

Alvord Unified School District

Speech Protocol Implementation Instructions Effective January 24, 2021 to June 30, 2022

DATE: January 22, 2021

TO: Howard Taras, MD

FROM: Fernando Cubias

Re: Determination of Medical Necessity for Speech Therapy

Pursuant to the requirements of the LEA Medi-Cal Billing Option Program, attached for your approval and signature are the guidelines that establish medical necessity for our district.

These guidelines were reviewed by the following staff members and represent this district's current standard of practice and scope of services provided to students identified with speech needs:

Name	Title	Phone No.	E-mail
<i>Paulina Nwuba</i>	<i>Special Education Director</i>	<i>(951)509-5045</i>	<i>Paulina.nwuba@alvordschools.org</i>
<i>Fernando Cubias</i>	<i>LEA Coordinator</i>	<i>(951)509-5012</i>	<i>Fernando.cubias@alvordschools.org</i>

Thank you for assisting our school district in accessing these federal funds that are extremely valuable in helping to offset the expenses of our special education programs, while continuing to allow us to provide these beneficial services to our students.

Sincerely,

Fernando Cubias
Director I, Finance & Budget

Enclosures:

- List of current practitioners (Page 2-3)
- Determination of Medical Necessity for Services (Speech)

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SPEECH PRACTITIONERS

Fiscal Year: 2020-2021

All licensed and credentialed speech pathologists for this district are subject to these guidelines. As recommended by the Department of Health Services, below is a list of the staff that currently rely on the attached guidelines to identify and determine the medical necessity for speech services.

This list is subject to change due to turnover in employees and the hiring practices of the district. To access the most current list of practitioners, please contact the Director of Special Education.

Name	Title	Phone No.	E-mail
Gowri Arakere	Speech Therapist	(951)509-5045	gowri.arakere@alvordschools.org
Ximena Barba	Speech Therapist	(951)509-5045	ximena.barba@alvordschools.org
Mary Blase	Speech Therapist	(951)509-5045	mary.blase@alvordschools.org
Krissy Burns	Speech Therapist	(951)509-5045	krissy.burns@alvordschools.org
Sage Coria	Speech Therapist	(951)509-5045	sage.coria@alvordschools.org
Kirstin Eschbach	Speech Therapist	(951)509-5045	kirstin.eschbach@alvordschools.org
Laurel Flores	Speech Therapist	(951)509-5045	laurel.flores@alvordschools.org
Lynne Greenlee	Speech Therapist	(951)509-5045	lynne.greenlee@alvordschools.org
Jessica Hernandez	Speech Therapist	(951)509-5045	jessica.hernandez@alvordschools.org
Karen Inouye	Speech Therapist	(951)509-5045	karen.inouye@alvordschools.org
Maria Lozoya	Speech Therapist	(951)509-5045	maria.lozoya@alvordschools.org
Jennifer Mccoy	Speech Therapist	(951)509-5045	jennifer.mccoy@alvordschools.org
Ashleen Mobley	Speech Therapist	(951)509-5045	ashleen.mobley@alvordschools.org
Hilary Ness	Speech Therapist	(951)509-5045	hilary.ness@alvordschools.org
Loida Ortiz	Speech Therapist	(951)509-5045	loida.ortiz@alvordschools.org
Marison Rios	Speech Therapist	(951)509-5045	marisol.rios@alvordschools.org
Joi Richardon	Speech Therapist	(951)509-5045	joi.richardson@alvordschools.org
Isela Rodriguez	Speech Therapist	(951)509-5045	isela.rodriguez@alvordschools.org
Matthew Ronayne	Speech Therapist	(951)509-5045	matthew.ronayne@alvordschools.org

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Saghi, Samadani	Speech Therapist	(951)509-5045	saghi.samadani@alvordschools.org
Kathy Sortor	Speech Therapist	(951)509-5045	kathy.sortor@alvordschools.org
Michelle Trubio	Speech Therapist	(951)509-5045	michelle.trubio@alvordschools.org
Stephanie Wong	Speech Therapist	951)509-5045	stephanie.wong@alvordschools.org

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Determination of Medical Necessity for Services by Speech and Language Pathologists

Medi-Cal and other health insurers require that "medical necessity" for speech and language services be established prior to reimbursement. For school-provided services, the District has established the following criteria for medical necessity. Some health insurers may establish their own criteria for the medical necessity that differ from the District's.

1. The etiology of a speech or language impairment (i.e., developmental or acquired) does not in itself determine whether a service is medically necessary. This is based on the nature and severity of the disability.
2. A service qualifies as medically necessary if it supports a need that meets the criteria set forth in the following: *Language, Speech and Hearing, and Severe Disorders of Language: Eligibility and Exit Criteria*, attached. This document is consistent with Title 5, California Code of Regulations, Article 3.1, and pertinent sections of the Education Code.
 - a. Articulation disorders, such that the pupil's production of speech significantly interferes with communication and attracts adverse attention.
 - b. Abnormal voice, characterized by precedent, defective voice quality, pitch, or loudness. An appropriate medical examination shall be conducted, where appropriate.
 - c. Fluency difficulties which result in an abnormal flow of verbal expression to such a degree that these difficulties adversely affect communication between the pupil and listener.
 - d. Inappropriate or inadequate acquisition, comprehension, or expression of spoken language, or non-verbal communication, including social, functional communication, such that the pupil's language performance level is found to be significantly below the language performance level of his or her peers (definition, below).
 - e. Hearing loss which results in a language or speech disorder and significantly affects educational performance.
 - f. Selective mutism.
 - g. A documented need for training for augmentative assistive communication devices to a problem identified in (a) through (f), above.
3. To define spoken language that is significantly below the language performance level of his or her peers", the performance should be at least 1.5 SD below mean or <7%ile relative to same-age peers. This finding may be based on standardized testing and/or performance-based assessment if: standardized testing cannot be given, standardized testing is not appropriate for the population or purpose, or standardized testing is not accurate, AND if the method and rationale behind the assessment are described.
4. Performance-based assessments are used to determine articulation, fluency, and voice disorders.

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5. Speech and language assessments that qualify a student for services must be documented in writing.
6. Reasonable effort must be made to ensure that students' physicians (or designated "medical home") receive the results of each speech/language assessment, including recommended therapy. See sample letter (attached below)
7. The interval prior to reassessment should not exceed the period required by the Special Education Department for the Individualized Educational Program (I.E.P.). This is currently three years.
8. A physician designated by the District is to audit records of those services which the District is billing and where medical necessity is a requirement for reimbursement.
9. These criteria are to be reviewed at least every two (2) years.

Howard Taras, MD

Physician Name (*please print*)

California License No.

Signature

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Address (Street)

Date

La Jolla, CA 92093-0927

Address (City, State)