

## **Project Charter**

### **Establishing Effective Special Education (Sped) Referral Process for English Language Learners (ELL)**

#### **Project Overview**

This project will focus on collaboration between Special Education Administration, Speech-Language Pathologists (SLPs), and the English Language Learners (ELL) coordinator to develop an appropriate and effective mechanism for referring ELL students for special education services.

#### **Project Background and Rationale**

Just like the monolingual population, there is a small subset of the bilingual population with speech and language impairments and/or learning disabilities. The distinction between a language difference and a language disorder can often be difficult to determine. ELL students can be over-identified as requiring services when they merely need time to master their second language — a language difference being mistaken as a disorder. They can also be under-identified as their true disabilities are dismissed as language barriers — a language disorder dismissed as a language difference. In order to provide an appropriate learning environment for all students, establishing an effective referral procedure is essential.

#### **Scope**

This project will focus on establishing a formal procedure for special education referrals for ELL students as well as developing a repository of resources for clinicians and teachers.

#### **Vision/Outcomes**

The project will produce the following results:

- Improved collaboration between SLPs and ELL staff and increased understanding of their respective roles and responsibilities
- Increased competence/comfort level of speech-language pathologists in consulting cases with ELL students
- Accessible repository of resources for clinicians and teachers
- Increased timeliness and accuracy of special education referrals/evaluations for ELL students

#### **Project Composition/Roles**

The project team will consist of a Speech-Language Pathologist, the ELL coordinator, and a program specialist to represent special education administration. Together this team will meet 2 or more times to 1) identify areas of need, 2) develop formal procedures/guidelines, 3) develop repository of relevant resources, and 4) complete/provide additional training to teachers/SLPs as needed.

#### **Support Needed**

In order for this project to be successful, the following support is needed:

- Permission from special education administrators and building administrators to release team members for meeting times
- Active participation of SLP, ELL Coordinator, and Program Specialist
- Support from special education administration for implementing final product
- Compliance of SLPs and teachers with final product

## **Project Outline**

In order to complete this project, the team will need to meet the following benchmarks:

- September/October 2017
  - Survey to SLPs, ELL Coordinator, and Program Specialist regarding current needs in ELL referral process and comfort level with process
  - Initial in-person brainstorming meeting for meeting needs
- November 2017
  - Gathering necessary resources
  - Collaboration via email for creating rough draft of referral procedure
  - Initial presentation via email to SLPs for feedback
- December 2017/January 2018
  - In-person team meeting to finalize written procedure and resource repository
- February/March 2018
  - Follow-up meeting if necessary to discuss further needs