



To whom it may concern:

This letter is to inform you that a student of yours, _____, is a child who stutters and is involved with our nonprofit organization, SAY: The Stuttering Association for the Young. We are writing this letter to support creating a 504 Plan for this student that would provide meaningful classroom accommodations and ensure equal access and participation in the general education curriculum.

Briefly, stuttering is an often misunderstood communication difference that is perceived by the listener as a disruption in the forward flow of speech. Stuttering is NOT an emotional disorder, but stuttering can certainly have an emotional impact. Stuttering is commonly characterized by repetitions (ex. ba-ba-baseball), sound prolongations (ex. mmmom) and/or blocks (i.e. no sound). Disfluencies may also be accompanied by negative thoughts and feelings about stuttering/talking, avoidance of sounds, words or situations and/or physical concomitant behaviors (ex. eye blinking, lip tension, head nodding, etc.).

For some children who stutter, the idea of speaking and stuttering in front of others can be a particularly intense source of stress or fear that can interfere with learning, participation in class and/or socializing with peers. However, every student responds differently to stuttering, and it is important that teachers and school staff are sensitive to the student's individual needs in different situations, without assuming what they can or cannot do.

The student and/or their parents should be involved in developing a 504 Plan that best addresses their individual needs. While appropriate accommodations will vary for each student who stutters, all plans should provide additional time for speaking in class and for any time-constrained project or assessment with an oral component. This may apply to classroom presentations, oral exams, or other speaking tasks. Other accommodations to consider are outlined on the following page.

Appropriate 504 accommodations can provide important support and peace of mind for the student. These accommodations help ensure that the student is not academically penalized because of their stuttering and has equitable access to opportunities to demonstrate their knowledge and abilities. Our goal is to support the student's success and participation in the school environment.

Please let us know if you have any additional questions or concerns related to the student's care or education. We are always happy to collaborate with the student, family, and school team to support their communication and academic needs. Thank you so much for your time and partnership.

Sincerely,

The SAY Team
www.say.org

Please note: Every child's IEP or 504 plan will look slightly different depending on the formatting of the specific school district's system and the child's individual needs. Below is a sample of classroom accommodations that can be used in an IEP or adjusted for a 504 plan:

SUPPLEMENTARY AIDS, SERVICES, PROGRAM MODIFICATIONS AND SUPPORTS				
Instructional Support(s)				
Nature of service	Frequency	Begin Date	End Date	Providers
Instructional support- Extended wait time during tasks that require oral responses	Daily	XX	XX Duration: 36 weeks	General education teacher
Clarify location and manner: In all school settings School staff should refrain from providing student with advice such as "relax", "slow down" or "take a deep breath" during stuttering moments and should not fill in words or sentences for student, unless student directly asks for this support. Instead, student should be provided with additional time to respond to questions and share information aloud to reduce the possibility of interruptions during stuttering moments.				
Instructional Support- Adjusted rubric for grading on oral presentations/assignments	As needed	XX	XX Duration: 36 weeks	General education teacher
Clarify location and manner: In all school settings Adjustments should include extra time to present information and ensure that the student is not penalized for secondary behaviors of stuttering such as physical concomitant behaviors, loss of eye contact, use of filler words, etc.				
Social/Behavioral Support(s)				
Nature of service	Frequency	Begin Date	End Date	Providers
Social/behavioral support- teacher-speech therapist communication system	Once a month	XX	XX Duration: 36 weeks	General education teacher
Clarify location and manner: General education teacher and the speech therapist will provide once a month updates regarding the student at school to ensure the child is thriving in a stutter-affirming environment				

Social/behavioral support- Alternative modes of participation available if stuttering begins to impact willingness to verbally participate in a large group setting (e.g. 1:1 with the teacher or in a smaller group).	As needed	XX	XX	General education teacher
Duration: 36 weeks				
Clarify location and manner: In all school settings				
School Personnel/Parental Support(s):				
Nature of service	Frequency	Begin Date	End Date	Providers
School personnel/parental supports- Notify parents if student requests alternative modes of communication to complete assessments or assignments	As needed	XX	XX	General education teacher
Duration: 36 weeks				
Identify areas of the IEP support by the training/consultation: Supplementary aids, Services, Program Modifications and Supports				
Clarify topics, participants, location and manner: In all school settings				
School personnel/parental supports- Meeting with student's teachers, speech therapist, parents and school counselor to discuss how stuttering is impacting educational performance including social/emotional well-being (e.g. teasing).	Once at the beginning of the year and then as needed by parent or IEP team request	XX	XX	IEP team
Duration: 36 weeks				
Identify areas of the IEP support by the training/consultation: Supplementary aids, Services, Program Modifications and Supports				

Clarify topics, participants, location and manner:

In all school settings

All teachers working with the student throughout the year should receive training and resources from the speech therapist pertaining to stuttering and how to best support and communicate with a student who stutters

Documentation to support decision:

These above supports will help the student to navigate stuttering within a stutter-affirming school environment.

*Additional accommodations to consider for some students:

1. Alternative reading assessments

Description: Should standard reading measures indicate weaknesses in reading fluency because of the presence of stuttering, an alternate method (such as a silent reading test) should be used to accurately determine student's reading level and place student in the appropriate reading group. Another option would be to have a speech therapist present during the reading assessment to support the teacher in separating stuttering-like disfluencies from assessment of student's true reading fluency.