

06-23-20 (revised 6-30-20)

### **Position Statement:**

It is the position of the Minnesota Speech-Language-Hearing Association (MNSHA) that a communication disorder in the area of articulation constitutes an educational need requiring the specialized therapeutic support of a licensed speech-language pathologist. Educational need is determined through meeting the articulation disorder criteria as defined by the [state of Minnesota 3525.1343](#) and by making a team decision guided by the expertise of the speech-language pathologist on the educational team.

### **Supporting Information:**

#### **ASHA School Services FAQ:**

**Can a school district deny speech-language pathology services to a student with a "mild" articulation disorder if the district decides that the disability does not "adversely affect educational performance"?**

State and/or local school education agencies may apply different interpretations to the phrase "adversely affects educational performance"; however, they cannot deny IDEA-mandated services to a child with a speech or language impairment just because that child does not have a discrepancy in age/grade performance in an academic subject-matter area. If acquisition of adequate and appropriate communication skills is a required part of your school's academic standards and curriculum and is considered to be a basic skill necessary for all children attending school, then a child who has initially qualified with a speech or language impairment and continues to demonstrate a need in this area, given the expertise of a licensed speech-language pathologist, is exhibiting speech or language skills that adversely affect their educational performance. Sound production errors may affect the way a student hears, speaks, reads, or writes phonemes, and thus can affect academic and social performance and development. For more information, see ASHA's Eligibility and Dismissal resource, "Adversely Affects Educational Performance" section. If a child qualifies in the area of articulation disorder (State of MN 3525.1343) and continues to demonstrate a need in this area, given the current evidence from the field, services cannot be denied, as the district would be denying federally mandated services.

U.S. Department of Education, Office of Special Education and Rehabilitative Services (OSERS) and Office of Special Education Programs (OSEP) documents on [ASHA](#), related to "Adversely Affects Educational Performance".

- [Letter](#) to Catherine Clarke, ASHA Education and Regulatory Advocacy, from OSEP clarifying "adverse effect on educational performance"

- [Letter](#) to Stan Dulblinske from the Department of Health, Education, and Welfare (Office of Education, Washington, D.C).

Minnesota Department of Education (MDE) interpretation of educational need determination (Question 10; Q&A Related Services) [\(PDF\)](#)