

SUPPORTS FOR SCHOOL-BASED PROFESSIONALS

Critical information to know

- 1. Receptive Language (Understanding)**
 - a. Ability to follow directions
 - b. Simple → multi-step
 - c. Comprehension of vocabulary, grammar, and classroom instructions
 - d. Understanding of academic language
 - e. “Compare”, “summarize”
 - f. Why this matters: Students may appear inattentive or off-task when the issue is actually comprehension
- 2. Expressive Language (Use of language)**
 - a. Sentence structure and grammar
 - b. Ability to explain ideas, tell stories, and answer questions
 - c. Important for participation, writing, and demonstrating knowledge
- 3. Pragmatic Language (Social communication)**
 - a. Turn-taking, topic maintenance
 - b. Understanding social cues
 - c. Eye contact, tone
 - d. Conversational repair
 - e. Clarify misunderstandings
 - f. Crucial for group work, friendships, and classroom behavior
- 4. Fluency and Voice**
 - a. Stuttering and disruptions in speech flow
 - b. Voice quality
 - c. Hoarseness, pitch, volume
 - d. Can affect confidence, participation, and classroom communication
- 5. Literacy-Related Language Skills**
 - a. Phonological awareness
 - b. Narrative skills
 - c. Reading comprehension and written expression
 - d. Strongly tied to academic success- this is where speech, language, and education overlap most
- 6. Functional Communication**
 - a. Ability to express needs, ask for help, and self-advocate
 - b. Use of supports such as AAC devices
 - c. Augmentative and alternative communication, if applicable
 - d. Important for meaningful and effective communicative interactions, socially and within the educational setting.
- 7. Cultural and Linguistic Background**
 - a. Home language(s)
 - b. Dialect differences vs. disorder

- c. English learner status
- d. Prevents misidentification of language differences as disorders

Where this information can be found

1. Student Records

- Individualized Education Program (IEP)
- Evaluation reports from the American Speech Language Hearing Association aligned with speech language pathologists
- Progress reports and goals

2. Classroom Observations

- How the student communicates in real-time
- Interaction with peers and teachers
- Response to instruction

3. Teacher Input

- Academic performance
- Participation and behavior
- Language demands in the classroom

4. Speech-Language Assessments

- Standardized tests- language, articulation, pragmatics
- Informal assessments- language samples, checklists

5. Parent/Caregiver

- Developmental history
- Communication at home
- Concerns and strengths
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Referrals

- Clients can be referred by “Other licensed practitioner of the healing arts” within the scope of practice such as but are not limited to:
 - Physicians
 - Physician assistants
 - Advanced Practice Nurses
 - School Nurses
 - Clinical Psychologists
 - Other Speech-language Pathologists
 - Individuals with Professional Educator License specifically endorsed in School Psychology or Speech Language Pathology

The referral is required before services begin and must be updated annually. Furthermore, the referral must be recorded in the student’s file and the attendance sheet from the IEP meeting or the signed IEP itself does not fulfill the requirement for a written referral.

[Handbook for LEAs, December 2025](#)

SLP Workload Guidelines In Schools

- Complete work load analysis first
- The number of children served by an SLP are based on the speech-language needs of each child and a full time SLP caseload cannot exceed 60 students.

[ISBE's Administrative Code Section 226.735 Workload for Special Educators](#)

[ASHA's 2025 State by State Caseload/Workload Chart](#)

Eligibility and Dismissal Criteria In Schools:

Illinois Speech-Language Pathology Guide

https://higherlogicdownload.s3.amazonaws.com/ISLHA/2c8d67fa-c658-463c-9740-4c94c8af540b/UploadedImages/2026_IL_SLP_Guide--Update.pdf

<https://www.asha.org/siteassets/uploadedfiles/roles-responsibilities-slps-schools-poster.pdf>

Roles/Responsibilities

ASHA's Dos and Don'ts <https://www.asha.org/siteassets/uploadedfiles/roles-responsibilities-slp-schools-dos-and-donts.pdf>

Additional updated information can be accessed using the directions below:

1. Go to ISHA's website
2. Click on the "resources" tab
3. Select the "Member Resources" link
4. Refer to the school affairs tab:)

<https://www.ishail.org/resources/member/member-resource-links>

State Education Advocacy Leaders

<https://www.asha.org/advocacy/state/seals/>