

# ***Educational Accommodations for Students Who Are Deaf and Hard of Hearing***

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# *Virginia Statistics*

Students receiving special education services:

- 2,228 students (ages 2-22) identified with Hearing Impairment (including Deafness)
- 34 students identified with Deaf-Blindness
- Approximately 94% of students who were deaf and hard of hearing (ages 6-21) attended regular public schools.

# ***Federal Laws***

- Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973
- Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA)
- Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA)
- Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA)

# ***Federal Requirements***

Section 504 and ADA:

- “Prohibit schools from excluding, denying benefits to, or otherwise discriminating against students with disabilities.”
- “Schools must provide accommodations to children who are deaf and hard of hearing, when appropriate:
  - To provide equitable opportunities to participate in, and benefit from, school programs.”

NASDSE, 2018

# ***FAPE***

## Free Appropriate Public Education (FAPE)

- Required by IDEA, Virginia's special education regulations, and Section 504
- In Virginia, FAPE applies to children identified with disabilities (e.g. Deaf or Hard of Hearing), ages 2-21
- Consider supports and services necessary for students to make progress in the general curriculum

# ***ESSA***

## Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA)

- General law
  - Applies to all students
  - Rigorous academic standards
  - Must administer assessments aligned with standards
  - Must report outcomes for student performance for specific subgroups (e.g. students with disabilities)

NASDSE, 2018

# ***Accommodations***

- In 2016, approximately 68% of Virginia students who were DHH spent at least 80% of their school day in general education classrooms.
- Appropriate supports and services are necessary for students to make progress in the general curriculum.

# ***Accommodations and Modifications***

- Educational supports apply to:
  - Instruction
  - Assessment
  - Educational environment
- Accommodations:
  - Allow student to have equitable access to information
- Modifications:
  - Change or alter the content of the instruction/information



# ***Accommodations and Modifications***

Accommodations and modifications:

- Allow equal opportunities to access curriculum and demonstrate achievement
- Provided for instruction and testing/assessment process
- May inadvertently hinder achievement and decrease level of independence, if provided solely to enhance performance beyond providing equal access

# ***Accommodations***

- May reduce or eliminate the effects of a student's disability
- Should not reduce learning expectations
- Should be consistent across classroom instruction and assessments

# ***Accommodations***

May be applied across educational activities and environments, including (but not limited to):

- Classroom instruction
- Homework
- Lunchroom
- Hallway
- Resource rooms
- Playground
- Field trips
- Assemblies
- Extra-curricular activities (i.e. sports, clubs, dances, plays, concerts)

# ***Accommodations in the IEP***

- Individualized according to the student's needs
- May apply to:
  - Time
  - Scheduling
  - Setting
  - Presentation
  - Response
  - Use of assistive technology and/or accessible materials

# ***Communication Access***

Auxiliary aids, related services, and visual and hearing technologies commonly include (but are not limited to):

- Sign language/tactile interpreting
- Cued speech transliterating
- Listening and spoken language
- Captioning and computer-aided transcription services
- Text messaging
- Note taking
- Hearing aids
- Cochlear implants
- Assistive listening systems (e.g. personal or classroom FM systems)

# ***Educational Service Providers***

- Provide integrated services and support
  - Classroom teachers
  - Teachers of the deaf and hard of hearing
  - Educational interpreters
  - Speech-language pathologists
  - Educational audiologists
  - Paraprofessionals

# ***Virginia Communication Plan***

## *Virginia Communication Plan for a Student Who is Deaf or Hard of Hearing:*

- Recommended tool to assist IEP teams:
  - Consideration for specific language and communication needs
  - Systematic process for gathering and reviewing information
  - Helps determine accommodations, services and supports needed
  - Recorded and maintained along with the IEP

VDOE/PPD, 2012

# ***Communication Plan***

- Addresses:
  - Language and communication modalities
  - Amplification and accommodations
  - Opportunities for direct communication
  - Academic needs
- Posted at the VDOE website
- Currently being revised



# ***Assistive Technology***

- Personal devices:
  - Schools are not required to provide personal devices, including eyeglasses or hearing aids for a student who is deaf or hard of hearing, unless the IEP team determines that the device is necessary for the child to receive FAPE.

VDOE, 2010

# ***Assistive Technology***

Schools must:

- Ensure hearing aids worn in school are functioning properly
- Provide routine checks of hearing aids and external components of surgically implanted devices (e.g. cochlear implants)

Items such as spare hearing aid batteries, a battery tester, and a stethoset may assist to minimize “down time”.

# ***Testing Accommodations***

## ***Students with Disabilities: Guidelines for Special Test Accommodations***

- VDOE resource document regarding the use of special testing accommodations for students with disabilities in Virginia
- Posted at the VDOE website

# ***Testing Accommodations cont'd.***

Testing accommodations should not affect:

- Validity
- Score interpretation
- Reliability
- Security

NASDSE, 2018

# ***Testing Accommodations***

- Must be related to the student's disability
- Should be considered separately for each assessment
- Should be utilized during daily instruction and classroom assessments.

VDOE, 2017

# ***Testing Accommodations***

Testing accommodations may include (but are not limited to):

- Multiple test sessions
- Planned breaks
- Use of amplification equipment
- Interpreting/transliterating directions
- Interpreting/transliterating test
- Separate test location
- Special lighting

# ***Interpreting Statewide Assessments***

The interpreter/transliterater may interpret:

- Test directions
- Sample items
- Questions directed to and answered by the examiner
- Test items directly from the assessments (paper/online)
- Items read by the examiner

# ***SOL Reading Assessment***

- Students who are deaf or hard of hearing may be considered for the interpreting/transliterating accommodation on the SOL *Reading* assessment , IF:
  - The student’s hearing loss severely limits the ability to decode text, as determined by a diagnostic tool or instrument administered by a qualified professional



# ***SOL Reading Accommodation***

Students who are deaf or hard of hearing

- Examples of a “diagnostic tool or instrument administered by a qualified professional”
  - Student’s most recent audiological report identifies the degree and type of hearing loss and resulting effect on auditory discrimination skills for phonemes/sounds
  - Information obtained from the student’s previous/current psycho-educational evaluation report and diagnostic reading assessments identifies severely limited ability to decode text

# ***Environmental Access***

- Special visual signaling/alerting devices, signage and message boards can provide information for:
  - Beginning/ending classes
  - Emergency situations
  - Safety
  - Daily announcements
- Preferential seating (i.e. away from air conditioner, computer/printer) and controlled lighting may support the use of interpreters, and enhance facial expressions, body language and lip movements.
- Enclosed classrooms (e.g. walls and doors) provide a better acoustic environment than open classrooms.

# ***Resources for Deaf and Hard of Hearing***

## [Virginia Hearing Aid Loan Bank](#)

- Provides hearing aids and FM systems for children in Virginia under age 18 whose hearing loss is confirmed by an audiologist
- Devices are loaned for free for up to six months
- Contact: Lisa Powley at [BRCCC@virginia.edu](mailto:BRCCC@virginia.edu) or (866) 596-9367

# *Resources*

## Virginia Project for Children and Young Adults With Deaf-Blindness

- Provides technical assistance, training, distance education, and networking information to families and service providers of children who are deaf-blind/dual sensory impaired.
- Contact: Julie Durando, Project Director, at [jdurando@vcu.edu](mailto:jdurando@vcu.edu) or (804) 828-8252

# *Resources*

Technical Assistance Center for Children Who Are Deaf and Hard of Hearing (TAC-DHH)

- Provides training and technical assistance to local public school divisions, early intervention, and preschool programs through the [Virginia Network of Consultants for Professionals Working with Children Who are Deaf and Hard of Hearing \(VNOC\)](#)
- Contact: Ann Hughes, Coordinator, at [awhughes@vcu.edu](mailto:awhughes@vcu.edu) or (804) 828-1342

# *Resources*

## [Virginia School for the Deaf and the Blind](#)

- Located in Staunton, Virginia
- Provides a K-12 educational day program, outreach services, and residential services exclusively for students who are deaf or hard of hearing, blind or visually impaired, or deaf-blind.
- [VSDB Outreach Services](#) assist early intervention providers, local school divisions, and families in meeting the needs of children across the Commonwealth.
- Contact: Debbie Pfeiffer, Director for Outreach Programs, [debbie.pfeiffer@vsdb.k12.va.us](mailto:debbie.pfeiffer@vsdb.k12.va.us) , (540) 414-5249

# ***Resources***

## [Virginia Department for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing \(VDDHH\)](#)

- Provides standards for educational interpreting services and other services to reduce the communication barriers between persons who are deaf or hard of hearing and their families, and professionals
- Contact: Eric Raff, Director, at [eric.raff@vddhh.virginia.gov](mailto:eric.raff@vddhh.virginia.gov) or (804) 404-9090

# *Resources*

## [Accessible Instructional Materials Center-Virginia \(AIM-VA\)](#)

- Provides required accessible educational materials to students with an IEP and training for school division personnel, at no cost to Local Educational Agencies
- Contact: AIM-VA Help Desk, at [aimva@gmu.edu](mailto:aimva@gmu.edu) or (866) 926-1879



# ***Resources***

## [Described and Captioned Media Program](#)

- Provides free educational media for loan in a wide range of content areas for all grade levels
- Website: [www.dcmp.org](http://www.dcmp.org)

# References

- [\*Guidelines for Working with Children Who Are Deaf or Hard of Hearing in Virginia Public Schools\*](#), (Virginia Department of Education/Partnership for People with Disabilities, 2012)
- [\*Regulations Governing Special Education Programs for Children With Disabilities in Virginia\*](#) (Virginia Department of Education, 2010)
- [\*Students with Disabilities: Guidelines for Special Test Accommodations\*](#) (Virginia Department of Education, 2017)
- [\*Optimizing Outcomes for Students who are Deaf or Hard of Hearing-Educational Service Guidelines\*](#) (National Association of State Directors of Special Education, 2018)

***Thank you!***

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