

**Title: Speech-Language Pathologist (SLP01)**

**Pay Grade:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Position/:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Department/School:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Reports to:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Date:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Incumbent:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Supervisor:** \_\_\_\_\_

### **Function and Purpose of Position**

The Speech-Language Pathologist works to promote the success of all students by engaging in activities designed to eliminate, reduce or prevent communication disabilities/delays. In addition, the speech-language pathologists counsel and educate families and school personnel about these disorders and their management.

#### **Activity A: Identification of students with speech and/or language impairments**

- review school records and review pertinent information and reports as required
- observe students in the classroom as required
- informal collaboration with parents, teachers, educational assistants and other professionals to provide strategies, resources and additional recommendations for teacher interventions in the classroom
- informal demonstration of intervention strategies, procedures and techniques
- provide follow-up consultation or initiate a formal referral for assessment
- screen all ECS students in September of each school year using informal screening measures to determine candidates for Program Unit Funding or Mild-Moderate Funding

#### **Activity B: Evaluation and diagnosis of specific speech and/or language impairments**

A core role of the speech-language pathologist is to conduct a thorough and balanced speech, language or communication assessment. Balanced assessment may include:

- gathering information from family members, teachers, students and other professionals and paraprofessionals
- selecting and administering appropriate standardized and functional assessment instruments
- administering hearing screenings as part of all new referrals
- after the assessment has been completed, it is the responsibility of the speech-language pathologist to:
  - interpret the assessment results in order to identify strengths, needs and emerging abilities
  - establish the presence of a communication disorder, delay or difference and determine a severity rating
  - define the relationship between the student's communication abilities and any adverse effect on educational performance
  - determine if the communication disability is affected by other factors such as age, attention, Central Auditory Processing, cognitive factors, cultural diversity, limited English proficiency, hearing loss or other health or social-emotional factors
- summarize the evaluation results and make recommendations

### **Activity C: Plan and provide intervention directed at remediating specific speech and/or language impairments**

It is the responsibility of the speech-language pathologist to provide intervention and follow-up services for disorders of:

- language (morphology, syntax, semantics and phonological awareness)
- cognitive aspects of communication (including communication disability and other functional disabilities associated with cognitive impairment)
- social aspects of communication (including challenging behaviour and pragmatics)
- speech (articulation, phonology, motor speech, fluency and voice)

The core responsibilities of the speech-language pathologist for intervention of all communication disorders include:

- reviewing all assessment/evaluation information in order to determine priority areas and methods for intervention
- considering other factors that may influence communication ability and addressing those through intervention, accommodations or modifications to the environment or referring to other health professionals
- selecting, planning and co-ordinating appropriate service delivery and scheduling options. These options include monitoring the child's speech and language skills, home program, collaborative consultation with the speech-language pathologist, teacher and family, classroom-based intervention, pull-out intervention (individual and group), self contained program (such as the Communication Skills Program) or a combination of two or more of these service delivery options.
- selecting materials appropriate to age and developmental level
- developing appropriate lesson plans
- applying effective teaching principles during intervention sessions
- collaborating with parents and educational personnel
- observing and recording student responses during intervention to determine progress
- preparation and distribution of home programs
- conducting formal and informal reviews to ensure that the goals and objectives reflect the student's needs. Re-evaluation leads to continuation or modification of the intervention, referral to other professionals or dismissal/review.

### **Activity D: Documentation**

Documentation and accountability are required for each of the core roles of the speech-language pathologist. Examples of required documentation include:

- observation and anecdotal notes
- referral and consent forms
- standardized and non-standardized test protocols and other assessment information
- IPPs/ISPs (the speech-language pathologist does not develop the IPP or ISP but contributes information to its development)
- schedules
- progress reports
- goals and objectives
- lesson plans

- treatment summaries
- assessment/review reports
- statistical and student information for the local regional health authorities (as per our contractual agreements)
- statistical information for our year-end program summary
- exception reports
- parent letters

### **Activity E: Counselling and guidance for parents, students, teachers and other school personnel regarding all aspects of speech and language development**

One of the core responsibilities of a school-based speech-language pathologist is in the area of prevention and education. Primary prevention and education activities may range from individual conferences to school-wide presentations or community in-services. They may include educating and collaborating with parents, families, educators, administrators, paraprofessionals and the community regarding all areas of speech and language development. These activities may take place before, during or after school hours.

### **Activity F: Other Duties:**

- engage in professional development activities (reading, workshops, conferences)
- provide supervision to various support personnel (SLP assistants, educational assistants, practicum students in Speech Pathology and Audiology, practicum students in the SLP assistant program, school volunteers)
- refer for medical or other professional attention deemed necessary for the prevention or rehabilitation of speech and/or language impairments
- attend monthly staff meetings
- attend other meetings as required (e.g. parent conferences, team meetings, IPP/ISP meetings, etc.)
- participate in the ongoing operation of our department (assist in ordering tests, materials, forms, photocopying and developing forms, entering new inventory. etc.)

## **EDUCATION AND EXPERIENCE**

- Masters Degree in Speech-Language Pathology (or equivalent) from an accredited university
- Must be registered for membership with the Alberta College of Speech-Language Pathologists and Audiologists (ACSLPA)
- Minimum of one year experience with the school-age population is preferred but not necessary

## **KNOWLEDGE, SKILLS AND ATTITUDES**

- ability to apply knowledge of principles, guidelines, concepts and procedures
- strong interpersonal skills
- strong organizational and time management skills
- strong written and oral communication skills
- good computer skills
- positive attitude towards students with special needs

## **DECISION MAKING**

The Speech-Language Pathologist makes regular decisions regarding testing procedures, caseload management and intervention procedures. Program guidelines are in place but individual speech-language pathologists are constantly required to modify or make changes to established methods and procedures as needed. Changes to the program or policies are directed to the co-ordinator.

## **WORKING WITH OTHERS**

The Speech-Language Pathologist must be able to work well with others as they work not only as part of a team of other speech-language pathologists, but also as part of a school team and as part of Student Support Services and Instructional Services. They must also be able to relate well with students of all ages and to their families.

## **PHYSICAL DEMANDS**

- long periods of intense concentration (visual, listening, mental)
- heavy lifting of test and therapy materials and equipment
- long periods of sitting (often in small chairs and at small tables where bending is required)

## **WORKING CONDITIONS**

- office space at Central Office is comfortable but can be very crowded (shared telephone lines and computer)
- working conditions in the schools vary from school to school (ranges from spacious and comfortable to cramped, poorly lit and poorly ventilated)
- frequent interruptions throughout the day
- usually at a different school every day (may be required to travel between schools during the lunch hour)
- may be required to drive up to 2 hours per day
- position is based on an 8 hour work day (expected to participate in meetings or in-services outside of school hours) and a minimum of 197 operational days

## **ADDITIONAL INFORMATION**

- must agree to respect the confidentiality and personal integrity of students, parents, teachers and other staff
- must have a valid driver's licence and own a reliable vehicle
- must have successfully completed a criminal record's check
- must abide by the duties and responsibilities outlined in the Canadian Association of Speech Language Pathologists and Audiologists (CASLPA) Canon of Ethics