

FAMILY RESOURCE

Understanding Speech Therapy Services

for Speech Sound Disorders

Extended Part C vs. School-Based Part B

Making decisions for your child can be challenging when you are faced with different options. If your child has a speech sound disorder and is approaching age 3, you may have the option to choose either of these two services:

Extended Part C Early Intervention Services

School-Based Part B Special Education Services

Understanding how these services differ from one another can help you make the best decision for your child and family.

What Is a Speech Sound Disorder (SSD)?

A **speech sound disorder** means that a child has difficulty producing speech sounds correctly. Some children use speech patterns that are not expected for their age. These patterns are called **phonological processes**. For example, a child may say “tat” instead of “cat” or “doe” instead of “go.” When many phonological processes are present in one child’s speech, others may have difficulty understanding what that child is saying.

A **speech-language pathologist (SLP)** supports children with SSDs, but the way services are delivered looks different, depending on which service type is being used—Extended Part C or School-Based Part B.

How Services May Look Different

Extended Part C Early Intervention Services

The SLP may . . .

- Explain phonological processes.
- Help parents understand how speech develops.
- Coach parents on strategies to use during daily routines.

School-Based Part B Special Education Services

The SLP may . . .

- Practice speech sounds with the child.
- Use strategies to improve speech production skills.
- Provide repeated opportunities to practice.

Advocacy Roadmap in Early Intervention

Side-by-Side Comparison

Extended Part C	School-Based Part B
The SLP coaches the child's family and/or caregivers.	The SLP works directly with the child.
The SLP focuses on supporting the family and/or caregivers by equipping them with strategies that they can use during everyday routines with their child.	The SLP focuses on the child's specific needs.
Goals are developed on the Individualized Family Service Plan (IFSP) to support routine-based functional communication.	Goals are developed on the Individualized Educational Plan (IEP) to support the child's speech and educational needs.
The family member or caregiver practices strategies throughout the day.	The child practices their speech skills during therapy sessions.
The SLP does not provide direct articulation therapy or phonological therapy.	The SLP may provide direct articulation therapy or phonological therapy.

According to the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), federal regulations and state guidelines determine service delivery approaches, and these approaches may depend upon program requirements.

Questions To Consider

When deciding between Extended Part C and School-Based Part B services, you may want to ask these questions:

- What are my biggest concerns about my child's communication?
- Do I want services focused on coaching, so that I can support my child's communication during their daily routines?
- Does my child need speech therapy focused on improving their speech sound production?
- Which service model best matches my child's needs?

Both Extended Part C and School-Based Part B services are valuable programs, but they are designed for different purposes—and they use different service delivery models.

If you have questions about your child's eligibility, services, or transition options, speak with your county Infants and Toddlers Program team or your local school system's special education staff.