

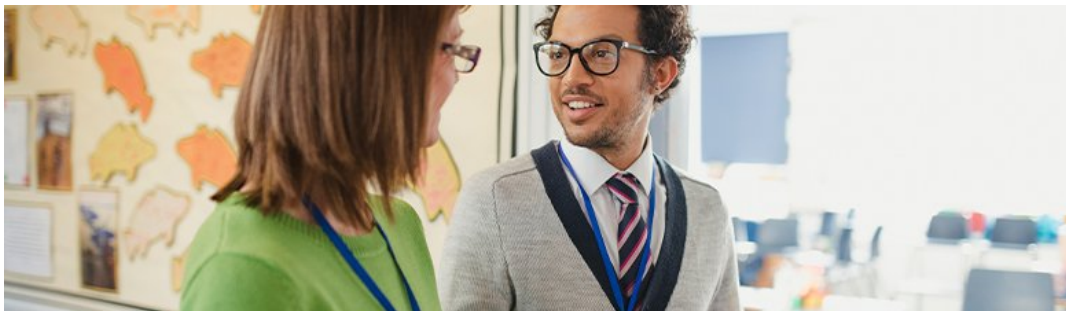
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School-Based SLPs and Special Education Teachers: Partnerships in Collaborative Classrooms

By [Tanika Johnson, EdD, MA, LPC-MHSP, LMHC, NCC, BC-TMH, CCTP](#) on August 6, 2021

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What obstacles prevent school-based SLPs and [special education](#) (SPED) teachers from providing the most equitable and inclusive high-quality educational environment?

One may argue that a lack of funding, investment, and training along with limited planning, time, implementation, administrator buy-in, [parental and familial involvement](#), and community alliances are key drivers. Others may dispute this and say that atypically developing children being served in a predominately inclusive environment, with no pull-out for reading and mathematics instruction, might not entirely benefit from individualized interventions, accommodations and modifications, evidence-based strategies, and classroom-wide procedures that include students who meet the criteria for an [individualized education program](#) (IEP).

Too often, we retreat to a mindset of regression versus progression when it



As it relates to real-world experiences, the workforce is not separated or divided by intelligence quotient (IQ), adaptive skills, or abilities. This means that we must establish a clear and concise pathway for eradicating these conventional frameworks of practice and adopt a collaborative model of partnering with the student's IEP Team.

Mutual Understanding and Collaborative Relationships

It is paramount for school-based SLPs and educators to acquire a mutual understanding of their roles, responsibilities, and level of expertise for executing a collaborative relationship.¹ While school-based SLPs must be capable of sustaining their intervention focus, educators have to recognize the increasing value of these professionals in delivering high-quality educational experiences in the classroom setting. This would encompass both general and special educators.

As it relates to the Response to Instruction and Intervention (RTI²) tier one, school-based SLPs may work alongside RTI² teams and provide assistance with progress-monitoring design and high-quality instruction that integrates language in the curriculum. For tier two, school-based SLPs can collaborate in the preparation, execution, and progress monitoring of additional instruction for below-grade-level students encountering challenges with [language and literacy](#) components of their educational programs. In terms of tier three, school-based SLPs administer specialized assessments and treatment for students meeting the criteria for a development language disorder and communication disorders.

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Federal Laws Require Collaborative

Partnerships

It is essential to acknowledge that school-based SLPs and educators are obligated by companies, nationwide organizations, and federal laws to partake in collaborative partnerships.² In the public school setting, the [Individuals with Disabilities Education Act](#) (IDEA) requires collaborative processes for assessing and delivering services to children with disabilities.

School-based SLPs can assist with successfully differentiating instruction for students with DLD by:

1. Lending a helping hand with the curriculum and instruction
2. Serving additional students in the classroom setting and personalizing lesson plans to satisfy IEP goals and objectives as well as Common Core State Standards (CCSS)
3. Offering added-on insight for multiple vehicles for learning—for example, supplying reading texts and materials at differing text readability and comprehension levels
4. Incorporating manipulatives and options in assignments
5. Captivating learners through relevant context¹

In the classroom setting, school-based SLPs can aid general and special educators in the successful implementation of functional goals that include:

1. Academics
2. [Social and emotional development](#)
3. Vocational advancement

Collaboration is a driving force for a student's educational attainment. School-based SLPs and special educators are substantial stakeholders in designing and delivering a provision of service to promote the equity, inclusion, and high-quality education of students with disabilities. Federal laws enforce collaboration among IEP teams to cultivate students' learning experiences and their achievement of goals, objectives, and CCSS.

When public school systems are enacting policies to support the dual roles of school-based SLPs and special educators in evaluating student data, encouraging peer observations, co-teaching, coaching, facilitating whole groups and small groups, and teaching the skill sets necessary for

accomplishing learning centers, workstations, and independent learning tasks, then the educational system, as a whole, widely benefits.

Below, watch Perry Flynn discuss **coteaching between SLPs and special education teachers** in a short clip from his and Lissa Power-deFur's MedBridge course, "[Educational Standards: Practical Applications for Student Success.](#)"



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She holds professional teaching licenses in both psychology and special education.

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