



Learning Disabilities Association of America (LDA) Accreditation Manual for Schools, Organizations and Programs

Table of Contents

1. Introduction
 2. Purpose and Scope
 3. Accreditation Levels
 4. Eligibility Criteria
 5. Application Process
 6. Self-Reflection Workbook
 7. Evidence Portfolio
 8. Accreditation Standards (Expanded)
 9. Evaluation Tools and Process
 10. Site Visit Toolkit
 11. Scoring and Decision-Making
 12. Appeals and Reapplication
 13. Policies and Procedures
 14. Supporting Templates and Documents
-

1. Introduction

The Learning Disabilities Association of America (LDA) School / Program Accreditation Manual outlines the comprehensive process for evaluating and accrediting educational institutions, specialized programs, and assessment service providers serving individuals with Specific Learning Disabilities (SLD).

2. Purpose and Scope

The LDA School / Program Accreditation System aims to recognize and support excellence in SLD education and services through a standards-based, evidence-informed, and collaborative process. This system covers:

- Schools implementing LD programs
- Standalone LD support programs
- Assessment and diagnostic service providers

3. Accreditation Levels

- **Full Accreditation:** Meets or exceeds expectations in all seven standards.
- **Provisional Accreditation:** Meets minimum criteria with minor improvements needed.
- **Not Endorsed:** Fails to meet foundational criteria; invited to reapply after improvement.

4. Eligibility Criteria

Applicants must:

- Serve a minimum of 5 students with diagnosed or suspected SLD.
- Demonstrate alignment with LDA's 7 Accreditation Standards.
- Submit a complete application with self-reflection and supporting evidence.

5. Application Process

Step 1: Submission of Application Form

Includes:

- Institution Details
- Program Overview
- Standards Compliance Table (Self-Rating 1–4)
- Checklist of Supporting Documents
- Signed Declaration
- Meeting with LDA CEO (Virtual)

Step 2: Desktop Review (4–6 weeks)

- Outcome: Proceed to Site Visit or Request Additional Evidence

Step 3: Site Visit (5–10 Days)

- Activities: Classroom observations, stakeholder interviews, evidence review
- Conducted by (up to) a 3-member evaluation team

Step 4: Scoring and Final Decision

- Ratings aggregated per standard
- Accreditation status determined via consensus
- Report issued within 30 days

6. Self-Reflection Workbook

Applicants complete a detailed reflection aligned to each of the 7 standards. Each sub-standard includes:

- Self-rating (1–4)
- Narrative explanation
- List of supporting evidence

7. Evidence Portfolio

Each standard requires specific documentation. Examples include:

- IEP/PLP samples (3–5 anonymized)

- Professional Development logs (past 2 years)
- Curriculum maps aligned with current research
- Assessment data and tools
- Stakeholder interview summaries
- Records of interdisciplinary team meetings
- SEL plans and implementation documents

8. LDA School / Program Accreditation Standards (Expanded)

The LDA School / Program Accreditation system is grounded in 7 core standards. Each standard includes detailed indicators and required evidence.

Standard 1: Interdisciplinary Approach

Focus: Collaborative planning and implementation involving multiple disciplines.

Key Indicators: Team meetings, integrated lesson plans, IEP co-development.

Required Evidence:

- Meeting minutes and agendas
- Interdisciplinary lesson plans
- IEP/PLP documentation with input from multiple disciplines
- PD attendance logs featuring cross-disciplinary topics
- Family involvement records

Standard 2: Dynamic Assessment-Instruction Loop

Focus: Continuous and responsive evaluation aligned with instruction.

Key Indicators: Assessment frequency, student goal-setting, real-time feedback.

Required Evidence:

- Assessment and progress monitoring samples
- Student feedback/reflection tools
- Goal-setting frameworks and results
- Teacher documentation of instruction adjustments

Standard 3: Research-Based Curriculum

Focus: Literacy and numeracy instruction rooted in current evidence.

Key Indicators: Use of structured programs, fidelity to research-based practices.

Required Evidence:

- Curriculum alignment charts
- Lesson plans reflecting structured literacy
- Evidence of use of validated interventions
- Intervention effectiveness data

Standard 4: Cultural and Linguistic Responsiveness

Focus: Inclusion and respect for cultural and language diversity.

Key Indicators: Language support, family engagement, culturally responsive practices.

Required Evidence:

- Bilingual/ESL service documentation
- Culturally inclusive curriculum examples
- Translation/interpreter services
- Family communication logs

Standard 5: Social-Emotional Development

Focus: Integration of SEL supports into programming.

Key Indicators: Mental health services, SEL curricula, student self-regulation outcomes.

Required Evidence:

- SEL curriculum documents
- Mental health provider availability and access logs
- Records of SEL-focused PD
- Incident reports and interventions logs

Standard 6: Strengths-Based Approach

Focus: Leveraging student assets, interests, and talents.

Key Indicators: Strengths in assessments, mentorships, student voice.

Required Evidence:

- Student strength profiles
- Evidence of strengths in lesson planning
- Mentorship or peer program structure
- Student self-assessments

Standard 7: Real-Life Outcomes

Focus: Preparation for life beyond school.

Key Indicators: Transition planning, community learning, post-secondary tracking.

Required Evidence:

- Transition plans with student input
- Community-based activity logs
- Post-program outcome data (e.g., graduation, employment)

9. Evaluation Tools and Process

Tools:

- Self-Assessment Rubric
- Site Visit Forms (SV-1, SV-2)
- Scoring Heatmaps and Dashboards

Process:

- Classroom and team meeting observations
- Interviews with staff, families, and students
- Surveys (optional)
- Evidence triangulation

10. Site Visit Toolkit

Includes:

- Pre-visit preparation guide
- Visit Checklist per Standard
- Daily Logs and Summary Templates
- Interview Questions
- Classroom Observation Form (SV-1)
- Stakeholder Interview Guide (SV-2)
- Site Visit Report Template

11. Scoring and Decision-Making

Each standard is rated on a 4-point rubric:

1 = Not Evident | 2 = Emerging | 3 = Proficient | 4 = Exemplary

Ratings are compiled and reviewed in a consensus meeting. Weighted scores may apply to core standards.

12. Appeals and Reapplication

- Appeals accepted within 14 days of report issuance.
- Appeal review includes third-party review of findings.
- Denied applicants may reapply after 12 months.
- Support available for reapplication planning.

13. Policies and Procedures

- **Confidentiality:** All data is secured, shared only with authorized evaluators.
- **Conflict of Interest:** All evaluators must sign a non-affiliation disclosure.
- **Fees:**
 - Schools, NGOs, NonProfit Organizations: \$2,500 USD (plus any travel expenses for site visits)
 - \$1,250 due upon submission of Application Form
 - \$1,250 due upon completion of site visit.
 - Tutoring and Intervention Programs: \$1,000 USD (plus any travel expenses for site visits)
 - \$500 due upon submission of Application Form
 - \$500 due upon completion of site visit.

- o All payments must be made electronically via credit card or online bank transfer via a secure link. Credit card fees may apply.
- **Communication Protocols:** Applicants receive confirmation emails, review timelines, and final decisions in writing.

14. Supporting Documents and Templates

- Standards
- Application

- Self-Study Workbook
- Evidence Portfolio Checklist
- Site Visit Forms (SV-1: Observation, SV-2: Interview)
- Standards Rubric and Rating Sheet

Note: All templates, rubrics, and tools are available as appendices or downloadable files.

Standards for the SLD Schools and Programs

Standard 1: The school/program embraces an interdisciplinary approach to instruction, intervention and support of students with SLD.

1.1 - Interdisciplinary Team Meetings: Teachers and specialists from different disciplines (e.g., special education, general education, speech therapy, occupational therapy) meet regularly (at least once a month) to discuss and plan instructional strategies, interventions, and supports for students with Specific Learning Disabilities (SLD).

1.2 - Collaborative Lesson Planning: Lesson plans are developed collaboratively by interdisciplinary teams, incorporating strategies and accommodations from multiple disciplines to meet the diverse needs of students with SLD.

1.3 - Integrated Intervention Plans: Individualized Education Plans (IEPs) or Personalized Learning Plans (PLPs) are created collaboratively by interdisciplinary teams, ensuring that interventions and supports are comprehensive and aligned across academic, behavioral, and social-emotional domains.

1.4 - Cross-Disciplinary Professional Development: Staff participate in cross-disciplinary professional development sessions focused on effective strategies for supporting students with SLD, enhancing collaboration and shared understanding among team members.

1.5 - Data Sharing and Analysis: Assessment data and progress monitoring results are shared and analyzed collaboratively by interdisciplinary teams, guiding decision-making and adjustments to instructional practices and interventions.

1.6 - Coordinated Support Services: Support services such as counseling, therapy, and academic support are coordinated and integrated into the daily routines and schedules of students with SLD, ensuring a seamless delivery of services across disciplines.

1.7 - Parent and Family Involvement: Opportunities are provided for parents and families to participate in interdisciplinary team meetings, ensuring their perspectives are considered in the development and implementation of interventions and supports for their child with SLD.

1.8 - Documentation of Interdisciplinary Collaboration: Records are maintained documenting interdisciplinary collaboration efforts, including meeting minutes, action plans, and progress notes, demonstrating a systematic approach to supporting students with SLD through interdisciplinary teamwork.

Standard 2: The school / program supports a dynamic and connected continuum of evaluation and instruction that is bidirectional and iterative in nature and enhances academic, social and emotional outcomes for students with SLD.

2.1 - Continuous Assessment: Assessment data for students with SLD is collected regularly (e.g., quarterly) and used to adjust instructional strategies and interventions in a timely manner.

2.2 - Data-Driven Instruction: Teachers utilize assessment results to inform instructional decisions, ensuring that lessons are tailored to the individual needs of students with SLD in both academic and social-emotional domains.

2.3 - Feedback Loops: Feedback mechanisms are established where teachers provide ongoing feedback to students with SLD on their progress, and students provide input on their own learning experiences and needs.

2.4 - Individualized Learning Plans: IEPs or personalized learning plans are developed and reviewed collaboratively by interdisciplinary teams, incorporating goals and strategies that promote academic, social, and emotional growth for students with SLD.

2.5 - Student Goal Setting: Students with SLD participate in setting academic and social-emotional goals aligned with their learning plans, and progress toward these goals is monitored and adjusted through ongoing assessment and feedback.

2.6 - Professional Development: Staff engage in professional development opportunities focused on best practices for dynamic assessment and instruction for students with SLD, ensuring that skills and knowledge are continually updated.

2.7 - Family Engagement: Families of students with SLD are actively engaged in the assessment and goal-setting processes, and they receive regular updates on their child's progress and opportunities to provide feedback on the effectiveness of interventions.

Standard 3: The SLD school/ program curriculum is informed by content-specific (Literacy-Numeracy) research and evidence-supported practice.

3.1 - Research-Based Curriculum: The school/program curriculum for literacy and numeracy is regularly reviewed and revised based on current research in the field of specific learning disabilities (SLD).

3.2 - Alignment with Standards: Curriculum documents clearly demonstrate alignment with evidence-based literacy and numeracy standards (i.e. the Knowledge and Practice Standards for Teachers of Reading), incorporating research-supported practices for students with SLD.

3.3 - Differentiated Instruction: Lesson plans and instructional materials reflect differentiated strategies based on research-supported practices for teaching literacy and numeracy to students with SLD.

3.4 - Use of Evidence-Supported Interventions: Interventions for students with SLD in literacy and numeracy are selected based on evidence-based practices proven effective through research studies and academic literature.

3.5 - The school or program is structured to allow for direct, explicit, instruction, using evidence supported strategies and methods, throughout their K-12 education or until they have achieved mastery of those skills.

3.6 - Assessment of Effectiveness: The effectiveness of literacy and numeracy interventions and instructional practices is regularly assessed using data-driven methods to ensure alignment with research-supported practices.

3.7 - Professional Development: Staff engage in professional development opportunities focused on the latest research and best practices in literacy and numeracy instruction for students with SLD, ensuring continuous improvement of instructional methods.

3.8 - Parent Education: Resources and workshops are provided to parents on research-supported strategies and interventions for supporting literacy and numeracy development at home for children with SLD.

Standard 4: The SLD school / program understands, embraces, and honors the cultural and linguistic background of the child.

4.1 - Cultural and Linguistic Assessments: The school/program conducts assessments that consider the cultural and linguistic backgrounds of students with SLD, ensuring evaluations are culturally responsive and sensitive.

4.2 - Culturally Relevant Curriculum: Curriculum materials and instructional strategies reflect diverse cultural perspectives and experiences, integrating content that resonates with the cultural backgrounds of students with SLD.

4.3 - Language Support: Language support services (e.g., bilingual instruction, English as a Second Language (ESL) support) are provided based on the individual needs of students with SLD, respecting their linguistic backgrounds.

4.4 - Family and Community Engagement: Strategies are in place to actively engage families from diverse cultural backgrounds in decision-making processes, ensuring their perspectives are valued and incorporated into the educational plan for students with SLD.

4.5 – Professional Development to Develop Cultural Competence: Staff members receive ongoing training and professional development on cultural competence, enhancing their ability to understand and address the unique needs of students with SLD from diverse cultural backgrounds.

4.6 - Culturally Inclusive Environment: The school/program promotes a welcoming and inclusive environment where cultural diversity is celebrated and respected, fostering a sense of belonging for students with SLD and their families.

4.7 - Collaboration with Community Organizations: Partnerships with community organizations and cultural institutions are established to support the cultural and linguistic development of students with SLD, providing enriching experiences and resources.

Standard 5: The SLD school/ program actively engages in evidence supported practices to support social-emotional development and wellbeing

5.1 - The program integrates social-emotional learning (SEL) to support student confidence, resilience, and self-awareness.

5.2 - Mental health supports are accessible and tailored to meet the needs of students with SLD.

5.3 - Students demonstrate improved interpersonal and self-regulation skills relevant to academic and life contexts.

5.4 -Staff members receive ongoing training and professional development on child development, developing a positive classroom climate and social-emotional development to enhance their ability to understand and address the unique needs of students with SLD.

5.5- Families are provided with resources and workshops are provided to support and enhance their child's social-emotional functioning.

Standard 6: The SLD school / program embraces the strengths of individuals with SLD as well as areas of difficulty.

6.1 - Strengths-Based Assessment: Assessments for students with SLD include identification and documentation of their strengths, talents, and interests alongside areas of difficulty, ensuring a comprehensive understanding of each student.

6.2 - Individual Strengths Development: Individualized Education Plans (IEPs) or personalized learning plans explicitly include goals and strategies to develop and enhance the strengths and talents of students with SLD.

6.3 - Strengths-Based Instructional Strategies: Teachers incorporate instructional strategies that leverage the strengths and interests of students with SLD into lesson plans, promoting engagement and motivation in learning activities.

6.4 - Student Self-Assessment: Opportunities are provided for students with SLD to self-assess their strengths and areas of difficulty, encouraging self-awareness and self-advocacy skills.

6.5 - Celebrating Achievements: Achievements and progress in both academic and non-academic areas are regularly acknowledged and celebrated for students with SLD, fostering a positive learning environment.

6.6 - Peer and Mentor Support: Peer mentoring programs or partnerships with older students or community mentors are established to provide support and encouragement based on the strengths of students with SLD.

6.7 - Professional Development on Strengths-Based Approaches: Staff participate in professional development opportunities focused on strengths-based approaches for supporting students with SLD, enhancing their ability to implement effective strategies.

6.8 - Parent Education on Strengths-Based Approaches: Resources and workshops are provided to parents on identifying and nurturing the strengths of their child with SLD, supporting positive reinforcement at home.

Standard 7: The school / program provides an educational program that leads to improved academic and real-life outcomes for students with specific learning disabilities (SLD).

7.1-Transition planning begins early, incorporates goals that promote independence and provides explicit instruction in life skills (e.g., time management, self-advocacy, financial literacy, communication).

7.2--Students participate in community-based experiences or simulations that promote real-life competence.

7.3-The program supports students in exploring and preparing for multiple postsecondary pathways (e.g., college, vocational training, employment).

7.4- Families, including the student when age-appropriate, are engaged as active partners in planning and evaluating their child's educational and life goals.

7.5- The school / program tracks data to evaluate post-program outcomes (e.g., high school graduation, post-secondary education, employment).

Application for Review: Alignment with SLD Standards

Section 1: School/Program Information

School/Program Name: _____

District/Organization: _____

Address: _____

Contact Person: _____ Title: _____

Email: _____ Phone: _____

Date of Submission: _____

Section 2: Evaluation Team Information

Please list all members of your Evaluation Team participating in the review process.

Name	Role/Title	Area of Expertise	Affiliation	Email
------	------------	-------------------	-------------	-------

Section 3: Self-Assessment Certification

We certify that all team members have reviewed the 7 SLD Standards and accompanying indicators.

Self-assessment tools (rubrics/checklists) have been completed for each standard.

Lead Evaluator Signature: _____

Date: _____

Attach completed self-assessment tools.

Section 4: Evidence Submission by Standard

Standard 1: Interdisciplinary Approach

- Interdisciplinary meeting schedules and agendas
- Sample co-developed lesson plans and IEPs
- Records of professional development and family engagement

Standard 2: Dynamic Assessment-Instruction Loop

- Assessment data and progress monitoring tools
- Student feedback tools and reflection samples
- Evidence of family involvement in assessment/goal-setting

Standard 3: Research-Based Curriculum

- Curriculum maps aligned with current literacy/numeracy research
- Differentiated materials and intervention lists
- PD logs and data on intervention outcomes

Standard 4: Cultural and Linguistic Responsiveness

- Assessment protocols addressing culture/language
- Diverse curriculum content samples
- Family engagement logs and community partnerships

Standard 5: Social-Emotional Development

- SEL integration plans and materials
- Mental health service descriptions
- PD records related to SEL/child development

Standard 6: Strengths-Based Approach

- Assessments identifying student strengths
- Lesson plans integrating student interests
- Celebrations, mentoring, and student self-assessment documentation

Standard 7: Real-Life Outcomes

- Student transition plans and life skills curriculum
- Community-based learning documentation
- Postsecondary tracking tools and readiness data

Section 5: Review Logistics

Preferred Review Format:

- On-Site
- Virtual
- Hybrid

Proposed Review Dates:

Indicate availability for interviews, focus groups, and classroom observations.

Section 6: Stakeholder Engagement

- Surveys distributed to staff, students, and families
- Focus groups/interviews scheduled with diverse stakeholders
- Classroom observation arrangements in place

Attach survey tools, schedules, and observation protocols.

Self-Study Document for Schools Serving Students with Specific Learning Disabilities (SLD)

School Information

School Name:

Address:

Contact Person:

Date of Submission:

School Year Covered:

Grade Levels Served:

Instructions

For each standard and substandard below, please provide:

1. Narrative Description of current practices and initiatives.
2. Supporting Evidence (documents, meeting minutes, data samples, etc.).
3. Self-Assessment Rating using the following scale:
 - 4 – Fully Implemented
 - 3 – Mostly Implemented
 - 2 – Partially Implemented
 - 1 – Not Yet Implemented
4. Planned Actions for Improvement, if applicable.

Standard 1: Interdisciplinary Approach

Indicator	Narrative Description	Evidence	Rating (1–4)	Planned Actions
1.1	Interdisciplinary Team Meetings			
1.2	Collaborative Lesson Planning			

1.3 Integrated
Intervention
Plans

1.4
Cross-Disciplinary
Professional
Development

1.5 Data Sharing
and Analysis

1.6 Coordinated
Support
Services

1.7 Parent and
Family
Involvement

1.8
Documentation
of
Interdisciplinary
Collaboration

Standard 2: Dynamic, Connected Continuum of Evaluation and Instruction

Indicator	Narrative Description	Evidence	Rating (1–4)	Planned Actions
2.1 Continuous Assessment				
2.2 Data-Driven Instruction				
2.3 Feedback Loops				
2.4 Individualized Learning Plans				
2.5 Student Goal Setting				

2.6 Professional
Development

2.7 Family
Engagement

Standard 3: Research-Informed Curriculum (Literacy & Numeracy)

Indicator	Narrative Description	Evidence	Rating (1–4)	Planned Actions
-----------	--------------------------	----------	--------------	-----------------

3.1
Research-Based
Curriculum

3.2 Alignment
with Standards

3.3
Differentiated
Instruction

3.4 Use of
Evidence-Suppo
rted
Interventions

3.5 Assessment
of Effectiveness

3.6 Professional
Development

3.7 Parent
Education

Standard 4: Cultural and Linguistic Responsiveness

Indicator	Narrative Description	Evidence	Rating (1–4)	Planned Actions
-----------	--------------------------	----------	--------------	-----------------

4.1 Cultural and
Linguistically
Appropriate
Assessment
Practices

4.2 Culturally
Relevant
Curriculum

4.3 Language
Support

4.4 Family and
Community
Engagement

4.5 Professional
Development on
Cultural
Competence

4.6 Culturally
Inclusive
Environment

4.7 Community
Organization
Collaboration

Standard 5: Social-Emotional Development and Wellbeing

Indicator	Narrative Description	Evidence	Rating (1–4)	Planned Actions
-----------	--------------------------	----------	--------------	-----------------

5.1 Integration
of SEL

5.2 Accessible
Mental Health
Supports

5.3
Demonstrated
Interpersonal &
Self-Regulation
Skills

5.4 Professional
Development in
Child
Development &
SEL

5.5 Family
Resources and
Workshops

Standard 6: Strengths-Based Approach

Indicator	Narrative Description	Evidence	Rating (1–4)	Planned Actions
-----------	--------------------------	----------	--------------	-----------------

6.1
Strengths-Based
Assessment

6.2 Individual
Strengths
Development

6.3
Strengths-Based
Instructional
Strategies

6.4 Student
Self-Assessment

6.5 Celebrating
Achievements

6.6 Peer and
Mentor Support

6.7 PD on
Strengths-Based
Approaches

6.8 Parent
Education on
Strengths

Standard 7: Improved Academic & Real-Life Outcomes

Indicator	Narrative Description	Evidence	Rating (1–4)	Planned Actions
-----------	--------------------------	----------	--------------	-----------------

7.1 Early
Transition
Planning

7.2
Community-Based Experiences

7.3
Postsecondary Pathways

7.4 Family Engagement in Life Planning

7.5
Post-Program Outcomes Tracking

Summary and Reflection

Key Strengths of the School/Program:

Areas for Growth:

Next Steps and Priorities:

Support or Resources Needed:

Suggested Artifacts for SLD Self-Study Documentation

General Schoolwide Documentation

- School mission and vision statements
- School improvement plan
- Organizational charts
- School schedule (showing integrated supports)
- Student handbooks
- Staff directories with roles

Standard 1: Interdisciplinary Approach

- Meeting agendas and minutes from interdisciplinary team meetings
- Sample collaborative lesson plans
- IEPs/PLPs showing input from multiple disciplines
- Cross-disciplinary PD attendance logs/agendas
- Shared data reports and analysis summaries
- Timetables showing coordinated services (e.g., therapy, counseling)
- Parent meeting logs, communications, or consent forms
- Documentation logs showing team collaboration (e.g., case notes)

Standard 2: Dynamic, Connected Continuum of Evaluation and Instruction

- Progress monitoring data (academic, behavioral, SEL)
- Assessment schedules and tools used
- Samples of student goal-setting forms or learning contracts
- Annotated lesson plans using assessment data
- Teacher reflection logs
- Feedback tools (student surveys, teacher notes)
- Family engagement records (emails, newsletters, meeting summaries)

Standard 3: Research-Informed Curriculum (Literacy & Numeracy)

- Curriculum guides aligned with SLD research (e.g., Orton-Gillingham)
- List of instructional resources used with rationale
- Documentation of curriculum audits or reviews
- Evidence of alignment with standards like IDA's Knowledge and Practice Standards
- Logs of literacy/numeracy interventions used
- Pre/post data on academic interventions
- PD records focused on literacy/numeracy for students with SLD
- Parent education materials or workshop flyers

Standard 4: Cultural and Linguistic Responsiveness

- • Examples of culturally responsive assessments
- • Multilingual resources or translated communications
- • Lesson plans showing inclusion of diverse perspectives
- • ESL/bilingual program documentation
- • Logs of family engagement (interpreters used, culturally relevant events)
- • Professional development certificates on cultural competence
- • Photos or materials showcasing a culturally inclusive environment
- • MOUs with community/cultural organizations

Standard 5: Social-Emotional Development and Wellbeing

- • SEL curriculum samples
- • Behavior support plans
- • Counseling session logs (confidential data removed)
- • Student self-assessments on SEL skills
- • Climate surveys (staff, student, parent)
- • PD session outlines on trauma-informed practices or SEL
- • Parent-facing SEL resources (handouts, workshop materials)

Standard 6: Strengths-Based Approach

- • Assessment tools identifying student strengths (e.g., interest inventories)
- • Excerpts from IEPs/PLPs including student strengths
- • Student portfolios
- • Classroom displays highlighting student work/strengths
- • Self-reflection or self-assessment forms completed by students
- • Recognition program materials (e.g., student awards)
- • Mentor program outlines or testimonials
- • Parent training materials on strengths-based strategies

Standard 7: Academic and Real-Life Outcomes

- • Transition plans within IEPs
- • Curriculum or lesson plans on life skills
- • Community-based instruction documentation (field trips, work experiences)
- • Transition or career exploration program brochures
- • Artifacts from student-led conferences
- • Family planning meeting records
- • Longitudinal data on alumni outcomes (grad rates, college, employment)

Interview and Focus Group Questions Aligned with SLD Program Endorsement Standards

Administrators

Standard 1: Interdisciplinary Collaboration

- - How are interdisciplinary team meetings structured and scheduled in your program?
- - In what ways do you support collaborative lesson planning across disciplines?

Standard 2: Evaluation and Instruction

- - How is assessment data used to inform instructional decisions at your school?
- - Describe how feedback loops between students and staff are facilitated.

Standard 3: Evidence-Based Curriculum

- - What steps have you taken to ensure the curriculum is aligned with current research in literacy and numeracy for students with SLD?

Standard 4: Cultural and Linguistic Responsiveness

- - How does your program incorporate students' cultural and linguistic backgrounds into assessment and instruction?

Standard 5: Social-Emotional Learning

- - What SEL programs or frameworks are in place to support students with SLD?

Standard 6: Strengths-Based Approach

- - How does your school recognize and build upon the strengths of students with SLD?

Standard 7: Life and Academic Outcomes

- - What systems are in place to support students' transition planning and post-secondary success?

Teachers

Standard 1: Interdisciplinary Collaboration

- - How often do you meet with other specialists to plan or review student supports?
- - What role do you play in interdisciplinary planning?

Standard 2: Evaluation and Instruction

- - How do you adjust instruction based on student data?
- - Can you give an example of a recent change you made to support a student's academic or emotional needs?

Standard 3: Evidence-Based Curriculum

- - What evidence-based strategies do you use in literacy and numeracy instruction?

Standard 4: Cultural and Linguistic Responsiveness

- - How do you ensure your instruction is culturally and linguistically inclusive?

Standard 5: Social-Emotional Learning

- - How do you integrate social-emotional learning into daily lessons?

Standard 6: Strengths-Based Approach

- - How do you help students identify and use their strengths in the classroom?

Standard 7: Life and Academic Outcomes

- - How do you incorporate life skills or future planning into your teaching?

Parents

Standard 1 & 2: Collaboration and Evaluation

- - How involved do you feel in planning your child's learning and support services?
- - Are you regularly updated on your child's academic and emotional progress?

Standard 3: Evidence-Based Curriculum

- - Do you feel the school uses effective strategies to teach reading and math to your child?

Standard 4: Cultural and Linguistic Responsiveness

- - How well does the school respect and reflect your family's cultural and language background?

Standard 5: Social-Emotional Learning

- - Have you seen growth in your child's social or emotional skills due to school support?

Standard 6: Strengths-Based Approach

- - In what ways does the school encourage your child's strengths and interests?

Standard 7: Life and Academic Outcomes

- - Do you feel the school is preparing your child for life beyond school (college, job, independence)?

Students

Standard 1 & 2: Support and Feedback

- - Who helps you when you need support at school?
- - Do you get to talk about your goals and how you're doing?

Standard 3: Literacy and Numeracy Instruction

- - What helps you the most when learning to read or do math?

Standard 4: Culture and Language

- - Do you see things in class that reflect your culture or language?

Standard 5: Social-Emotional Support

- - How do teachers help you when you feel upset or frustrated?

Standard 6: Strengths and Interests

- - What are you really good at? Does your teacher let you use those strengths?

Standard 7: Future Planning

- - Do you learn things in school that help you get ready for the future?

Classroom Observation Tool: SLD Program Evaluation

Observer Name: _____

Date: _____

Teacher/Staff Observed: _____

Grade/Subject: _____

Time of Observation: _____

Rating Scale

4 – Consistently Observed

3 – Frequently Observed

2 – Occasionally Observed

1 – Rarely Observed

N/A – Not Applicable or Not Observable

Standard 1: Interdisciplinary Collaboration

Indicator	Rating	Notes
Evidence of collaboration across disciplines (e.g., SLP, OT, special/general ed) reflected in lesson design		
Use of integrated strategies from multiple specialists		
Classroom displays or tools reflect input from interdisciplinary team		

Standard 2: Data-Driven & Dynamic Instruction

Indicator	Rating	Notes
Instruction is clearly adapted based on assessment data		
Real-time feedback is given to students		
Students are involved in setting or discussing learning goals		

Standard 3: Research-Based Literacy & Numeracy Instruction

Indicator	Rating	Notes
Literacy/numeracy instruction reflects evidence-based practices		

Differentiation is evident in materials and grouping		
Teacher references or applies research-supported interventions		

Standard 4: Culturally & Linguistically Responsive Practices

Indicator	Rating	Notes
Instruction or materials reflect students' cultural and linguistic backgrounds		
Language supports (ESL, bilingual resources) are evident and actively used		
Culturally inclusive classroom climate and respect for diversity		

Standard 5: Social-Emotional Learning & Wellbeing

Indicator	Rating	Notes
SEL strategies (e.g., emotion regulation, relationship skills) are embedded in lessons		
Teacher models supportive, respectful interactions		
Safe, positive classroom climate is evident		

Standard 6: Strengths-Based Practices

Indicator	Rating	Notes
Instruction leverages student strengths, interests, or talents		
Opportunities for student self-assessment or choice		
Evidence of student achievements being celebrated		

Standard 7: Real-Life Skills & Future Planning

Indicator	Rating	Notes
Instruction connects to real-world skills or scenarios		
Self-advocacy or life skills are encouraged during learning tasks		
Students are supported in building independence		

General Comments / Recommendations:

SLD School and Program Evaluation Rubric

Standard	Indicator	Rating (1-4)	Evidence Observed	Notes / Recommendations
Standard 1: Interdisciplinary Approach	Interdisciplinary team meetings occur regularly.			
Standard 1: Interdisciplinary Approach	Lesson planning is collaborative across disciplines.			
Standard 1: Interdisciplinary Approach	IEPs/PLPs are developed by interdisciplinary teams.			
Standard 1: Interdisciplinary Approach	Support services are integrated and coordinated.			
Standard 1: Interdisciplinary Approach	Families participate in team planning.			
Standard 2: Dynamic and Iterative Evaluation and Instruction	Regular assessments guide instructional adjustments.			
Standard 2: Dynamic and Iterative Evaluation and Instruction	Feedback loops exist between teachers and students.			
Standard 2: Dynamic and Iterative Evaluation and Instruction	Students and families are involved in goal setting.			
Standard 3: Research-Based Curriculum (Literacy & Numeracy)	Curriculum aligns with research-supported standards.			
Standard 3: Research-Based Curriculum (Literacy & Numeracy)	Instruction includes evidence-supported practices.			
Standard 3: Research-Based Curriculum (Literacy & Numeracy)	Professional development supports literacy/numeracy instruction.			
Standard 4: Cultural and Linguistic Responsiveness	Assessments are culturally and linguistically responsive.			
Standard 4: Cultural and Linguistic Responsiveness	Curriculum reflects cultural diversity.			
Standard 4: Cultural and Linguistic Responsiveness	Families and communities are actively engaged.			
Standard 5: Social-Emotional Development and Wellbeing	SEL is integrated into instruction.			
Standard 5: Social-Emotional Development and Wellbeing	Mental health supports are accessible.			
Standard 5: Social-Emotional Development and Wellbeing	Staff receive training on SEL and child development.			
Standard 6: Strengths-Based Approach	Assessments include strengths and interests.			
Standard 6: Strengths-Based Approach	Instruction leverages student			

Approach	strengths.			
Standard 6: Strengths-Based Approach	Student self-assessment and peer mentorship are supported.			
Standard 7: Real-Life and Postsecondary Readiness	Transition planning includes life skills.			
Standard 7: Real-Life and Postsecondary Readiness	Students engage in community-based learning.			
Standard 7: Real-Life and Postsecondary Readiness	Postsecondary outcomes are tracked.			