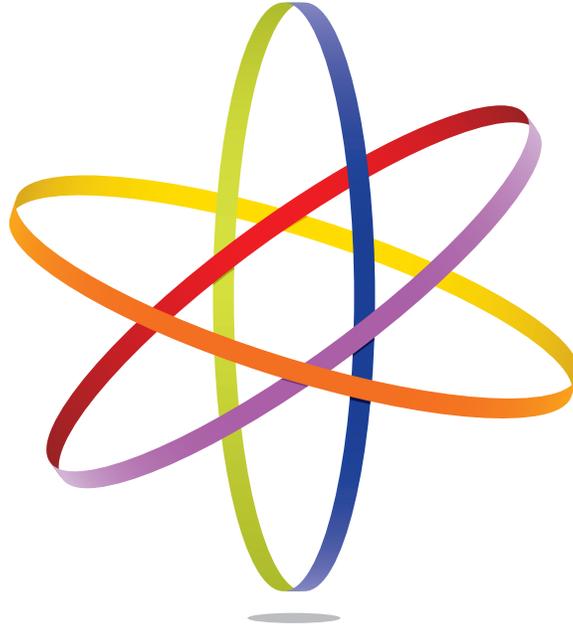
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Specific Learning Disabilities

Guidance for West Virginia Schools and Districts



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Some information in this document was adapted from Support for Personalized Learning Guidance for West Virginia Schools and Districts (2013); West Virginia Guidelines for Identifying Students with Specific Learning Disabilities (March 2009); Guidelines for Identifying Students with Specific Learning Disabilities (Colorado 2008); Specific Learning Disability Identification: A Guide for Teams to Determine SLD Eligibility (Thompson School District 2009).

Notes:

This guidance document is available at <http://wvde.state.wv.us/spl> and <http://wvde.state.wv.us/osp>.

This guidance document incorporates and replaces the Department's technical assistance manuals, *Specific Learning Disabilities Guidance for West Virginia Schools and Districts 2013* and *West Virginia Guidelines for Identifying Students with Specific Learning Disabilities 2009*.

Additional guidance on eligibility for specific learning disabilities may be found in Policy 2419: *Regulations for the Education of Students with Exceptionalities* September 2014.

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Guidance for West Virginia Schools and Districts

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Introduction

In 2004, the Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act (IDEA 2004) permitted the use of a process for identification of students with specific learning disabilities (SLD) that is based on the child's response to scientific, research-based intervention (§300.307(a)(2)). This reauthorization of IDEA also permitted, but did not require, the use of what has come to be known as the third method approach (300.309(a)(2)(ii). This approach involves consideration of a pattern of strengths or weaknesses, or both, relative to intellectual development and achievement if the evaluation group considers such information relevant to the identification of SLD.

In 2007 the West Virginia Board of Education approved a revision to Policy 2419: *Regulations for the Education of Students with Exceptionalities* that phased out the use of the severe discrepancy model and required the use of Response to Intervention (RTI) documentation as one component of eligibility decision-making while also recognizing the contribution that an evaluation of a student's cognitive processing to determine strengths and weaknesses could be very valuable. In 2011, Support for Personalized Learning (SPL) was adopted as a framework for providing personalized learning to all students. The West Virginia SPL framework is a state-wide initiative that suggests flexible use of resources to provide relevant academic, social/emotional and/or behavioral support to enhance learning for all students. SPL is characterized by a seamless system of high-quality instructional practices allowing all students to sustain significant progress, whether they are considered at-risk, exceeding grade-level expectations or at any point along the continuum. The IDEA encourages utilizing RTI as one means of identifying students for special education services. RTI has been a part of WV schools since 2005 and it is included in the overall approach to SPL. However, the intent of SPL is much more pervasive than eligibility alone. SPL utilizes instructional approaches such as universal screening and on-going data analysis to inform instruction, facilitate flexible use of building personnel, and encourage collaborative problem-solving to enhance the performance of ALL students. The flexibility of the framework allows schools to customize their implementation of SPL. Data collection indicates the most successful sites use common SPL components in a systematic way.

Utilizing SPL in West Virginia to identify Specific Learning Disabilities (SLD)

One of the ways SPL supports student learning is by addressing the prevention of academic, social/emotional and behavioral difficulties through the establishment of a multi-level instruction framework. High-quality practices supported by the multi-level SPL framework include

- accommodating the needs of all students resulting in improved support for struggling and high-achieving students;
- a means for appropriately identifying and selecting students for continued services through an Individualized Education Program (IEP) based on their demonstrated response to TARGETED and INTENSIVE instruction;
- universal screening for all students in core academic areas;
- multi-levels that provide increasing support for students who struggle;
- systematic data collection, analysis and decision-making;
- progressively intense monitoring of student achievement;
- collaboration and problem-solving;
- professional development for teachers and administrators in all components of the framework.

SPL is **one component** of the identification of SLD. A SLD determination is based on both educational need and a student's low response to high-quality general education instruction. A body of evidence demonstrating academic skill deficiencies and insufficient progress when provided TARGETED and INTENSIVE instruction is required in documenting eligibility as a student with a SLD. It is critical that teachers, administrators and evaluators understand that low achievement alone does not constitute a student with a learning disability. It is only after a student is provided appropriate supplemental TARGETED and INTENSIVE instruction over a sufficient period of time that the conclusion of a SLD may be made. **The delivery of sufficient and appropriate multi-level instruction includes**

the provision of supports at CORE, TARGETED and INTENSIVE levels. Instruction at these increasingly more intense levels ensures that each student is provided an adequate opportunity to learn prior to a SLD determination.

Connecting the SPL Framework to SLD Determination

SPL provides a framework for working with struggling learners and allows general education teachers to organize and deliver instruction to support students who struggle in reading, writing and mathematics. SPL supports and extends earlier models of RTI while also focusing on early intervention in the area of behavior. The benefit of SPL is to provide early intervention and to reduce the number of students referred for special education services; ultimately distinguishing between poorly performing students with disabilities and students performing poorly due to inadequate instruction.

The SPL process may be used to identify *specific* and effective instructional strategies that result in higher student achievement. Many students who struggle to master grade-level content often benefit from instruction that is skill specific and supplemental to the instruction provided within the general curriculum. Given supplemental instruction, progress can be accelerated by adequate time, the use of effective materials and robust instruction. Consequently, many students no longer require additional instruction. However, for a small number of students, low levels of response to instruction might initiate a referral for special education.

Implementation of the SPL framework is a process for verifying students have had access to high-quality instruction prior to pursuing eligibility. Labeling a child is never a benign action. Eligibility decisions hold life-changing implications for students and should be made with thorough attention to all aspects of the process. The performance of students with disabilities is considerably different from their same-grade peers on core academic skills such as English/language arts or mathematics.

Historically, defining SLD and determining their presence has been difficult and complex due to attempts to define what it is not rather than what it is. Moreover, the definition remained relatively unchanged since its inception in the early 1960s. IDEA and Policy 2419 define a SLD as:

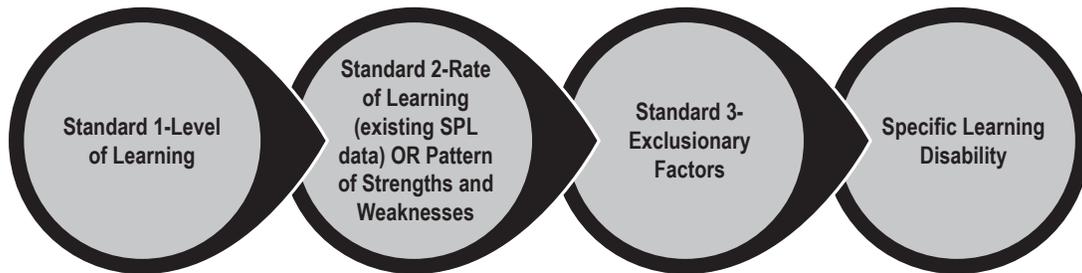
...a disorder in one or more of the basic psychological processes involved in understanding or in using language, spoken or written, that may manifest itself in the imperfect ability to listen, think, speak, read, write, spell, or to do mathematical calculation, including conditions such as perceptual disabilities, brain injury, minimal brain dysfunction, dyslexia, and developmental aphasia.

Effective September 2014, Policy 2419 further defined SLD by adding two statements taken from the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders Fifth Edition (DSM-5) as specified in §18-20-10:

1. Dyslexia is an alternative term used to refer to a pattern of learning difficulties characterized by problems with accurate or fluent word recognition, poor decoding and poor spelling abilities.
2. Dyscalculia is an alternative term used to refer to a pattern of learning difficulties characterized by problems with numerical information, learning arithmetic facts and performing accurate or fluent calculations.

The identification of SLD requires a comprehensive and strategic investigation of factors that might account for a student's underachievement. A learning disability does not include learning problems that are primarily a result of visual, hearing or motor disabilities, intellectual disability or emotional/behavioral disorders. Similarly, a learning disability must not be identified when environmental, cultural or economic disadvantage is a primary contributing factor to low academic performance. If any of these areas are suspected to be the primary cause of a student's underachievement, the Student Assistance Team (SAT) should be convened to review data and make recommendations for appropriate instruction within the context of general education.

Traditionally, SLD has been defined and identified as “unexpected underachievement” as measured by a discrepancy between cognitive ability and achievement. The method of measuring such discrepancies has proven problematic and ineffective (Fletcher, Lyon, Fuchs, & Barnes, 2007). Fuchs, Fuchs, & Speece (2002) note that research documents similar learning profiles (i.e., severe underachievement) in children with and without IQ-achievement discrepancies. Moreover, the “wait-to-fail” method, as it is often characterized in the literature, is no longer an acceptable option for identifying SLD.



Today, it is important to think about a student with a SLD as demonstrating a substantially lower learning rate manifested by unresponsiveness to instruction and intervention (Fuchs, Fuchs, & Speece, 2002). This constitutes a shift in thinking and requires school personnel to reassess their attitudes and beliefs about students who experience persistent academic difficulties.

The student with a SLD may be characterized as a learner with extreme low achievement and limited positive response to appropriate instruction (Shinn, 2007; Fletcher, 2008). Students are eligible for special education and related services when it is determined that they differ substantially from their peers on both of these dimensions. That is, they demonstrate low academic performance and inadequate growth (Fuchs, Fuchs, & Speece, 2002). While SPL uses a variety of terms to describe a student’s underachievement (e.g., significant, substantial, severe), the premise is that the achievement of these students is markedly different from peers, is significantly below grade-level expectations and interferes with progress in the general curriculum unless special education services are provided.

An integrated approach to SLD determination, a combination of SPL/RTI and the Pattern of Strengths and Weaknesses (PSW) model, may be advantageous because it hypothesizes a link between the observed low academic performance/ inadequate growth and the responsible cognitive processing weaknesses. In an integrated or hybrid approach to SLD determination it is important to first document the provision of relevant scientifically-based core curricula and high-quality instruction. The description of the learner’s response to this learning environment is then paired with assessment and used to help determine why the student was not responsive to this instruction.

When PSW is included as part of the comprehensive SLD evaluation the cognitive process (es) that are interfering with a student’s ability to perform academically may be identified. This identification is important because it may establish links between specific cognitive processes and academic areas of concern. These links have the potential to subsequently guide supplemental instruction and/or specially designed instruction. Although the processing deficits may or may not be remediable, their identification could lead to more effective instructional and compensatory strategies for those students who have not responded adequately to INTENSIVE levels of instruction within the SPL approach. It is hoped that an integrated approach may ensure that when greater intensity of instruction is not successful eligible students will receive individualized instruction based on their unique patterns of both academic and cognitive processing strengths and weaknesses. Appendix A comprehensively defines the eight areas of SLD and provides resources for each area.

Emphasis on eligibility decision-making moves from quantifying the discrepancy between IQ and achievement to analyzing whether or not a student is responding adequately to supplemental instruction matched to specific needs and perhaps developing a rationale for those students whose learning difficulties persist. SPL assumes a broader view of learning disabilities based on on-going assessment and analyses of students' responses over time to TARGETED and INTENSIVE instruction. Instructional implications of assessment, particularly progress monitoring results, are critical and play an essential role in making the eligibility decision.

Eligibility Committees must draw upon information from a variety of assessment tools and strategies and as specified in §18-20-10 ensure all students receive necessary and appropriate screenings and early assessments for specific learning disabilities. The Eligibility Committee may not rely on any single procedure for determining eligibility for special education and related services.

Parents as Partners in the Process

When parents and schools work collaboratively, student outcomes improve. The SPL framework provides an opportunity for parents and teachers to work collaboratively toward ensuring student success. SPL has initiated a significant change in the way instruction and supports are delivered. Universal screening, progress monitoring and grouping students for specific instruction are important instructional processes that parents must understand. Particularly when a child begins to struggle, schools should inform parents of the support options available within the SPL framework. When parents are fully informed they can engage in problem-solving with teachers and also support and encourage their child's academic progress at home.

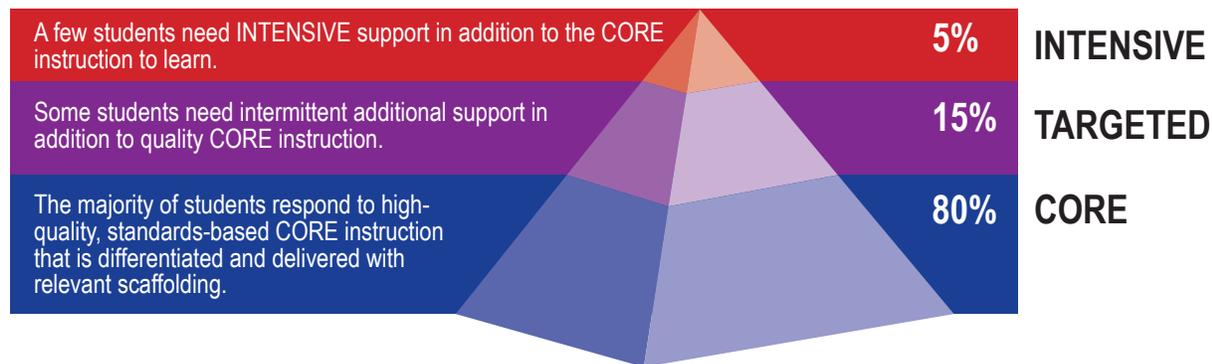
For the small number of students whose response to appropriate instruction may be described as "low" or "minimal," teachers and parents may begin to suspect a SLD. Policy 2419 includes the following parental notification requirements in relation to the SPL process. The district must document that the student's parents were notified about the following:

1. The state's policies regarding the amount and nature of student performance data that would be collected and the general education services that would be provided
2. Strategies for increasing the student's rate of learning
3. Information and education to parents regarding specific learning disabilities including dyslexia and dyscalculia and the services available to students as specified in §18-20-10
4. The parents' right to request an evaluation at any time

The state's policies regarding the amount and nature of student performance data requirement may be met through the dissemination of "***A Parent's Guide to Support for Personalized Learning (SPL)***" which is available at <http://wvde.state.wv.us/spl/familycommunity.html>. The brochure provides an overview of the SPL process and the multi-level instructional model and gives parents an explanation of the relationship between SPL and special education. It also informs parents of their right to request an evaluation for special education at any time. It is recommended that all parents receive a copy of the brochure at the beginning of each school year. It is particularly important that parents be involved in the decision-making processes related to providing TARGETED and INTENSIVE instruction. When parents know the type and format of instruction, they are better prepared to support their child's learning needs at home.

The Multi-Level Instructional Model

The multi-level instructional model provides a framework for the delivery of increasingly more intense academic support. The model is preventative in nature and assumes that most children's academic difficulties can be addressed with additional instructional supports provided within the context of general education.



CORE

High-quality CORE instruction is the foundation of SPL. It is characterized by high expectations for all students and takes place in an academic environment that is safe, challenging, engaging and allows students to take academic risks without fear of failure. All students need access to high-quality CORE instruction. Quality instruction at the CORE level requires a focus of personnel and resources as indicated by students' needs. Due to the fluctuating nature of needs across and within districts, schools and classrooms, it is essential that the individuals who are most aware of the needs participate in decisions made to allocate personnel and material resources. SPL affirms the premise that high-quality CORE instruction averts the need for unnecessary intervention and supports, and meets the needs of at least 80% of the students. Quality instruction at the CORE level incorporates relevant formative assessment, differentiation and scaffolding as basic practices in all lessons, and provides significant opportunities for authentic application of content and skills in and across all disciplines. It requires responsive teaching, teacher modeling, guided instruction, productive group work and independent learning. Content goals in the CORE come directly from the West Virginia Content Standards and Objectives.

Assessment is an important component of CORE instruction, as well. A variety of assessments are used to guide instruction. SPL supports the need for all schools to have a process for reviewing all students' progress through district-level and building-level screening. The WV SPL framework suggests some type of universal screening for all students at the beginning of the school year to determine each student's current level of performance. Screening measures are diverse, brief, can be informal and provide an initial indication of which students are entering the school year at-risk for academic difficulties. Valid and reliable screenings can help teachers differentiate their instruction based on what students already know and can do. Teachers, administrators and building teams reviewing screening and progress monitoring data utilize a systematic process of discussing data so that effective adjustments to instruction can be made.

Careful consideration should be given to determining the root cause(s) of a student's deficit and designing instruction to align with the type of need. There are many assessments and diagnostic tools available and of value, but classroom formative assessment processes allow teachers to adjust classroom instruction by scaffolding immediately to meet students' needs. The relevancy of the data used to guide instruction and scaffolding is a key consideration. Formative assessment strategies such as observations, checklists, rubrics, student work samples and student self-assessments furnish the teacher with valuable information and data, resulting in improved educational experiences for the student. SPL supports the use of performance tasks within instruction and as a means of demonstrating mastery of concepts and skills.

During CORE instruction, the level of performance (i.e., average score) and rate of progress of the entire class should first be evaluated to determine whether the curriculum and instructional practices are effective. If not, changes in class-wide instruction should be undertaken. Assuming that the level of performance and rate of growth of the entire class are adequate, the performance of students whose scores are discrepant from expected levels should be examined to determine whether strategic monitoring is desirable or whether TARGETED instruction should be initiated. TARGETED instruction is recommended for students whose universal screening, interim assessments, and/or formative/classroom assessments scores fall at or below the 8th percentile, while strategic monitoring (using the same measures) is recommended for students whose scores on universal screening measures fall at the “borderline” level (i.e., 10th-25th percentile).

On-going progress monitoring can reveal whether individual students are displaying adequate rates of growth; if growth rates are inadequate, TARGETED instruction should be initiated. Without effective instruction, discrepant growth rates will continue, resulting in the ever-increasing gap between typical and struggling learners known as “Matthew Effect.”

TARGETED

TARGETED instruction and more intense scaffolding are triggered when a student’s progress in the general classroom environment, despite strong commitment and high-quality instruction at the CORE level, slows to below State-approved grade-level standards. It differs from quality CORE instruction because of increased scaffolding, time, assessment and expertise. In the TARGETED level, students receive instruction on the currently-adopted content standards and objectives. As with CORE instruction, all TARGETED lessons incorporate the principles of differentiated instruction. TARGETED instruction typically occurs within the general classroom environment. SPL supports the assumption that TARGETED instruction and scaffolding occurs using relevant content, including science, mathematics, English Language Arts (ELA), social studies and electives, including Career and Technical Education (CTE) and arts courses. SPL supports the occurrence of TARGETED instruction before, during and after school and the need for ongoing consideration of how resources are used to support extended school day and year. It is not considered appropriate for supplemental instruction to take place during lunch, recess, extracurricular activities or replace other courses such as art, music, science, social studies or any other curricular offerings. Collaboration is a key component to making TARGETED instruction effective and meaningful.

For TARGETED instruction, the teacher creates flexible small groups of similarly-skilled/needs-alike students, allowing the teacher to give increased attention to each student, and to provide feedback and scaffolding within the context of collaborative peer learning experiences. Technology is embedded in teaching and learning, but is not used to replace the teacher or authentic, relevant instruction. TARGETED instruction supplements CORE instruction and usually occurs three to five times per week for 15 to 30 minutes (over a minimum of nine weeks). Those qualified to teach at the TARGETED level include classroom teachers, interventionists, instructional coaches, Title I teachers, reading specialists, related service providers and other qualified content area professionals.

During the active phase of a lesson, the teacher provides TARGETED instruction by working with guided groups in a variety of ways. TARGETED instruction might mean simply meeting with the group for additional time during rotation. In small group guided instruction, content, process and/or product are differentiated to meet the learning goals of the students. In designing TARGETED support, it is also important that careful consideration be given to determine if a student “can’t do” or “won’t do,” since the instruction is very different. Students who do not respond to TARGETED instruction in the CORE classroom are assessed more frequently in order to gauge the effectiveness of instruction and to inform adjustment of the instruction provided.

TARGETED instruction may include accommodations. These accommodations would not be expected to affect what students learn, only how they learn it. TARGETED instruction uses formative assessment processes for continuous feedback between student and teacher, peer interaction to scaffold student understanding, explicit instruction that emphasizes skill building and contextualized instruction that emphasizes application of skills. Teachers differentiate,

scaffold and use multi-modal strategies to engage students during TARGETED instruction. This is not the place for worksheet or textbook driven, “drill and kill” instruction.

Assessment at the TARGETED level is more focused. It is based on specific students’ needs, and results of the assessment and collaborative decisions about the most appropriate instruction. Once TARGETED instruction is in place, student response to instruction is monitored on a regular basis (i.e. every two to three weeks). If needs are difficult to identify, a diagnostic assessment (whether formal or informal) may be necessary to determine the focus of the instruction. Appendix B and C provides a list of diagnostic assessments grouped according to skill deficit. When selecting assessments at the TARGETED level, the focus is on identifying the specific understandings and/or skills needing support and on discerning the most effective means for meeting a student’s needs. Discussions about student progress at the TARGETED level may or may not take place formally in problem-solving team meetings, based on a student’s progress. Informal consideration and reflection occur as an ongoing process.

Teachers document TARGETED instruction matched to specific student needs as part of the process of determining what is most effective. A process called Gap Analysis can be used to determine if or how a student is responding to TARGETED instruction. Gap Analysis will also determine how intense the instruction should be. Appendix D provides a Gap Analysis Worksheet that has two steps that will help determine if there is a significant gap between a student’s current performance and the expected performance and the number of weeks needed to meet the student’s goal. TARGETED instruction continues until student needs can be met exclusively by CORE instruction or a team decision is made to move to INTENSIVE level support. Therefore, the duration of TARGETED instruction will vary. Insufficient progress despite sustained, relevant, high-quality instruction may warrant the initiation of INTENSIVE level support. Decisions to increase the level of support are made through data-driven dialogue conducted by the problem-solving team. Data derived from a single assessment is not considered adequate evidence for recommending INTENSIVE level support. The assessment system should be balanced by type and needs to vary from student to student.

INTENSIVE

INTENSIVE support is triggered when a student’s progress in the general educational environment, despite rich and meaningful instruction at the CORE and TARGETED levels, slows to below State-approved, grade-level standards. INTENSIVE support is distinguished from TARGETED support by intensification of scaffolding, time, expertise and assessment. Additionally, INTENSIVE instruction is typically provided to smaller groups of similarly-skilled and needs-alike students or one-to-one. INTENSIVE instruction usually occurs three to five times per week for 30 to 60 minutes (over a minimum of nine weeks) and is more likely to occur outside the general classroom than the TARGETED level of support. Like TARGETED level support, INTENSIVE support incorporates the currently-adopted content standards and objectives and utilizes the principles of scaffolding, accelerating, enriching and differentiating to provide instruction that is relevant and engaging to the student and is meaningfully aligned to what is happening in the general education environment. Collaboration continues to be a key component to making this level of support effective and meaningful. SPL endorses four factors as significantly contributing to highly effective INTENSIVE support as follows: 1) the teacher plays a critical role in assessment and instruction; 2) the teacher uses a different method of delivery than the student has previously received; 3) the instruction is engaging and developmentally appropriate; 4) the instruction includes significant opportunities for authentic, integrated reading, writing, language, speaking, listening and problem-solving. SPL does not promote isolated skill drill requiring students to independently make connections and generalizations to the CORE content. INTENSIVE support is most effective when provided by expert teachers including, but not necessarily limited to, interventionists, special educators, instructional coaches, Title 1 teachers and specialists.

Because of the urgency at this level, the response to INTENSIVE level support is formally monitored every one to two weeks and continually monitored using formative assessment processes. Assessment provides information on how to meet the student’s instructional and/or behavioral needs and assists the teacher in developing meaningful feedback for students. A variety of reliable assessments are available to monitor student needs. More formal diagnostic assessments may be given to get a comprehensive look at the student’s strengths and areas of need. (Appendix B, C, F, G, H and I)

If a student is unable to progress to the TARGETED or CORE level after reasonable duration of high-quality support at the INTENSIVE level, decisions driven by useful and relevant assessment data are reviewed and discussed by the school team. Recommendations and/or referrals are made after careful consideration of a collection of relevant data collected over time. Like assessment at the TARGETED level, the assessment system used at the INTENSIVE level is relevant, balanced and may vary from student to student.

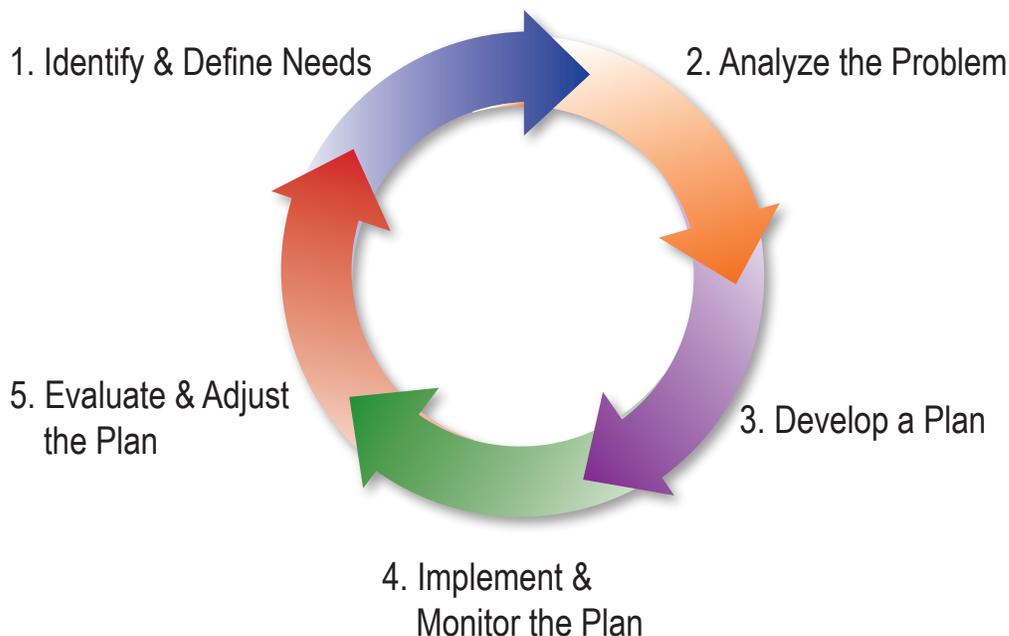
If a special education evaluation is being considered for the student, it is advisable for the teacher to meet with the school psychologist prior to beginning the process to identify necessary documentation and/or data to be collected during INTENSIVE support/instruction. The table below has suggested guidelines for the SPL framework.

Table: Suggested SPL Guidelines

Variables	Targeted Instruction	Intensive Instruction
Time Per Session	15-30 minutes	30-60 minutes
Length of Session	Time will vary based on student needs Suggested minimum 9 weeks prior to moving to Intensive Continues only until specific skill, concept, behavior is in place (usually short-term)	Suggested minimum 9 week period
Number of Sessions	3-5 per week	3-5 per week
Frequency of Progress Monitoring	Every 2-3 weeks	Every 1-2 weeks

Determining Levels of Support through Problem-Solving

The school must establish a process for examining screening data, analyzing causes for limited response to CORE instruction, developing instruction to increase student achievement and ensuring all students are learning. The process of decision-making is the same regardless of examining groups of students or an individual student. The more efficient use of time and resources is found when the process is utilized to benefit groups of students. The SPL team members will have various roles in this process. It is a continuous cycle of examining data and modifying and adjusting for student needs. This collaborative learning cycle results in curriculum decisions, scheduling of instruction, student grouping and allocation of resources. Five steps in the process have been identified. The steps are as follows:



1. Identify and Define Needs

The student's academic or behavioral need is explained in objective, measurable terms. Both the student and the learning environments are analyzed through data collection (e.g., screening, classroom walk-throughs, observations). The match or mismatch between the learner and his or her learning environment is described.

2. Analyze the Problem

The goal of problem analysis is to determine why this problem is occurring. Additional data are collected on the specific academic and/or behavioral need noted in the problem description. Data must be collected over a period of time and must be representative of the student's typical academic performance and/or behavior in the learning environment. Data collection procedures must be reliable, designed for individual student assessment and allow for repeated measurement of the same skills or behavior over time. The data must be used to analyze the problem and explore specific evidence-based instruction to address the need.

3. Develop a Plan

An individual student instructional plan must be designed by using the data collected over time. The instructional goal(s) for the plan must be established and describe the instruction to be provided. A progress monitoring plan should be included with persons responsible for implementation and projected timelines.

4. Implement and Monitor the Plan

The plan is monitored for the integrity of implementation. Progress monitoring refers to a systematic, frequent collection of individual performance data. The measures are repeated over time and charted for documentation purposes.

5. Evaluate and Adjust the Plan

Evaluate the effectiveness of the instruction provided by comparing the student's initial level of performance to performance results achieved as a result of implementing the instructional plan. If the instruction is not producing the desired results, adjust the instructional plan based on the data.

Progress Monitoring

Progress monitoring plays a critical role in a SPL approach and SLD Identification. Progress monitoring serves as a tool for accurately and efficiently determining the benefit of instruction. Progress monitoring is a scientifically based practice used to assess students' academic performance and evaluate the effectiveness of instruction (National Center on Student Progress Monitoring, 2009). Student progress in academic areas such as reading, writing and mathematics can be measured with both commercial progress monitoring tools as well as curriculum-based measurement (CBM) procedures. Progress monitoring provides dynamic assessment information to help teachers make instructional decisions. Frequently collected data provides on-going guidance to teachers regarding the effectiveness of instruction and whether changes to instruction are needed. In other words, if differentiated and scaffolded instruction is not improving the student's progress, changes should be made. While progress monitoring data are collected prior to and during the referral and evaluation process (every two to three weeks in TARGETED and every one to two weeks in INTENSIVE), it is important that school personnel involved at various decision-making levels (i.e., IT, SAT, MDET, EC) understand the purpose and utility of progress monitoring procedures.

A consistent monitoring plan is essential to determine effectiveness of instructional programs. Movement of a student within the instructional levels is determined by the data collected through progress monitoring. Progress monitoring is the way in which a team can gather the data used to make decisions during the problem-solving process. Progress monitoring varies depending on the level of intensity. For students at the CORE level, progress monitoring is provided to all students using on-going universal screening and assessments aligned with instruction. Students who are receiving more intensive instruction in TARGETED and INTENSIVE levels are provided more focused progress monitoring. Tools that are flexible, efficient, accessible and informative are a priority. Progress monitoring assessments function within SPL as a gauge of student performance and bring forward the need for conversation about instruction for groups of students or for individuals. Assessments in this category most typically target evidence of progress relative to specific, high-priority skills and processes. Data in this category could come from Acuity testlets or probes, DIBELS Next, West Virginia Writes, as well as other assessments. Progress monitoring assessment results can be used to adjust scaffolding, instructional pacing and presentation, as well as contribute to a collection of data used to make decisions about most appropriate instruction and placement for individual students.

Progress monitoring is based on the following tenets:

1. The general education classroom is meeting the needs of students as evidenced by acceptable academic growth for most students
2. Important differences exist between a student targeted for instruction and his/her peers
3. Inadequate growth occurs for some targeted students even when general education instruction is adjusted
4. Improved growth can occur for students identified for special education services (Fuchs, Fuchs, & Speece, 2002)

The most important goals of progress monitoring are: 1) determining if students are making progress toward specific skills, processes or understandings; and, 2) informing school-wide action plans. When instruction is implemented and students' scores increase, students are profiting from the instruction. When students' scores are flat, indicating no or little improvement, the first decision must be to change the instruction as the current instruction is not beneficial. Progress monitoring data provides valuable information about students' improvement as a result of a particular instructional method or program and measures instructional change and student growth.

An important aspect of progress monitoring is the establishment of measurable goals. Systematically sampling the various skills that comprise the curriculum at a particular grade level characterize the student's overall competence related to the State-approved, grade-level standards within an academic area. By graphing a student's scores and drawing a line to connect the scores, this trend line is used to illustrate the rate at which the student is making progress toward mastering grade-level curriculum. Scores are used to analyze student performance in relation to State-approved, grade-level standards. The student's average increase per week (i.e., rate of improvement or slope) is calculated to quantify his/her rate of learning on a particular skill. On the basis of slope, decisions are made about the adequacy of progress. Goal setting, then, plays a critical role in the problem-solving process.

Goal Setting

1. Collect three or four baseline data points (on consecutive days or in one day, depending on the student's attention).
2. Write a modest, reasonable or ambitious goal based on the student's learning characteristics. Goals are written in measurable terms such as:
In 24 weeks (end-of-year goal written after the first 12 weeks of school), Andrew will read aloud 100 words in 1 minute.
3. After setting the student's goal, administer timed reading assessments every two to three weeks or more often if warranted.
4. After 3-4 weeks of intervention, analyze the student's graph to determine the student's progress. Two options must be addressed:
 - a. If the trend of performance is below the projected rate of progress (i.e., the goal line), adjust the instruction in an effort to cause a change.
 - b. If the trend of performance is above the projected rate of progress, raise the goal.

Appendix E provides additional information on goal setting in the area of reading.

The use of charting rules allows teachers to problem solve and determine more effective instruction throughout the course of the nine-week instructional period. It is not appropriate to assume that even strong instruction will be effective for all students, and this individualized approach to examining the data will assist teachers and teams in making beneficial instructional decisions for each student who struggles.

For a step-by-step guide on using CBM procedures, see “*Advanced Applications of CBM in Reading (K-6): Instructional Decision-Making Strategies Manual*” by Pamela Stecker and Erica Lembke at http://www.studentprogress.org/weblibrary.asp#cbm_class. Comprehensive information on progress monitoring is collected and disseminated by the National Center on Student Progress Monitoring at <http://www.studentprogress.org/>. Included on the web site are presentations, procedures manuals, information briefs and training modules.

An important responsibility of the Instruction Team (IT) is to review the results of universal screening/interim data (e.g., DIBELS Next, Acuity, AIMSweb, STAR) administered at a particular grade-level and/or content level. ITs should meet after each universal screening or Interim administration to determine which students require additional support. Once these students are identified and assigned to instructional groups that address specific needs, progress monitoring data should be reviewed every two to three weeks.

For example, when DIBELS Next data are used, the team reviews the percentage of students at each instructional recommendation: benchmark, strategic or intensive. The team uses the data to set measurable goals to achieve by the next interim assessment. After reviewing the students’ current performance and setting goals for the next interim assessment, the team brainstorms whole-class instructional strategies and/or research-based materials that could be used to improve individual student performance in the general education classroom.

Problem-Solving and Teaming: Prerequisites to Identification of SLD

Decisions at all levels of the SPL process are fundamentally dependent on school collaborative problem-solving teams. Both informal and formal collaborative structures for decision-making are in place in West Virginia and include: School Leadership Teams, Grade-Level Teams, Content Area Teams, Instruction Teams (IT), Student Assistance Teams (SAT), Multidisciplinary Evaluation Teams (MDET), Eligibility Committees (EC) and Individualized Education Program (IEP) Teams. Each of these formats provides a framework and process for discussing students’ educational concerns and ultimately informs the SPL process for determining SLD.

West Virginia Board of Education Policy 2510, *Assuring Quality of Education: Regulations for Education Programs*, sets forth requirements at each programmatic level to address the needs of struggling students.

- In Grades K-5 schools must provide strategies for early detection and intervention to correct student deficiencies in reading, language arts and mathematics.
- At the middle school level, an intervention component ensures mastery of the rigorous content standards and objectives at each grade-level.
- High school students who do not demonstrate mastery of the content standards and objectives shall be provided extra help and extra time through intervention strategies.

Several types of teams are found at schools that have direct involvement with the SPL process. Regardless of the names of these teams, it is their function and membership that make them unique. In small schools, the teams may be combined or have shared membership. Since SPL is a dynamic process in which procedures change, the members of a team may also change. Decisions about how teams are configured are made at the local level based on the current needs of the students in the school. However, each team meets regularly and for a sufficient amount of time to conduct the business of the team. In addition to a written schedule of meeting times and locations, agendas and minutes are maintained in a file by a person and in a place designated by the team. Core members consistently attend meetings and avoid interruptions.

The following is a list and brief description of the types of teams that may exist in a building:

School Leadership Team

The leadership team has a global view. They see and understand how purposes and processes interface and manifest across state, district, school and classroom levels. They make school-wide decisions and create consistency with regard to curriculum, assessment, testing administration and needed staff development. This team establishes the collaborative culture and models trust and positive response to change.

Grade-Level Team

Teachers meeting within their grade-level team collaborate to provide the highest quality, most relevant instruction possible, with a clear focus on student needs and standards being addressed. These teams should identify areas of need across their classes based on ongoing data and set goals before they plan for the design and monitoring of instruction across the levels of support. As a horizontal team, they will have focused discussion on best practices and data interpretation that affects the students at their grade-level as well as a clear understanding of how grade-level results contribute to the school goals and actions.

Content Area Team

Functioning in much the same way as a grade-level team, these team members support each other with regard to the subject matter they teach. These teams are most often in place at middle and high school levels. It is important they include special educators and counselors who may have in-depth knowledge of students' needs. Teachers within subject areas mentor new teachers and guide them in aligning curriculum content with State standards, prioritizing and customizing instruction to meet students' needs.

Instruction Team

This team may have members who also have a role in other school collaborative teams. Its membership is varied and broad, including a core membership of teachers and professional staff with roles and expertise to provide critical input into the process. The focus of this team is the daily work of student achievement and outcomes, rather than special education eligibility. Members monitor the process of leveled instruction and review data to make collaborative decisions including referral to the multidisciplinary team. They have assigned roles that may vary throughout the year. Team meetings include additional participants who have pertinent information about the topic, small group need or individual student being discussed. This team can include a parent, speech-language pathologist, gifted teacher, English Language Learner (ELL) teacher or Title I teacher. The team maintains an atmosphere in which a grade-level team or referring teacher feels welcomed and supported. (See WVBE Policy 2510)

Student Assistance Team

According to WV Policy 2510, *Assuring the Quality of Education: Regulations for Education Programs*, each public school must establish a SAT. The SAT is required to

- receive training in referral procedures for multidisciplinary evaluations, alternative education placements, disciplinary procedures and other school processes as appropriate for ensuring student progress and maintenance of a safe school environment;
- collect and maintain data on the activities of the team, including dates of meetings and the results of its recommendations;
- conduct the problem-solving process that includes designing and monitoring implementation of interventions and/or reviewing interventions designed by other school teams;
- receive and process written referrals from outside sources suspecting a student may need special education, including referrals and requests for initial evaluations made by parents;
- consider referrals for multidisciplinary evaluation.

A parent or any other interested person or agency may refer a student who is suspected of needing special education and related services. Referrals received from an outside source are forwarded to the SAT at the student's school for consideration.

The district must review and process these written referrals in accordance with the SAT process described in Chapter 2, Section 3.B. of Policy 2419: *Regulations for the Education of Students with Exceptionalities*. For preschool age children or home-schooled students, the referral is received and processed directly by the special education director or designee. The special education director or designee must process referrals for private school students as well. Each district is responsible for locating, identifying and evaluating all students suspected of needing special education services who are enrolled by their parents in private schools, including religious, elementary and secondary schools located in the school district.

Multidisciplinary Evaluation Team

This team is a group of qualified personnel representing a variety of disciplines which determines the areas to be evaluated and conducts the multidisciplinary evaluation. The team's primary focus is to confirm that comprehensive procedures are used to determine whether a student is exceptional and the nature and extent of the special education and related services that the student needs. These procedures are used selectively with individual students and do not include basic tests administered to or procedures used with all students in a school, grade or class. The SAT can serve as the multidisciplinary evaluation team if membership meets the requirements. (See WVBE Policy 2419)

Eligibility Committee

The EC consists of members selected in consideration of the presented evaluation information and shall consist of the parent and/or adult student and qualified professionals as follows:

- District administrator of special education, principal or designee
- Members of the multidisciplinary evaluation team
- General and/or special educator
- Additional individuals with specific expertise related to the student and the area(s) of concern
- For initial ECs, the referring teacher
- For students suspected of having a SLD, the student's general education teacher and at least one person qualified to conduct individual diagnostic examinations of students such as a school psychologist, speech language pathologist (SLP) or remedial reading teacher (See WVBE Policy 2419)

The EC will review data and information from a variety of sources, including, as appropriate, but not limited to, formative assessments, aptitude and achievement tests, parent/adult student input, teacher observations, health, social or cultural background, adaptive behavior and functional assessments. Documentation from these sources must be available and carefully considered. The EC will consider these evaluation or reevaluation findings and determine whether the student meets or continues to meet eligibility criteria. Upon completing the review of the student's multidisciplinary evaluation or reevaluation, the EC must prepare an Eligibility Committee Report and provide a copy of the report to the parent/adult student. Copies of the evaluation reports and documentation of eligibility determination must be provided at no cost to the parent/adult student. The Eligibility Committee Report includes

- signatures with dates and positions of all eligibility committee members;
- all data on the student as required in the State Eligibility Criteria for the area of suspected exceptionality;
- the specific exceptionality determined for state and federal reporting purposes;
- information about how the student's exceptionality affects his or her educational performance;
- the committee's decision regarding whether the student needs special education services;
- recommendations for those students deemed ineligible for special education to be considered by the SAT or the IT;
- the date of the eligibility determination.

The Eligibility Committee Report and Eligibility Determination Checklist will provide details of how the student meets eligibility requirements even if no new assessments were conducted. The report must address each required eligibility component and include results of previous assessments if they are being used to determine eligibility. If the EC is considering a SLD, the committee must also complete a SLD Team Report. (Appendix M)

Individualized Education Program Team

The IEP Team is made up of the following required members:

- Parent(s)
- One or more general education teacher(s)
- Not less than one special education teacher of the student or, when appropriate, special education service provider (e.g., speech/language pathologist)
- A representative of the district
- An individual who can interpret the instructional implications of evaluation results (e.g., special education specialist, audiologist, special educator, speech/language pathologist, related service provider or school psychologist)
- Others with knowledge or expertise regarding the child (at parent or district discretion)
- Student (when appropriate)
- An agency representative (with parent or adult student consent) when appropriate
- Part C service coordinator (for a child previously served under West Virginia Birth to Three, at the request of the parent)
- A representative of the private school or facility (for a student being considered for or currently in a private school placement made by the IEP Team)

A member of the IEP Team is not required to attend an IEP meeting, in whole or in part, if the parent of a student with a disability and the district agree, in writing, that the attendance of the member is not necessary because the member's area of the curriculum or related services is not being modified or discussed in the meeting.

Members of the IEP Team may be excused from an IEP meeting, in whole or in part, when the meeting involves a modification to or discussion of the member’s area of the curriculum or related services, if the parent or adult student and district consent to this in writing. The member must submit, in writing to the parent and the IEP Team, input into the development of the IEP prior to the meeting.

School personnel must contact the parent to discuss excusal(s), obtain parent consent, and provide an In-Lieu-of IEP Team Attendance Report form to the identified team member(s). Excused team members must submit the In-Lieu of IEP Team Attendance Report form to parents and the IEP Team chair between receipt of parent consent for the excusal and the IEP Team meeting. Guidelines for developing IEPs can be found in WVBE Policy 2419, Chapter 5. The table presented below describes the different school collaborative problem-solving teams and their responsibilities.

Table: Examples of School Collaborative Problem-Solving Teams

Types of Teams	Suggested Membership	Responsibilities
School Leadership Team	Principal Grade-level facilitator Specialist leader Instructional Coach Counselor Content area facilitator	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Articulate school goals and keep the school on course • Determine staff development needs and resources • Decide on appropriate instructional and testing materials • Monitor best practice implementation review school/grade data • Define multi-level development and implementation • Communicate within and among teams
Grade-Level Team/Collaborative Team	Grade-level teachers Instructional Coach Specialist reps (SLP, ESL, Title I, Special Ed, Gifted) as necessary Instructional Aides	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Plan lessons • Collect and analyze data • Share resources and instructional methodologies • Decide and plan how to differentiate instruction • Define multi-level development and implementation in the grade
Content Area Team/Collaborative Team	Subject area teachers (i.e., math, English/ language arts, science) Instructional Coach Special educator Counselor Administrator	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Implement a decision-making process • Communicate within and among teams • Ensure consistency of effective instructional practices and share resources and instructional methodologies • Provide assistance/support to other teachers • Analyze student data
Instruction Team/Collaborative Team	Principal Instructional Coach Grade-level facilitator (s) Specialist reps (SLP, ESL, Title I, Special Ed, Gifted) Counselor School Psychologist Parent	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop standard instruction protocols that support the needs of all students • Conduct individual student problem-solving • Provide coaching, resource materials, mentoring to staff • Assign and monitor team roles and responsibilities • Interact with parents and community resources • Train new teachers in the SPL process
Student Assistance Team	Principal School Psychologist Grade-level teacher(s) Special educator Speech-Language Pathologist Parent	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Receive training in referral procedures for multidisciplinary evaluations, alternative education placements, disciplinary procedures and other school processes as appropriate for ensuring student progress and maintenance of a safe school environment • Collect and maintain data on the activities of the team, including dates of meetings and the results of its recommendations • Conduct the problem-solving process that includes designing and monitoring implementation of interventions and/or reviewing interventions designed by other school teams • Receive and process written referrals from outside sources suspecting a student may need special education, including referrals and requests for initial evaluations made by parents • Initiate initial evaluation for special education and related services for students, when warranted based on the outcome of interventions • Communicate within and among teams

Types of Teams	Suggested Membership	Responsibilities
Multidisciplinary Evaluation Team	Principal School Psychologist Special educator(s) Speech-Language Pathologist Grade-level/Content teacher Occupational /Physical therapist Parent	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review and consider requests for special education evaluation Evaluate student eligibility for special education Ensure adherence to state policies, federal guidelines and documentation Interact with community resources Communicate within and among teams Provide Prior Written Notice (PWN)
Eligibility Committee	Principal School Psychologist Grade-level teacher(s) Special education teacher Specialists reps (SLP, ESL, Title I, Gifted, OT, PT) Parent	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Complete the Eligibility Committee Report which will provide details of how the student meets eligibility requirements Address each required eligibility component (assessments, documentation and observations) Complete Eligibility Checklist Complete a SLD Team Report (when considering SLD eligibility) Provide Prior Written Notice (PWN)
Individualized Education Program (IEP) Team	Principal Special Education Director or (designee) Grade-level teacher(s) Special education teacher Specialists reps (SLP, ESL, Title I, Gifted, OT, PT) School Psychologist Agency (permission required) Parent	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop Individualized Education Program (IEP) according to Policy 2419: Regulations for the Education of Students with Exceptionalities Provide Prior Written Notice (PWN)

Identifying Students for TARGETED Instruction

Prevention and early intervention of academic difficulties is a basic principle of the SPL framework, and TARGETED instruction is a general education effort that addresses the needs of struggling learners. Accordingly, some students will be identified for TARGETED instruction as soon as beginning of the school year screening/interim data are analyzed. Formative/classroom assessments can also identify students who need TARGETED instruction. Considerations for provision of TARGETED instruction include

- the student's screening/assessment results;
- the level of intensity of instruction needed to address skill gaps and bring the student to grade-level mastery;
- prior early intervention efforts, particularly for an older student or a student who is new to the district or school;
- the level of support being provided at the end of a given school year (e.g., a student who completes nine weeks of TARGETED instruction at the end of first grade may need a second round of nine weeks of TARGETED instruction beginning the first day of second grade).

The IT identifies which students need TARGETED instruction based on universal screening/interim scores, formative/classroom data, progress monitoring data and any other available types of assessments. For each of the identified students, the team sets a measurable goal in terms of specific scores for the next formative assessment. Students are grouped for instruction by similar needs, and the team identifies the strategies that will be used, the frequency and duration of differentiated and scaffolded instruction and how the students' progress will be monitored.

In the area of reading, research recommends an additional 30 minutes of explicit instruction per day for the early elementary grades in addition to the required CORE reading block at K-2 or CORE block at 3-4 (Vaughn & Roberts, 2007). This specialized instruction is given in a small group. Research in elementary mathematics supports shorter times and larger groups such as 15-20 minute intervention blocks provided three times per week (Bryant, Bryant, Gersten, Scammacca & Chavez, 2008). Research recommendations are important considerations, but the best way to determine the sufficiency of instruction is in its results. Several variables affect instructional effectiveness: explicitness, duration, frequency and teacher efficacy. Each of these variables should be considered when determining whether instruction should remain the same, or be adjusted.

After a student has been provided nine weeks of TARGETED instruction, the IT may decide to do **one or more** of the following:

1. Discontinue TARGETED instruction because goals have been achieved
2. Continue with another nine weeks of TARGETED instruction because reasonable progress has been made, but the student has not yet met his/her goals
3. Make appropriate adjustments and modifications to TARGETED instruction for an additional nine weeks for students who are not showing reasonable progress
4. Move the student to INTENSIVE instruction for a nine week period of time.
5. Recommend the student to the SAT for broader problem-solving

It is important that problem-solving efforts continue throughout the duration of TARGETED instruction.

Careful and continuous attention to progress monitoring data is critical and will help teachers determine the adequacy of instruction, make modifications and manage student movement between and within levels. IT meetings provide a forum for teachers' discussions and the creation of educational solutions for individual students.

Identifying Students for INTENSIVE Instruction

After a student has been provided differentiated and scaffolded instruction for a minimum of one nine week period at TARGETED, a decision to further increase the level of intensity of the instruction is appropriate for some students. This decision is made on a case-by-case basis and is guided by the student's documented response to TARGETED instruction. At this point, the IT may consider referring the student to the SAT for further problem-solving that includes the parent and a broader group of educational professionals (e.g., school psychologist, speech/language pathologist, school counselor, nurse, special education teacher).

INTENSIVE instruction is for students whose response to a well-designed and appropriately delivered TARGETED instruction is minimal or low. Its characteristics include smaller grouping formats than TARGETED and 30-60 minutes of supplemental instruction three to five sessions per week (which may be segmented into two 30-minute sessions) beyond CORE instruction. Students are selected for INTENSIVE instruction based on the following criteria:

1. Student has participated in a minimum of one nine-week period of TARGETED instruction that was provided in accordance with recommended frequency and duration
2. Student's progress monitoring data indicate persistent low response to TARGETED instruction
3. Student's needs are such that a replacement program may be needed to address pervasive and significantly below grade-level skill gaps

Not all students who require the supports of INTENSIVE instruction are referred, evaluated and determined eligible for special education. INTENSIVE instruction may substantially improve academic difficulties for some students and assist in moving them closer to grade-level expectations. The student's rate of progress and level of learning within the context of the reading or mathematics program are essential considerations in determining the effectiveness and sufficiency of INTENSIVE instruction. The student should be provided sufficient time in INTENSIVE instruction to have an opportunity to demonstrate progress. A minimum of six data points over at least nine weeks of instruction represents one round of INTENSIVE instruction and is considered a reasonable amount of time to determine how the student is responding.

In contrast, for a small number of students, INTENSIVE instruction and specially designed instruction will need to be provided over a period of years or perhaps throughout their schooling. These students constitute the group of children with SLD and are entitled to the special education services and protections of IDEA. In such cases INTENSIVE instruction is considered long-term and necessitates a comprehensive evaluation. SATs have two choices regarding the provision of INTENSIVE instruction:

1. Implement INTENSIVE instruction and collect data on the student's response to the instruction. Convene the SAT periodically to discuss the student's progress and determine whether the student should be referred for an evaluation
2. For the student suspected of having a SLD, make the request to evaluate following the provision of a minimum nine weeks of TARGETED instruction and simultaneously implement INTENSIVE instruction. Data will be collected on the student's response to the instruction and used to assist the EC in making a SLD determination. In this case, INTENSIVE instruction is implemented **concurrent with** the 80-day timeline for evaluation and eligibility determination

The decision-making process for determining when or if to evaluate a student for a SLD is a multifaceted one that requires collaboration and problem-solving. School personnel can be confident when instruction was carefully planned, implemented with integrity and monitored frequently.

Referral for Multidisciplinary Evaluation

The SPL process, when firmly established as a framework for providing quality instruction, yields important information for decision-making. Only after a student has been provided an opportunity to learn with the additional supports afforded within the multi-level model should referral and eligibility for special education and related services be considered.

In making the decision to evaluate, the SAT must carefully examine and discuss progress monitoring data collected during the provision of TARGETED and INTENSIVE instruction. Some students may receive the supports of INTENSIVE instruction without the special education evaluation and eligibility processes. Examples include, but are not limited to, students who missed important early reading instruction due to high levels of mobility between schools or pervasive attendance problems, students for whom English is a second language(ELL) or those who were not provided opportunities for multi-level instruction in the course of their education. Students who do not demonstrate adequate progress with INTENSIVE instruction matched to individual needs and implemented for a sufficient period of time should be referred for a multidisciplinary evaluation.

Before a referral for a multidisciplinary evaluation to determine eligibility is initiated, the SAT must be confident that instruction was provided as intended for the appropriate duration and with sufficient intensity. Strategies for monitoring the delivery of instruction include, but are not limited to

- reviewing written documentation of TARGETED and INTENSIVE instruction (e.g., progress monitoring data, instructional plans);
- collaborating with the student's teachers, technical assistance specialists and IT;
- observing the delivery of the instruction (e.g., Principal Walk-Through data, Classroom-Level Practice Profile completed by principal and teacher).

Once the SAT has determined that, even after the provisions of multi-level instruction, the student may be a student with a SLD, the referral for a multidisciplinary evaluation is initiated. Again, the existing data that constitutes the SPL process must be validated by the SAT.

Multidisciplinary Evaluation Components

The focus of a multidisciplinary evaluation changes with SPL. It necessitates high levels of collaboration, communication and purposeful planning. Existing data collected over the course of multi-level instruction is the starting point for selecting the additional information sources needed to determine a SLD. The purpose of evaluations, then, is to help the team identify not only why a student is struggling, but also how teachers can design appropriate and individualized specially designed instruction. Parents and all school personnel with knowledge of a student are asked to contribute to the process of planning an evaluation that will provide specific direction for instruction.

Policy 2419 requires that for an initial evaluation, the student is evaluated in all areas related to the suspected exceptionality. Each student referred is entitled to a full and individual evaluation that is collaboratively planned and sufficiently comprehensive to identify all of the student's special education and related service needs.

While the SPL process replaces the IQ-achievement discrepancy model, it **neither replaces nor circumvents** the need for a comprehensive evaluation of a student suspected to have a SLD. A variety of assessment data must be used within the context of SPL. While the evaluation of a student relies heavily on existing data collected through the SPL process (i.e., screening and assessment results, multiple data points over time, student's response to TARGETED and INTENSIVE instruction, teacher and parent observations, diagnostic assessments, and state summative assessments), formal standardized assessments assist in making the SLD determination.

The Multidisciplinary Evaluation Team (MDET) begins its evaluation planning process by analyzing the existing data provided by the SAT. The MDET members select evaluation components that will provide additional data sources for determining the nature and extent of the student's learning difficulties and ultimately inform classroom instruction.

In conducting an evaluation, schools are encouraged to select assessment procedures to link eligibility determination to instruction. A complementary relationship between the SPL process and psychoeducational testing can exist in evaluating for potential learning disabilities. For example, relevant to reading difficulties, the individual evaluation process should explicitly target areas (i.e., phonological awareness, phonics, fluency, vocabulary, comprehension) and provide direction for meaningful instruction. Formative/classroom assessments and progress monitoring data might indicate pervasive difficulties in phonemic awareness and phonics. Therefore, formal achievement testing might include specific subtests that address phonological processing, phonological memory and rapid naming speed.

Likewise, for a student struggling with acquisition of math computation and reasoning skills, diagnostic assessments matched to specific skill areas would be appropriate (e.g., sequential processing, working memory, perceptual reasoning). Assessments that focus on **specific features of a student's academic difficulty** are more useful than measures that address global academic areas. Likewise, for the student who exhibits weaknesses in areas such as memory, attention, or processing speed, the evaluation battery may include cognitive assessments that target those specific domains. Finally, since learning disabilities are language-based, a comprehensive assessment of a student's language should be considered in the evaluation process. Many aspects of speech and language assessment can inform the eligibility decision and provide critical information for classroom instruction.

Pattern of Strengths and Weaknesses Approach (PSW)

To increase the diagnostic utility of the multidisciplinary evaluation and provide guidance for instructional strategies assessment results need to be able to advance an understanding of how the student's academic and cognitive domains interact. This method of evaluation, as it relates to eligibility determination, is described within IDEA as "the use of other alternative research-based procedures for determining whether a child has a specific learning disability." This method has been known as "the third approach" and may be more commonly referred to as the Pattern of Strengths and Weaknesses approach (PSW). It has also been described as a Processing Deficit approach and Cross-Battery approach. Rudebusch & Wiechmann (2008) define cross battery assessment (XBA) as a systematic process of selecting subtests that target specific cognitive domains.

These approaches attempt to operationalize the definition of specific learning disability included in IDEA:

"Specific learning disability means a disorder in one or more of the basic psychological processes involved in understanding or in using language, spoken or written, that may manifest itself in the imperfect ability to listen, think, speak, read, write, spell, or to do mathematical calculations, including conditions such as perceptual disabilities, brain injury, minimal brain dysfunction, dyslexia, and developmental aphasia."

The PSW approach includes assessment of a wide range of broad and narrow cognitive processes that identify processing strengths and weaknesses. Interpretation of the assessment occurs at the cluster rather than subtest level. Confidence intervals are used for all clusters, thereby reducing measurement error effects. Evaluation results improve understanding of meaningful connections between cognitive and academic domains and provide practical information to teachers and parents.

Results and interpretations of subtests inform and guide instructional approaches and strategies. A PSW approach assists in providing the multiple measures needed to arrive at a conclusion that either confirms or rejects the hypothesis that a student has a SLD. A student with a SLD would be expected to demonstrate average or above performance in some academic and cognitive processing tasks with weaknesses in others. It would also be expected that the area of cognitive processing weakness be related to the area of academic weakness. Appendix J illustrates the decision-making process teams would proceed through when integrating SPL and PSW.

Appendix F includes three examples of cross-battery assessments designed to investigate a potential reading disability (Feifer, 2008; Evans, Floyd, McGrew, & Leforgee, 2001; Mann, 2003). An example of the cognitive domains associated with mathematics performance with suggested instruments for assessing those domains is also found in Appendix H. These examples are based on the research that supports specific cognitive domains related to reading and mathematics performance. The lists are not exclusive and professional judgment and expertise should guide the selection of the particular assessments needed by an individual student. Appendix I demonstrates how cognitive processes may be linked to instructional strategies.

Observations

The student suspected of having a SLD must be observed in the learning environment, including the general education classroom setting, to document the student's academic performance and behavior in the areas of difficulty (IDEA 2004). Classroom observations assist the evaluator in gathering data to document the provision of appropriate classroom instruction.

The MDET has two options to consider relevant to the observation. First, the group may decide to use information from observations done before the student was referred for an evaluation. Alternately, the team may determine that at least one member of the evaluation team conducts an observation after the student has been referred for evaluation and parental consent is obtained

SLD Eligibility Standards

Once the evaluation process is completed, the EC convenes to determine whether or not a student meets state criteria for special education services. Policy 2419 frames the SLD eligibility standards as:

- Level of learning
- Rate of learning or Pattern of Strengths and Weaknesses
- Exclusion factors

The EC must use these standards in making the eligibility decision. Each standard is discussed at the meeting and corresponding documentation is reviewed and validated. In accordance with the following criteria, when considering data pertaining to the student's response to high- quality instruction, the SAT or MDET (as per individual district procedures) must ensure that prior to the referral for evaluation for special education

- high-quality instruction was selected and implemented;
- instruction was implemented as intended with appropriate research-recommended frequency and duration.

Standard 1: Level of Learning

The first element in identifying a student with a SLD addresses the student's mastery of grade-level content in one or more of the following areas:

1. Oral expression
2. Listening comprehension
3. Written expression
4. Basic reading skills
5. Reading fluency skills (area added in 2004 revisions to IDEA)
6. Reading comprehension
7. Mathematics calculation
8. Mathematics problem-solving

When making an eligibility decision, the EC considers whether the student demonstrates significant and persistent low academic achievement even after obtaining evidence of research-based CORE classroom instruction and TARGETED and INTENSIVE instruction. Guidelines for consideration in making the determination of significant or severe underachievement follow. These criteria are based on current research and are used to assist ECs in determining Standard 1, Level of Learning.

Guidelines for Determining Severe Underachievement

In verifying Standard 1: Level of Learning, the following guidelines are used to assist ECs in determining what constitutes “severe underachievement”. This information is considered a decision-making strategy and does not represent fixed rules used to deny an eligibility decision. Instead, it should be used to triangulate all available data and help the EC make a logical conclusion regarding the student’s level of learning.

1. Screening and assessment results that include a minimum of three data points that reflect at least nine weeks of TARGETED instruction and at least six data points that reflect at least nine weeks of INTENSIVE instruction that are at or below the 8th percentile are considered significant. The eighth percentile is considered a cutoff point and is not used as an absolute score. It is suggested that professional judgement be used when using these results.
2. An individually administered norm-referenced achievement test score at or below the 8th percentile is considered significant. Confidence levels for each test administered should be considered. The EC may consider the results of standardized achievement tests such as the Woodcock Johnson IV – Tests of Achievement (WJ IV ACH), the Wechsler Individual Achievement Test (WIAT III), the Kaufman Test of Educational Achievement, Second Edition (KTEA-II) or any other standardized measures.
3. Student performance relative to State-approved, grade-level standards is an essential component of determining the existence of severe underachievement. West Virginia Next Generation Content Standards and Objectives (NxG CSOs) are the student’s curriculum goals and the criterion by which performance is measured. In determining that a student is significantly below grade-level expectations, the student’s teacher, IT and SAT must carefully review relevant CSOs and document student performance over time and as measured repeatedly. A checklist substantiated with both formal and informal assessment data will provide valuable information regarding the student’s classroom performance in noted areas of difficulty.

It is recommended when a student demonstrates low response to high-quality instruction, mastery of applicable CSOs is documented through a grade-level CSOs checklist or other formats as per district procedures. CSOs are available in electronic format on the West Virginia Teach 21 website at http://wveis.k12.wv.us/Teach21/public/ng_cso/NG_CSO.cfm. Local schools and districts are encouraged to develop consistent, systematic tools for the collection of this information.

WV NxG CSOs also include Performance Descriptors that assist teachers in characterizing student performance and qualifying mastery. Performance Descriptors describe in narrative format how students demonstrate achievement of the content standards. Five performance descriptors are described as: distinguished, above mastery, mastery, partial mastery and novice. Performance Descriptors serve two functions. Instructionally, they give teachers more information about the depth of knowledge and skills students need to acquire. Performance descriptors are also used to categorize and explain student performance on statewide assessment instruments. Teachers should, therefore, note applicable Performance Descriptors when discussing the student’s status in relation to State-approved, grade-level CSOs.

The determination of severe underachievement (how low a student actually is) is complex and requires the use of multiple data sources and sound professional judgment. By considering the aforementioned data sources in relation to the determination of Level of Learning, the EC makes a confident, informed decision.

Standard 2: Rate of Learning or Pattern of Strengths and Weaknesses

The second element in identifying a student with a specific learning disability may be met by determining insufficient rate of learning or a pattern of strengths and weaknesses in cognitive and academic abilities. A student's academic progress is a critical aspect of determining his/her need for special education services and is fundamental to the decision-making process pertaining to determining Standard 2, Rate of Learning. The student's attained rate of improvement is compared to the typical rate of improvement in a given content area. It is through regular assessment of an instruction and its effect on the student's achievement that student response is determined. Progress monitoring data provide measurable evidence of changes in the student's achievement that are attributable to a particular instructional approach.

Standard 2, Rate of Learning, is met when the student's attained rate of improvement is substantially below grade-level peers' typical rate of improvement and, based on progress monitoring data and Gap Analysis, reasonable or targeted rate of improvement cannot be projected even when the student is provided supplemental instruction of reasonable intensity and duration. This rate of learning or growth is determined by comparing the rate of improvement (slope) of the student's data points with the rate of improvement (slope) of the typical student or the expected learning rate, the aim line. Interim rate of improvement and progress monitoring rate of improvement can both be calculated for a student. Interim rate of improvement is a student's rate of improvement across interim assessments (fall, winter to spring). Progress monitoring rate of improvement is a systematic way of calculating whether a student is indeed making the progress that they appear to be making rather than making an educated guess. The objective is to accelerate students who lag behind.

The key terms are the same for both interim and progress monitoring rate of improvement. The key terms are:

- **Typical Rate of Improvement** - the rate of improvement or the rate of change of a typical student at the same grade-level between the beginning of the year interim assessment and at the end of the year interim assessment. A typical rate of improvement will show that a student is on-level at the beginning, middle and end of the school year. The rate of change is considered the typical rate of improvement.
- **Targeted Rate of Improvement** - the rate of improvement that a targeted student would need to make by the end of the school year in comparison to a typical student. A student's targeted rate of improvement is the rate they need to move at in order to catch up to the typical student. The targeted student will have to move at a faster rate in order to be equal to the typical rate of improvement.
- **Attained Rate of Improvement** - the actual rate of improvement the student ends up achieving as a function of their particular progress across the year.

Example using DIBELS grade 2 Words Correct per Minute: 44 words correct per minute (wcpm) at the beginning of the school year; 90 words correct per minute (wcpm) by the end of the school year.

Typical rate of improvement is calculated by subtracting the beginning of the year expected score from the end of year expected score divided by the total weeks in a school year (36 weeks).

- $90-44/36= 1.3$ wcpm/ per week

Targeted rate of improvement is calculated by subtracting the targeted student's beginning of the year score from the end of the year expected score divided by the total weeks in a school year (36 weeks).

- $90-20/36= 1.9$ wcpm/ per week

Attained rate of improvement is calculated by subtracting the beginning of the year score from the end of the year attained score divided by the total weeks in a school year (36 weeks).

- $50-20/36=0.8$ wcpm/ per week

There are three ways to calculate the attained rate of improvement for progress monitoring listed below:

1. **Two-point rate of improvement**- subtract the starting score from the ending score and divide by the number of weeks that the progress monitoring was collected. The IRIS Center provides a slope calculator for assistance in the calculation of rate of improvement (slope). <http://iris.peabody.vanderbilt.edu> (click on resources then assessment (includes progress monitoring), next modules (8), then Perspectives and Resources-scroll to the bottom to find the Slope Calculator). Directions for use of the calculator are also available.
2. **Modified two-point rate of improvement**-subtract the median score of the first three data points from the median score of the last three data points and divide by the number of weeks that the progress monitoring was collected.
3. **Ordinary Least Squares (OLS)**- see <http://sites.google.com/site/rateofimprovement/> created by Caitlin Flinn, Andrew McCrae, and Mathew Ferchalk for an in-depth description of the OLS calculation.

A disadvantage to the two-point rate of improvement calculation is if you have an outlier score at the end of the data point or at the start. This may look very different from the actual progress the student may be making. When this occurs, the modified two-point rate of improvement will give a better depiction of the actual progress being made or lack of.

The modified two-point rate of improvement calculation uses the median (middle) score of the first 3 data points and the median score of the last 3 data points in the series. By using the median score instead of the mean of the three scores, it takes care of an outlier score that is not really an accurate depiction of how the student is performing. A disadvantage to using the modified two-point rate of improvement is that it does not take into account the entire set of progress monitoring data. This calculation uses only six data points.

When making a high stakes decision that is diagnostic in nature, a more precise method may be needed. The Ordinary Least Squares (OLS) method for calculating rate of improvement is more complicated; however, it is considered to be the most precise way of performing this calculation. The OLS calculation of attained rate of improvement uses essentially a linear regression. The linear regression is a mathematical process that establishes a straight line that cuts through a series of data points. This is called a linear trend in the data. This approach takes into account all the data points in the series. Due to the complexity of the OLS calculation, it is best to use software that is capable of performing this calculation. This method is not something that one does by hand on a calculator. Some commercial software such as AIMSweb and DIBELS use OLS method for calculating rate of improvement, although it does not give the actual numerical value that represents the rate of improvement. This can be done by Microsoft Excel; however, a moderate level of expertise in excel is needed in order to do this. The OLS calculation of attained rate of improvement requires a spreadsheet that has to be set up for this type of calculation.

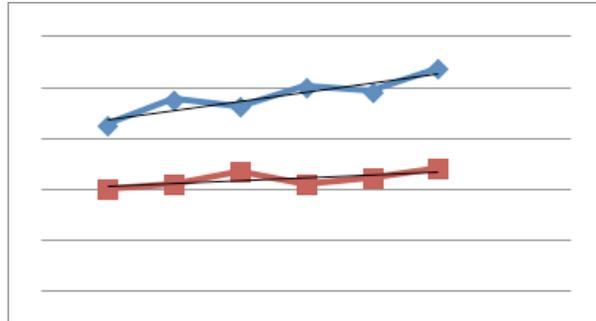
It is important to recognize that different methodologies give different results. Choosing the appropriate methodology for each student can make a great difference with interpreting outcomes.

Once the rate of improvement has been calculated and the IT has begun to look at how “slow” and “low” a student is, the problem-solving team can conduct a process known as gap analysis. This will help determine how low and how far from the expected score a student’s score falls at the point of referral and how slow the student’s progress is compared to their peers at the point of referral. Gap analysis is a mathematical way of calculating how low and how slow a student’s progress is now being depicted. By dividing the expected level of performance by the attained rate of performance, an empirical value is obtained. A gap of more than 2.0 is often considered significant. Appendix D provides a gap analysis worksheet and models to provide guidance.

The following conditions will help determine if Standard 2 (Rate of Learning) is met by looking at graphs pertaining to rate of improvement. As noted above, gap analysis will calculate the difference between the expected performance and actual performance of a student being referred for SLD eligibility. If the gap is more than 2.0, it is often considered significant.

- a. If the line of the attained rate of improvement (slope) of a student's data points is less than or equal to the typical rate of improvement (slope) for a student at the same grade-level, this may suggest that the student's rate of learning or growth is substantially deficient; or

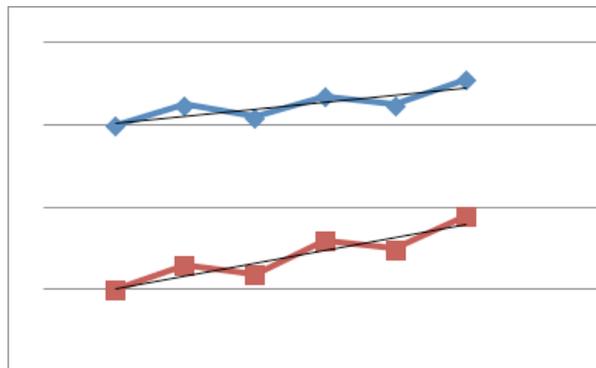
Rate – Example A



Blue line=Typical Rate of Improvement
Red line= Student's Attained Rate of Improvement

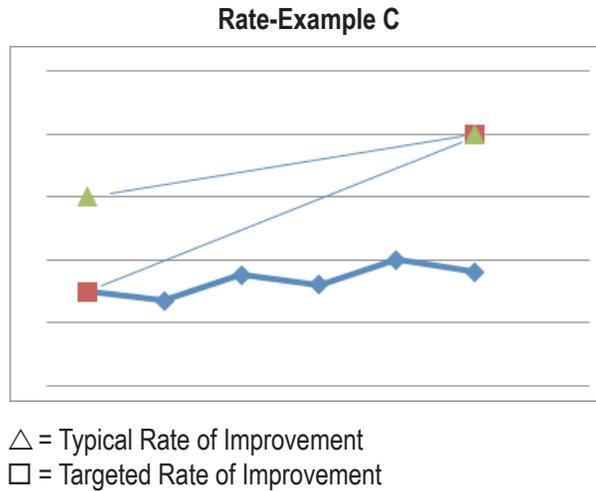
- b. If the student's attained rate of improvement (slope) line is greater than the typical rate of improvement (slope) for a student at the same grade-level, but a convergence would not occur within a reasonable and foreseeable time period as a result of the student's low level of learning and slow progress would indicate the student's rate of learning or growth is substantially deficient; or

Rate – Example B



Blue line=Typical Rate of Improvement
Red line= Student's Attained Rate of Improvement

- c. If the attained rate of improvement (slope) of the targeted student is less than or equal to half the typical rate of improvement (slope) of a student at the same grade-level, the aim line, it may be considered substantially below grade-level peers and the standard may be considered to have been met.



Pattern of Strengths and Weaknesses

In addition to not achieving adequately on age or State-approved grade-level achievement standards a specific learning disability may be confirmed if the student exhibits a pattern of strengths and weaknesses in performance, achievement, or both, relative to age, State-approved grade-level standards, or intellectual development, that is determined by the EC to be relevant to the identification of a SLD, using appropriate assessments. A description of common assessments used can be found in Appendix F, G and H.

A PSW approach assists in providing the multiple measures needed to arrive at a conclusion that either confirms or rejects the hypothesis that a student has a SLD. A student with a SLD would be expected to demonstrate average or above performance in some academic and cognitive processing tasks with weaknesses in others. It would also be expected that the area of cognitive processing weakness be related to the area of academic weakness. Appendix J illustrates the decision-making process teams would proceed through when integrating SPL and PSW.

Standard 3: Exclusion Factors

The third standard by which the EC determines the presence of a specific learning disability is the assurance that the student's underachievement is not primarily the result of any of the following:

- A visual, hearing or motor disability
- Intellectual disability
- Behavioral/emotional disorder
- Cultural factors
- Environmental or economic disadvantage
- Limited English proficiency

If the results of the multidisciplinary evaluation indicate that one of the aforementioned conditions explains the student's underachievement a SLD should not be considered.

Validating Underachievement

Finally, in making the SLD decision the EC must ensure that the student's documented underachievement is not due to lack of appropriate instruction. IDEA is very clear on this criterion and specifically refers to the academic content areas of reading, written expression and mathematics. In determining whether a student was provided appropriate instruction, schools should consider

- the student's primary language;
- limited English proficiency;
- environmental and cultural factors;
- excessive absences;
- interruptions in schooling that might affect progress in the curriculum.

Students who demonstrate reasonable progress in TARGETED and INTENSIVE instruction should not be determined eligible under the SLD category even though they may have academic weaknesses.

Documentation is required to demonstrate that **prior to referral and evaluation** the student was provided appropriate instruction in the general education classroom, including data-based documentation of repeated assessment of achievement at reasonable intervals, which is shared with parents.

The team needs to consider the instruction the student has been receiving, the skills and knowledge of the person delivering the instruction and the student's access to the instruction. High-quality instruction must be ensured and the team must also consider variables that might affect the student's access to instruction such as poor attendance and high levels of mobility that interrupt schooling.

Schools must validate and document the student's underachievement after the provision of appropriate multi-level instruction. Appendix K provides a sample form to document instruction and assessment. Districts, schools or staff may choose to develop their own forms to document instruction and assessment. Moreover, districts are encouraged to develop other formats and procedures to assist in validating and documenting the "lack of appropriate instruction" component of the SLD eligibility determination.

Data Analysis and Conclusions

The eligibility determination for SLD relies on the use of multiple data sources that have been collected over time. The EC organizes and discusses the results of each assessment, parent and teacher information and any other documentation relevant to making the eligibility decision. Each school district will determine local procedures regarding topics such as how documentation that supports EC decisions is organized, stored or located.

SLD Eligibility Documentation Requirements

Policy 2419 specifies the SLD eligibility documentation requirements. Much of the information reviewed by the EC is gathered and recorded throughout the course of a student's instruction. Documentation requirements include, but are not limited to

- a chronology of the student's educational history;
- screening/interim, progress monitoring, and formative/classroom assessment data;
- specific documentation of the nature and intensity of general classroom instruction;
- comprehensive documentation of the nature, frequency and duration of multi-level instruction results;
- additional achievement/performance data;
- formal evaluation reports.

Documentation for SPL may be collected using a district created format or by using the WVEIS WOW Interventions Tab. Appendix K provides an example of an SLD Academic Skill Deficit Worksheet that may be used for data collection.

The EC also must document its conclusions on the **SLD Team Report** (Appendix M). The report must be dated, and evaluation team members must certify in writing whether the report reflects each team member's conclusion. If the report does not reflect an individual team member's conclusions, the team member must submit a separate statement presenting the member's conclusions. An electronic version of the SLD Team Report is available on the Office of Special Programs website at <http://wvde.state.wv.us/specialeducationcompliance/resources.html>.

Reevaluation and Determining Continued Eligibility

At least every three years, an eligible student is reevaluated to determine if he/she continues to be a student with a disability who is in need of special services. Policy 2419 requires the district to conduct, as appropriate, an individual multidisciplinary evaluation to determine the student's continuing educational needs. As part of the reevaluation, the IEP Team and other qualified professionals must review existing evaluation data on the student, including

- the current IEP and the student's progress toward meeting annual goals;
- the current grade-level interim assessment results;
- ongoing formative/classroom assessments and progress monitoring of skills and instruction as indicated on the IEP;
- evaluations and information provided by the student's parent;
- summative assessment data;
- assessments completed in preparation for adult services (when indicated by age of student);
- parent information;
- classroom observations.

In determining that a student continues to have a SLD, the IEP team will determine which if any additional evaluations should be conducted (including individual assessments for a student approaching exit), as well as the student's level and rate of learning.

In making a decision to continue the eligibility of a student with a SLD, teams should consider the increased levels and rates of learning that are the positive results of special education supports. Likewise, the EC should thoroughly discuss the potential negative effects on student achievement that would occur from the removal of special education supports. The EC determines for a reevaluation that a student **continues to need specially designed instruction** afforded through special education services. It is imperative that assessment data related to the specific content of the student's IEP are collected and used to monitor student progress, make instructional adjustments and potentially validate the need for continued special education services. Thus, progress monitoring data collected on IEP goals address an important decision-making point not only for the development of yearly IEP goals but also for the determination of continued eligibility.

In consideration of West Virginia's adoption of the SPL framework for identifying SLD, ECs must use a student's current interim assessments, formative/classroom assessments, progress monitoring data, performance relevant to grade-level standards, information obtained from formal evaluations (if conducted) and continued need for special education services in making the reevaluation eligibility decision.

SPL, Child Find Requirements & Private Schools

Policy 2419, Chapter 8, requires school districts to establish and implement on-going Child Find systems to locate, identify and evaluate students with disabilities who reside in the district. This includes students who have been placed by a parent in a private school (including a religious school) located in the district regardless of the student's residency. A district's Child Find process must ensure the equitable participation of parentally-placed private school students with disabilities, including comparable timelines for the evaluation process.

The use of the SPL process as a component of the evaluation of a student suspected of having a SLD is relevant to parentally-placed private school students. In making a SLD eligibility determination for these students the same evaluation components and eligibility procedures apply.

Specific to validating underachievement, Policy 2419 states that the EC must consider the following factors:

1. Data demonstrating prior to or as part of the referral process, the student was provided appropriate instruction in general education settings
2. Data-based documentation of repeated assessments of achievement at reasonable intervals, reflecting formal assessment of student progress during instruction, which was provided to the student's parents (i.e., screenings/ interim assessments and progress monitoring data)

While a private school is not required to implement the state-required SPL framework, the requirements for a SLD determination must still be met. There is, however, an option to collect the necessary documentation of repeated assessments of achievement at reasonable intervals as part of the referral process. In such cases, the evaluation team, which includes the parent, private school representatives and district personnel, develop a data collection plan as part of the multidisciplinary evaluation. Every effort should be made to inform the parent and private school personnel of the need to address the student's academic difficulties through the provision of supplemental instruction and use of frequent progress monitoring. If this data and information cannot be made available, the MDET can determine to conduct a comprehensive evaluation, using cross-battery assessments to determine if there is a pattern(s) of strengths and weaknesses. The EC may use this alternate method for determining SLD eligibility. The EC will review all data and pertinent information when making an eligibility decision.

Conclusion

Identifying a SLD is a complex task and requires personalized, student-centered problem-solving. It is predicated on a belief that scaffolded, differentiated, high-quality general education instruction can be effective for most children and that only a few students demonstrate the severe and persistent underachievement associated with a SLD. The SPL framework provides important instructional support systems for all students and offers a logical alternative to the traditional IQ-achievement discrepancy model for identifying SLD. An alternate method for identifying students as SLD, known as the PSW approach, was adopted in the revisions to Policy 2419 effective July 2012. Revisions to Policy 2419 effective September 2014 allowed for two options to consider for SLD eligibility under Standard 2 requirements. Insufficient rate of learning or a pattern of strengths and weaknesses in cognitive and academic abilities may be used to identify a student with SLD. By using a hybrid approach of SPL and PSW in determining SLD eligibility, ECs will feel confident in determining eligibility and will be able to provide valuable recommendations for instruction.

Frequently Asked Questions

1. What documentation is needed for the SPL process?

Graphs and charts that indicate the level and rate of a student's progress when provided interventions are essential. These data must evidence appropriate frequency and duration of leveled instruction. Schools should have a data collection system that includes repeated assessment data collected over a period of time; intervention strategies used; and specific student outcomes. Districts may choose to utilize the WVEIS WOW Interventions Tab to document a student's participation in SPL.

2. Should a student receive TARGETED and INTENSIVE instruction before a special education referral is initiated by the SAT?

Yes. While a special education evaluation may be initiated at any time during the SPL process, appropriate general education instruction includes supporting the student at each of the three levels. It is only after a student who is suspected of having a specific learning disability has been provided this opportunity to learn that a special education referral should be initiated.

3. Must a student receive TARGETED and INTENSIVE instruction before a special education evaluation is initiated at the written request of the parent or guardian?

No. A parent may request an evaluation at any time. If the MDET determines that an evaluation is not needed at the time of the request, Prior Written Notice must be given as to why an evaluation is not needed. If the MDET determines to evaluate the student, documentation of instruction can be collected while performing a comprehensive evaluation and used in making the determination of a Specific Learning Disability. Although very little data may be available relating to the SPL process, the MDET should consider a comprehensive evaluation including standardized achievement and intelligence tests, parent interview(s), student observations, state assessment records as well as documentation of the parent/ guardian rationale for suspecting a disability. Once gathered this information should be forwarded to the EC.

- *For the EC to determine a disability is present, they will likely need to rule out an intellectual disability. To rule out an intellectual disability the MDET must have sought parent consent to administer a comprehensive battery of assessments including adaptive rating scales.*
- *If no intellectual or other disabilities are determined, via the comprehensive assessment results, the EC may attempt to confirm the presence of a learning disability by determining whether a student exhibits a pattern of strengths and weaknesses by examining specific areas of cognitive processing and linking them to areas of achievement. Strengths and weaknesses may help to confirm the presence of a learning disability if a student exhibits a pattern in performance, achievement, or both relative to age, grade-level standards, or function.*
- *If a pattern of performance cannot be established, the EC may elect to refer the student back to the SAT for additional instruction.*

4. How are parents involved in the SPL process?

Parent involvement is critical and should be embraced throughout the process. Parents are informed of the SPL framework, are advised when their child's screening results indicate academic difficulty and receive progress monitoring data each time it is analyzed. They are part of the problem-solving process when a child requires TARGETED or INTENSIVE instruction. The state's policies regarding the amount and nature of student performance data requirement may be met through the dissemination of "***A Parent's Guide to Support for Personalized Learning (SPL)***" which is available at <http://wvde.state.wv.us/spl/familycommunity.html>.

5. What if all components of the SPL process are not completed or implemented inappropriately prior to a referral for special education?

The components (i.e., level of learning, rate of learning, exclusion factors and validation of appropriate instruction) must be supported by data. Therefore, a referral should not be initiated until sufficient time and resources are applied to determine the student's response to multi-level instruction; however, if the MDET feels a comprehensive evaluation is warranted a referral may be expedited. The Student Assistance Team (SAT) is charged with thoroughly reviewing the student's case and making the appropriate recommendations. Actions include: 1) requesting more progress monitoring data, 2) requiring the provision of more intense or different instruction, 3) proceeding with a request for a multidisciplinary evaluation or 4) any other reasonable request of teachers and providers of customized instruction that will result in sufficient evidence that the SPL process was fully implemented.

6. What if a parent requests a multidisciplinary evaluation before general education interventions have been fully implemented?

The SPL process must be explained to parents. Policy 2419 states a parent has the right to request an evaluation at any time throughout the SPL process. Nothing in Policy 2419 precludes the completion or denial of a parent request for an individual evaluation. Each case should be reviewed carefully before an evaluation request is considered. In the event the school or district feels an evaluation is not appropriate, the parent must be provided prior written notice of that decision in accordance with Policy 2419, Chapter 10, Procedural Safeguards, Section 3. Policy 2419 allows for an EC to determine if there are a pattern of strengths and weaknesses in an area of cognitive ability and achievement. This would require a comprehensive assessment, and possibly a cross-battery assessment to determine if there is an area of cognitive ability that is weak in comparison to their overall cognitive ability and an area of weakness in achievement that is affected by the cognitive deficit. If a pattern of strength(s) and weakness(s) can be determined then a student can be made eligible for a specific learning disability.

7. If a student does not meet grade-level standards, must he/she be provided TARGETED instruction if the teacher knows the skills have been mastered?

The decision of whether or not to provide TARGETED instruction should be discussed thoroughly by the IT. Grade-level data is one data source to be analyzed. Teacher observation, classroom performance and student performance on a variety of assessments must be used to determine the effectiveness of an instruction. Should the IT decide the student is not in need of additional support in reading, mathematics or written language it would be prudent to occasionally progress monitor to confirm that the student is progressing as expected.

8. If a student shows progress after 4-6 weeks, does he/she have to remain in TARGETED for the full 9 weeks?

Criteria for exiting a student from supplemental instruction must be considered carefully and the decision should be made on a case-by-case basis by the instruction team. The team must thoroughly analyze the student's rapid response to instruction. Generally, it would be advantageous to continue to support the student to ensure against regression and maintain the child's progress through the end of the instructional round.

Teachers should keep in mind that as the school year progresses, skill difficulty increases as does the expected goal. Ultimately, students must be able to maintain and advance their skills in the core program over time, so be sure that the skills are firmly in place before exiting the student from TARGETED.

9. Does the SAT need to convene on all students who go to and/or exit TARGETED?

No. Policy 2510, *Assuring Quality of Education: Regulations for Education Programs*, Section 8.9, outlines the responsibilities of the Student Assistance Team (SAT) which provides a formalized process for the review of student needs and complements the work of instruction and intervention teams. Section 8.9.2 states that the SAT reviews individual student needs that have **persisted despite being addressed** by instruction teams, or acts in lieu of an instruction team, and considers referrals for multidisciplinary evaluation.

10. What is the difference between the IT and the SAT?

An instruction team uses a problem-solving model to make instructional adjustments based on student performance data. This team, comprised primarily of same grade-level teachers and providers of customized instruction, collaborates to determine the most effective strategies, grouping patterns, instructional materials and other components of differentiated instruction.

The SAT reviews documentation collected by the IT and considers Diagnostic Assessments and additional screeners that may further the problem-solving approach. The SAT may involve additional team members with expertise that may provide insight as to why a student may not be responding to instruction. The SAT may determine that a student is in need of a comprehensive evaluation and refer the student to the Multidisciplinary Evaluation Team (MDET). The MDET may consist of the same team members as the SAT. They review current data, information and determine additional evaluations needed to determine if a student has a specific learning disability.

11. What are intervention options after the Intensive Phonological Awareness Program (IPAP) has been completed?

Determining appropriate intervention strategies for students should be based on the individual needs of the students. Data generated from progress monitoring, observations and other measures must be examined to select an appropriate course of intervention for each child. Clearly, the students that were selected to participate in the IPAP exhibited deficiencies in phonemic awareness and their progress in the program should have been closely monitored. If the data indicate additional intervention is required, several factors must be considered:

- *Did the child receive the IPAP in Kindergarten or First Grade? Repeating the intervention may be appropriate, especially if the child participated in the program in the spring as a kindergarten student and can repeat the intervention in the fall as a first grader.*
- *Was the program implemented with integrity? This is a scripted program but requires training for the interventionist in understanding the sound structure of language, phonemic awareness and alphabetic principle.*
- *Did the student or interventionist have excessive absences that prevented completion of the 12 week program?*
- *Did the student receive the general education classroom component?*
- *Possible change in support after completion of the IPAP:*
 - *Repeat the intervention for 5 days /week*
 - *Expand the 30 minute time allotment*
 - *Reduce the number of students in the group (from 6 to 3).*

12. If considering a pattern of strengths and weaknesses in determining eligibility for SLD, do we have to discuss or review the SPL data and instruction?

No. When using PSW to meet Standard 2 requirements for eligibility, the results of these assessments are used for Standard 2 criteria. SPL data and assessments should have been reviewed and discussed at the MDET. However, if the EC feels the need to review SPL data and information, they may do so. You should always review and discuss all pertinent information and evaluations relating to a child's disability or suspected disability. You may only have a limited amount of SPL documentation at the time of the referral; however, you need to continue to collect that documentation while the student is being evaluated.

13. Can SPL documentation alone be used to make a student eligible under SLD?

No. SPL documentation does not take the place of a comprehensive evaluation. SPL documentation is one component to a comprehensive evaluation. Comprehensive evaluations may look different depending on a student's needs. The requirement of an observation, teacher evaluation and parent input is also very important in making an eligibility decision. In many cases, the best approach to SLD eligibility is using a hybrid approach (SPL documentation and determining a pattern(s) of strengths and weaknesses). This hybrid approach strengthens the accuracy of the eligibility decision and helps determine what may be the best approach to learning for an individual student.

14. When should diagnostic assessments be used?

Diagnostic assessments can be used throughout the SPL process. A diagnostic assessment will help determine specific skills deficits and will give valuable information in determining how to program for an individual student. Parent permission has to be obtained prior to giving a diagnostic assessment.

Glossary of Terms

Accommodations: Considerations that are given so that a student may access the general education curriculum. Accommodations do not change the content and are not considered interventions.

Aim-line: The straight line connecting a student's baseline level of performance with his or her long-range goal. The slope of the aim-line shows the expected rate of improvement if the student is going to meet the long-range goal.

Baseline data: Data that is collected before an intervention or program change begins.

Convergent sources of data: Several sources of data (e.g., progress monitoring results, classroom performance, observations, standardized assessments, parent information) that validate a hypothesis.

CORE Level Instruction: CORE instruction is provided to all students in the classroom. These interventions are preventive and proactive; implementation is school-wide or by whole classrooms; often connected to CORE instruction. (e.g. Guided Reading). These may be research-based, but are not necessarily prescriptive. Differentiated instruction is provided in CORE instruction.

Criterion-Referenced Assessment: Represents an approach to assessment designed to provide a measure of performance that allows for inferences to be made in terms of a clearly-defined domain of learning tasks.

Cross-Battery Assessment: A systematic process of selecting subtests that target specific cognitive domains. The cross-battery approach includes assessment of a wide range of broad and narrow cognitive processes that identify processing strengths and weaknesses.

Curriculum: The content standards, objectives and performance descriptors for all required and elective content areas and 21st century learning skills and technology tools at each programmatic level.

Diagnostic Assessment: Testing conducted to determine specific skill deficits. Diagnostic assessments go beyond screening information and help teachers pinpoint specific academic areas that need to be addressed through intervention.

Differentiated Instruction: Differentiated instruction is a teacher's response to learners' needs including respectful tasks, flexible grouping and ongoing assessment. Teachers can differentiate content, process or product based on students' readiness, interests and learning profiles. A process of designing lesson plans that meets the needs of the range of learners; such planning includes learning objectives, grouping practices, teaching methods, varied assignments and varied materials chosen based on student skill levels and learning preferences. Differentiated Instruction focuses on instructional strategies, instructional groupings and use of an array of materials.

Evidenced-based Instruction: An evidenced-based instructional practice is one found to be reliable, trustworthy and valid based on evidence to suggest that when it is used with a particular group of children, the children can be expected to make adequate gains in achievement.

Exclusion Factors: Any one or a combination of conditions that exclude a student from being determined eligible as a student with a specific learning disability (i.e., a visual, hearing, or motor disability; mental impairment; behavioral/emotional disorder; cultural factors; environmental or economic disadvantage; or limited English proficiency).

Explicit Instruction: Systematic instructional approach that includes a set of delivery and design procedures derived from effective schools research merged with behavior analysis; essential components of well-designed explicit instruction include visible delivery features of group instruction with a high level of teacher and student interactions and the less observable, instructional design principles and assumptions that make up the content and strategies to be taught.

Formative Assessment: A process used by teachers and students during instruction that provides feedback to adjust ongoing teaching and learning to improve students' achievement of intended instructional outcomes (CCSSO, FAST, SCASS, 2007).

Four-Point-Rule: A decision-making strategy characterized by determining that when four data points (scores) fall below the goal line, a teaching change is required. When four data points lie above the goal line, the goal should be raised.

Gap Analysis: Gap Analysis is a method for measuring the difference between the student's current level of performance and benchmark expectations.

INTENSIVE Instruction: Academic and/or behavioral support characterized by increased length, frequency and duration of implementation for students who struggle significantly. This support relates directly to an area of need; is supplemental to and is different from CORE and TARGETED instruction; is usually implemented individually or in very small group settings; may be individualized.

Intervention: The systematic and explicit instruction provided to accelerate growth in an area of identified need. Interventions are provided by both special and general educators, and are based on training, not titles. This instruction is designed to improve performance relative to specific, measurable goals. Interventions are based on valid information about current performance, realistic implementation and include ongoing student progress monitoring.

Level of Learning: Student's performance in grade-level learning experiences, including appropriate targeted instruction and based on grade-level West Virginia Content Standards and Objectives (CSOs)

Multiple Sources of Data: No single procedure or data source may be used as the sole criterion for determining eligibility. Information from a variety of sources such as intervention results, observations, formal assessments, interviews and other collection methods must be considered.

Problem-Solving Process: Assumes that no type of instruction will be effective for all students; generally has five stages (problem identification, problem analysis, plan development, plan implementation and plan evaluation); is sensitive to individual student differences; depends on the integrity of implementing levels of INTENSIVE instruction.

Progress Monitoring: Progress monitoring is the on-going process that involves collecting and analyzing data to determine student progress towards specific skills or general outcomes. Progress monitoring generates useful data for making instructional decisions based on the review and analysis of student data. Monitoring student progress, through collection and analysis of data, is an effective way to determine if the instruction being delivered is meeting the needs of the student.

Rate of Learning: A student's progress toward grade-level achievement goals. Rate of learning is determined by reviewing assessment data as plotted on graphs.

Research-Based Instructional Practices: A research-based instructional practice is one found to be reliable, trustworthy, and valid based on evidence to suggest that when the practice is used with a particular group of children, the children can be expected to make adequate gains in achievement. On-going documentation and analysis of student outcomes helps to define effective practice. In the absence of evidence, the instruction must be considered “best practice” based on available research and professional literature.

Response to Intervention (RTI) Also Response to Instruction/ Responsiveness to Intervention: A practice of providing high-quality instruction matched to student need, monitoring progress frequently to make changes in instruction or goals and applying child response data to important educational decisions. SPL incorporates and builds on processes formerly implemented in WV as RTI.

Scaffolding: An instructional technique, in which the teacher breaks a complex task into smaller tasks, models the desired learning strategy or task, provides support as students learn to do the task and then gradually shifts responsibility to the students. In this manner, a teacher enables students to accomplish as much of a task as possible without adult assistance.

Screening: Screening is the first level of assessment. School-wide screening and classroom-based screening can assist teachers in getting an initial sense of student performance relative to critical skills and behaviors and can be used to inform decisions about grouping.

Severe Underachievement: Achievement that is significantly below grade-level expectations, persists in spite of the provision of research-based intervention and constitutes skill gaps in need of specially designed instruction provided through special education services.

Slope (Rate of Improvement): Term used to describe the steepness, incline, gradient or grade of a straight line between two points. Comparing the slope of a student’s data points assists in determining rate of learning.

Specific Learning Disability: A disorder in one or more of the basic psychological processes involved in understanding or in using language, spoken or written, that may manifest itself in the imperfect ability to listen, think, speak, read, write, spell, or to do mathematical calculation, including conditions such as perceptual disabilities, brain injury, minimal brain dysfunction, dyslexia and developmental aphasia.

Support for Personalized Learning: SPL is a framework that promotes a well-integrated system connecting general, scaffolded and special education in providing high quality, standards-based instruction and intervention that is matched to students’ academic, social/emotional and behavioral needs.

TARGETED Instruction: Support that relates directly to an area of need; is supplementary to CORE instruction; is often implemented in small group settings; may be individualized.

Trend Line: A diagonal line drawn between two or more data points on a graph.

Tukey Method: A data analysis procedure that involves the drawing of a trend line of student progress and making a comparison to the goal. Seven to eight data points are graphed and compared the student’s goal line. If the trend is not as steep as the goal line, a teaching change is made. If the trend is steeper than the goal line, the goal is raised.

Online Resources

Assessment

- National Center on Student Progress Monitoring
<http://www.studentprogress.org/>
- AIMSweb Home
<http://www.aimsweb.com/>
- Official DIBELS Next Homepage
<http://dibels.uoregon.edu/>
- Intervention Central
<http://interventioncentral.org>
- Cross Battery Assessment
<http://www.crossbattery.com/> (SWEP) conference February 2012
<http://facpub.stjohns.edu/~flanagad/cross-battery/downloads/SWEP%202012%20Feb%209.pdf>
- CCSSO FAST SCASS
[http://ccsso.org/Resources/Programs/Formative_Assessment_for_Students_and_Teachers_\(FAST\).html](http://ccsso.org/Resources/Programs/Formative_Assessment_for_Students_and_Teachers_(FAST).html)

Instruction and Intervention

- WV Teach 21
<http://wvde.state.wv.us/teach21/>
- Adolescent Literacy in the 21st Century (WVDE Teach 21 Resource)
http://wvde.state.wv.us/instruction/aim_literacy.html
- Big Ideas in Beginning Reading
<http://reading.uoregon.edu/>
- The Florida Center for Reading Research
<http://www.fcrr.org/>
- Vaughn Gross Center for Reading Language Arts (University of Texas at Austin)
<http://www.fcrr.org/>
- Free Reading
http://free-reading.net/index.php?title=Main_Page
- International Reading Association (IRA)
http://www.reading.org/resources/issues/focus_rti.html
- The Iris Center
<http://iris.peabody.vanderbilt.edu/>
- Intervention Central
<http://www.interventioncentral.org/>
- RTI Wire
http://www.jimwrightonline.com/php/rti/rti_wire.php
- American Speech-Language-Hearing Association
<http://www.asha.org/members/slp/schools/prof-consult/Rtol.htm>

- National Council of Teachers of Mathematics
<http://www.nctm.org/>
- Screening for Mathematics Difficulties in K-3 Students (PDF)
<http://centeroninstruction.org/files/COI%20Math%20Screening.pdf>
- Intervention Central
<http://www.interventioncentral.org/>
- Access Center
http://www.k8accesscenter.org/training_resources/math.asp
- What Works Clearinghouse
<http://ies.ed.gov/ncee/wwc/>

Parent Involvement

- NASP Resources
<http://www.nasponline.org/resources/factsheets/rtiprimer.aspx>
- National Center on Learning Disabilities
http://www.nrclid.org/rti_practices/parent.html
- RTI Action Network
<http://www.rtinetwork.org/Connect/Discussion/Secondary/39-Parent-Involvement>
- Pacer Center
<http://www.pacer.org/>
- Creating IDEAL Lives
<http://www.ideallives.com/>
- Inclusive Communities
<http://www.pbs.org/parents/inclusivecommunities/about.html>
- Parent Involvement Tool Kit
http://www.k12.hi.us/~konawahs/parent_involvement_tool_kit.htm
- Parent Pals.com
<http://parentpals.com/gossamer/pages/>
- The Parent Institute
<http://www.par-inst.com/educator/>

SPL, Learning Disabilities and Special Education

- National Center on Response to Intervention
<http://www.rti4success.org/>
- RTI Action Network
<http://www.rtinetwork.org/>
- National Research Center on Learning Disabilities
<http://www.nrclid.org/>
- National Association for State Directors of Special Education
<http://www.nasdse.org/>

- National Center for Learning Disabilities
<http://www.nclد.org/content/view/1002/389/>
- Building the Legacy: IDEA 2004
<http://idea.ed.gov/explore/view/p/,root,dynamic,QaCorner,8,>
- National Association of School Psychologists
<http://nasp.org>

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Appendix

EIGHT AREAS OF SLD – APPENDIX A

This section provides descriptions of the eight areas in which specific learning disabilities are identified in both federal and state law/rules/regulations. The goal of these summaries is to provide a common language and conceptual base for addressing the different types of learning disabilities. Educators, in partnership with parents, can effectively screen, assess, intervene and progress monitor in each of the specific disability areas determined to be of concern.

The information provided is derived from reputable sources, but is not intended to be comprehensive.

1. ORAL EXPRESSION ; AND
2. LISTENING COMPREHENSION

Definition and Implications (Oral Expression)

Oral expression pertains to the use of words and includes the ability to formulate and produce words and sentences with appropriate vocabulary, grammar and application of conversational rules.

A child's oral expression skills are essential to their learning and academic success. Oral expression problems in students may result in literacy problems (ASHA, 1980). Furthermore, these children may not perform at grade level because of their struggle with reading, difficulty understanding and expressing language, and the fact that they may misunderstand social cues. Oral expression is about the student's ability to express ideas, explain thinking (critical in math), retell stories, and contrast and compare concepts or ideas.

Characteristics (Oral Expression)

The following may be exhibited by those children who demonstrate oral expression difficulties:

- Difficulty with the grammatical processes of inflection, marking categories like person, tense, and case (e.g., the –s in *jumps* marks the third-person singular in the present tense), and derivation, the formation of new words from existing words (e.g. *acceptable* from *accept*)
- Learning vocabulary
- Difficulty formulating complete, semantically and grammatically correct sentences either spoken or written
- Difficulty explaining word associations, antonyms/synonyms
- Difficulty with retelling, making inferences, and predictions

Definition and Implications (Listening Comprehension)

Listening comprehension refers to the understanding of the implications and explicit meanings of words and sentences of spoken language. Listening comprehension often co-exists with difficulties in written language and in the auditory processing of oral information. Children with problems processing and interpreting spoken sentences frequently can experience difficulties in mastering syntactic structures both receptively as well as expressively. Although some children appear to perceive and interpret the words used in spoken sentences, they may not be able to grasp the interrelationship among the words in the sentences. Difficulties with listening comprehension should not be mistaken for difficulties or deficits in Central Auditory Processing.

Characteristics (Listening Comprehension)

Children experiencing listening comprehension difficulties may exhibit the following:

- Difficulty with following directions for seatwork and projects
- Difficulty remembering homework assignments
- Difficulty with understanding oral narratives and text
- Difficulty answering questions about the content of the information given
- Difficulty with critical thinking to arrive at logical answers
- Difficulty with word associations, antonyms/synonyms, categorizing and classifying
- Difficulty with note-taking or dictation

Assessment (Oral Expression and Listening Comprehension)

The classroom teacher may screen for those students who are at risk of having oral expression and/or listening comprehension difficulties by referencing norms for oral expression and listening comprehension acquisition (see chart following progress monitoring/interventions). The speech-language pathologist should be the one to assess and determine deficits in these two areas.

The use of standardized tests provides the speech-language pathologist with valuable information regarding the student's communication skills in specific areas. However, we must realize that standardized assessments may be one component of an assessment process. The use of non-standardized or informal assessments, dynamic assessment, behavioral and pragmatic observations in the "natural environment" (outside of the classroom) as well as spontaneous and structured language sampling also provide important information that standardized tests by themselves may not.

Some common assessment tools used for assessing oral expression and listening comprehension skills are:

Preschool Language Scale-5 (PLS-5) and the Clinical Evaluation of Language Fundamentals-5 (CELF-5), Bracken Basic Concept Scale-Revised (BBCS-R), Comprehensive Receptive and Expressive Vocabulary Test-Third Edition (CREVT-3), Peabody Picture Vocabulary Test- Fourth Edition (PPVT-4), Test for Auditory Comprehension of Language-Fourth Edition (TACL-4), Test of Language Development, Fourth Edition (TOLD-4).

For students who are Spanish speaking the following assessment tools are either criterion-referenced or standardized in Spanish:

Bracken Basic Concept Scale- Revised, Spanish, Clinical Evaluation of Language Fundamentals-Fifth Edition, Spanish (CELF-5 Spanish), Preschool language Scale, Fifth Edition (PLS-5 Spanish Edition), Spanish Structured Photographic Expressive Language Test-3 (Spanish SPELT-3), Test de Vocabulario en Imágenes Peabody (TVIP), Test of Phonological Awareness in Spanish (TPAS)

The speech-language pathologist should be culturally sensitive when selecting and using assessment tools being administered to second language learners. The use of standardized assessments may not be appropriate with second language learners. It is the responsibility of the speech-language pathologist to validate the assessment instrument being used to the population for whom it was criterion-referenced or standardized.

For a comprehensive reference of assessment instruments for monolingual English speakers or bilingual students, please refer to the *Directory of Speech-Language Pathology Assessment Instruments, 2007*.

Intervention and Progress Monitoring (Oral Expression and Listening Comprehension) The speech-language pathologist can provide both direct and consultative services in collaboration with the classroom teachers, resource teachers and interventionists in developing intervention strategies that will include explicit skills-training in the areas of oral expression and/or listening comprehension as key to some students' access to the curriculum.

Providing structured opportunities for students to participate in social interactions, such as giving them "helping" roles or having them "talk through" an activity involving a successfully learned skill, reinforces oral expression skills. Working on beginning, middle and end to organize narratives as well as in the retelling of stories fosters oral expression development.

The direct teaching of listening strategies is important to improving listening comprehension. Particularly effective is cuing the student to keep their eyes on the speaker, make a picture in their head, ask for clarification, and internalize directions by repeating them to themselves. For the older student, learning to listen for the main idea is important. Modeling and demonstration is essential with students of all ages.

An example of progress monitoring of an oral expression and/or listening comprehension intervention would be correct identification of picture cards of specific targeted vocabulary being taught. The desired result should be that the student's correct labeling/identification of the target vocabulary increase with each collection of data to be analyzed (progress monitoring). The targeted intervention needs to be systematic and explicit in its delivery and progress monitoring.

Norms for Oral Expression and Listening Comprehension

	Oral Expression	Listening Comprehension
Kindergarten	Speaks intelligibly	Comprehends 13,000 words
	Uses 1500 words	Understands opposites
	Retells a story or event	Follows 1-2 step simple directions in sequence
	Takes turns during conversation	Listens to and understands age appropriate stories
	Sentences should be mostly grammatical	Recognizes meaning from tone of voice and facial expressions
First Grade		
First Grade	Tells and retells stories and events in a logical order	Comprehends 20,000 words
	Expresses ideas with a variety of complete sentences	Understands months and seasons
	Uses most parts of speech correctly	Remembers information
	Asks who, what, where, and why questions	Follows 2-3 step directions in sequence
	Stays on topic and takes turns in conversation	
	Gives instructions	
Second Grade		
Second Grade	Uses increasingly complex sentences	Follows 3-4 oral directions in sequence
	Clarifies and explains words and ideas	Understands direction words for location, space, and time
	Gives 3-4 step directions	Answers questions about a grade-level story or theme correctly
	Uses oral expression to inform, persuade and to entertain	
	Opens and closes conversation appropriately	
	Experiments with vocabulary	
Third Grade		
Third Grade	Summarizes a story accurately	Listens attentively in group situations
	Uses content area vocabulary	Understands grade level material
	Explains what he has learned	Expresses well-developed time and number concepts
	Varies verbal and nonverbal behaviors depending on the audience (more formal to teacher than with peers)	

	Oral Expression	Listening Comprehension
Fourth Grade	Understands some figurative language	Listens to and understands information presented by others
	Participates in group discussions	Forms opinions based on evidence
	Makes effective oral presentations	Listens for specific purpose
	Identifies main ideas and supporting details	Asks clarifying questions
	Chooses vocabulary appropriate to the message	Uses listening skills to understand directions
	Uses grammatically correct speech	
Fifth Grade		
Fifth Grade	Makes planned oral presentations appropriate to the audience	Listens and draws conclusions in subject area
	Maintains eye contact, uses gestures, facial expressions, and appropriate voice during group presentations	Distinguishes fact from fiction
	Summarizes main points	
	Reports about information gathered in group activities	
Middle School		
Middle School	Presents ideas effectively in discussion with a wide range of audiences	Recognizes stylistic elements such as tone of voice and body language
	Uses a wide range vocabulary for different purposes	
	Uses figures of speech	
	Uses a variety of simple and complex sentence structures	
	Defends a point of view	
High School		
High School	Supports a point of view using various forms of persuasion	Self-evaluates oral presentations
	Incorporates materials from a wide range of sources (newspapers, books, technical materials, etc.)	Recognizes a speakers point of view, purpose, historical and cultural context
	Selects and presents a focused topic	Analyzes and synthesizes materials presented orally
	Experiments with stylistic elements	
	Uses language to solve problems	

Websites (Oral Expression/Listening Comprehension)

American Speech-Language Hearing Association: www.asha.org/public/speech/development
Language Development in Children:
http://www.childdevelopmentinfo.com/development/language_development.shtml

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West Virginia Content Standards for Language Arts

Brace, J., Brockhoff, V., Sparks, N. & Tuckey, J. *First Steps Speaking and Listening Book 2nd edition* by Judy Brace, Department of Education and Training in Western Australia, 2007.

Brace et al., *First Steps Speaking and Listening Map of Development, 2nd edition*, Department of Education and Training in Western Australia, 2007.

3. WRITTEN EXPRESSION

A disability in written expression is an identified problem related to the writing process. Like reading comprehension, written expression develops through a progression of several interconnected skills and processes. To fully understand learning disabilities in the area of written expression it is important to differentiate the “transcription” component from the “generational” component (Berninger, 2004). Transcription involves the basic writing skills (BWS) of production of letters, words and spelling. The generational component, or composition, “translates ideas into language representations that must be organized, stored, and then retrieved from memory” (Fletcher, Lyon, Fuchs, & Barnes, 2007, p. 238). BWS are specific to written language, whereas composition processes involve oral language and thought. It is therefore, critical to address both BWS and compositional components in understanding written expression disabilities.

The first part of this section, ***Written Expression: Basic Writing Skills***, covers the foundational skills of transcription—handwriting and spelling. The second part, ***Written Expression: Composition***, focuses on generational components of composition—capitalization and punctuation, word and text fluency, sentence construction, genre-specific discourse structures, planning processes, and reviewing and revising processes.

Written Expression: Basic Writing Skills (Transcription)

Just as letter identification, phonemic blending, and decoding problems constrain reading comprehension, so do handwriting, phonemic segmenting, and spelling affect written expression (Fletcher, Lyon, Fuchs, & Barnes, 2007). It should be noted that the two processes are not completely parallel. To produce written work, letter forms and written words must be retrieved from memory during the writing process. Before children can give attention to planning, organizing, and constructing written pieces, they must first automatize basic writing skills including handwriting fluency and legibility, and spelling.

Handwriting and spelling difficulties can have serious, negative consequences for written expression, including a result in misinterpretation of the writer’s meaning, producing negative perceptions about the writer and the quality of the written work, interference with the composing process because the writer’s memory resources are overloaded with penmanship and spelling, and most importantly, student avoidance of writing, which further constrains writing development (Fletcher, Lyon, Fuchs, & Barnes, 2007).

Definition and Implications (Handwriting)

By the end of first grade, typically-developing children can name all the upper case and lower case alphabet letters presented in random order and can write dictated letters in both cases accurately from memory. This skill is an integration of orthographic codes (the form of the letter) phonological codes (the name of the letter) and graphomotor codes (output). The automaticity of letter retrieval and production has the biggest effect on beginning writing development and is the best predictor of written composition fluency, content, and organization. Automatic letter formation and retrieval must be intact before students can attend to composition.

Definition and Implications (Spelling)

Spelling is referenced in the definition of dyslexia adopted by the International Dyslexia Association's Board of Directors in 2002 and is used by the National Institute of Child Health and Human Development. "Dyslexia is . . . characterized by difficulties with accurate and/or fluent word recognition and by poor spelling and decoding abilities" (Lyon, Shaywitz, & Shaywitz, 2003).

Spelling is highly related to both reading and writing development. A solid research base shows that learning to spell enhances the reading and writing of all students. If spelling is not explicitly taught, spelling achievement can drop significantly while reading comprehension stays at an average level.

Learning to read and spell words follows a similar course of acquisition, and depends on the same knowledge about the alphabetic system and memory for the spellings of specific words. In other words, spelling and decoding are linked by phonological processing. However, the two processes are not quite the same.

Like beginning decoding skills, spelling abilities are predicted by a student's ability to map speech sounds to letters and letter clusters and knowledge of letter patterns (Berninger, 2004). However, competent spelling involves more than the skills identified above. It also involves understanding specific, rule-based letter patterns known as orthography, and understanding morphology, or the meaning of prefixes, roots, and suffixes.

Phonology and Spelling: Making the connection between phonemes and graphemes requires an awareness that all words can be segmented into individual sounds, or phonemic awareness. It is this awareness that allows the reader to discover and decipher the alphabetic code (Lyon, Shaywitz, & Shaywitz, 2003). Spelling is intimately related to reading because speech sounds are linked to letters and need to be translated into print.

Orthography and Spelling: After children have developed a secure understanding of the relationship between letters and speech sounds, they develop an understanding of spelling conventions. For example, final /k/ is spelled ck after a short vowel (i.e. *brick*), with a k after a vowel team or consonant (i.e., *book, milk*), and a c in multisyllabic words like *tarmac*. Shankweiler and his colleagues found that high school students' skill in representing individual phonemes with letters and letter clusters coincided almost perfectly (correlation of .95) with the ability to spell whole words.

Morphology and Spelling: An awareness of morphemes or meaningful units is called *morphological awareness*. Morphemes can include prefixes, suffixes, Latin roots, or Greek word parts. In written language, morphological awareness involves linking the sound with a meaning unit, not a letter. An example of this is the ability to distinguish the derivative *missed* from the base word *mist*. Morphology also involves understanding spelling rules for adding suffixes to base words, for example doubling the final consonant in *hopping* or dropping the silent e in *hoping*.

Poor spelling abilities hamper the ability to function as an adult. Liberman (1985) and her colleagues found that adult poor spellers limited their writing to words they knew how to spell correctly. The National Commission on Writing for America's Families, Schools, and Colleges reported that employment applications that are poorly written or poorly spelled will be rejected 80 percent of the time.

Characteristics (Handwriting)

Dysgraphia is a neurological disorder characterized by poor handwriting, with poor spelling as a secondary characteristic. People with dysgraphia often have fine-motor problems that specifically affect written language (Levine, 1994).

Students with a disability in this area have slow, laborious, and often illegible handwriting. Spacing between words, spacing between letters in words, alignment, letter size and errors in proportion and formation are all affected (Graham, Struck, Santoro, & Berninger, 2006). This exists despite thorough instruction and ample time to practice letter formation outside the demands of spelling or the writing process.

There are three common forms of graphomotor dysfunction:

- 1) Difficulty recalling the sequence of strokes needed to form a specific letter;
- 2) Use of the larger muscles of the wrist and forearm rather than small muscles of the fingers to form letters;
- 3) *Finger agnosia*, in which a student has to visually monitor the location of the writing instrument because the fingers do not report their location to the brain. A person with agnosia may have an awkward, fist-like pencil grip, placing the thumb over the fingers and thus preventing the fingers from moving the pencil easily. (Wolf, 2005)

Characteristics (Spelling)

Spelling errors characteristic of people with specific learning disabilities are rooted in faulty phonological processing as well as poor morphological awareness. Louisa Moats found that 90% of errors in spelling could be identified in the following categories:

- 1) Inflected ending omission (i.e., *dressest* for *dresses*) or substitution (i.e., “dropt” for *dropped*);
- 2) Misplacement or omission of /l/ and /r/ (i.e., “backboard” for *blackboard* or “fog” for *frog*);
- 3) Omission of non-salient consonants, including in consonant blends (i.e., “sip” for *slip* or “med” for *mend*);
- 4) Vowel errors (i.e., “maet” for *met*); within-class consonant substitution (primarily fricatives: /f/ and /v/--i.e., “ba^f” for *bath*--/th/ and voiced /th/, /s/ and /z/, /sh/ and /zh/), and
- 5) Weak syllable deletion (i.e., “xplak” for *explicate*).

Assessment/Progress Monitoring (Handwriting)

This area of disability cannot be diagnosed solely by looking at a handwriting sample. A thorough assessment includes writing self-generated sentences and paragraphs and copying age-appropriate text. The examiner must assess not only the finished product, but also the processes involved, including pencil grip, fatigue, cramping, or tremor of the writing hand, handedness, and fine-motor speed (International Dyslexia Association, 2007). An example of a handwriting assessment is the *Minnesota Handwriting Assessment* (Harcourt). Normative information is available and the assessment can also be used to monitor progress as a result of intervention. This test takes 2.5 minutes to administer the rate score and more time is given to produce a complete sample for scoring the five quality categories (legibility, form, alignment, size and spacing). Both manuscript and D’Nealian handwriting styles can be assessed.

Assessment (Spelling)

To analyze spelling for phonological and morphological errors, Moats recommends using a comprehensive sample of words, including words of high and low frequency, real and nonsense words, words of one to four syllables, words with inflected endings (i.e., suffixes -s, -ed, -ing, -er, -est), and words generated both to dictation and in spontaneous writing. Include potentially problematic phonological features, such as liquids (i.e., /l/ and /r/), consonant blends, multisyllabic words, words with unaccented schwa syllables (i.e., *happen*), and non-syllabic or unstressed inflected endings (i.e., suffix -ed as in *walked* or *slammed*).

Some assessment instruments are identified below:

- *Process Assessment of the Learner, 2nd Edition (PAL-II): Diagnostic for Reading and Writing*, (Harcourt). This is a comprehensive instrument that thoroughly assesses handwriting fluency and legibility, spelling, and composition skills. It can be administered multiple times to assess student progress.
- *SPELL Spelling Performance Evaluation for Language & Literacy (2nd ed.)*. Computer software scores and analyzes errors for students Grade 2 – adult.
- *Test of Written Spelling (TWS-5)*
- *Weshsler Individual Achievement Test (WIAT-III): Spelling & Written Expression*
- *WJ-IV: Spelling sounds*
- *Wide Range Achievement Test (WRAT-4): Spelling*

Intervention (Handwriting)

Effective writing instruction focuses on (a) legible and automatic letter production; (b) spelling; and (c) composition (word and text fluency; sentence construction; genre-specific discourse structures; planning processes; and reviewing and revising processes) (Berninger & Amtmann, 2003). Children in kindergarten and first grade should receive explicit, systematic instruction in letter formation and in associating the shape with the name of the letter. Work must always begin with the formation of individual letters written in isolation. Alphabets need to be practiced daily, often for months (International Dyslexia Association, 2007).

After almost two decades of research in handwriting instruction, Graham (1999) has found no evidence between the legibility or handwriting speed of students who used manuscript or cursive writing. Nor has he found any convincing evidence that slanted manuscript (the D’Nealian alphabet) makes the transition to cursive writing any easier. For students with LD, research examining the effectiveness of different scripts is “nonexistent” (Graham, 1999, p. 84). Graham advises teaching students with LD traditional manuscript before cursive. But, he cautions that teachers who insist on a strict adherence to any particular model “are likely to frustrate not only themselves but their students as well” (Graham, 1999, p. 84).

Intervention (Spelling) Teaching students how to segment words into phonemes helps them learn to spell because sounds and letters are related in a predictable way. Phoneme awareness instruction, combined with explicit instruction connecting phonemes to alphabetic letters significantly improves early reading and spelling skills. After students have well-established phonemic awareness, they need to learn to relate the sounds to letters as they spell words.

Phonics instruction teaches how letters of written language map to the individual sounds of spoken language. It teaches students to use these relationships to read and spell words. Systematic and explicit phonics instruction is required. Orthographic letter patterns used to spell many complex and irregular words must be taught as well (Fletcher, Lyon, Fuchs, & Barnes, 2007).

At the most basic level, systematic instruction explicitly teaches letter-sound relationships in a clearly defined sequence. Struggling students also need substantial practice in applying knowledge of these relationships as they read and write. Students also need opportunities to spell words and to write their own stories with words that include the letter-sound relationships they are learning (Armbruster, Lehr, & Osborn, 2001).

Progress Monitoring (Spelling)

One type of CBM for spelling is correct letter sequence (CLS) using dictated, grade-level word lists. Another way to progress monitor in spelling is total number/percentage of words spelled correctly (WSC). Although CLS requires more time to score, it is more sensitive to student improvement (Hosp, Hosp, and Howell, 2007).

One source for standardized spelling lists is AIMSweb Spelling-CBM. Provided are 33 alternate forms for each grade, 1-8. They are intended to be used for benchmarking grades 1-8 and progress monitoring any age.

The ABCs of CBM (Hosp, Hosp, and Howell, 2007) gives explicit instruction in the scoring of curriculum based measures in spelling, whether administering dictated lists of words or scoring words spelled correctly within timed student written passages.

The following are assessment tools or include assessment strategies that may be used to monitor student progress in spelling:

- *Process Assessment of the Learner, 2nd Edition (PAL-II): Diagnostic for Reading and Writing*, Harcourt. [See description above, under “spelling/assessment.”]
- *SPELL Spelling Performance Evaluation for Language & Literacy (2nd ed.)*, Learning by Design, Software for Grade 2 – adult. Scores and analyzes errors.
- Spelling Inventories (inform instruction by categorizing words according to sequential patterns arranged by complexity):
- Bear, D. R., Invernizzi, M., Templeton, S., & Johnston, F. (2000). *Words their way: Word study for phonics, vocabulary, and spelling instruction*. Upper Saddle River, NJ: Prentice Hall.
- Ganske, K. (2000). *Word journeys: Assessment-guided phonics, spelling, and vocabulary instruction*. New York: Guilford Press.
- *Spellography* (Sopris-West)

Written Expression: Composition (Generational Skills)

Definition and Implications

Like reading comprehension, written expression develops through a progression of several interconnected skills and processes. This section focuses on the generational aspects of written expression—capitalization and punctuation, word and text fluency, sentence construction, genre-specific discourse structures, planning processes, and reviewing and revising processes.

Characteristics

Difficulties in executive function and language hampers the composition component of written expression (Fletcher, Lyon, Fuchs, & Barnes, 2007). In addition to weak skills in handwriting and spelling, poor writers show problems in generating text. They are more likely to have shorter and less “interesting” essays, produce poorly organized text at both the sentence and paragraph levels, and be delayed in their acquisition and/or use of declarative, procedural, and conditional knowledge about writing. Furthermore, “poor writers are less likely to revise spelling, punctuation, grammar, or the substantive nature of their text to increase communication clarity” (Hooper et al., 1994, p. 386).

There is some evidence that, after accounting for difficulties in handwriting and spelling, there is a subgroup of children whose difficulties in written expression are restricted to composition. Students typically struggle in one or more of the following areas: capitalization and punctuation; word and text fluency; sentence construction; genre-specific discourse structures; planning processes; and reviewing and revising processes.

The following are specific indicators of a disability in written composition that are summarized from several sources:

- Word omissions (e.g., They ran to bus vs. They ran to *the* bus)
- Word order errors (e.g., *I and my mom* were here)
- Incorrect verb and pronoun use (e.g., *We is* running fast; *me and him* are here)
- Subject-verb disagreement (e.g., The monster *have* five *eyes*)
- Use of simple, rather than complex, sentence structures – particularly at the middle and high school levels
- Word ending errors (e.g., He *laughing* vs. He *laughed*; He is *dyslexia* vs. He is *dyslexic*)
- Lack of punctuation and capitalization
- Discrepancy between oral and written language

- Problems with cohesion (e.g., lack of transition words to link ideas)
- Problems with coherence (e.g., poor sentence organization and intra- and inter-paragraph organization)
- Word-retrieval problems (e.g., use of vague or general words—*thing, stuff, good*— instead of specific or precise vocabulary)

(Fletcher, Lyon, Fuchs, & Barnes, 2007; Hooper et al., 1994; Wakely, Hooper, de Kruif, & Swartz, 2006)

Assessment and Progress Monitoring

Thorough assessment of written expression must include an analysis of basic writing skills (skills of transcription) as well as compositional (generational) skills. Work samples should be carefully examined for the above errors.

Examples of Assessment Instruments:

- *Process Assessment of the Learner, 2nd Edition (PAL-II): Diagnostic for Reading and Writing*, (Harcourt). This is a comprehensive instrument that thoroughly assesses handwriting fluency and legibility, spelling, and composition skills for students for Grades K-6. It can also be used to reveal error patterns in older, remedial students, but standard scores will not be generated.
- *Test of Written Language, Fourth Edition (TOWL-4)* (Pearson Assessments). Assesses capitalization, punctuation, spelling (ability to form letters into words), vocabulary (word usage), syntax (sentence combining), grammar, story construction.

To monitor progress, timed writing CBM can be administered individually or to a group using grade-appropriate story starters. (AIMSweb provides 125 story starters across grades 1-8.) Scoring writing CBM commonly includes three procedures:

- total words written (TWS)
- words spelled correctly (WSC)
- correct writing sequences (CWS)

Other scoring procedures may be applied, such as: number of long words/characters per word; number of different words; number of nouns, verbs, adjectives, etc.; correct capitalization; correct punctuation marks; words per sentence; and number of complete sentences. (*The ABCs of CBM*, Hosp, Hosp, and Howell, 2007)

Interventions

Successful instruction draws clear linkages among oral language, reading, and written language. As in reading-related skills, effective instruction for students with disabilities in written expression must be systematic, explicit, and intensive (Lyon, 1996b). Classroom-level instruction that involves *Self-Regulated Strategy Development (SRSD)*, developed by Graham and Harris (2005), have been shown to be significant in improving writing performance for students with learning disabilities (Fletcher, Lyon, Fuchs, & Barnes, 2007).

Comprehensive instruction includes intervention at all levels of generational composition, including

- mechanics (capitalization and punctuation);
- word (grammar, including more mature synonyms, antonyms for verbs, adjectives, and adverbs);
- sentence construction;
- paragraph construction;
- multi-paragraph essays.

Websites with information on research and instruction:

The Access Center: <http://www.k8accesscenter.org/index.php>

Writing Next: Effective Strategies to Improve Writing of Adolescents in Middle and High School. Graham & Perin, 2007. Addresses 11 strategies to help 4th – 12th grade students improve their writing.

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4. BASIC READING SKILL

Definition and Implications

Learning to read is not like learning to speak. The human brain is hard-wired to learn spoken language and it is therefore, a naturally occurring process (Shaywitz, 2003). Typically, simply exposing hearing children to spoken language allows them to acquire and produce speech. Learning to read, however, is not “natural” for children. It has to be explicitly taught; exposure to text and print is not enough for the majority of the population.

In 1997, the National Reading Panel (NRP) was established in order to assess the status of research-based knowledge, including the effectiveness of various approaches to teaching children to read. The NRP identified 5 components to reading instruction that are essential for a student to learn to read. These 5 components are also referenced in IDEA 2004 and the Federal Regulations. The 5 essential components are phonemic awareness, phonics, reading fluency, comprehension and vocabulary.

For most of the student population identified with learning disabilities, a breakdown occurs in their basic reading skill (BRS). BRS difficulty includes problems with phonemic awareness and/or phonics. That is, students struggle to identify individual sounds and manipulate them; to identify printed letters and the sounds associated with those letters, or to decode written language. It is also typical for these students to struggle with spelling, or encoding. However, it should be noted that not all students with encoding difficulties have BRS difficulties.

It should be noted that in reading research and in clinical contexts, a breakdown in basic reading skill is frequently referred to as dyslexia. While schools tend not to use this term, instruction and intervention should align with the underlying need for BRS acquisition.

Characteristics and Assessments

The ability to understand letters and the sounds they represent is a prerequisite skill for reading comprehension. While many people think that learning phonics is something children should learn in kindergarten and 1st grade, many students do not, particularly if phonics has not been taught systematically and explicitly. Difficulty in decoding words impacts the ability to comprehend text and may be misidentified as a disability in the area of reading comprehension. Therefore, educators should carefully plan how they will assess a student's reading abilities.

At the kindergarten and first grade level, it is best to assess whether students can identify letters, as well as consonant and short vowel sounds, through teacher-made or formal assessments.

If letters and sounds are not mastered, the student's phonemic awareness should be assessed. "Phonemic awareness refers to the ability to notice, identify, and manipulate the individual sounds—phonemes—in spoken words." (Shaywitz, 2003, p. 51) For example, can the student identify that the word "cat" has 3 distinct sounds: /c/ /a/ /t/? Can they blend those sounds together to make one word? Assessment tools for both of these areas (phonics and phonemic awareness) include the Comprehensive Test of Phonological Processing, Second Edition (CTOPP-2) and Test of Word Reading Efficiency, Second Edition (TOWRE-2). The Dynamic Indicators of Basic Literacy Early Skills (DIBELS Next) is also an effective tool. There are many informal assessments that can be conducted as well.

At the upper grade levels, assessment should start at higher skill levels and then funnel down to the more basic skills. Therefore, it is recommended to start at the reading fluency level. If students cannot decode sentences fluently, then word level reading should be assessed. Teachers should determine if students can read words in isolation from a list. If the student is not able to do this accurately, then assessment should address single syllable words, and then vowel sounds. Many older students with BRS deficits have not mastered their vowel sounds, and those who have tend to struggle to decode multi-syllable words. Formal assessments for these skills include the Test of Silent Contextual Reading Fluency, Second Edition (TOSCRF-2), Test of Silent Word Reading Fluency, Second Edition (TOSWRF-2), TOWRE-2 and DIBELS Next.

If older students have not mastered their consonant and vowel sounds, it may be prudent to assess their phonemic awareness. Many of these students don't understand that words are made up of individual sounds that can be segmented and blended. The CTOPP-2 can be used with this age group as well.

Work samples should also be examined. Many students who struggle with BRS write using simpler language in their writing than in their oral vocabulary (typically 1-2 syllable words), and often jumble the letters in the words. They may have the correct letters, but in the wrong order. This is indicative of difficulties with sounding out what they are writing and relying heavily on their visual memory in attempting to spell.

When examining work samples, educators should look for patterns. Does the student have any words or vowel patterns they can spell or use consistently? Do they consistently use all of their short vowel sounds correctly? Do they understand the "magic e" rule? Work samples are extremely informative about concepts students have mastered, as well as those they have not.

If students do have the skills to decode at grade or age level accurately, but not fluently, then this may not be a basic reading skill issue. Reading fluency skills are addressed following basic reading skill.

Intervention

For all students with basic reading skill deficits, instruction must be systematic, direct and explicit. Instruction must be targeted to the student's unique needs and focus on areas of skill breakdown.

Systematic instruction progresses from simple to complex and follows a predetermined scope and sequence for instruction. Time should be built into lessons for independent practice and review of previously mastered skills.

In addition, because every year that a student misses out on grade-level reading, they also miss learning grade-level vocabulary, all reading interventions need to include enriched language experiences. These include listening to, talking about, and telling stories (Shaywitz, p.262).

A key component of effective intervention is the provision of ample opportunity for practice. Students with BRS deficits need significantly more practice on skills in order to be not only accurate, but fluent with the skill. Teachers need to teach to mastery, not just accuracy.

Students who have breakdowns at the phonemic awareness level should be taught how to segment and blend words. Lessons should be brief (10-15 minutes per day) and should have two or three focused activities. In *Language Essentials for Teachers of Reading and Spelling (LETRS), Module 2*, Louisa Moats provides the following guidelines for teaching phonological skills:

- Build proficiency at segmenting and blending individual phonemes in words with two or three phonemes
- Gradually move through the developmental progression of task difficulty. The object is to roam around in phonological space at the appropriate level of difficulty
- Emphasize oral production of words, syllables, and sounds. After hearing sounds, children should say them, paying attention to how the sounds feel when they are formed
- Always show children what you want them to do [model]. Do one together, and then let the children do one
- Give immediate corrective feedback. For example, if the child gives a letter name instead of a sound, tell him or her the difference and elicit the correct response
- Think 'multisensory.' Use concrete objects—such as fingers, chips, blocks, coins, or felts—to represent speech sounds. Inject movement into the activity
- Letters reinforce awareness once children have the idea. Phoneme awareness, reading and spelling are reciprocal; each benefits the others (Moats,p.19)

There are many reading programs that incorporate these guidelines. As Sally Shaywitz explained, “the specific program chosen from among them is far less important than the provision of systematic, explicit instruction in phonemic awareness and phonics, and then teaching children how to apply this knowledge to reading and writing” (Shaywitz, p. 263).

When teaching phonics, all of the rules around systematic, explicit and direct instruction continue to apply. There are many ways to teach phonics well, however, it works best if there is a daily routine at the beginning of each reading lesson. Again, Louisa Moats provides recommendations from her LETRS Module 7 for what the routine should include:

- Set up a goal and purpose for the lesson
- Review what has been taught, with the goal of accurate and fluent response
- Identify and isolate phonemes: Listen for sounds, pronounce sounds, and use oral-motor cues to enhance speech sound awareness
- Teach alphabet names, sequence, and letter formation, until they are known

- Link the sound with its symbol: Introduce a new sound-symbol concept or association, following a planned progression
- Apply phoneme-grapheme associations to reading real and nonsense words
- Extend to word study: sorts, chains, maps, families
- Spell by sound-symbol association; say word, segment sounds, spell, check, say word again
- Recognize and spell irregular ('memory') words
- Use speed drills as necessary to increase fluency in well-learned skills
- Write words, phrases, and sentences to dictation
- Read decodable sentences and books for fluency and meaning (Moats p. 19-20)

While interventions for BRS deficits tend to result in more rapid success with younger children, there is ample research to show that older students can learn these skills and become effective readers with the right instruction. It is never too late to teach someone how to read.

Progress Monitoring

Progress Monitoring should occur at the student's instructional level and should be specific to the skills they are being taught. However, periodic benchmark assessment should occur to compare student performance with that of peers.

Curriculum Based Measures (CBM) are well researched and can be used to monitor student's progress toward mastery of concepts. CBM were developed to permit frequent assessment of student growth on targeted skills. They also help to guide instructional practices and determine when changes in intensity, duration, or intervention are needed.

Tools that can be used to monitor progress in BRS include DIBELS Next, AIMSweb, Monitoring Basic Skills Progress (MBSP), and other Curriculum Based Measures (CBM).

5. READING FLUENCY SKILLS

Definition and Implications

Reading fluency refers to the ability to read words accurately, quickly and effortlessly. Additionally, fluency skills include the ability to read with appropriate expression and intonation or prosody. Fluency therefore relies on three key skills: accuracy, rate, and prosody.

Reading fluency can and should vary, even for skilled readers, depending on the type of text (narrative, expository, poetry), familiarity with the vocabulary, background knowledge of the content, and the amount of practice the student has had with a particular text or type of text. Fluency comes from many successful opportunities to practice reading (Lambert, 2007).

Fluency is a necessary but not sufficient component for comprehension. It is, however, the bridge that links accurate word decoding to comprehension (Rasinski, 2004). The ability to read fluently allows readers to free up processing "space" so that they can comprehend, make connections to the text and acquire new vocabulary. Typically, students who cannot read fluently show a significant lag in reading comprehension skills as well.

Characteristics and Assessments

It is important to understand the difference between a basic reading skill (BRS) deficit and a reading fluency deficit. Students who struggle with fluency typically present in two distinct profiles. The first includes students who struggle with accuracy, rate and prosody; the second includes those who struggle with rate and prosody only. Students who struggle with reading accuracy should be assessed for possible BRS deficits. Typically, these students need instruction in phonemic awareness and phonics, and therefore, the fluency interventions alone will not result in as great an improvement.

Students who only struggle with reading rate and prosody (how fast they read and if they read with expression) are those who truly have a fluency disability and will benefit most from fluency interventions. Typically these students will also struggle with any rapid automatic naming tasks such as identifying colors, letter names, numbers, names of familiar items and so on.

Fluency deficits may compound other reading deficits. Disfluent readers are exposed to significantly fewer words than those who are strong readers. If these skills are not remedied early, the cumulative lack of exposure to words becomes extremely challenging to reconcile. Students who are struggling to read are less motivated to read, reducing exposure to vocabulary, a critical element of reading comprehension. As a student progresses through school, a breakdown in fluency can make it extraordinarily difficult to keep up with the intensity and high volume of reading required for secondary and post-secondary education.

There are many assessments that can measure reading fluency. Again, it is important to attend to accuracy while conducting fluency measures. If a student struggles with accuracy, it is important to assess the underlying basic reading skills.

Some examples of assessments that measure fluency or that include fluency measures are:

- Test of Word Reading Efficiency, Second Edition (TOWRE-2);
- Test of Silent Word Reading Fluency, Second Edition (TOSWRF-2);
- Gray Oral Reading Test-4 (rate and accuracy scaled score combined);
- AIMSweb progress monitoring measures;
- Dynamic Indicators of Basic Early Literacy Skills (DIBELS Next);
- Qualitative Reading Inventory-4 (QRI-4);
- Texas Primary Reading Inventory (TPRI).

Intervention and Progress Monitoring

The earlier reading fluency intervention is provided, the more likely it is that students will respond. “Once serious fluency problems have developed, they can be resistant to remediation.” (Spear-Swerling, 2006) Joe Torgesen and his colleagues have found that reading fluency is the hardest area to improve when intervention has not occurred early enough. This is not to say that fluency cannot be improved, rather that early identification and intervention are most likely to result in complete remediation.

It is important to note that when intervening for reading fluency, an overemphasis on rate alone can have a detrimental effect on overall reading ability. Direct, explicit instruction is required for students to improve all three components of fluency: accuracy, rate and prosody. Reading rate develops as a function of efficient decoding skills, opportunities for successful practice, and learning to read with expression (Rasinski, 2004, B).

A good fluency intervention program includes frequent opportunities to practice reading. According to the National Reading Panel, guided oral reading in small groups is sufficient for “typical” children, however, it should not be the sole technique used for teaching fluency to students with an identified disability in this area (NRP, 2000). Teachers should model reading fluency, students should work in pairs, and chunking or phrasing should be explicitly taught. Other strategies include simultaneous oral reading, reader’s theater, and having students chart fluency rates as they improve.

J.J. Pikulski and D.J. Chard identified the following nine steps to building fluency in their article *Fluency: Bridge between decoding and reading comprehension*:

- Develop orthographic/phonological foundations (phonemic awareness, letter knowledge, phonics)
- Increase vocabulary and oral language skills
- Effectively teach high-frequency vocabulary and provide adequate practice
- Teach common word-parts and spelling patterns
- Effectively teach decoding skills and provide adequate practice

- Provide students with appropriate text to assist in building fluent reading
- Use guided, oral repeated reading strategies for struggling readers
- Support, guide and encourage wide-reading
- Implement appropriate screening and progress monitoring assessments (Pikulski & Chard, 2005)

There are numerous tools available to monitor fluency. As listed above, AIMSweb, DIBELS Next and other Curriculum Based Measures are available with multiple forms that allow frequent administration. The key to progress monitoring fluency is to do the frequent monitoring at the student's instructional level (student can read accurately with 95-100% accuracy), but to benchmark at least 3 times per year at grade level. The progress monitoring will be sensitive enough to show growth and gain as a result of instruction, and the benchmarking will help keep the ultimate goal in mind.

6. READING COMPREHENSION

Definition and Implications

A disability in the area of reading comprehension affects a student's ability to understand and make meaning of text. The RAND Reading Study Group defines reading comprehension as "the process of simultaneously extracting and constructing meaning through interaction and involvement with written language" (RRSG, 2002). Reading comprehension is a complicated set of processes that has been studied relatively little compared to the other areas of reading. In spite of the lack of research on reading comprehension *only* disabilities, there is consensus that all students with any type of reading disability benefit from direct, systematic, explicit instruction in reading comprehension skills and strategies.

It is most common for students to have basic reading skill (BRS) deficits combined with comprehension deficits, and/or fluency deficits. If this is the case, it is critical to instruct on the basic skill deficits *as well* as the comprehension deficits. Although it tends to be more unusual for a student to have a comprehension only deficit, this can occur. A reading comprehension deficit assumes that basic reading skills are intact and that the student can read fluently without errors. Students with a reading comprehension disability are typically not identified until the shift occurs from *learning to read*, to *reading to learn*. In most cases, this is around the third or fourth grade.

Characteristics

Reading comprehension encompasses a multi-faceted set of skills. First, and foremost, children with this deficit may have more basic struggles in the area of oral language including new vocabulary development. In *Overcoming Dyslexia*, Sally Shaywitz determined that a child learns about seven new words per day, which amounts to three thousand words per year (Shaywitz, 2003). If students struggle with acquiring oral language, this will certainly impair their ability to comprehend written language. Typically students who struggle in this area use smaller words and need significantly more exposure to new words. These students may also be challenged by how to form sentences. Their ability to understand what makes a complete sentence and what order to put words in may be impaired.

For students with breakdowns in language comprehension, phonological processing is often intact. Nevertheless, a student must be able to understand oral language before they can comprehend written language. If there are gaps in listening comprehension, it is likely there will be gaps in reading comprehension as well. While gaps in oral language are often a contributing factor to reading comprehension, not all students with reading comprehension disorders have oral language deficits.

Another area that can affect comprehension is working memory. The demands of reading new information, holding on to it, connecting it with previously learned information and applying the new learning can be overwhelming for some students. In addition, it is significantly more difficult for students with working memory deficits to learn new vocabulary introduced in a novel setting than when it is directly taught.

There are also several other processes that must occur for a student to comprehend well. These include the ability to infer, monitor comprehension, and be sensitive to story structure. To make inferences the student must draw conclusions from text or “read between the lines.” Comprehension monitoring is one of the most important and effective strategies used by effective readers. It requires the reader to “identify inconsistencies in the text, gaps in understanding, or the need to seek information from other parts of the text” (Catlido & Cornoldi, 1998). Students who are poor readers do not stop when they are confused by text and will not check for understanding during the reading process.

Finally, story structure sensitivity is an important contributor to reading comprehension. Each genre in literature has its own distinctive linguistic style and structure clues. Understanding the implications of story titles, paragraph beginnings and conclusions, bulleted points, and use of illustrations, for example, fosters stronger comprehension of text. Poor readers do not attend to these details.

Assessments

Unfortunately, there are not assessments for accurately measuring all aspects of reading comprehension. As was noted in the RAND Reading Study Group Report, current, widely used comprehension assessments are heavily focused on only a few tasks: reading for immediate recall, reading for the gist of the meaning, and reading to infer or disambiguate word meaning. Assessment procedures to evaluate learners’ capacities to modify old or build new knowledge structures, to use information acquired while reading to solve a problem, to evaluate texts on particular criteria, or to become absorbed in reading and develop affective or aesthetic responses to text have occasionally been developed for particular research programs but have not influenced standard assessment practices. Because knowledge, application, and engagement are the crucial consequences of reading with comprehension, assessments that reflect all three are needed (RRSGR, 2002).

The easiest aspect of comprehension to measure is that of vocabulary. Two common assessments are the Peabody Picture Vocabulary Test, Fourth Edition (PPVT-4) and the Test of Word Knowledge (TOWK). A speech-language pathologist (SLP) should be consulted to rule-out speech-language impairments if a deficit in expressive or receptive language is suspected. The SLP can also be very helpful in assessing any area related to vocabulary development.

Examples of assessments for passage comprehension (typically retell and inference) include the Diagnostic Assessment of Reading Second Addition (DAR-2), Qualitative Reading Inventory-V (QRI-V), Developmental Reading Assessment 2 (DRA-2), and other Informal Reading Inventories. Passage reading fluency assessments that are related to reading comprehension include the Aimsweb Maze CBM or other CBM maze passages.

Intervention and Progress Monitoring

In spite of the fact that assessment tools are limited for identifying specific reading comprehension deficits, there is good news about reading comprehension interventions. Both specific skills instruction and strategy instruction have been shown to result in very positive outcomes.

As the name implies, specific skills instruction includes direct instruction on improving the skills required to be a successful reader and can include vocabulary instruction, instruction on how to find the main idea, fact finding and making inferences. Teachers should model and coach students in these skills. Instruction must be explicit.

Strategy instruction is “viewed as [instruction in] cognitive processes requiring decision making and critical thinking” (Clark & Uhry, 1995). This includes instruction on activating prior knowledge, comprehension monitoring, and understanding how to read for different purposes.

Regardless of the type of intervention, in order to be effective, comprehension instruction must be explicit, systematic, and provide multiple opportunities for practice. The National Reading Panel outlined the following seven categories of text comprehension instruction which have a solid, established scientific basis:

- 1) Comprehension monitoring, where readers learn how to be aware of their understanding of the material
- 2) Cooperative learning, where students learn reading strategies together
- 3) Use of graphic and semantic organizers (including story maps), where readers make graphic representations of the material to assist comprehension
- 4) Question answering, where readers answer questions posed by the teacher and receive immediate feedback
- 5) Question generation, where readers ask themselves questions about various aspects of the story
- 6) Story structure, where students are taught to use the structure of the story as a means of helping them recall story content in order to answer questions about what they have read
- 7) Summarization, where readers are taught to integrate ideas and generalize them from the text information (National Reading Panel, 2000)

While many of these strategies are effective in isolation, they are far more powerful and produce greater effect sizes when used in combination in a multiple-strategy method.

As with the area of assessment, there are significantly fewer progress monitoring tools available to measure the specific areas of comprehension. AIMSweb and Ed Checkup do have maze progress monitoring tools that measure overall comprehension.

Websites with information on research and instruction (Reading/Literacy):

The Access Center: <http://www.k8accesscenter.org/index.php>

Center on Instruction: <http://www.centeroninstruction.org/>

What Works Clearinghouse: <http://ies.ed.gov/ncee/wwc/>

National Reading First Technical Assistance Centers:

The University of Texas at Austin: Center for Reading and Language Arts:

<http://www.texasreading.org/utcrcla/>

Florida State University: Florida Center for Reading Research: <http://www.fcrr.org/>

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7. MATHEMATICAL CALCULATION; AND 8. PROBLEM SOLVING

Definition and Implications

The federal and state statutes identify two specific areas of math disability. Mathematical calculation includes the knowledge and retrieval of facts and the application of procedural knowledge in calculation. Mathematical problem solving involves using mathematical computation skills, language, reasoning, reading, and visual-spatial skills in solving problems; essentially it is applying mathematical knowledge at the conceptual level.

Math disabilities have not been researched as extensively as reading disabilities. In a recent analysis, it was approximated that between 1996 and 2005, reading studies outnumbered mathematical studies by a ratio of 14:1 (Berch & Mazzocco, 2007). As a result, defining a math disability is somewhat challenging. Terms that have been associated with math disabilities include "developmental arithmetic disorder," "dyscalculia," and "specific mathematic disability." (Fletcher et al., 2007)

The National Council for Teachers of Mathematics (NCTM) divides math into two categories: content strands and mathematical processes.

The content strands include: 1) number and operations, 2) algebra, 3) geometry, 4) measurement, and 5) data analysis and probability (NCTM, 2000). These areas can be more simply thought of as the *what* of mathematical learning. Because of the diversity of skills required for these 5 areas, it is difficult to clearly define a construct or set of characteristics for students with a math disability (Berch & Mazzocco, 2007).

The area of mathematical processes in NCTM includes: 1) problem solving, 2) reasoning and proof, 3) connections, 4) communication, and 5) representation. These more closely align with mathematical problem solving disabilities and can be thought of as the *doing* of mathematics.

Typically, students with a mathematical calculation disability struggle in the area *number and operations* of the content strand. Students with a mathematical problem solving disability will often have problems within the category of mathematical processes. There is considerably more research available in the area of mathematical calculation than in the area of mathematical problem solving.

There is some evidence suggesting two subtypes of students who have disabilities in mathematics. One is a subset of children with a *math only* disability, the other has both *math and reading* disabilities. It is known that when reading and math deficits co-exist, both areas tend to be more severely impaired than when occurring in isolation.

In spite of the fact that relatively little research has been done in the area of math in general, a disability can have significant implications for students. "Mathematics, like literacy, is a primary method of communicating thoughts and ideas in our world. ...Without an appropriate level of competency in mathematics, students will find it difficult to manage many important aspects of their lives such as: budgeting; purchasing; practicing household tasks involving measurement including cooking and dispensing cleaning supplies, pesticides and medication; planning for retirement; and so forth" (Allsopp, Kyger & Lovin, 2007). Poor comprehension and achievement in mathematics can also limit students' career opportunities.

Characteristics and Assessment

The most commonly identified deficit in the area of mathematical calculation involves *number sense and operations*. Characteristics of students who have difficulties in calculation can include an inability to consistently identify written numbers and poor association of written numbers with the concrete representation of a quantity (number sense). Operations include the ability to understand calculations such as adding, subtracting, multiplying and dividing. This involves not only the ability to follow the procedures but to understand the meaning of the operations.

Developmentally, in most areas of mathematics, learning begins by using concrete materials, then moving to representational or semi-concrete drawings, and finally proceeding to abstract levels that use written symbols to represent mathematical constructs (Allsopp, Kyger & Lovin, 2007). Therefore, students with poor number sense may have the ability to add by counting on their fingers, but may not have moved to a more abstract and fluent stage of having memorized their math facts. Conversely, a student who has memorized their math facts may not understand operations at the conceptual level and this gap can impede future success in mathematics, as well. Teachers should assess for both the procedural and conceptual level of understanding in all areas.

Students with mathematical problem solving disabilities may have difficulties that include the inability to: identify important information; filter out unimportant information; and determine necessary steps in problem solving. An additional area of weakness can include metacognition or the inability to monitor one's own learning. Students with poor metacognition may not be able to evaluate their own work or implement strategies needed. Students may also have a passive approach to problem solving. For these students, math is a just a series of rote actions with no purpose other than to attain a right or wrong answer. They do not easily activate previously learned strategies or knowledge. Students with mathematical problem solving disabilities tend to use simple strategies such as counting on fingers when adding or counting each number rather than "counting up" (starting with the bigger number and counting from there) or retrieving memorized math facts.

Diagnostic mathematical assessments include both norm-referenced and criterion-referenced measures. Error analyses and student interviewing may also be very informative in determining specific areas of deficit and mastery (Fleishman & Manheimer, 1997). Curriculum-based measures are particularly helpful for monitoring progress. Textbooks may provide assessments that can provide useful information, as well.

Examples of norm-referenced mathematical diagnostic assessments are: KeyMath3 which assesses the understanding and application of critical math concepts and skills from counting through algebraic expressions; Stanford Diagnostic Mathematics Test, 4th ed. which provides both a screening assessment and a full diagnostic test; and Early Math Diagnostic Assessment (EMDA) which is designed to screen/assess students PreK through grade 3.

Of course, numerous broad achievement test batteries sample components of mathematics (often computation and reasoning/application/problem solving) in conjunction with other skill areas. Common examples are the Wide Range Achievement Battery, 4th ed. (WRAT-IV) and the Woodcock-Johnson Tests of Achievement IV (WJ-IV).

Progress Monitoring

Curriculum-based measures (CBM) for math include *early numeracy, computation, and concepts and applications*, with most of the research/technical work being done with computation (*The ABCs of CBM*, Hosp, Hosp, and Howell, 2007). Estimation measures are also now being developed. *Early numeracy* measures include missing numbers, number identification, oral counting, and quantity discrimination. *Computation* measures usually include specific skills within the curriculum such as multiplication facts. *Concepts and applications* taps various math skills related to specific curricula. Scoring of CBM for Math typically involves a determination of correct digits (CD) rather than correct problems. Another similar measure is the Monitoring Basic Skills Progress (MBSP) which provides a sampling of a year's curriculum and thus it differs for each grade level (Fuchs, Hamlett, & Fuchs, 1990, 1994, Pro-Ed).

For the secondary level, CBMs addressing *concepts and applications* tap mathematical skills taught in the upper grades, such as measurement, time, and graphical interpretation. *Maths Mate* is another tool that contains curriculum-based measures in all areas of math for grade levels 5-10. It consists of worksheets to be completed weekly followed by a test at the end of each month.

Foegen (2006) cites several progress-monitoring options for general mathematics at the middle school level. These include estimation, facts, and concepts-based measures. High school content areas such as algebra are being studied and tools developed. Currently, there are some measures for algebra basic skills, foundations, and content analysis (Foegen, 2006). Curriculum-embedded progress monitoring would also be appropriate for secondary students.

Tools are available from several publishers including AIMSweb, AAIMS (Algebra Assessment and Instruction – Meeting Standards), and Yearly Progress Pro (McGraw-Hill).

Interventions

Research on effective math interventions is emerging, but lags behind that found in the reading area (Fletcher et al., 2007). Some general research-based practices relating to math instruction have been identified below.

CRA is an intervention for mathematics instruction that research suggests can enhance the mathematics performance of students with learning disabilities. (See *The Access Center*: www.k8accesscenter.org which is endorsed by the U.S. Office of Special Education Programs.)

The CRA instructional sequence consists of three stages: concrete, representation, and abstract:

- **Concrete:** In the concrete stage, the teacher begins instruction by modeling each mathematical concept with concrete materials (e.g., red and yellow chips, cubes, base- ten blocks, pattern blocks, fraction bars, and geometric figures).
- **Representational:** In this stage, the teacher transforms the concrete model into a representational (semiconcrete) level, which may involve drawing pictures; using circles, dots, and tallies; or using stamps to imprint pictures for counting.
- **Abstract:** At this stage, the teacher models the mathematics concept at a symbolic level, using only numbers, notation, and mathematical symbols to represent the number of circles or groups of circles. The teacher uses operation symbols (+, −, ×, /) to indicate addition, multiplication, or division.

The CRA instructional strategy of progressing from **concrete to representational to abstract** is cited as being effective (Fleischner and Manheimer, 1997). This practice involves teaching students first at the concrete level, for example, learning that multiplication is just repeated addition using objects such as toothpicks or blocks. From the concrete, students can then start to generalize and apply this knowledge to representations of concrete items such as images of a yard with a fence for learning how to find area. Using the representation, students can identify how many squares fill the space. Finally, students can then move into abstract conceptual knowledge application in order to become more fluent. Fluency in math includes both accuracy and rate with the ultimate goal being able to apply mathematical understandings in relevant, authentic ways. An example is applying the formula for area (length x width) to determine how much tile is needed for a bathroom floor. In this example, memorized formulas as well as math facts are abstract concepts, but highly valuable in terms of building fluency toward solving the problem. If a student doesn't understand the practical application of why the formulas work the way they do, they are less likely to retain the information or generalize it.

Practice is a critical instructional component for supporting struggling learners. In this case, ample practice opportunity does **not** mean skill drills. While many teachers provide students with timed worksheets for practicing day after day, this is in fact negatively correlated with improving outcomes. Drill practice creates a lack of interest in students and typically results in frustration and anxiety. (Allsopp, Kyger and Lovin, 2007, p. 146)

Practice opportunities should be varied, motivational and whenever possible should occur in authentic contexts. For example, rather than doing paper and pencil activities around measuring perimeter and area, students can measure tiles on a floor or the area of a bulletin board, window or desk-top. Combining these activities with a specific purpose, for example, how to rearrange the classroom or design a new bulletin board, enhances the authenticity and meaning of these activities. It also shows students how mathematical concepts can be generalized to other life activities.

The following are important to remember when planning practice for struggling learners (Allsopp, Kyger and Lovin, 2007, p. 147):

1. Practice activities involve mathematics concepts and skills with which students have already demonstrated initial understanding
2. Practice activities provide students with multiple opportunities to respond using the target mathematics concept or skill
3. Practice activities match students' levels of understanding (e.g., concrete, representational or abstract)
4. Practice activities are designed to complement students' unique learning characteristics so that the students can best demonstrate their understanding students' responses (e.g. writing, speaking, drawing) are not significantly affected by their disability
5. The teacher provides directions and models how to perform the task required by the practice activity before the students begin
6. The teacher continually monitors students as they practice, providing corrective feedback and positive reinforcement for accuracy and effort
7. Practice activities include a process for measuring individual student performance
8. Subsequent instructional planning is based on the degree to which students demonstrate mastery of the concept or skill being practiced

Other research-based strategies that have been demonstrated to improve mathematical outcomes for students are identified below:

- **Structured Language Experiences:** Students are encouraged to use their own language to describe their mathematical understandings. This practice helps students develop and improve metacognition (important to problem solving) through talking, writing, drawing or performing.
- **Structured Cooperative Learning Groups or Peer Tutoring:** For struggling learners, the activities should be highly structured with clearly defined tasks.
- **Progress Monitoring Students' Mathematical Understandings:** Progress monitoring should be used to: provide students with immediate, tangible feedback about their learning; provide teachers with data for making instructional decisions; and, help students with setting goals and enhancing metacognition. Progress monitoring data should also be used to communicate with parents regarding their child's progress.
- **Maintenance of Mastered Concepts and Skills:** Because memory is sometimes an area of difficulty for students with math disabilities, it is important to periodically review previously learned concepts and skills. An effective practice is to provide 5-10 minutes of daily "maintenance" time that could be done as a warm-up activity at the start of each class period. (Allsopp, Kyger and Lovin, 2007)

Websites with information on research and instruction in math:

The Access Center: <http://www.k8accesscenter.org/index.php>

Center on Instruction: <http://www.centeroninstruction.org/>

National Council for Teachers of Mathematics (NCTM): <http://www.nctm.org/>

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DIAGNOSTIC ASSESSMENTS - APPENDIX B

Diagnostic assessments may be used to measure a student's academic skill deficit. Listed below are assessment options that include appropriate ages for each assessment and an identified skill deficit marker range.

*Oral Expression

Test	Type	Age Range	Deficit Marker
OWLS-II	NR	3-21	8%ile or below
TELD-3	NR	2.0-7.11	8%ile or below
CASL	NR	3-21	8%ile or below
CELF-5	NR	5-21	8%ile or below
TOLD-4 Intermediate & Primary	NR	8-17.11 or 4-8	8%ile or below
EVT-2	NR	2.6 & up	8%ile or below
PPVT-4	NR	2-90	8%ile or below

*Written Expression

Test	Type	Age Range	Deficit Marker
TOWL-4	NR	9-17	8%ile or below
TEWL-3	NR	4.0-11	8%ile or below
OWLS-II	NR	5-21	8%ile or below

*Reading Fluency

Test	Type	Age Range	Deficit Marker
GORT-5	NR	6.0-18.11	8%ile or below
GSRT	NR	7.0-25	8%ile or below
DIBELS Next (ORF)	CBM	Grades 1-5	3 data points below the 8%ile
AIMSweb (ORF)	CBM	Grades 1-8	3 data points below the 8%ile
TOWRE-2	NR	6-24.11	8%ile or below
SRI	CBM	Grades K-12+	3 data points below the 8%ile

*Math Problem Solving

Test	Type	Age Range	Deficit Marker
Key Math-3 DA (Applications)	NR	Grades K-12	8%ile or below
TOMA-3	NR	Grades 3-12	8%ile or below
AIMSweb (concepts & applications)	CBM	Grades 2-8	3 data points below the 8%ile
PAL-II	NR	Grades K-6	8%ile or below
SMI	CBM	Grades 2-8+	3 data points below the 8%ile
Acuity	CR	Grades 3-10	2 or more predictive scores below the district 8%ile (percentage of points possible)

KEY:

CBM: Curriculum-Based Measurement

CR: Criterion Referenced Assessment

NR: Norm Referenced Assessment

*Language Comprehension

Test	Type	Age Range	Deficit Marker
CELF-5	NR	5-21	8%ile or below
PLS-5	NR	birth-7.11	8%ile or below
CASL	NR	3-21	8%ile or below
TELD-3	NR	2.0-7.11	8%ile or below
TOLD-4 Intermediate & Primary	NR	8-17.11 or 4-8	8%ile or below

*Basic Reading

Test	Type	Age Range	Deficit Marker
Tera-3	NR	3.6-8.6	8%ile or below
DIBELS	CBM	Grades K-3	8%ile or below
CTOPP	NR	5-24.11	8%ile or below
TOWRE	NR	6-24.11	8%ile or below
GDRT-2	NR	6-13.11	8%ile or below
Acuity	CR	Grades 3-10	2 or more predictive scores below the district 8%ile (percentage of points possible)

*Reading Comprehension

Test	Type	Age Range	Deficit Marker
GDRT-2	NR	6-13.11	8%ile or below
GSRT	NR	7-25	8%ile or below
AIMSweb (MAZE)	CBM	Grades K-8	3 data points below the 8%ile
Acuity	CR	Grades 3-10	2 or more predictive scores below the district 8%ile (percentage of points possible)

*Math Calculation

Test	Type	Age Range	Deficit Marker
Key Math-3 DA (Operations)	NR	Grades K-12	8%ile or below
TEMA-3	NR	Grades PreK-3	8%ile or below
TOMA-2	NR	Grades 3-12	8%ile or below
Key Math-3	NR	Grades K-12	8%ile or below
AIMSweb (calculation)	CBM	Grades 1-8	8%ile or below
AIMSweb (early numeracy)	CBM	Grades K-1	8%ile or below
PAL-II	NR	Grades K-6	8%ile or below
SMI	CBM	Grades 2-8+	3 data points below the 8%ile
Acuity	CR	Grades 3-10	2 or more predictive scores below the district 8%ile (percentage of points possible)

SLD ASSESSMENT GLOSSARY - APPENDIX C

Oral Expression

1. **OWLS-II:** Oral and Written Language Scale, Second Edition (OWLS-II) offers an assessment of written language skills in children and young adults. Its wide age range (5-21) gives you a broad-based record of growth. Three important skill areas:
 - Use of conventions (handwriting, spelling, punctuation)
 - Use of syntactical forms (modifiers, phrases, sentence structures)
 - Ability to communicate meaningfully (relevance, cohesiveness, organization)
2. **TELD-3:** Test of Early Language Development, Third Edition (TELD-3) fills the need for a well-constructed, standardized instrument, based on current theory that can be used to assess spoken language skills at early ages. TELD-3 now has two subtests, Receptive Language and Expressive Language, and yields an overall Spoken Language score. The test is quick and easy to administer and includes all necessary manipulatives.
3. **TOLD-4:** Test of Language Development, Fourth Edition (TOLD-4) provides six subtests that measure different components of spoken language:
 - a. Sentence Combining
 - b. Picture Vocabulary
 - c. Word Ordering
 - d. Relational Vocabulary
 - e. Morphological Comprehension
 - f. Multiple Meanings
4. **CASL:** Comprehensive Assessment of Spoken Language (CASL) for ages (3-21). Fifteen tests measure language-processing skills— comprehension, expression, and retrieval—in four language structure categories: Lexical/Semantic, Syntactic, Supralinguistic, and Pragmatic.
5. **CELF-5:** Clinical Evaluation of Language Fundamentals, Fifth Edition (CELF-5) Composite scores include Core Language, Receptive Language, Expressive Language, Language Structure, Language Content and Language Memory Indexes as Standard Scores. Ages (5-21)
6. **PPVT-4:** Picture Peabody Vocabulary Test, Fourth Edition (PPVT-4) Ages (2-90) Vocabulary comprehension
 - a. **EOWPVT:** The test has also been co normed with the Expressive One-Word Picture Vocabulary Test so that meaningful comparisons can be easily made between an individual's receptive and expressive language. Ages (2-18)
 - b. **ROWPVT:** The test has also been co normed with the Receptive One-Word Picture Vocabulary Test so that meaningful comparisons can be easily made between an individual's expressive and receptive language. Ages: (2-18)
7. **EVT-2:** Expressive Vocabulary Test The EVT-2 is an individually administered, norm-referenced instrument that assesses expressive vocabulary and word retrieval for children and adults. Age Range: 2 years, 6 months and older. Administration: Individual - 10 to 15 minutes.

Language Comprehension

1. **CELF-5:** Clinical Evaluation of Language Fundamentals, Fifth Edition (CELF-5) Composite scores include Core Language, Receptive Language, Expressive Language, Language Structure, Language Content and Language Memory Indexes as Standard Scores. Ages (5-21)

2. **PLS-5:** The Pre School Language Scale, Fifth Edition (PLS-5) is an individually administered test for identifying children from (0-7:11 years) who have a language disorder or delay and features updated norms and expanded language coverage. PLS-5 targets receptive and expressive language skills in the areas of attention, play, gesture, vocal development, social communication, vocabulary, concepts, language structure, integrative language skills, and phonological awareness.
3. **CASL:** Comprehensive Assessment of Spoken Language (CASL) for ages (3-21). Fifteen tests measure language processing skills— comprehension, expression, and retrieval—in four language structure categories: Lexical/Semantic, Syntactic, Supralinguistic, and Pragmatic
4. **TELD-3:** Test of Early Language Development, Third Edition (TELD-3) fills the need for a well-constructed, standardized instrument, based on current theory that can be used to assess spoken language skills at early ages. TELD-3 now has two subtests, Receptive Language and Expressive Language, and yields an overall Spoken Language score. The test is quick and easy to administer and includes all necessary manipulatives.
5. **TOLD-4:** Test of Language Development, Fourth Edition (TOLD-4) provides six subtests that measure different components of spoken language:
 - a. Sentence Combining
 - b. Picture Vocabulary
 - c. Word Ordering
 - d. Relational Vocabulary
 - e. Morphological Comprehension
 - f. Multiple Meanings

Written Expression

1. **TOWE:** Test of Written Expression (TOWE) can be administered to individuals or groups of students. It uses two assessment methods to evaluate a student's writing skills. The first method involves administering a series of 76 items that assesses different skills associated with writing. The second method requires students to read or hear a prepared story starter and use it as a stimulus for writing an essay (i.e., the beginning of the story is provided, and the writer continues the story to its conclusion). The TOWE provides a source of writing samples that can be used independently in a norm-referenced assessment of writing or as a component of a student's portfolio of written products.
2. **TEWL-3:** Test of Early Written Language, Third Edition (TEWL-3) includes two forms, each with a Basic Writing and a Contextual Writing subtest. It can be used as an individual assessment for children ages (4-11). It allows items to be profiled for diagnosis of strengths and weaknesses. It also provides direction for interpretation and instruction.
3. **OWLS-II:** Oral and Written Language Scales, Second Edition (OWLS-II) offers an assessment of written language skills in children and young adults. Its wide age range (3-21) gives you a broad-based record of growth. Three important skill areas:
 - a. Use of conventions (handwriting, spelling, punctuation)
 - b. Use of syntactical forms (modifiers, phrases, sentence structures)
 - c. Ability to communicate meaningfully (relevance, cohesiveness, organization)

4. **AIMSweb:** AIMSweb is a progress monitoring system based on direct, frequent, and continuous student assessment. The results are reported to students, parents, teachers, and administrators via a web-based data management and reporting system to determine response to intervention. AIMSweb offers assessments in a variety of areas:
 - a. **Spelling-** A random selection of graded spelling words are dictated at a set pace.
 - b. **Written Expression-** Students write stories after being given an orally presented prompt called a Story Started. The story is scored in one of three ways: Total Words Written; Correct Writing Sequences, or Words Spelled Correctly. This is the student's best writing, not their fastest writing.

5. **TOWL-4:** Test of Written Language The fourth edition of TOWL-4 Test of Written Language is a norm-referenced, comprehensive diagnostic test of written expression. It is used to (a) identify students who write poorly and, therefore, need special help, (b) determine students' particular strengths and weaknesses in various writing abilities, (c) document students' progress in special writing programs, and (d) measure writing in research. Ages: 9-17. Grades: 4-12.

Basic Reading

1. **TERA-3:** Test of Early Reading Ability, Third Edition (TERA-3) is a direct measure of the reading ability of young children ages (3-8). Rather than assessing children's "readiness" for reading, the TERA-3 assesses their mastery of early developing reading skills. Standard scores are provided for each subtest. An overall Reading Quotient is computed using all three-subtest scores. The examiner administers three subtests:
 - a. Alphabet: measuring knowledge of the alphabet and its uses
 - b. Conventions: measuring knowledge of the conventions of print
 - c. Meaning: measuring the construction of meaning from print.

2. **CTOPP-2:** Comprehensive Test of Phonological Processing, Second Edition (CTOPP-2) was developed to aid in the identification of individuals from (k-21) who may profit from instructional activities to enhance their phonological skills. The CTOPP-2 has four principal uses:
 - a. to identify individuals who are significantly below their peers in important phonological abilities
 - b. to determine strengths and weaknesses among developed phonological processes
 - c. to document an individual's progress in phonological processing as a consequence of special intervention programs, and
 - d. to serve as a measurement device in research studies investigating phonological processing.
 - e. The test contains the following subtests:
 - i. Elision
 - ii. Blending Words
 - iii. Sound Matching
 - iv. Memory for Digits
 - v. Nonword Repetition
 - vi. Rapid Color Naming
 - vii. Rapid Digit Naming
 - viii. Rapid Letter Naming
 - ix. Rapid Object Naming
 - x. Blending Nonwords
 - xi. Phoneme Isolation
 - xii. Segmenting Nonwords

3. **TOWRE-2:** Test of Word Reading Efficiency, Second Edition (TOWRE-2) is a standardized test composed of subtests for sight word reading efficiency (reading real words) and phonemic decoding efficiency (reading pseudo-words). It is an individually administered test for which the test taker reads aloud as many sight words or pseudo-words as possible in 45 seconds. Ages: 6-0 through 24-11. Testing Time: 5-10 minutes. Administration: Individual
4. **GDRT-2:** Gray Diagnostic Reading Test, Second Edition (GDRT-2) is a norm-referenced, reliable, and valid assessment of oral reading ability. Individually administered in 45-60 minutes, the GDRT-2 is appropriate for individuals aged 6-0 to 13-11. It can be used to assess students who have difficulty reading continuous print or who require an evaluation of specific abilities and weaknesses. Two parallel forms are provided, allowing you to monitor a student's reading progress over time. Teachers and reading specialists find this test a useful and efficient way to gauge reading skills progress.
5. **DIBELS Next:** Dynamic Indicators of Basic Early Literacy Skills (DIBELS) Next are a set of procedures and measures for assessing the acquisition of early literacy skills from (k-6th grade). They are designed to be short (one minute) fluency measures used to monitor the development of early literacy reading skills. DIBELS NEXT are comprised of seven measures to function as indicators of phonemic awareness, alphabetic principle, accuracy, and fluency with connected text, reading comprehension, and vocabulary. DIBELS Next was designed for use in identifying children having trouble in acquisition of basic early literacy skills in order to provide support early and prevent the occurrence of later reading difficulties.
6. **AIMSweb:** AIMSweb is a progress monitoring system based on direct, frequent, and continuous student assessment. The results are reported to students, parents, teachers, and administrators via a web-based data management and reporting system to determine response to intervention. AIMSweb offers assessments in a variety of areas:
 - a. **Early Literacy (Kindergarten and 1st Grade)**
 - b. **Letter Naming Fluency**-requires students to identify as many upper and lower case letter names as they can.
 - c. **Letter Sound Fluency**-requires students to identify as many lower case letter sounds as they can.
 - d. **Phonemic Segmentation Fluency**-requires students to say the sounds in words presented orally by an examiner.
 - e. **Nonsense Word Fluency**-requires students to identify and say the sounds in non-real words. It may be appropriate for monitoring the progress of older children with low skills in letter-sound correspondence.
7. **Acuity** is a learning-based assessment program for Math and Reading in grades 3-10, as well as Algebra. Available on the Web and in paper and pencil, Acuity aligns to state standards and delivers targeted instructional materials to help prepare students for NCLB exams. Acuity is designed to measure and report, and improve student progress on state learning standards, and to determine students' readiness for state tests.
8. **SCHOLASTIC READING INVENTORY™ (SRI)** is a research-based, computer-adaptive reading assessment program for students in Grades K–12 that measures reading comprehension on the Lexile Framework® for Reading. The most powerful feature of the SRI is its ability to administer fast and reliable low-stakes assessment to inform instruction and make accurate placement recommendations. Aligned to state tests, SRI helps educators forecast student achievement to those important goals

Reading Fluency

1. **GORT-5:** Gray Oral Reading Tests, Fifth Edition (GORT-5) provide a measure of growth in oral reading and an aid in the diagnosis of oral reading difficulties. Five scores give you information on a student's oral reading skills in terms of:
 - a. **Rate**—the amount of time taken by a student to read a story
 - b. **Accuracy**—the student's ability to pronounce each word in the story correctly
 - c. **Fluency**—the student's Rate and Accuracy Scores combined
 - d. **Comprehension**—the appropriateness of the student's responses to questions about the content of each story read
 - e. **Overall Reading Ability**—a combination of a student's Fluency (i.e., Rate and Accuracy) and Comprehension Scores
2. **GSRT:** Gray Silent Reading Test (GSRT) measures an individual's silent reading comprehension ability. The GSRT is a new, exciting addition to the Gray reading test battery. This test consists of two parallel forms each containing 13 developmentally sequenced reading passages with five multiple-choice questions. You can give the test to persons 7 years through 25 years of age. It can be given individually or to groups. Each form, of the test yields raw scores, grade equivalents, age equivalents, percentiles, and a Silent Reading Quotient.
3. **DIBELS NEXT:** Dynamic Indicators of Basic Early Literacy Skills (DIBELS NEXT) are a set of procedures and measures for assessing the acquisition of early literacy skills from (k-6th grade). They are designed to be short (one minute) fluency measures used to monitor the development of early literacy and early reading skills. DIBELS NEXT are comprised of seven measures to function as indicators of phonemic awareness, alphabetic principle, accuracy, and fluency with connected text, reading comprehension, and vocabulary. DIBELS NEXT was designed for use in identifying children having trouble in acquisition of basic early literacy skills in order to provide support early and prevent the occurrence of later reading difficulties.
4. **AIMSweb:** AIMSweb is a progress monitoring system based on direct, frequent, and continuous student assessment. The results are reported to students, parents, teachers, and administrators via a web-based data management and reporting system to determine response to intervention. AIMSweb offers assessments in a variety of areas. For reading fluency assessment, use the **Reading Fluency** probes.
5. **TOWRE-2:** Test of Word Reading Efficiency, Second Edition (TOWRE-2) is a standardized test composed of subtests for sight word reading efficiency (reading real words) and phonemic decoding efficiency (reading pseudo-words). It is an individually- administered test for which the test taker reads aloud as many sight words or pseudo-words as possible in 45 seconds. Ages: 6-0 through 24-11. Testing Time: 5-10 minutes. Administration: Individual.
6. **SCHOLASTIC READING INVENTORY™ (SRI)** is a research-based, computer-adaptive reading assessment program for students in Grades K–12 that measures reading comprehension on the Lexile Framework® for Reading. The most powerful feature of the SRI is its ability to administer fast and reliable low-stakes assessment to inform instruction and make accurate placement recommendations. Aligned to state tests, SRI helps educators forecast student achievement to those important goals.

Reading Comprehension

1. **GDRT- 2:** Gray Diagnostic Reading Test (GDRT-2) is a norm-referenced, reliable, and valid assessment of oral reading ability. Individually administered in 45-60 minutes, the GDRT-2 is appropriate for individuals aged 6-0 to 13-11. It can be used to assess students who have difficulty reading continuous print or who require an evaluation of specific abilities and weaknesses. Two parallel forms are provided, allowing you to monitor a student's reading progress over time. Teachers and reading specialists find this test a useful and efficient way to gauge reading skills progress.
2. **GSRT: Gray Silent Reading Test (GSRT)** measures an individual's silent reading comprehension ability. The GSRT is a new, exciting addition to the Gray reading test battery. This test consists of two parallel forms each containing 13 developmentally sequenced reading passages with five multiple-choice questions. You can give the test to persons 7 years through 25 years of age. It can be given individually or to groups. Each form, of the test yields raw scores, grade equivalents, age equivalents, percentiles, and a Silent Reading Quotient.
3. **AIMSweb:** AIMSweb is a progress monitoring system based on direct, frequent, and continuous student assessment. The results are reported to students, parents, teachers, and administrators via a web-based data management and reporting system to determine response to intervention. AIMSweb offers assessments in a variety of areas:
 - a. **Reading Maze-**A passage is read and students have to select the appropriate word from a series of choices within the passage.
4. **Acuity** is a learning-based assessment program for Math and Reading in grades 3-10, as well as Algebra. Available on the Web and in paper and pencil, Acuity aligns to state standards and delivers targeted instructional materials to help prepare students for NCLB exams. Acuity is designed to measure and report, and improve student progress on state learning standards, and to determine students' readiness for state tests.

Math Calculation

1. **AIMSweb:** AIMSweb is a progress monitoring system based on direct, frequent, and continuous student assessment. The results are reported to students, parents, teachers, and administrators via a web-based data management and reporting system to determine response to intervention. AIMSweb offers assessments in a variety of areas:
 - a. **Test of Early Numeracy (K-1st)**
 1. **Oral Counting-**requires students to orally count starting from 1 as high as they can.
 2. **Number Identification-**requires students to orally identify numbers.
 3. **Quantity Discrimination-**requires students to orally identify the bigger number from a pair of numbers.
 4. **Missing Number-**requires students to orally identify the missing number from a string of three numbers.
 - b. **Math Computation (Grades 1-8)**
 1. **Math Curriculum-Based Measurement and Multiple-Skill Math Fact Probes-**math facts probe for various types of math computation problems. The correct digits in the answer are scored. Grades 1-6.

2. **TEMA-3:** Test of Early Math Abilities, Third Edition (TEMA-3) measures the mathematics performance of children between the ages of (3-8). It is also helpful with older children who have learning problems in mathematics. It can be used as a norm-referenced measure or as a diagnostic instrument to determine specific strengths and weaknesses. The TEMA-3 is a way to measure progress in math, evaluate programs, screen for readiness, discover the bases for poor school performance in math, and identify gifted students, and guide instruction and remediation. The test measures both informal and formal concepts and skills in the following domains: numbering skills, number-comparison facility, and numeral literacy, mastery of number facts, calculation skills, and understanding of concepts. It has two parallel forms each containing 72 items.

3. **TOMA-2:** Test of Math Abilities, Second Edition (TOMA-2) was developed for use in Grades (3-12). It measures math performance on the two traditional major skill areas in math (i.e., story problems and computation) as well as attitude, vocabulary, and general application of mathematics concepts in real life. This norm-referenced test can be used to monitor progress, evaluate programs, and do research. The TOMA-2 has five subtests, four in the core battery (Vocabulary, Computation, General Information, and Story Problems), and one supplemental subtest (Attitude toward Math).

4. **Key Math-3:** Key Math 3 is a comprehensive, norm-referenced measure of essential mathematical concepts and skills. Key Math 3 DA content covers the full spectrum of math concepts and skills that are typically taught in kindergarten through ninth grade and can be used with individuals aged (4-21) years who are functioning at these instructional levels. The items are grouped into 10 subtests that represent three general math content areas:
 - a. **Basic Concepts (conceptual knowledge)**
 - b. **Operations (computational skills)**
 - c. **Applications (problem solving)**

5. **Acuity** is a learning-based assessment program for Math and Reading in grades 3-10, as well as Algebra. Available on the Web and in paper and pencil, Acuity aligns to state standards and delivers targeted instructional materials to help prepare students for NCLB exams. Acuity is designed to measure and report, and improve student progress on state learning standards, and to determine students' readiness for state tests.

6. **SCHOLASTIC MATH INVENTORY™ (SMI)** is a research-based, computer-adaptive math assessment program for students in Grades 2 – 8+ that measures math understanding on The Quantile Framework® for Mathematics. The most powerful feature of SMI is its ability to administer fast and reliable low-stakes assessment to inform instruction and make accurate placement recommendations. Aligned to the Common Core State Standards, SMI helps educators forecast student achievement to those important goals.

Math Problem Solving

1. **AIMSweb:** AIMSweb is a progress monitoring system based on direct, frequent, and continuous student assessment. The results are reported to students, parents, teachers, and administrators via a web-based data management and reporting system to determine response to intervention. AIMSweb offers assessments in a variety of areas: Mathematics Concepts and Applications assess general mathematics problem-solving skills. Grades 2-8

2. **TOMA-2:** Test of Math Abilities, Second Edition (TOMA-2) was developed for use in grade (3-12). It measures math performance on the two traditional major skill areas in math (i.e., story problems and computation) as well as attitude, vocabulary, and general application of mathematics concepts in real life. This norm-referenced test can be used to monitor progress, evaluate programs, and do research. The TOMA-2 has five subtests, four in the core battery (Vocabulary, Computation, General Information, and Story Problems), and one supplemental subtest (Attitude toward Math).

3. **SCHOLASTIC MATH INVENTORY™ (SMI)** is a research-based, computer-adaptive math assessment program for students in Grades 2 – 8+ that measures math understanding on The Quantile Framework® for Mathematics. The most powerful feature of SMI is its ability to administer fast and reliable low-stakes assessment to inform instruction and make accurate placement recommendations. Aligned to the Common Core State Standards, SMI helps educators forecast student achievement to those important goals.
4. **Key Math-3:** The Key Math 3 is a comprehensive, norm-referenced measure of essential mathematical concepts and skills. Key Math 3 DA content covers the full spectrum of math concepts and skills that are typically taught in kindergarten through ninth grade and can be used with individuals aged (4-21) years who are functioning at these instructional levels. The items are grouped into 10 subtests that represent three general math content areas: Basic Concepts (conceptual knowledge), Operations (computational skills), Applications (problem solving).
5. **PAL-II:** Process Assessment of the Learner, Second Edition (PAL-II) Math measures the development of cognitive processes that are critical to learning math skills and actual math performance. Appropriate as either Tier 1, Tier 2 or Tier 3 evaluation tool. Grades K-6.
6. **Acuity** is a learning-based assessment program for Math and Reading in grades 3-10, as well as Algebra. Available on the Web and in paper and pencil, Acuity aligns to state standards and delivers targeted instructional materials to help prepare students for NCLB exams. Acuity is designed to measure and report, and improve student progress on state learning standards, and to determine students' readiness for state tests.

APPENDIX D

Student Name: _____
Grade: _____ Date: _____

GAP ANALYSIS WORKSHEET

Why we use GAP ANALYSIS:

- Helps determine if or how a student is responding to instruction
- Helps determine how intense instruction should be

How to Calculate the GAP (Remember that the Gap is ALWAYS calculated at CURRENT Grade level)

Step 1

- The Gap is determined by dividing the CURRENT benchmark by CURRENT performance
 - Then we determine if the Gap is significant (guideline: anything above 2.0 is significant)
- Step 2 What kind of progress is needed to close the gap?
- This step is determined by subtracting the CURRENT performance from the END OF YEAR benchmark
 - Divide this number by the amount of weeks left in the year
 - Is this a reasonable goal for this student?

OR

- Determine reasonable amount to be made up per week for this student
- Figure out how many weeks it will take for the student to accomplish this goal

STEP 1: DETERMINE GAP

Assessment used: _____

CURRENT GAP: _____

$$\frac{\text{Current Benchmark}}{\text{Current Performance}} = \frac{\text{Current Benchmark}}{\text{Current Performance}}$$

Is it Significant? Yes ___ No (2.0 or greater)

$$\frac{\text{Current Benchmark}}{\text{Current Performance}} = \frac{\text{Current Benchmark}}{\text{Current Performance}} \times \text{Number of weeks left in the year}$$

Step 2: GAP ANALYSIS

$$\frac{\text{End of Year Benchmark} - \text{Current Performance}}{\text{Number of weeks left in the year}} = \frac{\text{End of Year Benchmark} - \text{Current Performance}}{\text{Number of weeks left in the year}}$$

OR

$$\frac{\text{End of Year Benchmark} - \text{Current Performance}}{\text{Number of weeks left in the year}} = \frac{\text{End of Year Benchmark} - \text{Current Performance}}{\text{Number of weeks left in the year}}$$

***Team to determine: Is closing the gap realistic for this student? Comments? Plan?**

GAP ANALYSIS WORKSHEET

Why we use GAP ANALYSIS:

- Helps determine if or how a student is responding to instruction
- Helps determine how intense instruction should be

Student Name: Allen
Grade: 6th Date: September 10

How to Calculate the GAP (Remember that the Gap is ALWAYS calculated at CURRENT Grade level)

Step 1

- The Gap is determined by dividing the CURRENT benchmark by CURRENT performance
- Then we determine if the Gap is significant (**guideline: anything above 2.0 is significant**)

Step 2 What kind of progress is needed to close the gap?

- This step is determined by subtracting the CURRENT performance from the END OF YEAR benchmark
- Divide this number by the amount of weeks left in the year
- Is this a reasonable goal for this student?

OR

- Determine reasonable amount to be made up per week for this student
- Figure out how many weeks it will take for the student to accomplish this goal

STEP 1: DETERMINE GAP

Assessment used: AIMSweb, words read correctly

$$\frac{137}{\text{Current Performance}} - \frac{58}{\text{Current Performance}} = \frac{2.36}{\text{Current Gap}}$$

CURRENT GAP: 2.36

Is it Significant? X Yes ___ No (2.0 or greater)

$$\frac{98}{\text{Needed to catch up in the year}} / \frac{30}{\text{weeks left in the year}} = \frac{3.27}{\text{how many/ much per week}}$$

Step 2: GAP ANALYSIS

$$\frac{156}{\text{End of Year Benchmark}} - \frac{58}{\text{Current Performance}} = \frac{98}{\text{Needed to catch up}}$$

$$\frac{98}{\text{Needed to catch up}} / \frac{2.5}{\text{how many/ much per week}} = \frac{39.2}{\text{number of weeks to meet goal}}$$

***Team to determine: Is closing the gap realistic for this student? Comments? Plan?** Yes, Intensive instruction needed with weekly PM

GAP ANALYSIS WORKSHEET

Why we use GAP ANALYSIS:

Student Name: Lexi
Grade: 9th Date: September 5

- Helps determine if or how a student is responding to instruction
- Helps determine how intense instruction should be

How to Calculate the GAP (Remember that the Gap is ALWAYS calculated at CURRENT Grade level)

- Step 1**
- The Gap is determined by dividing the CURRENT benchmark by CURRENT performance
 - Then we determine if the Gap is significant (guideline: anything above 2.0 is significant)
- Step 2** What kind of progress is needed to close the gap?
- This step is determined by subtracting the CURRENT performance from the END OF YEAR benchmark
 - Divide this number by the amount of weeks left in the year
 - Is this a reasonable goal for this student?
- OR**
- Determine reasonable amount to be made up per week for this student
 - Figure out how many weeks it will take for the student to accomplish this goal

STEP 1: DETERMINE GAP

Assessment used: Acuity (percentage of points obtained) CURRENT GAP: 2.2

77% (district average on Acuity A) / 35% = 2.2 Is it Significant? X Yes No (2.0 or greater)

Current Performance Gap = 2.2

Benchmark

44% / 16 weeks until Acuity C = 2.75% per week *
Needed to catch up in the year how many/ much per week

Step 2: GAP ANALYSIS

79% (district average on Acuity C) - 35% = 44% Needed to catch up

End of Year Benchmark

OR
44% / 1.5% points per week = 58% by Acuity C*
Needed to catch up how many/ much per week number of weeks to meet goal

***Team to determine: Is closing the gap realistic for this student? Comments? Plan?** Yes, Intensive instruction needed with weekly PM

GOAL SETTING IN READING WORKSHEET - APPENDIX E

Weekly Improvement Rates for Reading			
Grade	Modest Goal	Reasonable Goal	Ambitious Goal
1st – 2nd	1.0	1.5	2.0
3rd – 6th	.5	1.0	1.5

Calculating Goals

Steps:

1. **Multiply** the number of weeks available for instruction by the improvement rate chosen (modest, reasonable or ambitious number of words correct/week)
2. **Add** the total number of words to be gained for the year and the current baseline number of words correct per minute

Example:

- Susan is a 2nd grader who read 18 words correct/minute on November 1.
- There are 26 weeks left in the school year.

26 weeks x 2 words/week gain = 52 total words gained by end of year

52 words gained + 18 words correct now = 70 words read correct/min goal

Practice:

- Andrew is a 1st grader who read 22 words per minute on January 10.
- There are 19 weeks left in the school year.
- Use the formula to calculate a modest, a reasonable, and an ambitious goal for Andrew.

Modest	Reasonable	Ambitious

EXAMPLES OF CROSS-BATTERY FOR READING PERFORMANCE - APPENDIX F

Example 1

DOMAIN	ASSESSMENT TOOLS
Cognitive Functioning	WISC-V; WJ-IV; Cognitive Assessment System, Second Edition (CAS-2); SB-V; RIAS
Phonemic/Phonological Awareness	DIBELS Next; NEPSY II (Phonological Processing); WJ-IV (Sound Blending, Word Attack); C-TOPP-2; PAL-II; KTEA II (Nonsense Word Decoding)
Rapid Naming	DIBELS Next (Letter Naming); WJ-IV (Rapid Picture Naming); PAL-II; NEPSY II (Word Generation & Speeded Naming); C-TOPP-2
Verbal Memory Tests	TOMAL-II; Children's Memory Scales; NEPSY-II (Memory Scales); WRAML-II; California Verbal Learning Test-Children's version
Reading Fluency Measures	WJ-IV; WIAT-III; DIBELS Next (Oral Reading Fluency); KTEA-II (Word Reading Fluency); GORT-5; Curriculum Based Measurement
Visual Spatial Skills	NEPSY-II (Arrows, Design Copy); VMI-6th Edition; WJ-IV (Visualization); SB-V (Visual-Spatial Processing); KABC-II (Gestalt Closure); Rey Osterrieth Complex Figure Test; Bender Gestalt II
Attention	CAS-2 (Number Detection, Expressive Attention, Receptive Attention); WJ-IV (Numbers Reversed, Verbal Attention); KABC-II (Number Recall); NEPSY-II (Auditory Attention and Response Set); Behavior Scales (BASC-II, Conners)
Executive Functioning	Wisconsin Card Sort; Stroop Test; CAS-2; NEPSY-II; D-KEFS; BRIEF
Family History	Interview

Example 2

DOMAIN	ASSESSMENT TOOLS
Oral Reading Errors	DIBELS Next, WJ-IV (Phonetic Coding and Phonetic Coding-Extended); WIAT-III
Naming/Productive Vocabulary	Boston Naming Test; tests of rapid naming (such as those identified by Feifer)
Linguistic Working Memory	WISC-V (digit span, letter number sequencing); SB-V; CAS-2 (subtests that require the recall of strings of letters, numbers, or words in order)
Syntax & Semantics	CAS-2; SB-V (comprehension of sentences); Token Test (ability to follow instructions)

Mann, V.A. (2003). Language processes: Keys to reading disability. In H.L. Swanson, K.R. Harris, & S. Graham (Eds.), *Handbook of Learning Disabilities* (pp. 213-227). New York: The Guilford Press.

Example 3

The Cattell-Horn-Carroll (CHC) process encourages the assessment of specific cognitive domains that have been shown, through research, to be correlated with reading achievement. The recommended tests are the Woodcock-Johnson Tests of Cognitive and Achievement-Fourth Edition (WJ-IV). Again, these tests are recommended, but they are not the only measures of the research-based domains. In fact, the tests shown below are from instruments other than the WJ-IV. The CHC factors most highly correlated with reading include:

DOMAIN	ASSESSMENT TOOLS
Comprehension-Knowledge (Gc)	WISC-V (Similarities, Vocabulary, Comprehension); SB-V (Nonverbal Knowledge, Verbal Knowledge); KABC-II (Story Completion 5-6 years, Riddles, Expressive Vocabulary, Verbal Knowledge); DAS-II (Naming Vocabulary ages 2-6.6, Word Definitions, Verbal Similarities, Verbal Comprehension)
Short-term Memory (Gsm)	WISC-V (Digit Span, Letter-Number Sequencing); CAS-2 (word series); DAS-II (Recall of Digits Forward, Recall of Digits Backwards, Recall of Sequential Order); KABC-II (Hand Movements, Number Recall, Word Order); SB-V (Nonverbal Working Memory, Verbal Working Memory)
Auditory Processing (Ga)	CTOPP-2 (Elision, Blending Words, Phoneme Isolation)
Long-term Retrieval (Glr)	CAS-2 (Expressive Attention); KABC-II (Atlantis, Rebus); CTOPP-2 (RAN Cluster); DAS-II (Rapid Naming); KTEA-3 (Letter-Naming Facility, Object Naming Facility)
Processing Speed (Gs)	WISC-V (Symbol Search, coding); CAS-2 (Receptive Attention, Number Detection); DAS-II (Speed of Information Processing)

RESEARCH-BASED ASSESSMENT DOMAINS FOR READING ACHIEVEMENT - APPENDIX G

1. COGNITIVE FUNCTIONING

- Wechsler Intelligence Scale for Children-5th Ed. (WISC-V) INTEGRATED
- Woodcock Johnson IV Test of Cognitive Abilities (WJ-IV)
- Das-Naglieri Cognitive Assessment System, Second Edition (CAS-2)
- Stanford Binet Intelligence Scale V (SB V)
- Reynolds Intellectual Assessment Scales (RIAS)
- Differential Ability Scales-2nd Edition (DAS II)

2. PHONEMIC/PHONOLOGICAL AWARENESS

- Process Assessment of the Learner-2nd Edition (PAL-2)
- A Developmental Neuropsychological Assessment-2nd Edition(NEPSY II) (Phonological Processing)
- Comprehensive Test of Phonological Processing, Second Edition (CTOPP-2)
- DAS-II (Phonological Awareness)
- Kaufman Test of Education Achievement-2nd Edition (KTEA-II) (Phonological Awareness, Nonsense Word Decoding)
- Early Reading Success Indicator-(ERSI) (Phonological Processing)
- WJ-IV (Phonological Processing)
- Test of Phonological Awareness Skills (TOPAS)
- DIBELS Next

3. RAPID NAMING TESTS

- NEPSY II (Word Generation and Speeded Naming)
- KTEA II (Naming Facility)
- PAL-II (RAN Letters, RAN Words, RAN-Digits, RAN-Words and Digits)
- CTOPP-2 (Rapid Color Naming, Rapid Digit Naming, Rapid Letter Naming)
- WJ-IV (Rapid Picture Naming)
- DAS II (Rapid Color Naming, Rapid Picture Naming, Rapid Picture and Color Naming)
- ERSI (RAN Letters, Speeded Naming)
- Controlled Oral Word Association (COWA) “FAS” test
- DIBELS Next (Letter Naming)

4. VERBAL MEMORY TESTS

- Test of Memory and Learning-2 (TOMAL-2)
- Children’s Memory Scale (CMS)
- Rey Auditory Verbal Learning Test
- NEPSY II Memory Scales
- Wide Range Assessment of Memory and Learning (WRMAL-II)
- California Verbal Learning Test-Children’s Version
- RIAS

5. **READING FLUENCY TESTS**

- Gray Oral Reading Test-5th Edition (GORT-5)
- Woodcock Johnson Tests of Achievement
- Wechsler Individual Achievement Test-3rd Edition (WIAT III)
- PAL II
- Curriculum Based Measurement
- Informal Reading Inventory
- DIBELS Next (Oral Reading Fluency)

6. **VISUAL SPATIAL SKILLS**

- NEPSY-II (Visuospatial)
- DAS-II (Spatial)
- SB-V (Visual-Spatial Processing)
- RIAS (NIX Index)
- WJ-IV (Visualization)
- KABC-II (Gestalt Closure)
- Bender Gestalt II
- Berry Visual Motor Integration Test-6th Edition (VMI)
- Jordon Left Right Reversal Test
- Rey Osterrieth Complex Figure Test

7. **ATTENTION**

- NEPSY-II (Auditory Attention and Response Set)
- CAS-2 (Number Detection, Receptive Attention)
- WJ-IV (Numbers Reversed, Auditory Attention)
- KABC-II (Number Recall)
- Behavior Scales (Conners 3, BASC-II, ADDES, ACTers)
- Test of Everyday Attention of Children (Tea-CH)

8. **EXECUTIVE FUNCTIONING**

- Behavior Rating Inventory of Executive Function (BRIEF)
- NEPSY-II
- CAS-2
- Delis-Kaplan Executive Functioning Scale (D-KEFS)
- Wisconsin Card Sort Test
- Category Test
- Stroop Test

This list contains commonly used assessment instruments and is not intended to be all inclusive. A variety of other useful assessment instruments are available. The list was developed in consultation with Dr. Steven Feifer and additional information is available in this book, *The Neuropsychology of Reading Disorders: Diagnosis and Intervention Workbook*.

RESEARCH-BASED ASSESSMENT DOMAINS FOR MATHEMATICS ACHIEVEMENT - APPENDIX H

1. COGNITIVE FUNCTIONING:

- Wechsler Intelligence Scale for Children-5th Ed. (WISC V & Integrated)
- Woodcock Johnson IV Tests of Cognitive Abilities (WJ- IV)
- Das Naglieri Cognitive Assessment System, Second Edition (CAS-2)
- Stanford Binet Intelligence Scale V (SB V)
- Reynolds Intellectual Assessment Scales (RIAS)
- Differential Ability Scales-2nd Edition (DAS II)
- Universal Nonverbal Intelligence Test (UNIT)
- Wechsler Nonverbal Scale of Ability (WNV)
- Comprehensive Test of Nonverbal Intelligence-2nd Edition (CTONI-2)

2. VISUAL SPATIAL SKILLS:

- NEPSY II (Visuospatial)
- DAS II (Spatial)
- SB V (Visual-Spatial Processing)
- Universal Nonverbal Intelligence Test (UNIT)
- RIAS (NIX Index)
- WJ IV (Visualization)
- KABC II (Gestalt Closure)
- Bender Gestalt II
- Berry Visual Motor Integration Test-6th Edition (VMI)
- Jordon Left Right Reversal Test
- Rey Osterrieth Complex Figure Test

3. WORKING MEMORY:

- WISC V & Integrated
- Stanford Binet 5 (Verbal and Nonverbal Working Memory)
- Test of Memory and Learning-Second Edition (TOMAL-2)
- NEPSY II (Memory and Learning)
- CAS 2 (Number Detection, Receptive Attention)
- WJ IV (Numbers Reversed, Auditory Working Memory)
- Wechsler Memory Scale IV (WMS-IV)
- Children's Memory Scale (CMS)
- California Verbal Learning Test-Children's Edition (CVLT-C)
- Wide Range Assessment of Memory and Learning (WRAMAL 2)
- Paced Auditory Serial Addition Test (PASAT)

4. EXECUTIVE FUNCTIONING:

- Behavior Rating Inventory of Executive Function (BRIEF)
- NEPSY II
- CAS-2
- Delis-Kaplan Executive Functioning Scale (D-KEFS)
- Wisconsin Card Sort Test
- Category Test
- Stroop Test

5. MATHEMATICS SKILLS AND NUMBER SENSE:

- Process Assessment of the Learner-2nd Edition: Diagnostic Assessment for Math
- Wechsler Individual Achievement Test-3rd Edition (WIAT-III)
- Woodcock Johnson Achievement Test-4th Edition (WJ-IV)
- Test of Early Mathematics Ability-3rd Edition (TEMA-3)
- Comprehensive Test of Mathematical Abilities (CMAT)
- Test of Mathematics Abilities-2nd Edition (TOMA-2)
- Key Math 2

6. MATH ANXIETY SCALES

- Math Anxiety Rating Scale (98 items)
- Abbreviated Math Anxiety Scale (9 items)
- Achenbach Child Behavior Checklist
- Behavior Assessment System for Children-2nd Edition (BASC II)
- Personality System for Children-2nd Edition (PIC-II)
- Revised Children's Anxiety Scale-2nd Edition (RCMAS-2)

This list contains commonly used assessment instruments and is not intended to be all inclusive. A variety of other useful assessment instruments are available. The list was developed in consultation with Dr. Steven Feifer and additional information is available in this book, *The Neuropsychology of Mathematics: Diagnosis and Intervention Workbook*.

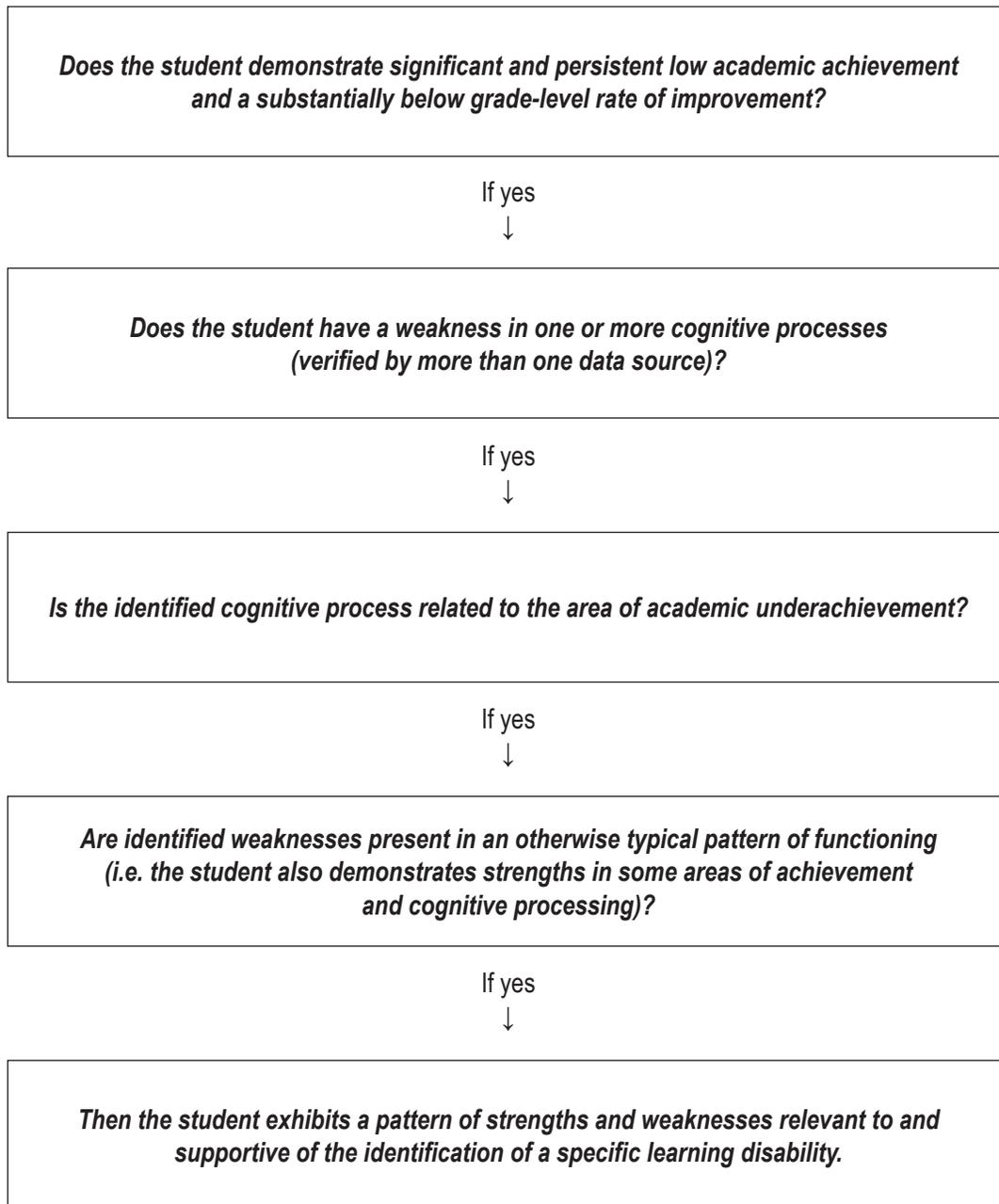
COGNITIVE PROCESSES AND INTERVENTIONS/ STRATEGIES - APPENDIX I

Cognitive Process	Children with processing deficits may benefit from:
<i>Fluid Intelligence:</i> Refers to mental operations that a person uses when presented with a relatively novel task that cannot be performed automatically. Includes concept formation, problem solving, reorganizing and transforming	Step-by-step instructions, problem solving strategies, sequencing skills development, explicit and systematic teaching, categorization skills, and graphic organizers.
<i>Crystallized Intelligence:</i> Refers to the breadth and depth of a person's general fund of knowledge. These knowledge stores are acquired through formal school experiences and general life experience. These stores are primarily language based and include both declarative and procedural knowledge.	Relating new information to prior knowledge, vocabulary strategies and instruction, rich learning experiences (e.g., museums, field trips, and virtual field trips), scaffolded instruction, and incorporating student interests in learning.
<i>Short-Term Memory:</i> Refers to the ability to apprehend and hold information in immediate awareness and then use it within a few seconds.	Short, simple instructions, overlearning, repetition, review, and memory strategies (e.g., chunking, mnemonics, verbal rehearsal)
<i>Visual Processing:</i> Refers to the ability to think with visual patterns and stimuli. Includes the ability to rotate, reverse, and manipulate spatial configurations, and spatial orientation.	Manipulatives, note taking assistance, graph paper, verbal descriptions of visual stimuli, assist with visual discrimination tasks.
<i>Auditory Processing:</i> Refers to the ability to notice, compare, discriminate, and distinguish distinct and separate sounds.	Provide phonological awareness activities (e.g., rhyming, alliteration, songs, imitations), explicit and systematic phonics instructions, and visual aids.
<i>Long-term Storage and Retrieval:</i> Refers to the ability of storing new or previously acquired information and then fluently retrieving that information.	Overlearning, repetition, mnemonic instruction, graphic organizers, cues, additional practice and time.
<i>Processing Speed:</i> Refers to the ability to fluently and automatically perform cognitive tasks (mental quickness).	Providing additional time, focus on quality and accuracy, note taking assistance, fluency building (e.g., practicing to reduce cognitive demands, flashcards)

(Learning Disability Association of America)

PROCESS FOR CONFIRMING/SUBSTANTIATING A SPECIFIC LEARNING DISABILITY USING AN INTEGRATED SPL AND PSW APPROACH - APPENDIX J

To identify a student as exhibiting a pattern of strengths and weaknesses relevant to the identification of a specific learning disability, the team must answer yes to each of the following questions:



SLD ACADEMIC SKILL DEFICIT WORKSHEET - APPENDIX K

To qualify a student as eligible for Special Education services under the SLD label, the student must meet the following criteria:

"The student does not achieve adequately for the student's age or does not meet State-approved grade-level standards in one or more of the areas identified below, when provided with experiences and instruction for their age or State-approved grade-level standards AND the student does not make sufficient progress to meet age or State-approved grade-level standards in the area(s) identified when using a process based on the student's response to scientific, research-based intervention."

Part I-Progress Monitoring Data

Skill Deficit Area	P.M. Tool	Student's gap or score	Typical student's score or %	Is there a lack of progress?		Is this student receiving significant support?
				Yes	No	
				Yes	No	
				Yes	No	
				Yes	No	
				Yes	No	
				Yes	No	

Part II – Based on the student's like-population (ethnicity, ELA, GT, SES, etc.) how does this student compare?

Similar to like-population?	Significantly different from like-population?
-----------------------------	---

Part III-Based on the student's progress monitoring data, circle the student's suspected deficits.

Oral Expression	Basic Reading	Math Calculation
Language Comprehension	Reading Comprehension	Math Problem Solving
Written Expression	Reading Fluency	

Part IV-What additional assessments were given to determine if an academic deficit exists?

Assessment	Targeted Skill	Student's Score	Deficit Marker	Is there a deficit?

DOCUMENTING ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS FOR SLD - APPENDIX L

Criteria	Documentation
Level of Learning	<input type="checkbox"/> Results of formative assessments administered pre- and post-instruction <input type="checkbox"/> WV Content Standards and Objectives checklists <input type="checkbox"/> Cumulative records <input type="checkbox"/> Student work samples <input type="checkbox"/> Anecdotal teacher records <input type="checkbox"/> Norm-referenced measures of achievement
Rate of Learning	<input type="checkbox"/> Progress monitoring data collected before, during, and after the provision of nine weeks of TARGETED instruction and nine weeks of INTENSIVE <input type="checkbox"/> Content, frequency, and duration of instruction for TARGETED and INTENSIVE
Patterns of Strengths and Weaknesses	<input type="checkbox"/> Norm-referenced measures of achievement <input type="checkbox"/> Norm-referenced measures of cognitive processes
Exclusion Factors	<input type="checkbox"/> Formal educational, cognitive, and/or medical evaluation reports <input type="checkbox"/> Formative assessments and progress monitoring data <input type="checkbox"/> Functional academic and/or behavior assessments
Validation of Underachievement	<input type="checkbox"/> Interim and progress monitoring data <input type="checkbox"/> Norm-referenced measures of achievement

SPECIFIC LEARNING DISABILITIES TEAM REPORT APPENDIX M

_____ County

Student's Full Name _____ Date _____
 School _____ Date of Birth _____
 Parent(s)/Guardian(s) _____ Grade _____
 Address _____ WVEIS# _____
 City/State _____ Telephone _____

Initial

Re-Evaluation

Other

When considering whether or not a student may be eligible for special education and related services as a student with a **Specific Learning Disability**, the Eligibility Committee must respond to each item below. The EC must answer **“yes” to each yes/no statement** to appropriately conclude a student is a student with a specific learning disability.

1) The student's multidisciplinary evaluation was sufficiently comprehensive to identify the student's special education and related services needs and administered in accordance with evaluation procedures specified in <i>Policy 2419</i> , Chapter 3, Section 4.	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No								
2) Based on multiple and convergent sources of data, the student's level of learning reflects low academic performance compared to same-age peers when provided with learning experiences and instruction appropriate for the student's age or State-approved grade-level standards (NxGCSOs) in one or more of the following areas (Check all areas that apply): <table style="width: 100%; border: none;"> <tr> <td><input type="checkbox"/> Oral Expression</td> <td><input type="checkbox"/> Reading Comprehension</td> </tr> <tr> <td><input type="checkbox"/> Listening Comprehension</td> <td><input type="checkbox"/> Reading Fluency Skills</td> </tr> <tr> <td><input type="checkbox"/> Written Expression</td> <td><input type="checkbox"/> Mathematics Calculation</td> </tr> <tr> <td><input type="checkbox"/> Basic Reading Skill</td> <td><input type="checkbox"/> Mathematics Problem Solving</td> </tr> </table>	<input type="checkbox"/> Oral Expression	<input type="checkbox"/> Reading Comprehension	<input type="checkbox"/> Listening Comprehension	<input type="checkbox"/> Reading Fluency Skills	<input type="checkbox"/> Written Expression	<input type="checkbox"/> Mathematics Calculation	<input type="checkbox"/> Basic Reading Skill	<input type="checkbox"/> Mathematics Problem Solving	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
<input type="checkbox"/> Oral Expression	<input type="checkbox"/> Reading Comprehension								
<input type="checkbox"/> Listening Comprehension	<input type="checkbox"/> Reading Fluency Skills								
<input type="checkbox"/> Written Expression	<input type="checkbox"/> Mathematics Calculation								
<input type="checkbox"/> Basic Reading Skill	<input type="checkbox"/> Mathematics Problem Solving								
3) Identify the method used to determine Eligibility: <input type="checkbox"/> The student fails to achieve a rate of learning to make sufficient progress to meet State-approved grade-level standards (NxGCSOs) in one or more of the areas identified above when assessed using the SPL process. <p style="text-align: center;">OR</p> <input type="checkbox"/> The student exhibits a pattern of strengths and weaknesses in performance, achievement or both, relative to age, State-approved grade-level standards (NxGCSOs) or intellectual development that is determined by the group to be relevant to the identification of a specific learning disability.	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No								
4) The student's achievement deficits are NOT primarily the result of vision, hearing or motor impairments; intellectual disability; emotional/behavioral disorder; cultural factors, environmental or economic disadvantage or limited English proficiency.	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No								
5) Evaluation information and documentation confirm that lack of appropriate instruction in reading or mathematics was NOT the determinant factor in the eligibility decision.	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No								
6) Evaluation information confirms there is an adverse effect on the student's educational performance.	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No								

7) The student was observed in the learning environment, including the general classroom setting, to document the student's academic performance and behavior in the areas of difficulty. An observation summary/report is attached and describes the relevant behavior noted during the observation, if any, and the relationship of that behavior to the student's academic functioning.	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
8) The specific instructional strategies used and the student-centered data collected are documented and available in the Eligibility Committee Report.	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
9) Note educationally relevant medical findings, if any (Write N/A if no relevant medical findings apply):	

The Eligibility Committee used the above evaluation data analysis and discussion to determine:

- The student **DOES** meet the eligibility criteria for a specific learning disability that adversely impacts his/her education and **is eligible** for special education and related services.
- The student **DOES NOT** meet the eligibility criteria for a specific learning disability and **is not eligible** for special education and related services as a student with a specific learning disability.

The student's parents were notified about the following: The State's policies (i.e., WVBE Policy 2419, Chapter 4, Section 2.L. including Support for Personalized Learning) regarding the amount and nature of student performance data that would be collected and the general education services that would be provided; strategies for increasing the student's rate of learning; results of repeated assessments of student progress AND, the parent's right to request an evaluation at any time throughout the Support for Personalized Learning process.

Date of parent notification: _____

Eligibility Committee Members

	Position	Agreement with EC Determination	
_____	Chairperson	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
_____	Evaluator/Specialist	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
_____	Teacher	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
_____	Parent	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
_____	Student	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
_____	Other	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No

NOTE: If this report does not represent an individual team member's conclusions, that team member must submit a separate Specific Learning Disabilities Team Report

Meeting Notes (if applicable)

Notes

Notes

Notes

ONE VOICE
ONE FOCUS
All Students Achieving



Michael J. Martirano, Ed.D.
State Superintendent of Schools