

**Learning Disability**  
**Oral Expression**  
**Criteria**

**Introduction**

To be certified as learning disabled in any area, the disability must adversely affect academic performance. If deficits in Listening Comprehension or Oral Expression do not affect academic performance, the speech-language pathologist may better address the student's needs.

The adverse impact of a learning disability on academic performance is evidenced not only by test-based performance but also by grades and work samples.

In order to be eligible to receive Oral Expression services the following criteria are to be met.

**Criteria**

Students eligible as learning disabled in the area of Oral Expression must meet all **three** of the following criteria:

- I. A 20-point split between the performance intelligence quotient (PIQ) and verbal intelligence quotient (VIQ) scores on the WISC IV with the performance being higher. (10% of the population)
- II. Significantly low standard scores on two language tests listed below. (These cut off scores are identical to those used in the speech-language handbook).
- III. The student demonstrates a need. A need is defined as either A or B below:
  - A. Significant ability-achievement discrepancy in an academic area using the performance IQ as the ability indicator.
  - B. For those students who do not meet the significant discrepancy and there is reason to believe the student experiences a learning disability two of the following three descriptors must apply:
    1. By teacher observation and report, the student consistently demonstrates difficulty formulating age appropriate answers during classroom and small group discussion.
    2. By teacher observation and report, the student does not participate in classroom and small group discussions consistently across all academic areas over time.
    3. The student demonstrates their language deficit in written expression by:
      - a. Scoring a standard score of 6 or below, which is the 9<sup>th</sup> percentile or below, on the Diagnostic Achievement Battery (DAB) Written Vocabulary subtest: or
      - b. Scores at the 16<sup>th</sup> percentile or below on the Test of Early Written Language 2 (TEWL-2)
      - c. Significant discrepancy on the WJIII Oral Expression cluster.

NOTE: If the student meets the severe discrepancy criteria for an academic area, it is not necessary to meet the alternative criteria listed as B 1,2,3 above.

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**Rationale**

When students have academic difficulties and the team suspects oral expression as the bases of the academic deficit, further assessment in oral expression may be warranted. As in other areas of LD we do not routinely assess all areas of LD unless a concern is indicated at the pre-referral. It is not required or even suggested that all students be given language tests as part of the initial referral unless it is identified as an area of concern or need.

**Assessment Tools**

The speech pathologist will give any two of the following tests. Only one can be a vocabulary test (i.e., cannot use both the EOWPVT and the PPVT).

<b>TEST</b>	<b>CRITERION SCORE</b>
CELF-R & CELF-III (Ages 5.0 -16.11)	total score below 78 (1.5 SD below mean)
CELF - Preschool (Ages 3.0-6.11)	total test score below 85 (1.0 SD below mean)
TOAL (ages 11.0-17.5)	SLQ below 85 (1.0 SD below mean)
TOLD-Intermed - 2 (Ages 8.6-12.11)	SLQ below 85 (1.0 SD below mean)
TOLD-Primary - 2 (ages 4.0-8.11)	SLQ below 85 (1.0 SD below mean)

<b>TEST</b>	<b>CRITERION SCORE</b>
EOWPVT -R (ages 2.0 -11.11)	Below 85 (1.0 SD below mean)
PPVT –R & PPVT-III (Ages 2.5 to adult)	Below 78 (1.5 SD below mean)
WORD - elementary (ages 7.0-11.0)	Total test score below 45 (1.0 SD below mean)
WORD - Revised (ages 7.0-11.11)	Total test score below 85 (1.0 SD below mean)
WORD - Adolescent (ages 12.0-17.0)	Total test score below 85 (1.0 SD below mean)
LPT (ages 5.0 – 11.11)	Total test score below 40 ( 1 SD below the mean)

**Service Delivery**

If the team is considering an LD certification in the area of oral expression, the team must involve the speech-language pathologist. The SLP will administer two appropriate tests from this list as part of their usual test battery.

The special education teachers and the speech-language pathologist will collaborate to develop Oral Expression goals and objectives.

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If the student receives services from both the speech-language pathologist and the special education teacher for language, the SLP and special education teacher should coordinate goals and set up complimentary language programs to meet the student's severe language needs. For older students who have received years of direct speech-language intervention it may be appropriate for the SLP to use a consult delivery model.

**Other**

No tests are listed for preschool students, as LD is not a certification for young children.

As with all other LD certification areas, students must have "average ability" (full scale of 85 or above) to be considered for Listening Comprehension goals and objectives. Because the criteria requires a 20 point split between verbal and performance scaled scores which makes interpretation of the full scale score difficult, the team needs to review all assessment data and conclude that the student has average or above average cognitive functioning. This conclusion must be clearly stated in the Assessment Report prepared by the psychologist.

On the front page of the IEP, the student's certification is LD. Under areas of service, Listening Comprehension would be listed for X amount of hours.

**LD ORAL EXPRESSION**

**Definition:** This is a certification for students who are language-learning disabled. Most of these students have large splits between Performance and Verbal on the WISC IV and score poorly on language assessments. Speech and language is the underlying disability that impacts their academic achievement. The following questions and answers may help you to understand this certification.

**When to Use?** With older students who have gained functional expressive language so we don't need to continue serving them in speech, but who are still language learning disabled. Their cognitive/classroom language can be appropriately addressed within the general curriculum and/or with special education services. Students whose language needs are so severe that the team does not feel Speech-Language services alone will adequately address the student's need.

**Who Makes the Certification Decision?** It is a team process. The SLP, psychologist, and teacher review scores and look at the discrepancy formula sheet (psychologists) to see if there is a significant discrepancy with the student's IQ score. At this point, you decide if LD Oral Expression is an appropriate certification.

**What if a Child Qualifies? Who is Responsible for Language?** If the student will receive both Speech-Language and Resource services, the SLP and resource teacher will set up complementary language programs consisting of prioritized goals. Some goals will be most appropriate for the resource room, while others will be most effectively addressed by the SLP. This is a team decision.

**Will Qualifying for "Oral Expression" Automatically Qualify the Student to Work on Reading and Math in the Resource Room?**

No. Special education services are provided only in areas for which the student qualifies and requires specialized instruction.

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