

Guide to Becoming a Speech-Language Pathology Supervisor in the Schools of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania

INTRODUCTION

Speech-Language Pathologists in the schools of Pennsylvania benefit from the support of a program specific supervisor to deliver the highest quality services to their students. Ideally, the speech-language supervisor would possess the highest credentials of our profession.

To impact the assurance of quality school speech and language services to the students in your system, you should consider becoming a Speech-Language Supervisor. In this capacity you can be well connected to help coordinate the services that are provided and develop guidelines to ensure "best practices."

Another very important responsibility is to develop and implement staff development activities. The Pennsylvania Department of Education has Act 48 requirements that should be tailored to the specific discipline of the teacher. As a Speech-Language Supervisor in the schools, you will have opportunities to organize and present current best practices that should fulfill Act 48 hours, as well as coordinate with ASHA and state licensure continuing education requirements.

RESPONSIBILITIES or SKILL SET

- Opportunities to work with administrative staff to educate them about services the Speech and Language Program offers, and how SLPs can positively impact the academic performance of all students in the regular education curriculum
- Communication and coordination with universities and training programs, such as filling requests for graduate externships in the schools. This allows for the opportunity to make a great match between the SLP and the extern, who learn from each other. Recruitment and retention purposes are fulfilled, and current practices and excitement for new ideas are developed. Leadership skills are expanded for the cooperating clinician.
- Technical skills, people skills and a commitment to quality ethical services for all students in need are necessary skills, as well as organized approaches to the multiple and changing tasks faced each day.

What is the Pennsylvania Department of Education certification requirement for becoming a Special Education Supervisor?

The successful completion of a Special Education Supervisory Certification program through an approved program at an educational institution is necessary. Candidates must also pass the PRAXIS Supervisory-Education Leadership (10410) 580 Test.

The professional education program provides evidence that the criteria and competencies for exit from the Special Education Supervisory program are assessed in coursework, field experiences and an internship.

What are the requirements for the Internship?

The professional education program has requirements that Special Education Supervisory certification candidates meet the established program goals and exit criteria during their participation in 60 hours of field experiences and 300 hours in a practicum. These hours may be accumulated over several years, and are defined by each University.

Candidates demonstrate ability to perform the major task areas of policy determination, program development, and instructional supervision including:

- designing curriculum scope and sequence
- interpreting student test scores and assessments
- evaluating instructional methodologies and strategies
- monitoring and developing alternative forms of student assessment
- assessing instructional service delivery and evaluating program effectiveness
- identifying staff development needs and resources
- planning activities to address the needs of the educational program
- integrating curriculum across multiple disciplines
- budgetary planning for curriculum and personnel development

What are the duties and responsibilities of the Special Education Supervisor?

Grade Level Scope of Certificate:

An individual who holds a valid PA certificate as a Supervisor of Special Education is qualified to serve and work with elementary, middle, and secondary levels in grades Nursery through 12 in the special education requirements.

An educator holding a valid PA certificate as a Supervisor of Special Education is qualified to function as a liaison between the school administration and the certified professional special education staff of a public school for the purposes of:

- Enhancing the attainment of the district's expectations and goals by authorizing activities using judgment not equally shared by all other professional-level employees certified in special education
- Directing other certified special education persons
- Providing direct input to administrators, which affects the employment, assignment, transfer, promotion, layoff, discharge or other similar personnel actions of other professional-level employees certified in special education

Special Considerations:

- A certified principal may be permitted to supervise and direct special education staff within a particular building.
- An educator certified in this field may provide school staff development services regarding their collegial studies/skills.

Restrictions:

The Supervisor of Special Education is qualified for supervisory duties only in the special education area. If a Supervisor of Pupil Personnel Services is assigned responsibility for a Special Education program, including the responsibilities of evaluating and supervising special education staff and instruction, that person must also hold a Supervisor of Special Education certificate.

References: Program Specific Guidelines for Certification, 22 PA Code: Chapter 49: §49.11

What are the benefits of becoming a Special Education Supervisor?

The Special Education Supervisor has direct influence over the budgets of programs, presentations for professional development, recruitment, hiring, evaluation of staff, development of new programs and creative ideas, and precise knowledge of PDE regulations and Academic Standards, IDEA regulations and process.

In addition to the above, a Speech/Language Supervisor has the unique opportunity to provide a professional program of the highest quality for the students who require these services. It is inherent in the work of the Speech/Language Supervisor to provide to staff a vision of future trends, evidence based practices, and professional enhancement opportunities. Speech/Language Supervisors collaborate directly with Universities and Associations (such as PSHA and ASHA) to promote the professions and encourage development of high quality programs.

What additional requirements, if any, are needed to maintain the Special Education Supervisory Certification?

As of 2009, Act 48, ASHA continuing education units (CEUs), and state licensure CEUs, are important to maintain. These are the same requirements that speech/language pathologists in the schools of Pennsylvania uphold. The requirements are to be renewed at the end of each five-year period.

Salary is commensurate with experience and based on hiring school district scales

Support and assistance can be found:

- Pennsylvania Speech Supervisors (PASS) which meets regularly twice per year to collaborate and define needs and trends of importance.
- Pennsylvania Speech-Language-Hearing Association (PSHA)
www.psha.org
- PAIU Directors
- Local Intermediate Units – other allied professionals
- University contacts
- ASHA www.asha.org
- ASCD
- CEC

What approved programs for obtaining a Special Education Supervisory Certification are available in Pennsylvania?

The following Universities currently offer the Certification programs. Please contact the Universities directly for more information.

Arcadia University
Bloomsburg University of Pa
Cheyney University of Pa
Duquesne University
East Stroudsburg University of Pa
Eastern University
Edinboro University of Pa
Gannon University
Immaculata University
Lehigh University
Mansfield University of Pa
Marywood University
Millersville University of Pa
Pennsylvania State University/Main
Saint Francis University
Saint Joseph's University
Shippensburg University of Pa
Slippery Rock University of Pa
Temple University/Main
University of Pittsburgh/Main
Widener University

What do you need to do to obtain a Special Education Supervisor Certification in Pennsylvania if you are from another state?

Pennsylvania has signed an Interstate Agreement with other states/jurisdictions based upon the mutually agreed-upon conditions of that contract. The Interstate Agreement pertains to instructional areas only. All other certifications (education specialist, supervisory, administrative, etc.) must meet all requirements set in the Program Specific Guidelines. (See question #3 for specifics).

The informational content of this FAQ Guide to Becoming a Speech-Language Pathology Supervisor in the Schools came directly from the Pennsylvania Department of Education website: www.pde.state.pa.us.