

Inclusive Student Services Impact Update

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Speech and Language Services

Communication skills are an essential part of a student's success and well-being. Language helps students to understand and participate in all aspects of their school day, and supports their social, cognitive, emotional, and academic development.

Speech and Language Services: Communication, Connection, Participation

Speech-Language Pathologists (S-LPs) are part of DDSB Inclusive Student Services and work with students, families, educators, and professionals to create culturally responsive, inclusive, and accessible learning environments that embrace all ways of communicating. S-LPs have a master's degree and are registered with the [College of Audiologists and Speech-Language Pathologists of Ontario \(CASLPO\)](#). The team has specialized training in communication, speech, language, and literacy.

Supporting All Aspects of Communication

In collaboration with families and school teams, S-LPs support the academic success and social and emotional well-being of students through a variety of services, such as:

- **Assessments:** Evaluating language, communication, and speech skills using various assessment methods that respect each student's development, home language, and culture.
- **Collaboration:** Partnering with educators, support staff, families, and other professionals to set goals and strategies that make learning accessible.
- **Training and Support:** Teaching and modeling ways to enhance communication skills for all, including Alternative and Augmentative Communication (AAC) users.
- **Workshops:** Providing learning opportunities for parents, educators, and community partners.
- **Community Connections:** Coordinating with community agencies and making referrals (e.g., [Grandview Kids School-Based Rehabilitation](#), [Holland Bloorview Kids Rehabilitation Hospital](#)).



Language is the basis for thinking, communicating, and learning. Students need language skills to comprehend ideas and information, to interact socially, to inquire into areas of interest and study, and to express themselves clearly and demonstrate their learning.”

—Ontario Ministry of Education, The Ontario Curriculum, Grades 18: Language, 2023

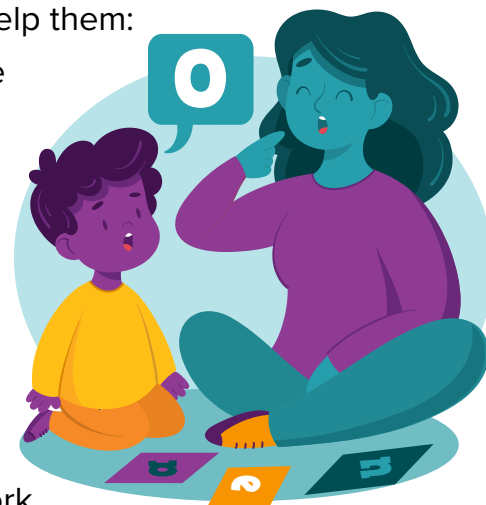
Who We Support

We work with students from Kindergarten to Grade 12 to help them:

- Understand spoken language, written text, and/or picture communication symbols.
- Express themselves through speech, writing, and other communication methods.
- Develop communication skills for social interactions.

While early intervention is a priority, we support students of all ages.

As members of a multi-disciplinary Inclusive Student Services school team, S-LPs work in collaboration with members of Early Years, Psychological Services, Social Work departments and other educators and professionals to provide student support.



“The S-LP showed me how to use my child’s communication device, and now we feel so much more confident using it at home.”

—Parent/Caregiver

“I have had the pleasure of working with our S-LP as a homeroom teacher and a Special Education Resource Teacher (SERT). Our S-LP focuses on building strong foundational literacy skills and communication tools for our students. They empower educators by providing strategies and resources to enhance language development and accessibility to curriculum for all learners. They help to ensure that we are working together to reduce barriers and create an environment where all students can learn and develop their language skills in order to reach their full potential. Their knowledge, experience, and dedication to our school is top notch.”

—SERT

How to Access Our Services

Individual services are referral based and provided in accordance with the professional standards and ethical guidelines of the CASLPO. School-based staff follow the Inclusive Student Services referral pathway. Parental/guardian informed consent is required before services begin.

“We always appreciate the expertise of our brilliant S-LP. They are a wealth of knowledge for SERTs, classroom educators and students alike. Our S-LP is always knowledgeable about assessment tools and high yield strategies to support a wide variety of student needs. They are always willing to collaborate with school teams and other members of the ISS team to develop comprehensive and innovative programs. We can always depend on them to see the whole student and to give programming suggestions that play off their strengths and potential. It is amazing to see the growth in the students they support, and they continues to make a long-term impact on our school community.”

—SERT

Did You Know?

Having knowledgeable and supportive communication partners is essential in creating inclusive communication environments. DDSB S-LPs dedicate time to creating materials, programming, and training/coaching staff and families on the use of AAC tools and strategies to ensure that all students have a way to access and use language across their day.

“The work the S-LP has done alone with our PLP (Practical Learning Program) class is like nothing I have ever seen. She has gone above and beyond to provide parental supports and student supports and has certainly left a lasting impression on our staff in our PLP class who are working diligently to implement the strategies she suggests.”

—Principal



For more information about the DDSB Inclusive Student Services Impact Update, please visit [DDSB Inclusive Student Services](#).