Slide 1

Speaker 1:
Good Afternoon, we are here today to go over revised speech language eligibility criteria for the new Missouri State Plan. I am Beth McKerlie, I am a Past President of MSHA and I work in North Kansas City School District. I am here today with Pat Jones as she is MSHA President and works in Liberty School District. I am also here today with Diane Golden, she is with the Association of Assistive Technology Act Programs and is retired from MO-CASE.

Slide 2

Speaker 1:
We have a few disclosures that we will need to share with you today. Financial disclosures for myself, I am employed as the Speech Language and Related Service Coordinator in the North Kansas City School District. We do have a ASHA Grant that provides travel and lodging expenses as well as a contract for DESE.

For my non-financial disclosures, I am a member and a past president of the Missouri Speech-Language-Hearing Association, I’m member of the American Speech-Language-Hearing Association and a member of MO-CASE.

Speaker 2:
Pat Jones here, I am employed with Liberty Public Schools as a Speech Language Pathologist. For a financial disclosure, we received an AHSA Grant for travel and lodging expenses and have a contract with DESE.

For non-financial disclosures, I’m the current MSHA President. I am a member of American Speech-Language Association. I am the current State Education Advocacy Leader (SEAL).

Speaker 3:
I am Diane Golden, I am employed by the Association of Assistive Technology Act Programs. Again, we have an ASHA Grant supporting this training and contract with DESE. I am a member and past Board member of Missouri Speech-Language-Hearing Association. I am a member and past committee chair for the American Speech-Language-Hearing
**Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA)**

The Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) is a federal law that requires schools to serve the educational needs of students with disabilities. The law ensures a free appropriate public education (FAPE) for students with disabilities in all 50 states and US Territories.

**Key Principles in IDEA**

- Procedural Safeguards
- Free Appropriate Public Education (FAPE)
- Appropriate Evaluation and Eligibility for Services
- Individualized Education Program (IEP)
- Least Restrictive Environment (LRE)
- Parent Participation

**Federal Regulations for §300.306 Determination of Eligibility**

- Group of professionals and the parent determine whether the child is a child with a disability as defined in §300.8 and must determine whether the child needs specially designed instruction and related services.
- Must determine what the adverse impact is on the child’s education.
- Must also determine if the child is a child with a disability if there is a lack of appropriate instruction in reading, which includes all the essential components of reading instruction as defined in ESEA section of the Every Student Succeeds Act. And the lack of appropriate instruction in math or Limited English proficiency and they don’t meet the eligibility criteria.

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**Slide 3**

*Speaker 1:*

Speech Language Pathologists working in today’s schools have a variety of roles of responsibilities. For purposes of today’s presentation, we are talking about Individuals with Disabilities Education Act or IDEA. IDEA is a federal law that requires schools to serve the educational needs of students with disabilities. The law ensures a free appropriate public education (FAPE) for students with disabilities in all 50 states and US Territories.

**Slide 4**

*Speaker 1:*

There are key principals in IDEA such as Procedural Safeguards, Free Appropriate Public Education (also known as FAPE), appropriate evaluation and eligibility for services, individualized education program (or IEP), least restrictive environment (LRE) and parent participation.

**Slide 5**

*Speaker 1:*

The Federal Regulations for section §300.306 regarding determination of eligibility, states that a group of professionals and the parent determines whether the child is a child with a disability as defined in §300.8 and the group of the professionals and the parent must determine if they need specially designed instruction and related services. You must determine what the adverse impact is on the child’s education. The child cannot be determined to be a child with a disability if there is a lack of instruction in reading, which includes all the essential components of reading instruction as defined in ESEA section of the Every Student Succeeds Act. And the lack of appropriate instruction in math or Limited English proficiency and they don’t meet the eligibility criteria.
**Slide 6**

*Speaker 1:*

The evaluation should draw upon information from a variety of sources, parent input, teacher recommendations, as well as information about the child’s physical condition, social or cultural background, and adaptive behavior.

The evaluation should also ensure that the information obtained from all these sources is documented and carefully considered.

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**Slide 7**

*Speaker 1:*

The Missouri Speech Language Hearing Association, MO-CASE, and DESE had been working for years to look at possibly revising our outdated speech language eligibility criterion. We quickly became one of only two states utilizing cognitive referencing, which is comparing IQ scores to language scores. Most all other states have moved away from cognitive referencing and they use a deficit model for standardized assessments and most frequently they are using 1.5 to 2.0 standard deviations from the mean of the language test. They are using overall language, not discreet parts of language such as syntax.

So, in 2015-2016 conversations continued about revising this out dated eligibility criterion and a group of MSHA, MO-Case Higher Education, DESE and local district stake holders established a work group and met throughout the year of 2016-2017 to develop recommendations for DESE that included revisions to all speech and language criteria. This recommendation was included in the proposed State Plan for 2017, but the state plan proposal could not be finalized in 2018, due to the lack of the State Board quorum.

Again, in 2018 these recommendations were included in the proposed State Plan and the State Board approved the plan in February, 2019 in rule making. The new State Plan is effective as of July 30, 2019.
Initial Eligibility Criteria Proposed Revisions

- Proposed revisions for INITIAL eligibility criteria under IDEA (State Plan rules) for all 4 speech-language areas:
  - Language
  - Sound System
  - Voice
  - Fluency
- Not eligibility criteria for re-evaluation and determination of continued need for special education
- Not eligibility criteria for determination of need for speech-language as related service

Language Impairment

A language impairment is present when a comprehensive communication assessment documents all of the following:

1. The language impairment adversely affects the student’s educational performance as documented by a lack of response to evidence-based interventions designed to support progress in the general curriculum. The intent with this prong criterion is to ensure that RTI, MTSS type of general education intervention has been implemented before consideration for IDEA eligibility. You will see with this prong, this first prong, applies all speech language eligibility criteria.

2. The student's overall language functioning is significantly below age expectations as measured by two or more composite standard scores on standardized language assessments. The composite language score reflects both receptive and expressive language function in a single standard score. Significantly below is defined as 1.75 standard deviations below the mean for students who are kindergarten age eligible and older.

Slide 8
Speaker 1:
The initial eligibility criteria is just use for initial eligibility. These revisions apply to initial eligibility for all four areas of speech and language: Sound System, Language, Voice and Fluency. This is not criteria that should be used for a re-evaluation and determination of continued need for special education services. Nor is this eligibility criteria that is used for determination as a related service. This criteria is only applied for initial eligibility purposes.

Slide 9
Speaker 1:
We are first going to look at Language Impairment. A language impairment is present when a comprehensive assessment documents all of the following:

The first prong is that the language impairment adversely affects the student’s educational performance as documented by a lack of response to evidence-based interventions designed to support progress in the general curriculum. The intent with this prong criterion is to ensure that RTI, MTSS type of general education intervention has been implemented before consideration for IDEA eligibility. You will see with this prong, this first prong, applies all speech language eligibility criteria.

The adverse effect on the educational performance as defined by evidence-based interventions can be curriculum-based interventions such as reading or it can be specific speech language interventions. These interventions can be implemented by any appropriate provider, such as a teacher, para, SLP-A, or SLP.

Slide 10
Speaker 1:
The second prong of the Language Impairment is that the student’s overall language functioning is significantly below age expectations as measured by two or more composite standard scores on standardized language assessments. The composite language score reflects both receptive and expressive language function in a single standard score.

Significantly below is defined as 1.75 standard deviations below the mean for students who are kindergarten age eligible and older.
A public agency may accept a composite score allowing for the standard error of measurement when the criterion is met on the other composite score.

The agency may adopt written procedures for utilization of reasonable variances that enable a student to meet the standard score criterion in highly unique situations such as English Learners.

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**Slide 11**

**Speaker 1:**

So just to recap the standardized assessment component of the language criterion. The new straight deficit of 1.75 SD below the mean for the language assessment, replaces the previous cognitive reference comparison. IQ scores are no longer required.

The new language criterion requires 1.75 SD below the mean on two overall language composite scores from standardized assessments, that include both receptive and expressive language skills. Standardized assessments that only look at discreet areas of language such as semantics or a syntax test are not utilized for the 1.75 SD below the mean criterion.

Also, there is an allowance for variance in meeting the 1.75 SD criterion level including standing error of measurement and unique situations such as English Learners.

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**Slide 12**

**Speaker 1:**

It is important to note with the new language eligibility criteria that Young Child with a Developmental Disability criteria remains unchanged. You should still continue to use YCDD for determination of eligibility for children who are 3-5 years of age but not Kindergarten eligible. This continues the use of YCDD deficit levels of 2 SD in communication in one area or 1.5 when its paired with another developmental area for eligibility of children aged 3-5 who are not yet Kindergarten age eligible. Again, this is NOT a change from current criteria.
The student consistently displays inappropriate or inadequate language that impairs communication in the student’s educational environment as documented by structured qualitative procedures which includes a formal language sample, classroom observations, curriculum-based assessments, teacher/parent checklists/interviews or other clinical tasks.

The intent is to have authentic assessment beyond normed referenced scores that documents language impairment that adversely impacts educational performance in the school environment.

The fourth prong of the language impairment eligibility criterion is that the language deficit is not primarily the result of dialectal differences or second language influence. This is also unchanged, as it is in the current criterion. I am going to turn this over to Diane and she will go over the Sound System Disorder criteria.

Before we get into the criterion changes themselves, I have a couple of slides that provide some background data information that I think is important for people to understand and provide a context for the changes in the Sound System criteria. The first slide provides data from the Missouri Child Count, that’s the December 1 child count of children with IEPs that every school district provides. With the number of students identified eligible under the Language Impairment criterion and Sound System Disorder criterion along with Voice/Fluency but the speech numbers are 99% children with Sound System not Voice/Fluency. The table provides data from 2007 through 2018 and what I hope folks can observe by this table is that the ratio between language and speech (the numbers of students identified eligible under language and the number of students identified eligible under speech) the ratio between the two has remained relatively stable for over a decade. With far
Missouri Preschool Child Count Data

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<th>Year</th>
<th>Speech</th>
<th>Language</th>
<th>Total</th>
<th>YCDD</th>
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<td>143</td>
<td>3,926</td>
<td>8,115</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2017</td>
<td>168</td>
<td>3,655</td>
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<tr>
<td>2010</td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Missouri Child Count Trend Summary

- Speech (almost all sound system disorders) consistently is the majority of K-12 SL child count rather than Language.
- Add to these numbers those students with articulation errors served as non-special education interventions and the level of K-12 SLP resources focused on speech production is large, country, K-12 SLP time is more focused on reading/Fluency interventions with a direct nexus to academic achievement.
- PK Speech (almost all sound system disorders) continues to increase compared to YCDD which has been stable for many years.

I am providing this data because this is relatively inconsistent with other states and national trends. I will say the trend in other states is just the opposite. The majority of children eligible are on the Language side not the Speech side. This is an area where Missouri is out of step with many states and I just want people to be aware of the fact that we have far more children identified as IDEA eligible in the area of Speech than other states tend to have.

Over 60% closer to even 70% of all students identified as Speech and Language eligible, eligible in the area of speech, which translates to Sound System Disorder versus Language.

So proposed changes, not proposed-final changes to the Sound System eligibility criteria were at least somewhat based on the rather odd trajectory of data that has been occurring in Missouri for the past decade or so. Overall, those data trends show that Speech, almost all Sound System Disorders, are consistently the majority of K-12 students on child count instead of Language. When you add into that the numbers of students that are served, who have...
Sound System Disorder
A Sound System Disorder, which includes articulation and/or phonology, is present when:

1. The Sound System Disorder adversely affects the student’s educational performance as documented by lack of response to evidence-based interventions designed to support progress in the general education curriculum.

Intent is to ensure general education interventions have been implemented before consideration for IDEA eligibility. Can be provided by any appropriate provider including SLP.

Slide 18
Speaker 3:
So, the changes to Sound System Disorder eligibility criteria as Beth pointed out, in the Language criterion. There are prongs and the first prong of the Sound System is very similar to the first prong of Language which is the Sound System Disorder adversely affects the student’s educational performance as documented by lack of response to evidence-based interventions designed to support progress in the general education curriculum. That prong is intended just like it is in Language to ensure that RTI, MTSS some sort of non-special education intervention has been tried first before moving IDEA eligibility determinations.

2. The student exhibits a significant delay of at least one year in correct sound production based on state designated normative data in the table below (and the table is inserted in the state plan it is not on this slide) after administering a single word test and/or a sentence/phrase repetition task and a connected speech sample with consideration given to the type of error recorded (substitutions, omissions, distortions, and/or additions). These errors may be described as single sound errors or errors in phonological patterns. However, if the student does not exhibit a significant delay of at least one year in correct sound production, but there are multiple errors in the sound system which are collectively so severe that the student’s speech is considered to be pathological, the student may be identified as having a sound system disorder.

Slide 19
Speaker 3:
The next prong is the metric or the quantifier for the criterion. That is that the student exhibits a significant delay of at least one year in correct sound production based on state designated normative data in the table below (and the table is inserted in the state plan it is not on this slide) after administering a single word test and/or a sentence/phrase repetition task and a connected speech sample with consideration given to the type of error recorded (substitutions, omissions, distortions, and/or additions). Important: these errors may be described as single sound errors or errors in phonological patterns. The errors may be described as such but having single sound error or an error in a phonological pattern in and of itself does not constitute eligibility. The eligibility is being a year beyond the norms in the table. So very important point.

However, there is always a however, if the student does not exhibit a significant delay of at least one year based on the
normative table, but there are multiple errors in the sound system which are collectively so severe that the student’s speech is unintelligible, the public agency may establish the student has a disability. AKA Sound System Disorder.

**Slide 20**

**Speaker 4:**
The third prong of the criteria is an exclusion clause, “the sound system disorder is not a result of dialectal differences or second language influence.” This portion of the criteria is unchanged from the current version.

In overall summary, the sound system criteria metric provision has been changed to one-year beyond (rather than at) the developmental norms used by the current criteria. Professional judgement has been eliminated and replaced by a determination that the students’ speech is “unintelligible” which can be documented by an inability to communicate basic wants and needs which will likely cause measurable deficits in a variety of development and/or academic areas.

**Slide 21**

**Speaker 3:**
This next slide provides a bit of an overview for reminding people about issues related to determining adverse educational impact related to Sound System Disorder or actually Voice and Fluency, any eligibility criteria. Adverse educational impact legally, in a number of court cases, always comes back to a child’s ability to learn and function and perform in the general education classroom. In a general education curriculum.

For children with Speech, Sound System and Fluency impairments/disorders the most reasonable way to document the educational impact is by being able to point out, how overall communication deficits impact the child in the general education classroom academically. Their ability to matriculate general education curriculum and reasonable achievement levels. Very frequently school districts document educational impact in the area of Speech particularly Sound System Disorder by using statements like “the child’s speech calls negative attention to themselves” creating some sort of implying or stating directly that it creates some sort of social or emotional impact. I would
caution people strongly about using that kind of language because if that is the adverse educational impact, then that IEP should have goals and objectives to address the negative social/emotional impact, such as counseling or someway to address the social/emotional issues that are caused by communication- the Articulation Sound System Disorder.

Just providing this information as a caution so that people take seriously the adverse educational impact part of the speech criterion. It is really talking about the kinds of negative academic achievement issues that you tend to see with other disabling conditions and again if it social/emotional then one would want you to address that directly with goals and objectives. Not just speech therapy per say to address an articulation error. So just a word of caution. With that I am going to turn it over to Pat and she is going to discuss Voice Impairment criteria.

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**Voice Impairment**

A voice impairment is present when a comprehensive communication assessment documents all of the following:

1. The voice impairment adversely affects the student’s educational performance as documented by lack of response to evidence-based interventions designed to support progress in the general education curriculum.
2. The child consistently exhibits deviations in pitch, quality, or volume;
3. The student’s voice is discrepant from the norm as related to his/her age, sex, and culture and is distracting to the listener;
4. The voice impairment is not the result of:
   - a medical condition that contraindicates voice therapy intervention;
   - a temporary condition such as: normal voice changes, allergies, colds, or other such conditions; or
   - a dialectal difference or second language influence.

There is a note an intent for schools to establish policy to address medical clearance for voice therapy. Which has always been “best practice”. 

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**Slide 22**

**Speaker 2:**

Voice Impairment has four prongs. A voice impairment is present when a comprehensive communication assessment documents all of the following:

The first prong: the voice impairment adversely affects the student’s educational performance as documented by lack of response to evidence-based interventions designed to support progress in the general education curriculum,

The second prong: the child consistently exhibits deviations in pitch, quality, or volume;

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**Slide 23**

**Speaker 2:**

The third prong: the student's voice is discrepant from the norm as related to his/her age, sex, and culture and is distracting to the listener;

The fourth prong: the voice impairment is not the result of--

- a medical condition that contraindicates voice therapy intervention;
- a temporary condition such as: normal voice changes, allergies, colds, or other such conditions; or
- a dialectal difference or second language influence.

There is a note an intent for schools to establish policy to address medical clearance for voice therapy. Which has always been “best practice”.
Fluency Impairment

A fluency impairment is present when a comprehensive assessment documents all of the following:

1. The fluency impairment adversely affects the student’s educational performance as documented by lack of response to evidence-based interventions designed to support progress in the general education curriculum.
2. The student’s fluency is significantly below the norm as measured by speech sampling in a variety of contexts and impairs communication in the student’s educational environment as documented by structured qualitative procedures such as classroom observations, curriculum-based assessments, teacher/parent checklists/interviews, or other clinical tasks.
3. The student consistently exhibits one of the following symptomatic behaviors of dysfluency:
   - Sound, syllabic, or word repetition;
   - Prolongations of sounds, syllables, or words;
   - Avoidance;
   - Blockages; or
   - Hesitations

It is the intent is to have authentic assessment beyond any numeric data that documents fluency impairment that adversely impacts educational performance in the school environment.

Data Based Analysis

- Several large districts participated in work group:
  - Representatives of DESE, MO-CASE, MSHA, schools based SLP,s, and MSHA
- Applied new criteria to 1,200 evaluations wondering if flood gates would open
- Result: not significant different in number of students eligible, shift in type

As a work group, we analyzed 1,200 evaluations. Several districts came together in our work group. MO-CASE, MSHA, DESE other SLPs and we applied the new criteria to 1,200 evaluations. The concern would be that the flood gates would open and the number of Language, Speech, Fluency and Voice eligibility students would greatly increase. However, the results indicated that there was not a
significant change in the number of students that are eligible, however there is a definite shift in the type of student that would be eligible.

I am going to hand the mic over to Beth McKerlie.

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Speaker 1:

In the beginning of the work group that was put together to review the Speech/Language criteria, I talked earlier about what other states were doing to get a feel for what was going on in the other states. Through a process for reviewing that information, we found out that most every state has some sort of Speech/Language Handbook or guidelines document that either the Department of Education or the Speech Language Hearing Association for that state edited and put out for the speech pathologists to use in the state.

So, Missouri decided that we needed a handbook, the people that were working on this work group, MSHA led the way and we received an ASHA State Association Grant in 2017 to develop this handbook.

The handbook work group met for the year of 2017-2018 to put together the handbook. The purpose for the handbook is that we can get some greater consistency in the state to improve outcomes for children, to make sure we are aligning local, state and federal practices and also to ensure evidence-based practices. We published the handbook on November 1, 2018. The handbook lives on the MSHA website (it’s on the front page of the MSHA website). The handbook has also been referenced a couple places on the DESE website. And the handbook also includes a Q&A section that has been published both on the MSHA and DESE website. All the information is also there about the history of the State Plan Changes.

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Speaker 1:

It is intended now that the State Plan has been finalized that the MSHA handbook will go on to be revised again to include suggestions for Speech Language Pathologists and administrators in school districts to help with all the various prongs of the criteria. Examples would be including teacher checklists, observation forms, informal measures that can be utilized other than assessments and updating the Q&A section (questions that have been obtained through the
various presentations in presenting this information to the state of Missouri). We hope that we will be able to publish another version of the handbook soon.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Questions</th>
<th>If you have any questions you can contact Diane, Pat or myself and we will be happy to help give you some guidance. Thank you for your time today!</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Contact for questions:</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Beth Mclerie</td>
<td><a href="mailto:beth.mclare@kayschools.org">beth.mclare@kayschools.org</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pat Jones</td>
<td><a href="mailto:pat.jones@p53.org">pat.jones@p53.org</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Diane Cordy Colville</td>
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