

Speech-Language Pathologist Evaluation Instrument

**Performance Standards, Criteria,
and Descriptive Examples**

Standard I: Speech-language pathologists are committed to students and their learning.

Performance Criteria

- A. Speech-language pathologists’ actions convey the belief that every student can develop optimal communication skills with appropriate supports.
- B. Speech-language pathologists actively engage students to use listening and speaking skills, or alternative communication, during group and/or individual instruction.
- C. Speech-language pathologists set measurable outcomes for the development of students’ communication skills and share accountability with students for the achievement of those outcomes.
- D. Speech-language pathologists recognize individual differences in students and adjust their practices accordingly.
- E. Speech-language pathologists identify students eligible for speech-language programming necessary to facilitate success with the curriculum.
- F. Speech-language pathologists develop and implement Individualized Education Plans, which reflect analysis of assessment data and prioritized goals and objectives.

Examples of evidence of beliefs, commitment, and tenacity

The speech-language pathologist...

Meets Standard	Below Standard
conveys the importance of optimal communication skills to staff, parents, and students	does not represent or advocate students’ use of optimal communication skills as required for school learning
focuses student attention on the importance of using optimal communication skills	does not expect students to use optimal communication skills during instruction; accepts minimal/inaccurate responses from students during instruction
maintains focus on developing optimal communication skills as the outcome of therapy services	focuses on isolated skill development regardless of functional communication needs of individual students
helps students take responsibility for learning and using optimal communication skills	does not discuss, reinforce, and/or promote independent use of communication skills
writes communication outcomes that can be accomplished by completion of the IEP	writes IEPs with inappropriate expectations for students (e.g., outcomes that are too basic or too challenging or unrelated to student needs)
clearly states expectations for student performance	does not clearly state expectations for student performance

Meets Standard	Below Standard
gives students immediate feedback regarding performance to improve learning	provides feedback on students' work that is often inaccurate, nonspecific, or delayed
employs practices that take into account individual differences in students to improve communication skills	does not differentiate instruction with students who have individual differences by nature of their culture, learning style, or disability when facilitating communication skill development
demonstrates/models sensitivity to all students; treats all students respectfully and equitably	does not demonstrate/model sensitivity to all students; does not treat all students respectfully and equitably
assesses students' communication skills using appropriate formal and informal measures when determining eligibility for service; addresses concerns presented for assessment	writes assessments that are not comprehensive, do not include appropriate formal and informal measures, and/or do not address communication concerns presented for assessment
uses MCPS Speech and Language Programs guidelines to establish rationale for service eligibility	makes recommendations for service eligibility/ineligibility with little or no regard for the MCPS Speech and Language Programs guidelines
writes assessment reports following MCPS Speech and Language Programs guidelines	writes assessment reports that do not follow MCPS Speech and Language Program guidelines
addresses student communication needs by ensuring that IEPs contain current assessment information documenting present levels of performance and the manner in which the speech-language impairment affects progress in the general curriculum (or appropriate preschool activities)	writes IEPs that do not reflect present level of performance or how the student's speech-language impairment affects progress in the general curriculum (or appropriate preschool activities)
develops IEPs that contain measurable goals and objectives related to meeting educational needs resulting from the disability; IEP objectives lead to meaningful communication outcomes for students	develops IEP goals and objectives that do not address specific needs; objectives are not educationally relevant
develops IEPs that state the manner in which student's progress will be measured and how often the measurements will occur; clearly states criterion for achievement	identifies evaluation criteria that are incomplete or unclear; IEP objectives do not reflect appropriate expectations for student progress

Standard II: Speech-language pathologists know about communication theories and therapeutic techniques, and apply them to facilitate student learning.

Performance Criteria

- A. The speech-language pathologist is knowledgeable about communication development and disabilities.
- B. The speech-language pathologist understands how communication skills are linked to broader educational goals, including curricular outcomes.
- C. The speech-language pathologist uses appropriate skills/techniques in a variety of settings to support student learning.
- D. The speech-language pathologist uses a broad range of therapeutic techniques and strategies.
- E. The speech-language pathologist plans therapy lessons that meet the individualized needs of students.
- F. The speech-language pathologist integrates technology and research into planning and implementing services to improve student communication skills.

Examples of evidence of knowledge, planning skills, and successful instruction

The speech-language pathologist...

Meets Standard	Below Standard
uses knowledge of communication development to plan and implement appropriate intervention	plans lessons that do not reflect an understanding of communication development
is able to explain how MCPS Speech and Language Programs guidelines incorporate current research and best practices	is unable to explain a rationale for MCPS guidelines in relationship to current research and best practices
instructs students in a variety of settings/models, (e.g., individual, small group, large group, classroom) when appropriate, to improve communication skills	uses a specific service delivery model to instruct students, regardless of its effectiveness in promoting the development of optimal communication skills
plans lessons with content that supports learning school curriculum material	plan lessons that reflect little or no relationship to curriculum expectations for students
implements a breadth of techniques and strategies for improving communication skills of students in a range of school settings	does not use new or different techniques or strategies with students; utilizes specific and/or familiar techniques or strategies, regardless of their effectiveness in promoting the development of optimal communication skills

Meets Standard	Below Standard
designs lessons/activities that address the specific needs of each student within a group setting	uses generic lessons/activities for all students in a group session without regard for the specific needs of individual students or the appropriateness of working on the same skills with all students
uses strategies to facilitate carry-over of optimal communication skills (e.g., gives suggestions and demonstrates strategies to other school personnel and families to stimulate carry-over)	rarely communicates with teachers or families regarding carry-over strategies
uses available technology when appropriate to develop optimal communication skills in students	avoids and/or is resistant to using available technology that can be effective in developing optimal communication skills in students
shows willingness to apply information from research in the field of speech-language pathology to lessons	avoids and/or is resistant to using information from research in the field of speech-language pathology to lessons

Standard III: Speech-language pathologists contribute to the establishment and maintenance of a positive environment in which students can develop their communication skills.

Performance Criteria

- A. The speech-language pathologist promotes a positive learning environment in which students can develop communication skills.
- B. The speech-language pathologist establishes and maintains respectful partnerships with families to support the development of communication skills.
- C. The speech-language pathologist consults with staff regarding student communication needs within the learning environment.
- D. The speech-language pathologist facilitates the use of communication skills in a variety of school settings.

Examples of evidence of positive climate, management, and family partnerships

The speech-language pathologist...

Meets Standard	Below Standard
demonstrates acceptance, openness, support, responsiveness, courtesy, and consideration for all students	rarely demonstrates acceptance, openness, support, responsiveness, courtesy, and consideration
provides a welcoming therapy environment that is safe, nurturing, and confidential	does not provide an environment that is conducive to therapy
creates an atmosphere that fosters communicative interaction among students	does not provide a therapy setting that facilitates peer interaction
uses a repertoire of strategies matched to student needs to avoid and/or address behavior problems	fails to anticipate and/or appropriately address behavior problems
clearly explains development of communication skills to families, staff members, and students	provides incomplete or nonspecific information, or uses jargon, when explaining development of communication skills to families, staff members, and students
convey importance of communication goals to families through conferences, notes and/or homework assignments	does not convey importance of communication goals to families
regularly communicates with families in a variety of ways (telephone, quarterly reports, notes, conferences with family members); communicates with families before problems become insurmountable	interacts minimally with families except at scheduled times for conferences; allows problems to become serious before making families aware of them; makes little or no accommodation for family schedules
communicates both positive and negative feedback	typically communicates negative feedback to families

Meets Standard	Below Standard
solicits information from families about their children’s communication skills, strengths, and constraints	disregards input from families
helps staff and families use appropriate supports to effect optimal communication skills	does not provide suggestions or ideas to staff and families that promote the use of appropriate supports to effect optimal communication skills (e.g., staff/adult consistency, peer modeling, use of augmentative communication, and the like)

Standard IV: Speech-language pathologists continually assess student progress, analyze the data, and develop intervention strategies to improve student communication skills.

Performance Criteria

- A. The speech-language pathologist uses a variety of assessment techniques to evaluate student progress on communication skills.
- B. The speech-language pathologist modifies speech-language interventions based on on-going data collection.
- C. The speech-language pathologist conducts IEP reviews and reevaluations of students in accordance with federal, state, and local regulations.

Examples of evidence of assessment, analysis, and adaptation of instruction

The speech-language pathologist...

Meets Standard	Below Standard
uses a variety of formats (e.g., performance tasks, portfolios, checklists, observations of student work in class, teacher feedback) to collect data on student progress	does not collect sufficient data to gauge progress
develops strategies for students to evaluate their own and other's work (e.g. rubrics, self charting)	does not involve students in self-evaluation
maintains therapy logs reflecting student attendance, goals, strategies, and progress	does not consistently maintain therapy logs; maintains logs that are incomplete
uses information gained from on-going data collection to plan and modify instruction; modifies IEPs when needed to ensure that students are progressing appropriately to the goal of generalization of skills	does not use on-going data collection in lesson planning or in IEP development
follows MCPS guidelines to conduct quarterly and annual IEP reviews	does not follow MCPS guidelines to complete reviews for students on caseload
conducts re-evaluations by completing formal and/or informal assessments based on diagnostic questions proposed by the IEP team	does not complete re-evaluation procedures for individual students in accordance with IEP team recommendations

Standard V: Speech-language pathologists are committed to continuous improvement and professional development.

Performance Criteria

- A. The speech-language pathologist continually reflects upon his/her practices in promoting student communication skills.
- B. The speech-language pathologist draws upon educational and clinical research and seeks the advice of others whenever possible to inform and modify his/her practices.
- C. The speech-language pathologist is a member of learning communities.

Examples of evidence of reflection and collaboration for personal growth

The speech-language pathologist...

Meets Standard	Below Standard
reflects on own strengths and weaknesses and modifies clinical practices accordingly	does not reflect on own strengths and weaknesses and/or does not modify clinical practices after reflection
develops a professional development plan (PDP); implements strategies that support PDP outcomes	does not develop a professional development plan (PDP); does not implement strategies that support PDP outcomes
develops and maintains a portfolio or other means of assembling evidence of meeting evaluation standards	assembles little or no evidence of meeting evaluation standards
uses the evaluation year to analyze the success of efforts undertaken during the professional growth years of the cycle; initiates reflective conversations with PDP support team, other peers, staff development teacher (SDT), and supervisory staff	does not use the evaluation year to analyze the success of efforts undertaken during the professional growth years of the cycle; does not initiate reflective conversations with PDP support team, other peers, staff development teacher (SDT), and supervisory staff
appropriately modifies intervention based on solicited and unsolicited feedback from staff, students, and parents/guardians	does not solicit feedback from students, staff, or parents/guardians; does not act on any feedback, whether solicited or unsolicited
keeps up to date on current research; modifies assessment and intervention strategies based on current research	demonstrates limited awareness of current research trends; little or no evidence of application of current research in modifying assessment or intervention approaches

Meets Standard	Below Standard
<p>acquires knowledge and skills in best practices through professional activities such as—</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ attending workshops and conferences ▪ participating in seminars, study groups, and in-service trainings ▪ reading professional literature ▪ affiliating with professional organizations (integrates knowledge and skills gained into clinical practices) 	<p>Does not pursue knowledge about speech-language best practices through a variety of professional growth activities; little or no change in assessment of intervention strategies from year to year</p>
<p>appropriately modifies clinical practices based on feedback from formal and informal observations</p>	<p>does not modify clinical practices based on feedback from formal and informal observations</p>
<p>engages in peer visits and reflection</p>	<p>does not engage in peer visits and reflection</p>
<p>interacts with colleagues to share ways in which assessment and intervention can be improved to enhance communication skills</p>	<p>shows little or no evidence of interaction with colleagues to exchange professional ideas</p>
<p>seeks the support of colleagues and is open to applying advice or suggestions to improve clinical practices</p>	<p>does not seek the support of colleagues and/or will not accept advice or suggestions to improve clinical practices</p>

Standard VI: Speech-language pathologists exhibit a high degree of professionalism.

Performance Criteria

- A. The speech-language pathologist understands and supports the vision of the school system.
- B. The speech-language pathologist shares responsibility for the total school program and supports schoolwide goals.
- C. The speech-language pathologist demonstrates the ethical standards of his/her profession and conducts him-/herself in a professional manner.
- D. The speech-language pathologist follows mandated procedures and completes required documentation for students with disabilities.

Examples of evidence of leadership and professionalism

The speech-language pathologist...

Meets Standard	Below Standard
complies with MCPS policies and regulations; aligns practices, policies, and procedures with school system vision and goals	does not comply with MCPS policies and regulations; uses practices, policies, and procedures that do not align with school system vision and goals
participates in implementation of local school improvement goals and schoolwide plans for student behavior management	does not participate in implementation of local school improvement goals and schoolwide plans for student behavior management
actively participates in school teams and/or systemwide committees and work groups	participates infrequently in school teams and/or systemwide committees or work groups
represents the school in a positive manner when dealing with students, parents, and/or other members of the community	does not represent the school in a positive manner when dealing with students, parents, and/or other members of the community
interacts in a respectful manner with all members of the school community	shows little or no respect for some members of the school community
adheres to the ethical standards of the American Speech-Language-Hearing Association	is unaware of, or fails to adhere to, the ethical standards of the American Speech-Language-Hearing Association
meets professional obligations in a timely manner; completes paperwork and reports on time; submits SEDS and Medicaid information; follows updated building and student schedules; adheres to therapy schedule; follows school operating procedures	misses deadlines; does not complete required paperwork in a timely manner; does not consistently follow therapy schedule

Meets Standard	Below Standard
maintains student speech files following program guidelines; keeps a record of parent contacts; places required information in student confidential files	does not maintain speech and confidential files according to guidelines; does not document parent contacts
implements required IEP team procedures for students with disabilities; implements IEPs as written	lacks awareness of required procedures; does not implement mandated procedures; does not consistently complete required paperwork and follow-up; does not implement IEPs as written

Speech-Language Pathologist Evaluation Process

Formal Evaluation Schedule

Tenured, Experienced, or Veteran Speech-Language Pathologists

Speech-language pathologists who are tenured professionals follow the same professional growth cycle as teacher colleagues. They will be evaluated formally at the end of a three-, four-, or five-year growth cycle, depending on years of service in MCPS. Also, they may be evaluated formally whenever the evaluator has observed and documented that a formal evaluation is needed in lieu of a professional development year, following the same special evaluation criteria developed for teachers.

New Speech-Language Pathologists/New to MCPS (Probationary)

Speech-language pathologists in their first and second year of service in MCPS will be scheduled for formal evaluations. They will not be required to complete Professional Development Plans during their first two years of service. Their focus must be to develop a repertoire of assessment and intervention strategies and become knowledgeable about the MCPS Speech and Language Programs service models and guidelines. Once probationary speech-language pathologists have achieved tenure, they will follow the same professional growth cycle as their teacher colleagues.

Experienced Speech-Language Pathologists/New to MCPS (Probationary)

Experienced speech-language pathologists who are new to MCPS are considered probationary and will be scheduled for formal evaluations during their first and second years of service with MCPS. Although they have experience working as speech-language pathologists, they must still become knowledgeable about the MCPS Speech and Language Programs service models and guidelines. Once they have achieved tenure, these speech-language pathologists will follow the same professional growth cycle as their teacher colleagues.

Requirements for Formal Observations

- At least three observations must occur for a minimum of 30 minutes. Due to the varied nature of the speech-language pathologist's role and responsibilities, observations may be of different activities in different settings.
- All observations must include a post-observation conference.
- Post-observation conferences should be held within three school days after the observation. Conferences may be delayed by mutual agreement due to extenuating circumstances.
- Speech-language pathologists may respond to a post-observation conference report by submitting a written response to their file within 10 school days of receipt of the Post-Observation Conference Report.

- The Post-Observation Conference Report is considered a stand-alone document. Any notes taken by an observer or evaluator may be shared with the speech-language pathologist, but they are not considered part of the formal documentation.
- The Post-Observation Conference Report is completed after the conference with the speech-language pathologist. It is reviewed by the administrator and the speech-language pathologist and is housed in the local school file.

Observations for the purpose of evaluation of school speech-language pathologists may be conducted by—

- school administrators,
- supervisor of speech and language programs,
- support speech pathologists, or
- special education supervisors.

Observed activities may include—

- classroom, small-group, individual, and parent-training intervention;
- individual student assessment sessions;
- interactions with families, students, staff (e.g., parent conferences, phone calls, informal exchanges, and staff meetings);
- contributions to EMT/IEP team meetings;
- parent education;
- participation in Speech and Language Programs in-service training and committees; or
- contributions to school-based committees.

Evaluations

The formal evaluation process for speech-language pathologists is the same as the process for classroom teachers, with the exception of the evaluation of novice speech-language pathologists. The school administrator, along with Speech and Language Programs staff, support novice speech-language pathologists; CTs are not currently available to support speech-language pathologists.

The Final Evaluation Report

The principal or assistant principal of the base school is the evaluator responsible for completing the formal Final Evaluation Report for school-based speech-language pathologists. The supervisor of speech and language programs is responsible for completing the formal Final Evaluation Report for centrally based speech-language pathologists. The evaluation includes an examination of cumulative performance on each of the six MCPS performance standards. Speech-language pathologists are encouraged to assemble a portfolio with evidence of attainment of growth in terms of the six performance standards to serve as a comprehensive record of continuous improvement.

The administrator and the speech-language pathologist review together the additional sources of data that may include—

- therapy lesson plans and logs;
- typical assessment reports;
- evidence of communication with parents;
- publications;
- PDPs, evidence of activities that support PDP outcomes, and additional PDP-related documentation;
- sample Individual Education Plans (IEPs); or
- agendas of meetings, presentations, workshops, or staff development activities attended or led by the speech-language pathologist.

Sources of Data Beyond Therapy Observation

Performance Standard I: Speech-language pathologists are committed to students and their learning.

Evidence of beliefs, commitment, and tenacity

- Assignments
- Communication of standards and criteria for success on tasks
- Communications to students and parents
- Feedback on student work
- Records of data analysis and goal setting
- Student work samples
- Therapy lesson plans and logs
- Typical assessment reports
- Sample Individual Education Plans (IEPs)

Performance Standard II: Speech-language pathologists know about communication theories and therapeutic techniques, and apply them to facilitate student learning.

Evidence of knowledge, planning skills, and successful instruction

- Therapy lesson plans and logs and supporting materials
- Assignments
- Documents distributed to students and parents
- Room set-up
- Work displays
- Planning for technology incorporation

Performance Standard III: Speech-language pathologists contribute to the establishment and maintenance of a positive environment in which students can develop their communication skills.

Evidence of positive climate, management, and family partnerships

- Feedback on work and on student goals
- Evidence of requesting feedback about students from teachers and/or parents
- Grouping practices
- Room tours (e.g., what public messages are posted, what values are revealed),
- Records of communication to parents (e.g., parent conference summaries, parent contact logs)
- Student records of goal setting and self-analysis of work
- Student and parent survey data

Performance Standard IV: Speech-language pathologists continually assess student progress, analyze the data, and develop intervention strategies to improve student communication skills.

Evidence of assessment, analysis, and adaptation of instruction

- Assessment samples (e.g., checklists, performance tasks, observations of student work in class)
- Feedback on work
- Therapy lesson plans and logs
- Sample IEPs
- Sample quarterly progress notes from IEPs
- Sample reevaluation assessment reports and/or status reports
- Meeting notes with students, parents, and school staff

Performance Standard V: Speech-language pathologists are committed to continuous improvement and professional development.

Evidence of reflection and collaboration for personal growth

- Collection of ideas, research, articles, etc. Related to professional development plan and shared with colleagues
- Interview and conference data
- Log of professional development activities
- Agendas of meetings, presentations, workshops, or staff development activities attended
- Evidence of professional achievements or milestones
- Professional articles or presentations

Performance Standard VI: Speech-language pathologists exhibit a high degree of professionalism.

Evidence of leadership, professionalism, and routines

- Attendance records (work, meeting)
- Documentation that validates that the teacher was observed performing assigned duties and supporting school priorities
- Letters of thanks and commendations for participation in initiatives/activities inside and outside of the school
- List of committee participation, presentations
- Meeting agendas, minutes, notes
- Personal calendar
- Records/logs of meetings with students or staff members
- Student schedule and building schedule
- Documentation of record keeping tasks (e.g., SEDs, Medicaid information, student speech files).