

HEARING SERVICES

Description

A student considered to be deaf or hard of hearing is one who has a medically diagnosed hearing loss, which results in such an educational difficulty that he/she requires direct services on a regular and frequent basis by a qualified Teacher of the Deaf and Hard of Hearing.

Philosophy

In order for deaf and hard of hearing children to reach their full potential, they require flexible programs which support the development of self-esteem, as well as communication, literacy, academic, and social skills. It is the Deaf and Hard of Hearing role to support the children, their families, and those working with them to ensure development in these areas.

Service

School District No 22 has 2.0 FTE Teachers of the Deaf and Hard of Hearing. The teachers serve in an itinerant role and provide direct, as well as consultative service to schools, students, teachers and parents. When required, students may be provided with a teacher assistant or sign language interpreter. This is determined by individual student needs and their means of communicating.

The Teacher of the Deaf and Hard of Hearing is a member of the planning and programming team for students claimed as receiving Direct Service by the Teacher of the Deaf and Hard of Hearing.

Responsibilities

The responsibilities of the itinerant teacher are multi-faceted in nature and include in class observation of the student for assessment/evaluation and individual work or small group work with the student either in the classroom or on a pullout basis. The itinerant teacher is part of the IEP development team.

To support the goals of the IEP the itinerant teacher may work with the student on:

- support in the care, use and management of assistive listening devices (ALDS),
- the teaching of auditory skills,
- speech development,
- speech reading,
- English language development,
- cognitive development,
- academic skill building strategies,
- social and/or emotional development,
- facilitate home-school communication,
- career and personal planning,
- coordinate the services of community professionals.

The itinerant teacher is a resource to the classroom teacher, the interpreter, Certified Education Assistants, and the student, ensuring that the working arrangement in the classroom is efficient and effective. A signing student's IEP should include the goal and strategies for the student to become a wise consumer of interpreters.

Identification, Planning and Programming

Any degree of hearing loss has educational implications, so following the identification of a student's hearing loss, an assessment to determine the strengths and weaknesses of the student in the areas of language development and communication skills may be required. This assessment, administered by the Teacher of the Deaf and Hard of Hearing may include the administration of standardized tests in the areas of ability and achievement, as well as curriculum based assessment and anecdotal reports. Program planning decisions and recommendations for placement of the student in a specific program should occur only after a full assessment has been completed.

A critical part of the assessment process is determining the method of communication to be used in the educational setting. While the majority of students who are hard of hearing will develop English language skills through the use of appropriate amplification and oral instruction, some students, often with more severe hearing losses or other disabling conditions, will require use of sign language.

The school district is responsible for assessing the most enabling language of instruction to allow a student who is deaf or hard of hearing to fully access the curriculum, and for ensuring staff are hired with appropriate qualifications to meet the specific communication needs of individual deaf or hard of hearing students.

Any student identified as deaf or hard of hearing requiring direct, regular, and frequent service must have a current IEP. Besides addressing the effects of hearing loss, and language development, the IEP must address the following:

- social and vocational needs arising as a result of the hearing loss
- auditory management and assistive listening devices
- speech development
- sign language as required
- development of self-advocacy skills

Referrals

Deaf and Hard of Hearing referrals for Hearing screening can be made by School Based Teams using the Hearing Screening Referral form.

Role of Sign Language Facilitators

The role of the sign language facilitator is to provide communication between persons who do not share the same language and culture, mode of communication, or who access information differently.

Sign language facilitators are expected to convey everything that is being communicated amongst students, teachers, and peers. The sign language facilitator will interpret all comments made in the presence of a deaf or hard of hearing student. The sign language facilitator will not alter the intent or content of the message nor become involved in the dynamics of the communication.

Sign language facilitators are members of a professional organization and as such are bound by a code of ethics. This code provides guidelines for professional conduct, attire, and confidentiality.

Sign language facilitators are available to provide interpretation for extra curricular situations, as identified in the IEP, and as part of the educational team, may be asked to participate in educational team meetings.

Sign language facilitators are not expected to be experts on the subject of deafness. Specific questions should be referred to the appropriate resources.

Sign language facilitators working in the classroom (need to be available for interpretation) in a variety of contexts such as field trips, assemblies and guest presenters as these situations are an extension of the learning opportunities that take place in the classroom.

Sign language facilitators will:

- Accurately interpret instructional information including the subtleties and nuances that the speaker conveys.
- Convey student questions and responses to the teacher and the class in the language level used by the student.
- Encourage direct communication amongst individuals while assisting and facilitating communication through the use of sign language/voice interpretation.
- Work in a given setting, keeping in mind that each class has its own procedures and technical language.
- Interpret without personal bias.
- Spend time to become familiar with new material being presented prior to its presentation within the educational setting; this may include preparation time and consultation with members of the Deaf community to avoid introducing erroneously invented sign vocabulary.
- Interpret the student's sign language into written English at a given time, provided this has been specified by the educational team in the IEP.
- Sign all spoken messages and voice all signed messages.
- Be familiar with school rules.
- In order to further enhance team efforts and improve social and learning opportunities, the sign language facilitator needs to be supportive of other students' learning and social needs.

Provincial Programs

BURNABY (School District #41) Provincial Resource Program (oral) - Burnaby South Secondary School - Contact Person: Marguerite Henderson, Principal - Telephone: 604-664-8560

LANGLEY (School District #35) Provincial Resource Programs (signing) - Uplands Elementary School - 604-533-1285 or Mountain Secondary School - 604-888-3033 - Contact Person: Leslie Klein, Vice Principal

SOOKE (School District #62) Provincial Resource Program (signing) - Spencer Middle School - 250-474-1291 - Contact Person: J. Cambridge, Principal

Pre-School and Post Secondary Programs

BC Family Hearing Resource Centre - Preschool Program (oral/signing) - Contact Person: Susan Lane, Director

Deaf Children's Society - Preschool Program (oral/signing) - Contact Person: Cheryl Collins, Executive Director

Queen Alexandra Centre For Children's Health - Preschool Program - Contact Person: Patty Juno, Teacher

Vancouver Oral Centre For Deaf Children - Preschool/Elementary Program - Dr Marietta Paterson, Principal