

The Public Schools of Dover and Sherborn

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Language-Based Learning Disability Program Overview

Student Profile

Language-based learning disability (LBLD) is the inability of individuals with average to above average cognitive ability to learn at their level of potential and to access curriculum through traditional educational techniques due to neurologically-based challenges with the processing and expression of language. Students with LBLD require explicit skill-based, strategy-based instruction to develop literacy and support executive function. Executive function coordinates the cognitive and psychological processes necessary for effective communication.

Students with language-based learning disabilities may experience minor interferences with literacy and executive function that can be addressed in the classroom to significant difficulties that require intensive, specialized, and multi-sensory instruction as well as on-going guided practice, aimed at remediating their specific areas of weakness. A primary area of focus is instructing students how to organize and manage time, materials, and language within their learning environment, and develop their self awareness as a learner. The intensive remediation is provided by the language-based specialist during the on-going, concentrated language-based instructional block and academic support period.

The Program

The Region's objective is to provide students with language-based learning disabilities a language-based instructional program. The program integrates language-based strategies and interventions into the student's general education classrooms through a collaborative approach with the language-based specialist, a designated language-based teaching assistant, general education faculty and the speech and language pathologist. The program includes a language-

based instructional block within the academic day. This class, Language-Based Instruction (LBI), explicitly teaches the skills, strategies, and methods needed for students with this profile to succeed in the following areas:

- Reading Foundation Skills: Instruction in phonemic awareness, decoding, fluency, and spelling.
- Reading Comprehension Skills: Instruction in recognizing and retaining specific details, summarizing, inferential reasoning, analysis of text, making connections to prior knowledge, making predictions, and finding the main idea.
- Written and Oral Expression Skills: Instruction in the use of vocabulary, paraphrasing, thematic development, organization of thought, single and multi paragraph development, grammar, semantics and syntax.

Additionally, the program includes an academic support block that explicitly teaches the skills, strategies, and methods needed for students with this profile to succeed in the following areas:

- Executive Function: Organization, time management, note-taking, research and report writing, self-advocacy, self-regulation and self efficiency.
- Assistive Technology: Instruction in digital binder organization, creating templates, speech-to-text technology, access to audio/digitally formatted text.

Eligibility

The IEP Team determines eligibility based on individual student's needs and progress through their IEP service delivery. As needs require, the language-based instruction designs and incorporates small group instruction with progress monitoring in the following areas:

- Decoding/Encoding (i.e. Wilson/O.G. instruction)
- Reading Fluency/Comprehension (i.e. Read Naturally/Read Live, Keys to Literacy)
- Sentence structure (i.e. Project Read - Framing Your Thoughts)
- Writing Process: organization and expression (i.e. EmPower)
- Executive Function (i.e. prioritization, long term planning, initiation/completion rates)
- Assistive Technology (i.e Google Classroom & Read and Write, Learning Ally, Speech-to-Text)