

Rationale for Contracting a Speech Therapist (2 Days per Week)

Over the past school year, the number of students requiring speech and language services has steadily increased. This includes students identified with Speech-Language Impairment as a primary disability, as well as students receiving speech services as a related service under other eligibility categories. As enrollment grows and student needs become more complex, the demand for speech therapy support is getting close to exceeding the current staffing capacity.

By contracting a speech therapist for two days per week, the district will be able to:

- Ensure timely evaluations and re-evaluations to remain compliant with IDEA requirements.
- Provide consistent direct and consultative speech therapy services aligned with students' Individualized Education Programs (IEPs).
- Prevent caseload overload for existing speech staff, supporting quality of service delivery.
- Allow for more collaboration with teachers and families to support student progress in communication skills that are critical for academic and social success.

This additional support will help the district keep pace with the increasing number of students requiring speech and language services, while ensuring compliance and maintaining a high standard of support for student growth and achievement.



THE STEPPING STONES GROUP

Transforming Lives Together

Corporate Office
225 W Washing St. STE 1140
Chicago, IL 60606
www.thesteppingstonesgroup.com

AGREEMENT

This Agreement is made and entered on September 18, 2025 by and between The Stepping Stones Group LLC, 225 W Washington St, STE 1140, Chicago, IL 60606 hereinafter referred to as "Contractor" and, [Simpson County Schools, 430 South College Street, Franklin, KY 42314], hereinafter referred to as "School District." It is hereby agreed as follows:

SERVICES, RATES AND BILLING: Contractor agrees to provide the services, at the designated rates, as listed in Appendix A to this Agreement.

School District agrees to be billed (except during holidays) by Contractor for up to 40 hours per week for each of Contractor's employees, unless agreed otherwise. No employee of Contractor will work above 40 hours per week without advanced authorization from both Contractor and the designated supervisor assigned by School District. Any hours worked that are considered overtime by state or federal law will be billed at 150% of bill rate. School District will not be billed during school closures and school holidays.

When Statutory Costs and other employee costs of living increase, Contractor will pass those increases along to School District with no mark-up. School District agrees to pay such increases at the same time as any billed fees pursuant to this Agreement. Statutory Costs include any costs and expenses of Contractor that are associated with Workers Comp, FICA, FUTA, SUTA, and incremental costs associated with the Affordable Care Act (ACA), among others.

TRAVEL TIME & MILEAGE: To the extent applicable, travel between schools will be considered billable time and the mileage will be billed at the current IRS mileage rate. No travel will be billed when work is completed at one site.

PAYMENT TERMS: School District will be billed every two weeks via email and agrees to pay all outstanding invoices within 30 days of receipt. School District agrees and understands that School District is billed on actual hours of service provided by the Contractor's employee, based on the total hours listed on a biweekly timesheet. To ensure billing accuracy and timeliness, School District will complete the Billing Details just above the signature section of this Agreement.

A finance charge of 1.5% per month on the unpaid amount of an invoice, or the maximum amount allowed by law, will be charged on past due accounts. Payments by School District will thereafter be applied first to accrued interest and then to the principal unpaid balance. Any attorneys' fees, court costs, or other costs incurred in collection of delinquent accounts shall be paid by School District. If payment of invoices is not current, Contractor may suspend performing further work.



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REMITTANCE DETAILS: School District will make payments to Contractor at the following address:

PO Box 6280

Carol Stream, IL 60197

If School District prefers to make payments via electronic ACH, instructions can be obtained from the Contractor representative.

EMPLOYEE BENEFITS AND INSURANCE: Contractor will be responsible for providing all employee benefits and insurance including workers' compensation, general liability, and professional liability insurance coverage (with policy limits and deductibles that are appropriate for similarly situated school districts).

NO SOLICITATION: During the term of this Agreement and for a period of two years after the termination of this Agreement, School District agrees not to directly or indirectly contract with, offer employment to or hire any employee of the Contractor assigned to School District or any candidate submitted by Contractor to School District. School District agrees that if School District breaches this no solicitation covenant, direct and indirect damages may be assessed and recovered by Contractor, and Contractor shall be entitled to seek and obtain specific performance.

CONFIDENTIALITY: School District agrees not to provide any information pertaining to the contents of this Agreement to any individual or any entity that may be considered a competitor of the Contractor. School District further agrees not to discuss or disclose any information pertaining to the contents of this Agreement, including but not limited to fees/costs, duration and terms, etc. to the Contractor's employee assigned to provide services to the School District. Disclosure of such information to the Contractor's employee will be considered a breach of this Agreement.

Both parties may receive information that is proprietary to or confidential to the other party or its affiliated companies and their clients in connection with the parties' performance of services under this Agreement. Both parties agree to hold such information in strict confidence and not to disclose such information to third parties or to use such information for any purpose whatsoever other than performing under this Agreement or as required by law. No knowledge, possession, or use of School District's confidential information will be imputed to Contractor as a result of any of Contractor's employees having access to such information. The provisions set forth in the foregoing paragraph and this paragraph shall survive expiration or other termination of this Agreement, regardless of the cause of such termination.

Contractor agrees that it is subject to, and shall comply with, all federal and state laws and School District policies relating to the confidentiality of student information, including, without limitation, compliance with the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA).



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COOPERATION: School District agrees to cooperate fully and to provide assistance to Contractor in the investigation and resolution of any complaints, claims, actions, or proceedings that may be brought by or that may involve any employees of Contractor.

TERMINATION: This Agreement will end on July 31, 2026 and may continue beyond this point by mutual consent. School District agrees not to terminate the Agreement until the end of the Term unless (a) Contractor's employee assigned to School District as a whole is deficient in performance of the services hereunder or (b) any employee of Contractor assigned to School District commits an act of professional or ethical misconduct. School District agrees to notify Contractor of any deficiencies in services or possible unethical or unprofessional conduct as soon as School District becomes aware of such deficiencies or misconduct and further agrees to permit Contractor the opportunity to cure any deficiency or misconduct within thirty (30) days of Contractor's receipt of such notice prior to School District delivering notice of termination of this Agreement. Contractor may terminate this Agreement (i) if School District discontinues operations or (ii) if School District fails to make any payments as required by this Agreement.

NONDISCRIMINATION: Contractor represents and warrants that it does not discriminate in hiring and employment practices regarding race, color, religion, disability, sex, age, national origin, ancestry, marital status, pregnancy, or sexual orientation.

INDEMNIFICATION AND LIMITATION OF LIABILITY: To the extent permitted by law, Contractor will defend, indemnify, and hold School District and its equity holders, subsidiaries, directors, officers, agents, representatives, and employees harmless from all claims, losses, and liabilities (including reasonable attorneys' fees) to the extent caused by or arising from Contractor's breach of this Agreement; its failure to discharge its duties and responsibilities under this Agreement; or the gross negligence or willful misconduct of Contractor or Contractor's officers, employees, or authorized agents in the discharge of those duties and responsibilities under this Agreement.

To the extent permitted by law, School District will defend, indemnify, and hold Contractor and its parents, subsidiaries, directors, officers, agents, representatives, and employees harmless from all claims, losses, and liabilities (including reasonable attorneys' fees) to the extent caused by or arising from School District's breach of this Agreement; its failure to discharge its duties and responsibilities under this Agreement; or the gross negligence or willful misconduct of School District or School District's officers, employees, or authorized agents in the discharge of those duties and responsibilities under this Agreement.

Except as expressly set forth herein, neither party shall be liable for or be required to indemnify the other party for any incidental, consequential, exemplary, special, punitive, or lost profit damages that



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arise in connection with this Agreement, regardless of the form of action (whether in contract, tort, negligence, strict liability, or otherwise) and regardless of how characterized, even if such party has been advised of the possibility of such damages.

As a condition precedent to indemnification, the party seeking indemnification will inform the other party within ten (10) business days after it receives notice of any claim, loss, liability, or demand for which it seeks indemnification from the other party; and the party seeking indemnification will cooperate in the investigation and defense of any such matter.

The provisions in this section of the Agreement constitute the complete agreement between the parties with respect to indemnification, and each party waives its right to assert any common-law indemnification or contribution claim against the other party.

NOTICES: Notices to Contractor shall be sent to:

The Stepping Stones Group
225 W Washington ST, STE 1140
Chicago, IL 60606
AND
K12ops.contracts@ssg-healthcare.com

Notices to School District shall be sent to:

Simpson County Schools
430 South College Street
Franklin, KY 42134

JURISDICTION: This agreement shall be governed by, construed, and is enforceable in accordance with the laws of the State of Delaware. Any action or proceeding relating to or arising out of this Agreement shall be commenced and heard in the State or Federal Court sitting in Delaware. Both parties hereby consent to the jurisdiction and venue of such courts.

GENERAL: No provision of this Agreement may be amended or waived unless agreed to in writing and signed by the parties. The provisions of this Agreement will inure to the benefit of and be binding on the parties and their respective representatives, successors, and assigns.

BILLING DETAILS FOR SCHOOL DISTRICT:

Billing Contact Name/Title:



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Billing Email/Phone: Kelly Baker (kelly.baker@simpson.kyschools.us)

Mailing Address (for invoice): Simpson County Schools
430 South College Street
Franklin, KY 42134

Special Billing Instructions:

Signed for Contractor:

Signature: Amber Espinola

Name: Amber Espinola

Title: _____

Date: August 27, 2025

Signed for School District:

Signature: _____

Name: _____

Title: _____

Date: _____

Appendix A

The services that may be provided under this Agreement and the corresponding hourly bill rates for each service for the are listed below:

Specialty

Speech Language Pathologist

Hourly Rate

\$75.00 per hour in person