WISCONSIN DEPARTMENT OF
PUBLIC INSTRUCTION

Wisconsin Educational Services Program
WESP-DHH
for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing

Guidelines for Discussion on **Consideration of Special Factors (IDEA 2004) when a Student is Deaf or Hard of Hearing**

The purpose of this document is to assist IEP teams in having a comprehensive discussion and documentation of the <u>Special Factors</u> that support the educational needs of a student who is deaf or hard of hearing as outlined in IDEA. Since some of the terms are "disability specific" a short glossary has been included at the end.

A) Does the student's behavior impede his/her learning or that of others? ☐ Yes ☐ No

If so, what are the behaviors?

NOTE: *A student who is deaf or hard of hearing will often demonstrate <u>behaviors that indicate when learning is impeded</u> due to poor acoustics, poor or insufficient visual information, or language expectations beyond the student's abilities. These behaviors may include, (but are not limited to): poor attention span due to fatigue, restlessness, inattentiveness, "tuning out", class clown, anxiety, complaining of not knowing or not understanding, etc.*

If yes, include positive behavioral interventions, strategies and supports to address that behavior.

B) Is the student an English Language Learner*? ☐ Yes ☐ No

There are <u>some</u> students who are deaf or hard of hearing who <u>may</u> also be an English Language Learner. This may be the situation for students whose primary language is American Sign Language or another spoken language. If the IEP team believes that the student may be an English Language Learner, it is important to assess their English Language Proficiency (in Wisconsin the ACCESS-ELL is used) to

determine the level of proficiency and assist the IEP team in drafting IEP goals that address strategies of English second language learning as well as considerations for the WSAS. The questions below are designed to assist in the IEP team discussion.

- What is the student's *English Language Proficiency* level?

- How was it determined?

- Is the student's communication and language proficiency adequate to enable him/her to succeed in acquiring grade level skills and concepts within the general curriculum?

- What are the implications for instructional strategies and educational services?

    o What supports are needed?

    o What will be done to increase English proficiency?

C) If visually impaired, does the student need instruction in Braille or the use of Braille? ☐ Yes   ☐ No

If the student who is deaf or hard of hearing also has a loss in vision (corrected or not), the combined effects may affect the student's abilities to learn. Even if the student does not meet the criteria for a visual impairment, or is a student in need of Braille, it is important for the IEP team to consider the possible implications and modifications needed in order to benefit from his/her education. If the student has met criteria for both hearing impairment and visual impairment, this student may be identified as deafblind with access to several state and national resources.

D) In developing each student's IEP, the IEP team shall ... *identify the communication needs of the child who is deaf or hard of hearing, including a) the student's language, b) opportunities for direct communication* with peers and professional personnel in the child's language and communication mode, and c) academic level and full range of needs, including opportunities for direct instruction in the student's language and communicative mode. The following chart is one way an IEP team may address and document the child's communication.*

a) The Student's Language and Communication Needs:

1. What is the child's primary communication / language use in various settings? Note for all environments.

	*American Sign Language	*English-based sign	*Sign Supported Speech	Auditory / Oral	Receptive language-sign/ Expressive language - spoken	Other, please describe
Home / Community						
School						
With adults						
With peers						

* See the glossary at the end of this document for definitions.

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b) Opportunities for <u>direct communication</u> with peers and professional personnel in the child's language and communication mode. ("direct communication" means person-to-person communication and not through an interpreter.)

1. What are the **opportunities** for the child to have <u>direct communication with grade level peers</u>?

2. What are the **opportunities** for <u>direct communication with professional personnel</u> (i.e. teachers, related services staff, etc)?

c) Academic level and full range of needs, including opportunities for direct instruction in the student's language and communicative mode.

1. What is the student's academic level in relation to their same age peers? What accommodations or modifications are recommended so this student can achieve along with their peers? (If appropriate, include the student's WKCE results)

2. What are the *"full range of needs"* for this student? (Check areas below that apply. Add other areas of need that may need to be further addressed in the IEP.)

    ☐ Opportunity to interact with deaf or hard of hearing adult role models

    ☐ Instruction along the expanded core curriculum (see glossary)

    ☐ Staff is able to meet the linguistic needs of the student utilizing the student's primary means of communication

    ☐ Access to technology that supports communication

    ☐ Acoustic accessibility for students using auditory / oral communication including those with cochlear implants

☐ Visual accessibility for students using sign communication including those with cochlear implants

☐ Social interaction

☐ Transition information that is supportive of people who are deaf or hard of hearing

☐ Parent support in building strong communication skills in order to support their child's education at home

☐ Other:

Discussion on the *least restrictive educational environment* for students who are deaf or hard of hearing needs to consider the opportunities for the student to have direct communication with peers and staff. This is in addition to the student's participation in the general education curriculum with supports and services as needed.

What factors were considered when discussing the educational environment that is least restrictive for this student?

☐ Student communication

☐ Ability of the student to directly interact with peers

☐ Ability of the student to directly interact with staff

☐ Access to school information available to all students

☐ Student's ability to participate in the general curriculum

☐ Supports and Services needed for academic success

☐ Continuum of placements that can provide the educational environment needed to meet the academic and social-emotional needs of the student including:
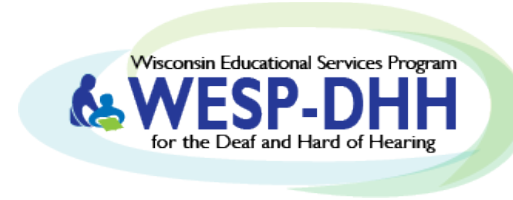
☐ the school the student would attend if he/she did not have a disability

☐ schools within the district

☐ schools within neighboring districts

☐ schools within the CESA

☐ schools within the state

E) Does the student need assistive technology services or devices? (see the list below as a reference only) ☐ Yes   ☐ No
If yes, specify particular device(s) and /or service(s).

For example:

☐ Audiology services: ☐ Communication software

    ☐ Monitoring personal hearing aids   ☐ Telecommunication software

    ☐ FM system   ☐ Personal pager

    ☐ Other Assistive Listening Device   ☐ Video Relay Service (VRS) module

    ☐ Services supporting use of a cochlear implant   ☐ Other:

    ☐ Access to school environment

    ☐ Visual alarm / alerting system

    ☐ Captioning of films and other sound media

GLOSSARY:

American Sign Language is the language of sign used by the people in the Deaf community in the USA and most of Canada with over 200 years of evolution. This language is a sophisticated visual language with its own grammatical features that support communication and learning with the mind that does not hear spoken languages.

English-based sign has a few different forms that have evolved since the 1970s. These sign modalities have been created by people with the intent to mimic English on the hands. It is not a language and is not generally used by the community of Deaf or Hard of Hearing adults.

Sign Supported Speech is a process of 'interpreting' that includes a mix of oral interpreting and signing of key and new concepts or vocabulary. It is most often used when the student is able to hear spoken messages, but not with full comprehension, and does not need *all* language interpreted. This student usually speaks for themselves.

Expanded Core Curriculum includes the knowledge and skills needed by a student who is deaf or hard of hearing that supports their independence in life. It includes knowledge of the technology and resources available in the community, state and country that provide resources and services that allow for full participation in work, post-secondary, personal, and community activities. For a list of components that are within the Expanded Core Curriculum, see the DPI Eligibility Guidelines for Students who are Deaf or Hard of Hearing, page 25-27 http://www.dpi.wi.gov/sped/pdf/dhhguide.pdf