

HEARING LOSS OR DEAFNESS: CONSIDERATIONS FOR ASSESSMENT PLANNING AND IEP DEVELOPMENT

The purpose of this document is to provide individual education program (IEP) teams guidance and considerations when planning evaluations and the IEP for students who are deaf or hard of hearing. Due to the nature of the disability, the team should consider including a specialist in deaf education. South Dakota Services for the Deaf (SDSD) provides consultation and assists in evaluations as described in the mission and vision of the Interagency agreement.

ADVERSE EDUCATIONAL EFFECT IS NOT SYNONYMOUS WITH ACADEMIC DELAYS.

SUPPORTING REGULATION:

- 🔔 Each state must ensure that a free appropriate public education (FAPE) is available to any individual student with a disability who needs special education and related services, *even though the student has not failed a course or grade and is advancing from grade to grade.* (CFR Section 300.101)

Considerations in Assessment Planning for Performance Review:

- What is the academic achievement of the student compared to typical hearing peers?
- Is the student continuing to make progress in the identified areas of educational need or do additional accommodations need to be implemented to assure goal attainment?
- What specially designed instruction is needed in order for the student to progress in the general education curriculum?
- How does hearing loss impact classroom functioning, access, and participation?
- What is the student's linguistic level of development compared to typical hearing peers?
- What is the level of conversational competence in the classroom (sharing information, taking turns, clarification in conversations all in context of a conversation)?
- Have acoustic needs been accommodated in all classrooms based on setting and activity?
- What strategies are utilized when learning breakdowns occur in the classroom?
- How are support services utilized (interpreter, language facilitator, etc.)?
- How effective are the current accommodation(s) and should others be considered?
- What is the student's social-emotional level of competence?

CONSIDERATIONS FOR IEP PLANNING:

- How does the student handle questions posed by the teacher during typical instruction?
- Does the student understand various forms of figurative language, including idiomatic expressions used in conversation, instruction, and grade-level reading materials?
- Can the student follow multi-part directions in both spoken language, sign language, and written language formats?
- Does the student comprehend the print posted in the classroom and school environment?
- Can the student comprehend grade-level texts adequately enough to access critical content?
- Is the student able to fully participate in classroom rituals and routines?
- Can the student demonstrate knowledge using typical testing procedures?
- How do the child's social and emotional skills compare to those of his or her typical hearing peers?

OBTAIN RELEVANT FUNCTIONAL PERFORMANCE INFORMATION USING TECHNICALLY SOUND INSTRUMENTS.

SUPPORTING REGULATION:

- 🔔 Evaluation for eligibility (DEA 300.304): "Use a variety of assessment tools and strategies to gather relevant functional, developmental, and academic information about the student, including information provided about the parent" "Use technically sound instruments that may assess the relative contribution of cognitive and behavioral factors, in addition to physical or developmental factors" "Assessments and other evaluation materials include those tailored to assess specific areas of educational need" "Assessment tools and strategies that provide relevant information that directly assists persons in determining the educational needs of the student are provided.

Considerations in Assessment Planning:

- Speech Perception
- Listening Skills
- Phonologic Awareness
- Classroom Performance
- Device Use
- Hearing Level
- Self-Advocacy
- Pragmatic Language
- Social Emotional Skills
- Language Processing (Sign/spoken language)
- Language Use (Sign/spoken language)
- Multiple Challenges
- Deaf Culture
- Sensory Needs

- Acoustically Accessible Setting

ACCURACY IN THE ABILITY TO ACCESS COMMUNICATION OF PEERS AND TEACHERS NEEDS TO BE DETERMINED AND CONSIDERED AS LACK OF ACCESS WILL IMPACT INTERACTION AND COMPREHENSION.

SUPPORTING REGULATIONS:

- 🔔 IDEA Special Considerations for students who are Deaf/Hard of Hearing: “In the case of a child who is deaf or hard of hearing, consider the child’s language and communication needs, opportunities for direct communication with peers and professional personnel in the child’s language and communication mode, academic level, and full range of needs, including opportunities for direct instruction in the student’s language and communication mode, and (v) Consider whether the child requires assistive communication devices and services.”
- 🔔 34 CFR 303.324(2) AND Sec. 300.320(a)(4) requires the IEP to include a statement of ... the program modifications or support for school personnel that will be provided, to enable the child to be involved in and make progress in the general education curriculum.

Consideration in Assessment Planning:

- How does the student access language?
 - If through spoken language, does the student require amplification and have access to it in all needed environments?
 - If through sign language, does the student have access to a certified interpreter or how will access be provided?
- Does the student use language for different purposes?
- Does the student follow rules for conversations and other social interactions?
- Does the student engage in a variety of social interactions appropriate for age?

Considerations in IEP Planning:

What is the student’s level of communication effectiveness during:

- Teacher instruction
- Class Discussion
- Small group learning
- Learning via media (computers, television, videos, Smartboard, etc.)
- School announcements (specific informant with social elements important for self-concept and social acceptance)
- Physical Education and/or sports-related activities (specific instructions, callout plays, possibly peer-to-peer)
- School assemblies (specific, sometimes complex information, often with social elements)
- School media center (library)
- Under typical classroom conditions, how does the student understand speech in noisy and quiet situations?
- What accommodations, technology and/or support does the student need to access instruction?

- What is the student's range of speech perception under typical classroom listening conditions?
- What are peer relationships like? (i.e., is the student passive or assertive in getting his/her needs met?)
- Does the student recognize when he/she is missing information?
- Does the student ask for repetition or clarification when he or she does not understand?
- How does the student's level of skill development in communication repair impact achievement?

HEARING TECHNOLOGY IS TYPICALLY NECESSARY TO MAXIMIZE ACCESS TO AUDITORY INFORMATION

SUPPORTING REGULATION:

- 🔔 IDEA statute (20 USC 1400(c)(5)(H)) specifies "supporting the development and use of technology, including assistive technology devices and assistive technology services, to maximize accessibility for children with disabilities."

Considerations in Assessment Planning:

- Does the student have auditory (audition) skills and behavior comparable to that of typical hearing peers of similar ability?
- To what degree does the student's hearing level impact language acquisition?
- What is the student's record of technology use?
- How does distance and noise impact the student's ability to accurately perceive speech?
- Which sounds does the student miss consistently and how does that impact speech perception accuracy?
- Does the student have a complete understanding of his or her ability to perceive speech/sound in different situations? (noise, quiet, distance)
- Can the student problem-solve and make decisions in challenging communication situations?
- Does the student have both academic and functional skills to achieve self-efficacy?
- Does the student have self-advocacy skills appropriate for age and cognitive ability?

CONSIDERATIONS FOR IEP PLANNING:

- Can the student maintain his or her amplification adequately?
- Does the student transfer the transmitter as needed?
- Does the student use or would he or she benefit from assistive technology (hearing aid, BAHA, cochlear implant, DM, Classroom Sound Field)?
- Can the student answer questions about his or her assistive technology?
- Can the student describe their need for accommodations and strategies they can use to address hearing needs?
- Is the student able to identify the seating arrangement that supports acquisition of learning in a variety of environments?
 - Does the student know how to request preferential seating?
 - Can the student independently seat himself or herself in a variety of environments to access learning or to participate?

- Does the student use communication services effectively (interpreter, transliterator, notetaker, captionist, etc.?)
- What is the backup plan when the student's assistive technology is not available to ensure continuation of auditory access?
- What is the plan for school-purchased assistive technology devices in a student's home or other settings if the team determines access to the devices is needed to receive FAPE?
- What is the school's plan to monitor the hearing devices in school to ensure they are functioning properly (as needed to receive FAPE)?

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

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- [South Dakota Services for the Deaf \(sddeaf.org\)](https://sddeaf.org)
 - [Optimizing Outcomes for Students who are Deaf or Hard of Hearing](#)
 - [AEM Center: The National Center on Accessible Educational Materials for Learning at CAST](#)
 - [CAST: Until learning has no limits®](#)