

Bridge to Preschool

Navigating a Successful Transition



Information for Families who have Children who
are Deaf / Hard of Hearing

Created by the Colorado School for the
Deaf and the Blind (CSDB)

and

Colorado Families for Hands & Voices



2026 Edition



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Welcome

Dear Families,

“Hey, I’m finally getting the hang of this... now we have to transition?”

As parents who have already completed the transition process, we want you to know that you can make it through this successfully, with your child’s needs met, and with confidence in your choices. We also want you to know we understand what it feels like to be going into the unknown once you are finally feeling settled in the “here and now.” Right when you are starting to understand what some of the acronyms mean, (IFSP, Part C, EHDl) all of the sudden you are faced with transitioning into services where expectations and roles are different (Part B, IEP, 504 Plan and additional school based services).

Change, change, change....

Planning for the transition from early intervention (Part C) to preschool services at age three (Part B) is a very important state in the life of your child and family. Probably from early on in your experience with early intervention services, you became aware that at the age of three there would be a transition process which may include:

- A change of people who have been serving your child
- A change of location of services
- A change in which part of the law oversees services in the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) and Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA)
- New opportunities

We’re here to help!

This packet was developed by a group of professionals and parents who want to support you during this time. It won’t have everything you’ll need, but we hope that there is enough information to get you through the transition process, and to know where to get help if needed. You could benefit from the input of other parents, professionals you trust, and adults who are deaf and hard of hearing to give you their perspectives as you transition into the next phase of education and life with your child. The truth is “transitions” are an ongoing part of life that may cause some stress, and are an inevitable part of the journey of raising a child who is deaf or hard of hearing. It is also an exciting part of the journey, your child is growing, you are gaining confidence in your knowledge, and your involvement in your child’s education will pay off with big dividends! You are ready!

Your Early Intervention Team and educational teams are here for you, and we hope you find this packet of information useful in this transition.

Sincerely,

The Transition “Team”, Janet, Sara, Dinah, and Denise

Common Terms and Acronyms

<p>Part C</p>	<p>The Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) Part C program promotes the development of infants and toddlers with delays or disabilities, enhances the capacity of families to meet the developmental needs of their infants and toddlers, minimizes the need for special education and related services when children enter school, and enhances children’s long-term outcomes.</p> <p>*In Colorado, Part C is defined as birth to 3 years, Early Intervention.</p> <p>IDEA Part C: Early Learning and Early Childhood - Individuals with Disabilities Education Act</p>
<p>Part B</p>	<p>Part B supports are available through the public school system after children turn 3 years old. Through an IEP, or 504 Plan, schools will provide appropriate support for students to access and participate in the general education preschool curriculum. As children get closer to the age of three, a referral to Part B for an evaluation may be made.(do we need this here?)</p> <p>*In Colorado, Part B Services can begin at the age of 3 for children who are found eligible.</p> <p>Early Intervention and Preschool Special Education Key Differences</p>
<p>IFSP</p>	<p>IFSP stands for Individualized Family Service Plan. This plan specifically is a legal binding document providing services to eligible children ages 0-3. The IFSP document covered under the IDEA. Early Intervention services will be written within the IFSP to support, communication, self-help, cognitive, social-emotional and physical skills. Parents/caregivers are also an important part of the IFSP and will participate in services within the child’s natural environment (either home or child care setting).</p>
<p>CHIP</p>	<p>Colorado Home Inclusion Program</p>
<p>Educational Team</p>	<p>Your child’s educational team is responsible for supporting the IEP during the school day. REMEMBER Parents are always members of the educational team!</p>
<p>TOD</p>	<p>Teacher of the Deaf. This teacher will often be your child’s IEP case manager and will be responsible for ensuring the IEP goals and accommodations are being supported in the classroom. The role of the TOD looks different depending on the school placement, more information related to this below.</p>
<p>IEP</p>	<p>Individualized Education Program. If your child qualifies for special education support in the public school system and IEP will be developed by you and the educational team. This is a legally binding, individualized, educational plan for your child and will include specifics related to the educational supports and educational goals that will be provided during the school day.</p>

Annual Goals	<p>These will be written based on educational needs identified in the child find evaluation</p> <p>The educational team will write academic goals for a one year time span. These are individualized for your child and support identified areas of academic need. They will be specific and measurable and you will receive progress reports periodically throughout the school year. IEP goals will be tied to Colorado state standards for education.</p>
Dispute Resolution	<p><i>Dispute resolution info CDE: https://www.cde.state.co.us/cdesped/upkfaqs#UPKdisputeprocedures</i></p>
Communication Plan	<p>The Communication Plan originated from the Deaf Bill of Rights. It is an additional page in the IEP required for all students who are d/hh in Colorado. The Communication Plan will address the unique communication needs of your child and is its own document embedded in the IEP. It also ensures that other important topics are discussed including access to d/hh peers and adults, educational options are shared, and how your child’s communication will be supported throughout the entire school day.</p>
504 Plan	<p>This document could be put in place for students that are not found eligible for an IEP. The 504 plan covers accommodations and supports the child will be receiving in order to have full access to education at school. A 504 plan is different and less detailed than an IEP. The key word to understand here is ‘accommodation’ (like preferential seating, access to HAT or flashing smoke/fire detectors)- these are not one on one, direct or specialized, instructional support. Title II of ADA and Section 504 protect students with disabilities in public schools regardless of their eligibility for IDEA.</p> <p>Section 504 U.S. Department of Education</p>
Accommodations	<p>An accommodation is a change that removes a barrier to learning or getting work done. Accommodations should be able to happen within the classroom and support student learning and access to the curriculum. They are documented in the IEP or on a student’s 504 Plan.</p> <p>See accommodation list on page:</p> <p>Accommodations: What they are and how they work</p>
BOCES	<p>Boards of Cooperative Education Services- In Colorado (and other states that use BOCES), it's a group of school districts that work together to share resources and provide services—especially special education services—that smaller districts might not be able to offer on their own. This may include Speech Language Pathologists (SLP), Audiologists (AuD) and Teachers of the Deaf (TOD).</p>

Transition Overview

There is more detailed information in the pages that follow, but this is a general overview.

Your local school district or BOCES Child Find team is responsible for assessment and identification of young children (birth -5) who might be eligible for services under Individuals with Disabilities Education Act. The team’s evaluation may include any or all of the following: health, vision, hearing, motor, social/ emotional, general intelligence, and communication skills. These tests

must be conducted in your child's preferred mode of communication (spoken language, sign language or a combination). These evaluations are offered by the district at no cost to you as the parent.

The purpose of these evaluations is to identify your child's special education needs. Special education need is defined as individualized instruction. The instructional strategies and services can include academic, non-academic and related services. Many school districts and most Child Find teams are accepting the 33 month CHIP Assessment as either part of this evaluation or in lieu of other assessments. Make the team aware of this or additional private assessments that have already been completed on your child. This will avoid unnecessary duplication. Your Child Find Team can review these assessments and make a determination.

Your CHIP Coordinator and a Hands & Voices ASTra Educational Advocate may be available to attend this evaluation with your family. It is important that someone attend this meeting who has expertise in the uniqueness of young children who are deaf and hard of hearing. Some districts have designated professionals to participate in all Child Find evaluations with young deaf and hard of hearing children, while others do not.

Once the evaluations are completed, the educational team will be convened to write the education report findings. You will then be scheduled to meet and discuss the results.

If your child has been determined eligible for services, the IEP team including parents/caregivers will develop an IEP (Individualized Education Plan) for your child. This plan will state the goals for your child and the special education services that will be provided by the school district. If your child is found in-eligible for an IEP, you will then meet with a 504 Coordinator at your school to start the 504 planning.

There are options for educating your child. The law mandates that a continuum of services be discussed. One basic tenet of IDEA is that public agencies must ensure that to the maximum extent appropriate, children with disabilities, including children in public or private institutions, are educated with children who are not disabled. Additionally, in 1996, Colorado passed The Deaf Child's Bill of Rights, which served to strengthen the program options for deaf students in the state of Colorado. As your child moves into Part B services, you will work with a team of professionals to develop a plan (Individualized Education Plan) that addresses the unique needs of your child. As part of this process, you will develop a Communication Plan for your child which ensures among other things that all educational options have been explored.

The focus of this manual is on the transition from Part C to Part B, or from early intervention to preschool services through your school district.

Mindful Language

As you may have already noticed since your child's hearing levels were identified, there's a wide range of vocabulary used – terms can vary depending on the topic and who you are communicating with. You'll encounter similar variation in this manual. Words like hearing loss, deaf, deaf/hard of hearing, hearing differences, hearing levels all appear based on the source or context.

We encourage families—and d/Deaf and hard of hearing (d/hh) children themselves—to become familiar with the different terms and choose the language that feels right for them. This choice may change over time, and that's completely okay. Talking with your child, loved ones, and members of the Deaf community can help ensure that others use the terminology you prefer.

Please note: We are moving away from the term "*Hearing Impairment*." Your child's hearing levels are simply a part of who they are—not an impairment. If you hear this term being used, feel free to share this perspective. Many now prefer using "*deaf or hard of hearing*" instead.

Heads up: You will see the term "*Hearing Impairment*" on one form in this manual—the state's eligibility page, titled "*Hearing Impairment including Deafness*." This is federal language that we are not able to change. While we recognize the discomfort with this term, this form is essential for accessing individualized support and services, including the communication plan on your child's IEP

As you move into the IEP process, it's natural to want the very best for your child—and advocating doesn't mean preparing for a battle. Advocacy is about being informed, asking questions, understanding your rights, and helping the team understand the unique needs of your child. You are a vital member of the IEP team, and your insights matter.

Everyone at the IEP table shares a common goal: supporting your child's learning and development. The team is made up of professionals who care deeply about helping young children grow. Sometimes, especially with topics unique to children who are

deaf or hard of hearing, team members may still be learning. That’s okay—what matters is that the team works together, keeps the child at the center, and stays open to creative, individualized solutions.

Disagreements can happen, but they’re much less frequent than many families fear—and most can be resolved through respectful, honest communication. Approaching meetings with a collaborative mindset, focused on problem-solving and shared goals, builds trust and strengthens outcomes for your child.

You don’t have to do this alone—resources and allies are available every step of the way.

Key Differences between Part C and Part B

	<u>Early Intervention Colorado/CHIP (Part C of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act)</u>	<u>Preschool Special Education (Part B, Section 619 of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act)</u>
Ages Served	Birth through age 2 (up until 3 rd birthday)	3 – 5 year olds Child Find
Goals	Supports the family to meet the developmental needs of their child with a delay or disability.	Supports the child to access and participate in the general education preschool curriculum.
Eligibility	A child must have a *diagnosed physical or mental condition that has a high probability of resulting in a significant delay in development; OR the child demonstrates a significant level of developmental delay in one or more areas of development.	A child must be *unable to receive reasonable benefit from general education without additional support in the public schools because of a specific disabling condition. *see eligibility page for 'hearing impairment including Deafness'
Evaluation	Two or more professionals from different disciplines complete a developmental evaluation of all five areas of development to determine if a significant delay is present and to determine what the child and family need.	A team of qualified professionals, including the family, determines if the child has an educational disability (as defined by state and federal criteria) and identifies all the child's special education and related services needs.
What the Child/Family are Eligible to Receive	Based on the identified needs of the child and family, Early Intervention Colorado provides early intervention services to support the family to help their child learn and develop.	A child determined eligible is entitled to a Free and Appropriate Public Education. Additionally, special education services are provided (typically within a preschool setting) in order to ensure access of the child to the general curriculum and in order for the child to be able to meet the educational standards. The child may also receive Related Services (such as transportation, developmental, and other supportive services) as are required for the child to benefit from special education.

Type of Plan	An Individualized Family Service Plan (IFSP) documents the family's desired outcomes for their child, as well as the supports and services to be provided.	An Individualized Education Plan (IEP) documents the child's educational goals, services and placement, including how progress will be measured.
Delivery of Services	Services are provided in natural environments – such as the child's home, child care setting or other areas in the community where infants and toddlers without disabilities participate.	Children with disabilities and special learning needs are educated alongside children who are not disabled, in the "least restrictive environment". Special classes, schooling, or other removal of the child from the regular education environment occurs only when the nature and severity of the disability is such that education in regular classes with the use of supplementary aids and services cannot be achieved satisfactorily.
Who is Responsible, and What are the Costs to Families?	All early intervention services included in a child's IFSP are provided at no cost to families and are coordinated through the local Community Centered Board (CCB).	Services listed in the IEP are the responsibility of the local school district and/or Board of Cooperative Education Services (BOCES).



COLORADO
Department of Education

The Basics related to the laws and rights of a Child who is d/hh in the school system:

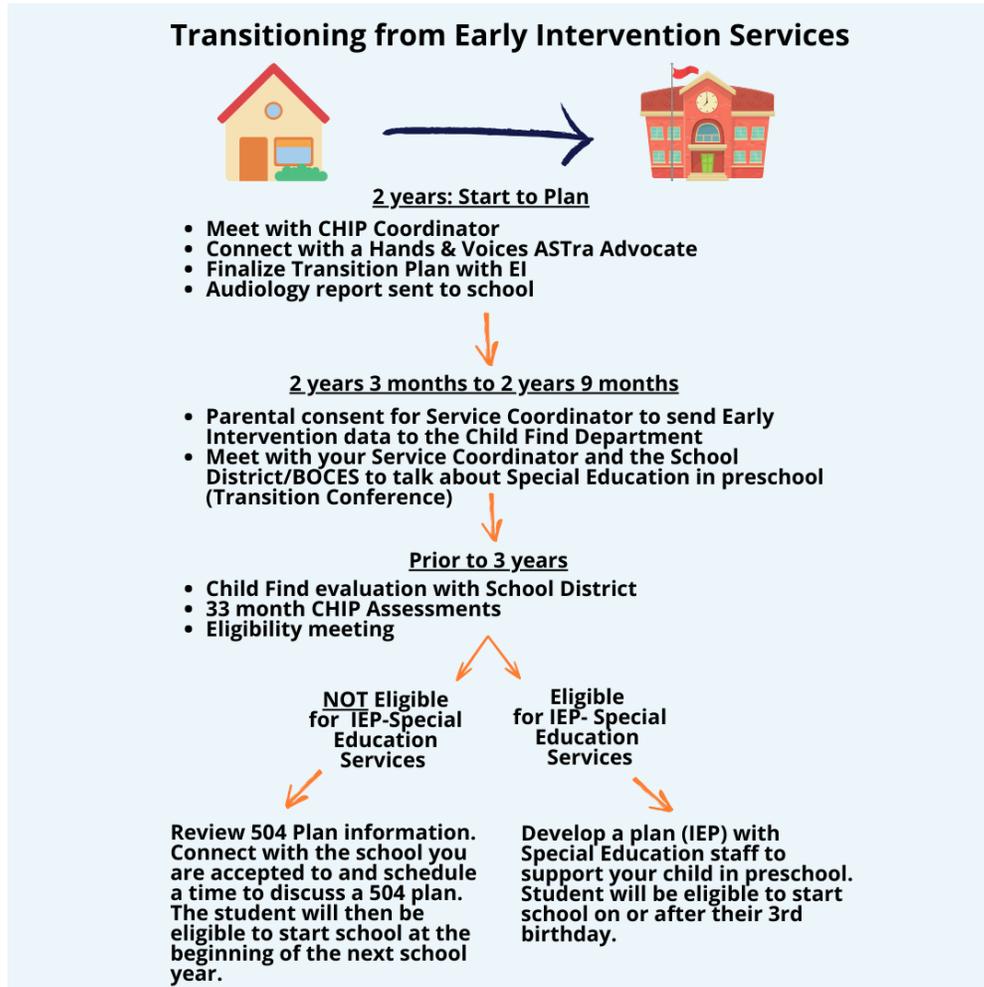
Bottom Line Students in public schools, including charter and magnet schools, who are deaf and hard of hearing have rights under IDEA, Section 504, and Title II of the ADA. Because each law has a slightly different intent, their individual provisions must be considered when addressing the communication needs of students from age 3 to high school graduation.

IDEA (Individuals with Disabilities Education Act)	<p>The Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) is a law that makes available a free appropriate public education to eligible children with disabilities throughout the nation and ensures special education and related services to those children including early intervention services for infants and toddlers and their families. The goal of IDEA is to provide children with disabilities the same opportunity for education as those students who do not have a disability. Individuals with Disabilities Education Act, or IDEA, originally passed in 1973 and was most recently reauthorized in 2006. IEPs are the cornerstone of IDEA.</p> <p>*U.S. Department of Education IDEA: https://www.ed.gov/laws-and-policy/individuals-disabilities/idea</p>
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ADA (Americans with Disabilities Act)	<p>Title II of the ADA applies to public entities, including schools, requiring them to ensure effective communication with people with disabilities. This means schools must provide necessary auxiliary aids and services, such as interpreters, real-time captioning, or assistive listening devices, to ensure students with hearing loss have equal access to information and communication. 504 Plans are part of ADA.</p> <p>https://archive.ada.gov/doe_doj_eff_comm/doe_doj_eff_comm_fact_sht.htm</p>
FAPE (Free Appropriate Public Education)	<p>FAPE stands for Free and Appropriate Public Education. There are many resources available on the concept of FAPE. What is important to mention in this stage of your child's journey is that services, identified by the educational IEP team, must be provided at no cost to the family and be of educational benefit to the child. The right to FAPE is a powerful legal right for children with disabilities. FAPE requires schools to provide special education services and supports to meet the unique needs of a child.</p> <p>What is and isn't covered under FAPE</p>
LRE (Least Restrictive Environment)	<p>Considering the learning environment for the child with hearing loss can be a tricky proposition. The philosophy of IDEA suggests that a child's neighborhood school, or the school he or she would attend if there wasn't a hearing loss to consider, is the least restrictive placement. As often is the case, this law was created as a response to students being isolated from their typically developing peers and separated from what's going on in the regular classrooms. In current research, however, investigators note that for children with hearing loss, particularly those who get the most information from a visual sign language, a classroom of hearing peers may be more isolating for that particular child. For that reason, a child's ability to interact with peers and adults in his or her school life should be considered carefully when making placement decisions. Is there a hard and fast rule of what is an LRE? No. The scenarios are as individual as your child and family, and your child's most appropriate placement could change radically from year to year.</p>
Deaf Child Bill of Rights	<p>The Deaf Child's Bill of Rights is a specific CO State Law that recognizes the unique communication and language needs of children who are deaf and hard of hearing using the Communication Plan.</p> <p>https://handsandvoices.org/comcon/articles/pdfs/dcbr.pdf</p>
Parental Rights Packet	<p>*You will be offered your Parental Rights including Procedural Safeguards at each IEP meeting, you can access them at the links below. This document outlines the rights you have as a parent with a child receiving special education.</p> <p>https://www.cde.state.co.us/spedlaw/2024proceduralsafeguards-spanish https://www.cde.state.co.us/spedlaw/procedural-safeguards-notice</p>
Exceptional Children Educational Act	<p>The Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) is a law that makes available a free appropriate public education to eligible children with disabilities throughout the nation and ensures special education and related services to those children, supports early intervention services for infants and toddlers and their families, and awards competitive discretionary grants.</p> <p>https://www.ed.gov/laws-and-policy/individuals-disabilities/idea</p>

Roadmap to Transition

Every family's journey into School Services will look a little different. Below is a potential roadmap or transition from Early Intervention services to Preschool services could look like and more detail below.



*Your child's team may include your local Hands & Voices Guide, CHIP Coordinator and CHIP Facilitator and service coordinator will be available to work with you on a transition plan to ensure your child receives support and services based on their needs after Early Intervention (EI) ends. EI ends by your child's 3rd birthday, unless they qualify for Extended Part C..

Who May be Part of Your Preschool Child Find IEP Team

Your Educational team will evolve over time. Initial IEPs are typically written with the school district's Child Find Teams who are specialists working only with children transitioning into preschool. Your child's initial Child Find IEP team will often not be the same group for future IEP meetings. After your child is attending school, your educational team moving forward will include teachers and specialists your child sees on a regular basis including the TOD, the audiologist assigned to that school, teachers and administrators.

Parents/Caregivers	This is YOU. You are an equal and important part of the IEP team. Come prepared to share your knowledge and insight about your child. You know your child best and can help the team build a strong IEP.
Student	When appropriate, a student is a vital part of their own education. They are encouraged to give input on goals and accommodations that best suit them for success. For your first IEP meeting consider bringing a Transitions Portfolio, on page 37.
Teacher of the Deaf (TOD)	A specialized educator available to provide support to deaf/hard of hearing children, and their families. Teachers of the Deaf (TOD) have backgrounds and specialized education specific to language acquisition, communication, and social-emotional development of children who are deaf/hard of hearing.
Educational Audiologist	Educational Audiologists evaluate students' hearing, interpret audiology reports, and provide support to students who are deaf/hard of hearing in the school system. They can support technology use and provide guidance and insight related to functional listening in the classroom. Additionally, audiologists support receiving and using additional hearing technology during the school day as needed.*
Special Education Representative	This will be someone who helps make decisions regarding the EP and how the district is able to support the plan.*
Case Manager	One member of the IEP team will be named the case manager. They will serve as your primary contact for your child's IEP, ensuring that the services outlined in the plan are being followed. Regular check-ins with the case manager help keep parents informed and engaged.*
General Education Teacher	A Preschool teacher will be assigned to your students team and will give input to the IEP services. It is important to note that this teacher may not be your student's teacher when they start school.*

- Team members with * sometimes can represent multiple roles on the team during a meeting.
- Parents have the right to invite others with a special interest or knowledge of the child to the IEP meeting including an advocate or another adult to support the parents and take notes at the parents' discretion.
- Out of courtesy for the IEP team, make sure to contact them prior if you plan to have additional people attending.

IEP Eligibility -Let's take a deeper dive

Your local school district is responsible for providing eligible children with educational services after age three. This will look different for each child based on their unique educational needs as identified in the IEP. Hallmarks of this system include such language as: eligibility, least restrictive environment (LRE), "free and appropriate public education" or FAPE, and the Deaf Child's Bill of Rights and Communication Plan. If your child is found 'eligible' this opens the door to Special Education in the state of Colorado and the option for an IEP/Individualized Education Program for your child.

The public school system has a different criterion for special education than the early intervention system. Considering deafness specifically, Colorado law lists specific criteria beyond the diagnosis of a hearing loss in one or both ears that might qualify a child for special education services. A child must have both an educationally significant hearing loss and require specialized instruction and/or related services in order to benefit from the curriculum. Eligibility is considered at the first IEP and every three years afterwards, at what is called the "triennial IEP meeting" until the child either graduates or turns 21.

CDE Eligibility Form (below) outlines what the eligibility requirements are for a student with ‘Hearing Impairment, Including Deafness.’

DETERMINATION OF ELIGIBILITY: HEARING IMPAIRMENT, INCLUDING DEAFNESS	
<p>Definition: A child with Hearing Impairment, Including Deafness shall have a deficiency in hearing sensitivity as demonstrated by an elevated threshold of auditory sensitivity to pure tones or speech where, even with the help of amplification, the child is prevented from receiving reasonable educational benefit from general education. ECEA 2.08(2)</p>	
<p>The team has addressed each of the following statements and has determined: IDEA 34 C.F.R. §§ 300.304(c)(6) and 300.306(b), ECEA 2.08(2)</p>	
<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
<p>1. The evaluation is sufficiently comprehensive to appropriately identify all of the child's special education and related services needs, whether or not commonly linked to the disability category. (Answer must be "yes" in order for the child to be eligible for services.)</p>	
<p>2. The child can receive reasonable educational benefit from general education alone. (Answer must be "no" in order for the child to be eligible for services.)</p>	
<p>3. The child's performance: (All answers below must be "is not" in order for the child to be eligible for services.)</p>	
<p style="padding-left: 40px;"><input type="checkbox"/> is <input type="checkbox"/> is not due to a lack of appropriate instruction in reading, including the essential components of reading instruction</p>	
<p style="padding-left: 40px;"><input type="checkbox"/> is <input type="checkbox"/> is not due to a lack of appropriate instruction in math; and</p>	
<p style="padding-left: 40px;"><input type="checkbox"/> is <input type="checkbox"/> is not due to limited English proficiency.</p>	
<p>To be eligible as a child with a Hearing Impairment, Including Deafness, there must be evidence of a "deficiency in hearing sensitivity" of one of the following criteria, as measured by behavioral or electrophysiological audiological assessments: ECEA 2.08(2)(a)</p>	
<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
<p>Three frequency, pure tone average hearing loss in the speech range (500 – 4000 Hertz (Hz)) of at least 20 decibels Hearing Level (dBHL) in the better ear which is not reversible; or</p>	
<p>A high frequency, pure tone average hearing loss of at least 35 dBHL in the better ear for two or more of the following frequencies: 2000, 3000, 4000 or 6000 Hz; or</p>	
<p>A three frequency, pure tone average unilateral hearing loss in the speech range (500 – 4000Hz) of at least 35 dBHL which is not reversible; or</p>	
<p>A transient hearing loss, meeting one of the criteria above, that is exhibited for three (3) months cumulatively during a calendar year (i.e., any three months during the calendar year) and that typically is caused by non-permanent medical conditions such as otitis media or other ear problems.</p>	
<p>The Hearing Impairment, Including Deafness, as described above, prevents the child from receiving reasonable educational benefit from general education as evidenced by one or more of the following criteria: (check all that apply) ECEA 2.08(2)(b)</p>	
<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
<p>Delay in auditory skills and/or functional auditory performance including speech perception scores (in quiet or noise), which demonstrates the need for specialized instruction in auditory skill development or assistive technology use; and/or</p>	
<p>Receptive and/or expressive language (spoken or signed) delay including a delay in syntax, pragmatics, semantics, or if there is a significant discrepancy between the receptive and expressive language scores and/or function which adversely impacts communication and learning; and/or</p>	
<p>An impairment of speech articulation, voice and/or fluency; and/or</p>	
<p>Lack of adequate academic achievement and/or sufficient progress to meet age or state-approved grade-level standards in reading, writing, and/or math; and/or</p>	
<p>Inconsistent performance in social and learning environments compared to typically developing peers; and/or</p>	
<p>Inability to demonstrate self advocacy skills or utilize specialized technology/resources to access instruction.</p>	
<p><input type="checkbox"/> This box should be checked, in the event that a child who is Deaf-Blind does not meet the above requirements for Hearing Impairment, Including Deafness, but the combination of an existing hearing loss and the documented visual loss adversely affects the child's educational performance.</p>	
<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
<p>The child has a disability as defined in the State Rules for the Administration of the Exceptional Children's Educational Act and is eligible for special education.</p>	

Summer Birthdays in Colorado

If your child has a summer birthday you will need to contact your CHIP Coordinator to discuss current Extended Part C options. This decision must be made BEFORE your child exits Early Intervention. Extended Part C must be written into your final IFSP meeting. Unfortunately, if you exit Early Intervention prior to writing in the extension, they will no longer be eligible. Adding in

Extended Part C comes with additional timelines that must be met. Typically an annual IFSP will be completed early (before 3rd birthday), along with a preschool readiness evaluation. All services under Extended Part C must extend until the start of the school year.

Additional Summer Learning Opportunities

Additionally, there are many summer camps available in Colorado offering support for d/hh children from age 3 on. Be sure to stay up to date with the Colorado Hands & Voices and CSDB's Facebook pages for current events, camps and social learning opportunities.

Please reach out to your local Hands & Voices Parent Guide or contact your district for the most up to date information.

Colorado Hands & Voices Calendar of Statewide Events:

www.co-hv.org/statewide-events

Colorado Department of Education D/HH Calendar of events:

[-https://calendar.google.com/calendar/u/0/embed?src=sib3vpv1suuosdoikamus28qj8@group.calendar.google.com&ctz=America/Denver](https://calendar.google.com/calendar/u/0/embed?src=sib3vpv1suuosdoikamus28qj8@group.calendar.google.com&ctz=America/Denver)

Extended School Year (ESY)

Your child's team will collect data within the school year to determine eligibility for extended school year (ESY) services. Not all IEP-qualified students are eligible for extended school year services. Predictive Factors

[Extended School Year Services- What families need to know](#)-from the CDE

Transportation

Please work with your local school IEP team to find out more about the specifics in your area. If transportation is a hardship and would prevent your child from accessing preschool services identified in the IEP, please talk to your child's educational team and advocate to see if there are other options to consider.

Colorado follows federal IDEA rules and its own *Exceptional Children's Education Act*, which ensures preschoolers with disabilities have access to services, including transportation.

ECEA - [Colorado Transporting Students with Special Needs Guide](#)

The Communication Plan

Recognizing that children with hearing loss require special considerations in planning for their education. Included in this packet is the actual wording of the law in Colorado. On the following pages is an in-depth discussion of the Communication Plan that was created out of the law for use in Colorado schools. When used to its fullest potential, the Communication Plan generates a full discussion among the IEP team about how to match the school's environment with the child's educational and communication needs. For even more discussion of this topic, including specific action plans, see the Hands & Voices HQ website at www.handsandvoices.org.

*Please see the Deaf Bill of Rights on page 41 for more information.

Visit this link to see the part of the ECEA rules in the communication plan - <https://www.sos.state.co.us/CCR/GenerateRulePdf.do?ruleVersionId=61>

Below is the Colorado Department of Education Communication Plan for a student who is Deaf/Hard of Hearing or Deafblind, with explanations of wording.

To better understand the Communication Plan, read the highlighted sections that correspond with each section below.

COMMUNICATION PLAN FOR STUDENT WHO IS DEAF/HARD OF HEARING OR DEAFBLIND	
The IEP team has considered each area listed below, and has not denied instructional opportunity based on the amount of the child's/student's residual hearing, the ability of the parent(s) to communicate, or the child's/student's experience with other communication modes. To the extent appropriate, the input about this child's/student's communication and related needs as suggested from adults who are deaf/hard of hearing has been considered. 300.324(a)(2)(IV) 4.03(6)(A)	
1. Language and Communication	
<i>Section 1 should describe the languages both used by the child and understood by the child – this will look different for each child and can include both visual and verbal languages. Needs to be measurable and documented (eval report) identify based on data.</i>	
1. a. The child's/student's primary language is one or more of the following. <i>Check all that apply.</i>	
Receptive	Expressive
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> English
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> Native language (ASL, Spanish etc), specify _____
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> Combination of several languages
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> Minimal language skills; no formal primary language
<i>Describe:</i>	
<i>Action Plan, if any:</i>	

1. **b.** The child's/student's **primary communication mode** is one or more of the following. **Supports 300.116(e).**

Check all that apply and if more than one applies, explain.

Receptive:

- | | | |
|--|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Auditory | <input type="checkbox"/> American Sign Language | <input type="checkbox"/> Signing Exact English/Signed English |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Speechreading | <input type="checkbox"/> Cued Speech/Cued English | <input type="checkbox"/> Conceptual signs (Pidgin Signed English or Conceptually Accurate Signed English) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Fingerspelling | <input type="checkbox"/> Gestures | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Tactile/objects | <input type="checkbox"/> Picture symbols/pictures/photographs | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Home signs | | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Other, please explain _____ | | |

Expressive:

- | | | |
|---|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Spoken language | <input type="checkbox"/> American Sign Language | <input type="checkbox"/> Signing Exact English/Signed English |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Conceptual signs (Pidgin Signed English or Conceptually Accurate Signed English) | <input type="checkbox"/> Fingerspelling | <input type="checkbox"/> Gestures |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Tactile/objects | <input type="checkbox"/> Home signs | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Cued Speech/Cued English | <input type="checkbox"/> Pictures symbols/pictures/photographs | |
| | <input type="checkbox"/> Other, please explain _____ | |

Explanation for multiple modes of communication, if necessary:

Section **1.b** considers how your child communicates during all parts of the day. Consider time at home, daycare, with family and friends, it can look different throughout the day and with different communication partners and/or when your child is using or not using hearing devices, AAC devices, pictures etc.

Explanations for multiple modes of communication, if necessary should describe any differences with settings, people etc English word order/ASL

1. **c.** What supports are needed to increase the proficiency of parents and family members in communicating with the child/student?

Parent Counseling Training 300.34(8)(i) and (iii)

Issues considered:

Action Plan, if any:

In section **1.c**, think about what supports you can use at home for communication with your child. Some parents choose sign language classes, knowing the vocabulary used at school could support communication, communication with the teacher to know of events that happened during the day, words to the songs your child may be singing can be helpful etc. This is about communication, not just spoken or sign language.

2. Describe the child's/student's need for deaf/hard of hearing adult role models and peer groups in sufficient numbers of the child's/student's communication mode or language. Document who on the team will be responsible for arranging for adult role model connections and opportunities to interact with peers. **(Section 3. 22-20-108 CRS II) 300.116 Placement Determination**

Opportunities considered: ECEA proposed 4.03(6)(a)(iii)

Action Plan, if any:

Section **2** addresses the **NEED** for access to other peers and adults who are deaf/hard of hearing. This looks different for each school placement and district. This could be virtual or in person, field trips, pen pals, reading buddies, classmates etc. There are a variety of ways to meet this need. This can change over time. Language peers support language acquisition, same as their peers. Does the child have the ability to have direct communication with peers?

3. An explanation has been given of all educational options provided by the administrative unit and available for the child/student.

Placement determination 300.115 and 300.116

Placements explained:

Describe how the placement options impact the child's communication access and educational progress:

Section 3 Continuum of services available to the child, not always within the district. What will we continue to measure to ensure this child has access to FAPE. Action plan – what are we measuring, for how long, when will we revisit

4. Teachers, interpreters, and other specialists delivering the communication plan to the child/student must have demonstrated proficiency in, and be able to accommodate for, the child's/student's primary communication mode or language. **ECEA 3.04(1)(f)**

Considerations:

Action Plan, if any:

Section 4 This is a statement about how the professionals working with your child will be able to meet his/her communication needs throughout the day. This looks different based on the child and educational placement.

5. The communication-accessible academic instruction, school services, and extracurricular activities the child/student will receive have been identified. The team will consider the entire school day, daily transition times, and what the child/student needs for full communication access in all activities.

Considerations **300.324(a)(2)(iv) Communication plan, 300.107 Non-academic settings, 300.101 FAPE:**

Action Plan, if any:

Section 5 ensures that communication is accessible throughout the child's whole school day, consider times such as lunch time, the bus, playground etc. As with all sections of the Communication Plan, this will grow and change with your child as their settings changes. Also, consider emergencies and back up plans for equipment, substitutes (teachers and interpreters) etc.

Fast Facts



August/2004

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS Communication Plans for Deaf and Hard of Hearing Students

Do all students with hearing loss have to have a Communication Plan?

Yes – all students, 3-21 years or until high school graduation, must have Communication Plans as part of their IEPs. Students for whom hearing loss is a secondary disability or who have concomitant visual impairments are included.

How frequently must the Communication Plan be reviewed?

The Communication Plan must be reviewed annually at the IEP meeting and modified when necessary. The Communication Plan should be completed prior to the development of the IEP goals with input from all members of the IEP team including the parents.

How is the Communication Plan developed?

The Communication Plan is individualized for each student and results from thoughtful discussion about that student and his/her communication access, social and instructional needs. It is not a checklist. If a district or BOCES does not use the state IEP form, they must insure that all five required Communication Plan components are addressed on the form used to ensure compliance with ECEA 4.02(4)(k). Meaningful discussions of each of five Communication Plan components will result in any necessary "Action Plans" to address relative needs. Teachers must also insure that there is meaningful correlation between the Communication Plan, the student's IEP goals and how the student functions in his/her educational environment.

How do I know that I am filling the form out correctly?

- a. Ask yourself if each point has been sufficiently explored and if the action plan reflects those conversations.
- b. Include on the form who will be responsible for carrying out each part of the plan that requires action.
- c. Include initial or review dates on the form

What if the parents don't use the same mode of communication as their child?

The student cannot be denied instructional opportunities based on their parents' ability to communicate.

What if a student who uses a different mode of communication than the one emphasized in our program wants to transfer to our school?

- a. A student's experience with other communication modes cannot be the basis for denial of instructional opportunity.
- b. The amount of the student's residual hearing cannot be used as the basis for denial of any instructional opportunity.

When the original law passed in 1996, there was language which stated, "nothing in this subsection shall require a school district to expend additional resources or hire additional personnel to implement the provisions of this subsection" (ECEA 22-20-108 4.7, III (g)). Is this still true?

No. The US Office of Special Education Programs (OSEP) deemed this section to be inconsistent with FAPE (free appropriate public education) under IDEA. All services determined by the IEP team to be needed for the student must be provided for by the school.

Components of the Communication Plan: Discussion Points

1. What kind of discussions should we have about "The Child's Primary Mode(s) of Communication"?

- a. A clear identification of mode and consensus on how the student is communicating and whether his/her language development is appropriate should be addressed.
- b. Consideration should be given to the changing communication needs in different environments (e.g., various classes, "centers", cafeteria, gym, computer lab, home, community).

Fast Facts

- c. Consideration should be given to the different communication partners (e.g., teachers, other students, family) of this student.
 - d. The parents need for training to develop/improve skills in their child's primary communication mode should be considered.
- 2. What about "availability of deaf/hard of hearing peers and adult role models of the student's communication mode"?**
- a. Discuss the opportunities for direct communication that are available to this student. Does s/he have communication peers in the classroom? On the sports team? How will authentic peer relationships be supported and encouraged? How often is enough?
 - b. Consider participation in state sponsored regional activities for D/HH students as well as summer programs such as Aspen Camp School for the Deaf/Hard of Hearing.
 - c. Plan for adult role models of the student's communication mode to be included in his/her school experience and/or in meaningful ways involved in the child's life.
 - d. Discuss opportunities for hearing peers to improve communication skills with the student.
- 3. Must *all* educational options be presented and explained?**
- a. All educational options provided by the school district or administrative unit must be explained to the family. This includes neighborhood schools, center-based programs, and schools of choice.
 - b. An explanation of all educational programs *available* to the student must be provided. That would include residential deaf schools, charter schools, regional programs, and schools of choice.
 - c. Explaining all educational options does not require the IEP team to be experts in every program available in the state. Offer to loan the family the State Directory of D/HH Services so they can review *all* options if they're interested.
 - d. The placement decision is made by the IEP team, including parents, based on the child's IEP and communication needs.
- 4. Must teachers, interpreters, and other specialists delivering this Communication Plan have demonstrated proficiency in, and be able to accommodate for, the student's primary communication mode?**
- a. Special education providers must be fully qualified according to CDE licensing (teachers, SLPs, ed interpreters, Para educators, audiologists).
- b. The providers' skills should be linked to the child's individual communication needs based on their mode or language.
 - c. The general educators working with this student should be been trained to support the child's communication mode.
 - d. Identify who is evaluating the "demonstrated communication proficiency" of the service providers. Is the evaluator qualified to do so?
 - e. Any paraprofessional or teaching assistant assigned to the student should also be proficient in his/her mode of communication.
 - f. CDE/CSDB D/HH consulting services should be utilized for consultation, evaluation, inservice and/or staff mentoring.
- 5. What does communication accessibility for academic instruction, school services, and extracurricular activities that apply to this student look like?**
- a. Identify how access will be provided to school announcements, field trips, assemblies, etc..
 - b. Identify the assistive communication devices and technologies that are needed (flashing fire alarms, TTYs, acoustical adaptations) to provide access for the student.
 - c. Describe how the student will communicate with hearing peers on the playground, at the football game, during sports team practice, or on the bus.
 - d. Describe the plan for accessibility in group communication settings where multiple speakers are talking. Describe how this student's communication will be translated back to the class (if necessary).
 - e. Determine that films and media being shown in the student's classes are closed captioned. Identify the other accommodations that are needed.



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My Child is Deaf/Hard of Hearing Plus...

You are NOT alone! Research suggests that more than 40% of children who are d/hh have additional educational needs or disabilities. You may hear the terms 'Deaf/Hard of Hearing +' or 'Deaf/Hard of Hearing Plus' as you work through the child find and school process. Be assured that all of your child's unique learning needs can be addressed during the evaluation and IEP.

Colorado has identified 14 different disability categories that can qualify students for specialized education.

Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD)	Deaf - Blindness	Developmental Delay	Hearing Impairment, Including Deafness
Infant/Toddler with a Disability	Intellectual Disabilities	Multiple Disabilities	Orthopedic Impairment
Other Health Impaired (OHI)	Serious emotional Disability	Specific Learning Disability	Speech or Language Impairment
	Traumatic Brain Injury (TBI)	Visual Impairment, including Blindness	

For more information: <https://www.cde.state.co.us/cdesped/sd-main>

Children can qualify for one or more disability category. Some, including 'Hearing Impairment, Including Deafness' are very specific, others are more inclusive of a variety of needs. For example, 'Developmental Delay' is a category defined as: A child with a developmental delay shall be three through eight years of age and who is experiencing developmental delays in one or more of the following areas: physical, cognitive, communication, social or emotional, or adaptive, which prevents the child from receiving reasonable educational benefit from general education. You *must identify a primary disability and also identify all of the needs.* It is important to go through a check list for all categories they may qualify for.

Similar to the IFSP you are familiar with, **IEPs will have a list of 'Services.'** This portion of the IEP will list the specialized instruction your child will receive as well as the minutes each specialist will work directly or indirectly with your child. Services can include supports such as Speech and Language, Physical Therapy, Occupational Therapy etc. More information about 'Related Services' can be found here: <https://www.cde.state.co.us/cdesped/rs-main>

Know that some services your child may be receiving through Early Intervention may not qualify for in the school system. **IEPs are focused on your child accessing the academic setting including academics and communication and access to peers.** There may be areas your child needs to continue developing that are not impacting the access to the curriculum, in these cases parents can look into private therapies or support for in their community. Examples of this could include Nutrition, some motor supports, and services such as assistive technology.

Some questions we have been asked:

- My child uses an AAC device to communicate what types of support will she receive at school? Be sure to ask about the SWAAC program through the school system. This is similar to the 'Assistive Technology' support received in Early Intervention and will help support your child's communication using their AAC devices.
- My child needs a nurse when at school – Please talk to the school district about this policy. Schools DO have nurses on staff who will be knowledgeable about your child and will be a part of the educational team and who will be responsible for medical needs at school. Ask about school policies if you are your child's CNA at home, or if your child has a private nurse, policies tend to vary by district and needs.
- My child uses a G-Tube – this is important information to share with the team. This can be accommodated for at school. There will be a person identified and trained to support use of the G-tube for snack times.
- My child needs to take medicine during the school day. There will be a plan in place to support your child and the needs around medications. Be sure to have close contact with the school nurse and update the health care plan when there are changes.
- My child is not potty trained. This is never an issue for children who qualify for special education, there will be changing areas that will be used for your child and others as well. Not all classrooms have this support
- My child will not be able to tell me what happens during the school day. This is important for everyone. Be sure to talk to your child's teachers and specialists about increased communication – can they send pictures at the end of the day? Can there be a time to connect after the school day, a journal, or an email etc.
- My child gets sick very easily and often ends up in the hospital. Talk to your team about this, is there an option for joining virtually if there are illnesses going on, or if your child is out for an extended time? Is there a way to get materials

home so your child can participate in classroom activities? Does your child qualify for home bound supports based on medical need? Talk to your child's doctor and educational team about concerns and needs.

- This is scary to me, is this the best choice for my child? I have been the primary care giver for my child from day one, and this feels vulnerable and risky. It can be very scary to have your child cared for by others, your educational team will understand this and have supported many children and parents. Be sure to ask ALL of the questions you have, ask about being able to observe the classroom before your child attends school, ask about policies around parents in the classroom. Remember that preschool is not mandatory, and your decision about preschool can change.

Reminders:

- If your child is d/hh, please advocate for the 'Hearing Impairment , Including Deafness' identified as a need and to always be in the body of the IEP and impact of disability statement so your child has the benefits of the Communication Plan included in their IEP.
- You know your child best and the information you share is vital, be open and honest
- Your child will do things at home that they do not do at school, and the opposite is also true. Take videos to show skills or how your child responds to supports at home.
- You have the right to call a meeting at any time to talk about the IEP and how your child is being supported at school.
- Your child is unique and the IEP will be individualized to their needs, and these needs can change over time.
- You do not have to navigate this alone! Connect with your Hands and Voices representative or CHIP Coordinator for additional support and information.

A Look at Social Emotional Learning Importance

More than 90% of children who are Deaf or Hard of Hearing (DHH) are born to hearing parents who often lack experience with deafness or sign language. This can significantly affect communication and language development. Limited exposure to language means that DHH children may miss out on incidental learning, such as understanding interpersonal norms and social language. Language deprivation or restricted access to language can have detrimental effects on acquiring various skills and typical areas of social and emotional development. Social-Emotional Learning is a crucial skill and fundamental aspect of development for many students. When examining the social-emotional layer of a student who is deaf or hard of hearing (DHH), it is essential to understand how important these social interactions are. Young students are like sponges, absorbing everyday life skills. "Theory of Mind" refers to the ability to understand and recognize that other people have their own thoughts and feelings and to be able to infer what they might be. DHH children may struggle to develop theory of mind and the associated skills, especially if they have experienced language delays or deprivation. Providing our young students with the tools to develop appropriate social-emotional learning is a crucial priority.

So how can you help?

- Make sure your student is evaluated by a qualified professional with an emphasis on Social Emotional Learning or SEL.
- Talk to your educational team about how they support getting d/hh/peers connected. Look for a school/placement with other kids who are deaf or hard of hearing. Not only does this support acceptance but it also gives the student social support and shared experiences. This can also foster empowerment and boost self-esteem.
- Pay attention and look for confusion. Developing problem-solving skills can enhance various other positive abilities, such as conflict resolution, self-advocacy, and self-regulation.
- Practice makes perfect. Practicing skills in real-time within a structured environment, supervised by an adult, helps students develop a better understanding of social scenarios.
- Language. Continue to support your child's mode of communication. More is better even if it is not perfect. Always allow for full access to language.
- Look for events and social get togethers to join as a family.

Children Who Are Not Eligible for an IEP or IDEA/Part B

To qualify for Part B services, both a qualifying degree of hearing loss and a documented educational need for specialized services are required. If a child is not eligible for Part B preschool services (IEP), the transition plan must include options of other appropriate services for the child. This may include private therapies, enrolling in tuition-based preschools, community activities, and/or the creation of a 504 Plan (if applicable) to ensure the continuing need for access. 504 plans can include accommodations such as preferential seating, use of hearing assistive technology and a trained staff to support technology. Any child with a hearing loss (even if not eligible for an IEP) can benefit from a 504 plan when attending public school. All children leaving early intervention at age three must have a transition plan whether they are eligible for services under Part B of IDEA. See the section on eligibility for more specific information.

Advocates note: *If your child is deemed ineligible for IEP-special education services, it's crucial to remember that this doesn't mark the end of support for your child. Every child is unique, and many excel in the classroom with just the addition of a 504 Plan. While families may have mixed feelings about ineligibility, we want to reassure parents that sometimes a 504 Plan is the most suitable option for a child. If you decide that a 504 Plan is not a good fit for your child, they are still capable of being a successful student.*

504 Plans

A 504 Plan is part of an antidiscrimination law in the United States that provides resources to students with disabilities. According to the ADA.gov, the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) is a federal civil rights law that prohibits discrimination against people with disabilities in everyday activities. The ADA prohibits discrimination on the basis of disability just as other Civil rights laws prohibit discrimination on the basis of race, color, sex, national origin, age, and religion. The ADA guarantees that people with disabilities have the same opportunities as everyone else to enjoy employment opportunities, purchase goods and services, and participate in state and local government programs. This Act currently defines a person with a disability as:

any person who has been physical or mental impairment; has a history of impairment; or is believed to have a disability that substantially limits a major life activity such as caring for oneself, performing manual tasks, seeing, hearing, eating, sleeping, walking, standing, lifting, bending, speaking, breathing, learning, reading, concentrating, thinking, communicating and working.

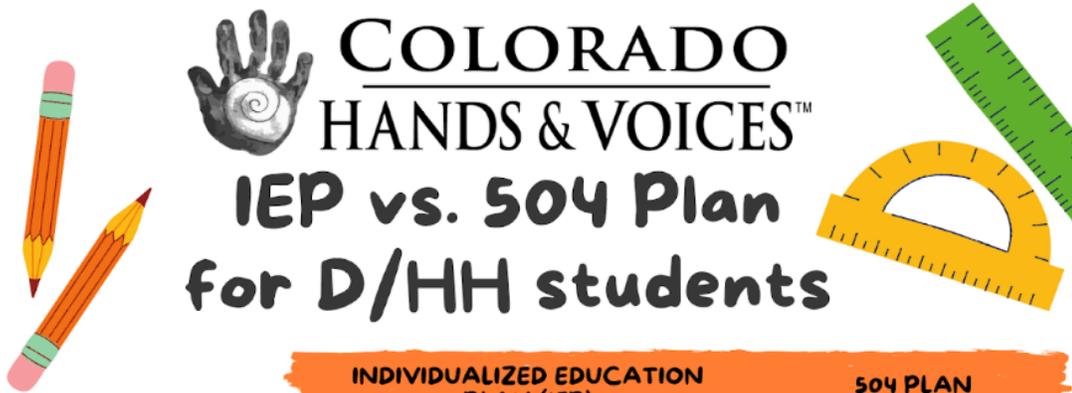
In addition to the broadened definition of major life activities, 504 eligibility determinations must be made without accounting for the effects of mitigation measures. These measures include hearing aids, cochlear implants and other personal hearing instruments, medications and other learned behavioral adaptations such as tutoring. So, what does that mean? When taking into consideration whether the student has a hearing impairment and qualifies for a 504 Plan, the team cannot say that the child is no longer impaired because the student wears a hearing aid, cochlear implant or other personal hearing instrument.

For a student entering Preschool from EI that did not qualify for an IEP, this is where a 504 plan would be implemented. A 504 Plan will provide accommodations to the student. Now, it is important to remember that these are accommodations and not special services or one on one instruction. Some examples of accommodations that would be appropriate for a D/HH student could be preferred seating up front to the teacher, allowing extra time to process information, FM/Roger system, flashing fire alarm or smoke detectors. *full list available below

Getting the 504 Plan moving

Each school has their own 504 Coordinator to help assist in putting together an appropriate plan for the student. Once the student has been enrolled and accepted to the school they choose, it will be up to the family to request a meeting for a 504 Plan. Typically, the first person to contact will be the principal of that school to get started. The 504 Coordinator will help facilitate the meeting along with the family, school audiologist, teacher of the deaf and primary teacher. Together the team will discuss what accommodations would be beneficial to the child during their day.

Let's take a deeper dive into some major differences between an
IEP and a 504 Plan



INDIVIDUALIZED EDUCATION PLAN (IEP) **504 PLAN**

WHAT IS IT?

A legally binding document detailing individualized services, etc.

A document identifying accommodations

WHO IS IT FOR?

Students with qualifying disabilities under IDEA

ANY student with a disability needing an accommodation to access the school day

WHAT DOES IT PROVIDE?

Specialized education & transition services for further education, employment, & independent living goals

Accommodations for general education. Think "access"... captioning, acoustics, notetakers, etc.

WHAT LAW MANDATES IT?

The Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA)

The Rehabilitation Act of 1973: section a civil rights law

WHEN IS IT UPDATED OR RENEWED?

Annually, to assess goals and progress made. Eligibility evaluation required every three years

Not required to be updated, however it's good to review it regularly, or at least every three years

WHICH PLAN IS BETTER FOR MY STUDENT?

Those who benefit from an individualized approach to achieve equal access and educational equity

Those who can participate in general education & need accommodations to do so

Accommodations

IEP/504 CHECKLIST

Accommodations & Modifications For Students Who Are Deaf & Hard Of Hearing

Name: _____ Date: _____

Note: Accommodations provide access to communication and instruction and are appropriate for 504 services; Modifications alter the content, the expectations, and the evaluation of academic performance and usually require an IEP.

Amplification Accommodations

- Personal hearing instrument (hearing aid, cochlear implant, Baha, tactile device)
- Personal FM (hearing aid + FM or FM only)
- Hearing assistance technology (without personal hearing instrument)
- Wide area sound distribution system

Assistive Devices Accommodations

- Videophone or Text Phone
- Alerting devices
- Other _____

Communication Accommodations

- Priority seating arrangement: _____
- Obtain student's attention prior to speaking
- Reduce auditory distractions (background noise)
- Give student time/assistance to locate speaker in small or large group setting
- Reduce visual distractions
- Enhance speechreading conditions (avoid hands in front of face, mustaches well-trimmed, no gum chewing)
- Present information in simple, structured, sequential manner
- Clearly enunciate speech
- Extra time for processing information
- Repeat or rephrase information when necessary
- Frequent checks for understanding
- Speech to text software (speech recognition)
- Interpreting (ASL, signed English, cued speech, oral)

Instructional Accommodations & Modifications

- Visual supplements (overheads, charts, vocabulary lists, lecture outlines)
- Interactive whiteboard (e.g., Smart Board, Mimio)
- Classroom captioning (CART, CPrint, TypeWell)
- Captioning and/or scripts for television, videos, movies
- Buddy system for notes, extra explanations/directions
- Check for understanding of information
- Down time/break from listening/watching
- Extra time to complete assignments
- Step-by-step directions
- Interpreting (ASL, signed English, cued speech, oral)
- Speech to text software (speech recognition)
- Tutoring
- Notetaker
- Direct instruction (indicate classes): _____

Physical Environment Accommodations

- Noise/reverberation reduction (carpet & other sound absorption materials) reANSI.s12.60
- Special lighting
- Room design modifications: _____
- Flashing fire alarms/smoke detectors

Curricular Modifications

- Modified reading assignments (shorten length, adapt phonics-based instruction)
- Modified written assignments (shorten length, adjust evaluation criteria)
- Extra practice
- Pre-teach, teach, post-teach vocabulary, concepts
- Strategies to adapt oral/aural curriculum/instruction to accommodate reduced auditory access
- Supplemental materials to reinforce concepts of curriculum
- Alternative curriculum

Evaluation Accommodations & Modifications

- Reduce quantity of tests
- Alternate tests
- Reading assistance with tests for clarification of directions, language of test questions (non-reading items)
- Extra time
- Special setting
- Other _____

Other Needs/Considerations

- Expanded core curriculum instruction (speech, language, pragmatic language/communication, audition and listening, speechreading, sign language, self-advocacy, transition planning, deaf studies)
- Counseling
- Family supports and training
- Sign language instruction for family members
- Deaf/Hard of Hearing peers
- Deaf/Hard of Hearing role models
- Recreational/Social opportunities
- Transition Services:
 - ___ Vocational Rehabilitation services
 - ___ Linkages to higher education, job training
 - ___ Self-advocacy & personal responsibility training
 - ___ Financial assistance
- Other _____

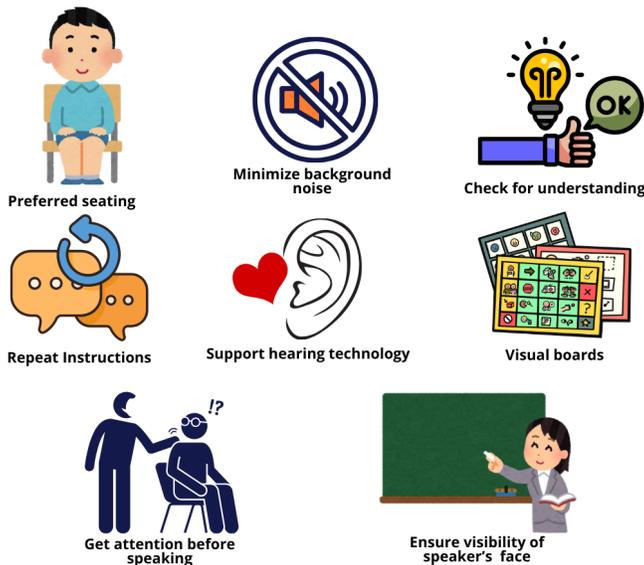
From: C.D. Johnson & J. Seaton, Educational Audiology Handbook, 2nd Edition (2011), Cengage-Delmar Learning

The list of accommodations can be found at www.co-hv.org/co-astra

Below is a visual of classroom accommodations that can be hung in the classroom. It can serve as a reminder to teachers on how they can help support students with hearing loss in the classroom.

Classroom accommodations

for students who are d/hh



Accommodation Descriptions

1. Preferred Seating: Allow students to sit in the front row or on a preferred side—especially important for those with unilateral hearing differences—to ensure full access to teacher instruction.
2. Minimize Background Noise: Create a quiet learning environment by reducing distractions such as music, side conversations, fans, hallway noise, loud toys, or outdoor play near the classroom.
3. Check for Understanding: After giving instructions, teachers should follow up with the student to confirm comprehension with more than “Did you hear me?”, or “Do you understand?”. A quick check-in can make a big difference.
4. Repeat Instructions: Repeating directions helps reinforce understanding and ensures the student clearly grasps the task or assignment.
5. Support Hearing Technology: Encourage and accommodate the use of assistive devices such as:
 - Cochlear implants
 - Hearing aids
 - BAHAs systems
 - Roger Mic/FM systems
 - CART (Communication Access Realtime Translation)
 - Smart Boards
 - Speech-to-text tools
 - Captioning software
 - Mimio Board (interactive whiteboard)
6. Use Visual Supports: Incorporate visual aids to reinforce concepts—e.g., a stop sign for “stop” or a car image for “car.” Smart Boards are excellent for integrating visuals into instruction.
7. Gain Attention Before Speaking: Gently tap the student’s shoulder or use a visual cue to ensure they’re facing you before speaking. This signals that communication is about to begin.
8. Ensure Visibility of the Speaker’s Face: Make sure students can clearly see the teacher’s face during instruction. Avoid speaking while facing the whiteboard. Be mindful that facial hair or obstructed views can hinder lip-reading and visual cues. This also helps with making sure the speaker’s voice is directed in the direction of all students, and not towards the blackboard.

Communication

LANGUAGE	Language refers to a system of communication using words and grammar, it is the 'WHAT' of communication
ASL-American Sign Language	American Sign Language is recognized as a true language in its own right. ASL is a visual language primarily used by the Deaf and Hard of Hearing communities in the United States and Canada. It is a complete language with its own unique grammar, syntax, and vocabulary, distinct from English. ASL uses hand shapes, movements, facial expressions, and body language to convey meaning. https://www.nad.org/
Spoken Language	Spoken language is language communicated through sound, as opposed to written language or other forms of communication like sign language. It involves the use of speech, including both words and related utterances that convey meaning. Spoken language relies on the vocal tract and auditory senses for transmission and reception of information.
MODALITY	Modality refers to the medium or channel through which language is conveyed, it is the 'HOW' of communication
Cued Language	Designed to enhance lipreading ability, cued speech combines the natural mouth movements of speech with eight hand shapes (cues) that represent different sounds of speech. https://cuedspeech.org/
CASE – Conceptually Accurate Signed English PSE – Pidgeon Signed English *often used synonymously	SimCom, CASE and PSE are Manually Coded English (MCE) systems that use signs to represent English words. Often ASL signs are used in an English word order allowing the communicator to speak and sign at the same time. They connect American Sign Language with Manually Coded English (MCE) by incorporating signs and syntax employed by both forms. The main goal is to provide auditory and visual https://signstation.org/what-is-pse-sign-language/ English based sign, several different identified
Listening and Spoken Language – LSL AVT-Auditory-Verbal Therapy	This approach to language development teaches infants and young children with hearing loss to listen and talk with the support of hearing technology such as hearing aids, assistive listening devices (such as an FM system) or cochlear implants. Methods: Listening and Spoken Language (LSL) and Auditory-Verbal, https://www.hearingfirst.org/what-to-do/strategies-techniques *interchangeable, one with families/professionals tech/practical

<p>*often used synonymously</p>	
<p>SEE – Signing Exact English</p>	<p>Signing Exact English (SEE) is a sign system that matches signs with the English language. It is one of the first manual English systems to be published (1972). Each English word and tense has a separate sign for representing the actual spoken and written word in English.</p>
<p>Bilingual: ASL/English is most common in Colorado.</p>	<p>Uses a natural sign language (like ASL) alongside the spoken and written language (e.g., English). It can support the acquisition, learning, and use of ASL and English to meet the needs of diverse learners who are deaf and hard of hearing.</p> <p>https://gallaudet.edu/asl-english-bilingualism/</p>
<p>SimCom - Simultaneous Communication</p> <p>Bimodal</p>	<p>Uses both sign language and spoken language, either simultaneously or in tandem, for communication.</p> <p>"Bimodal" means being expressed or received through two different modes. In terms of language use some examples of modes are: speaking, , signing, watching, listening, reading, writing, tactile etc. "Simultaneous" means happening at the same time. "Simultaneous bimodal bilingual communication" means using (or attempting to use) two different languages in two different modes at the same time. "SIMCOM" is shortened way of referring to "simultaneous bimodal bilingual communication."</p> <p>https://www.clerccenter.gallaudet.edu/national-resources/images/clerc/articles/Odyssey_SPR_2012_NussbaumScottSimms.pdf</p>
<p>Total Communication</p>	<p>Total Communication (TC) is the philosophy of educating children with hearing loss that incorporates all means of communication; formal signs, natural gestures, fingerspelling, body language, listening, lipreading and speech. The goal is to optimize language development in whatever way is most effective for the individual child. Total Communication is truly a <i>philosophy</i> rather than a <i>methodology</i>. As a result, the implementation of the TC philosophy with one child may look entirely different than its implementation with another child.</p> <p>https://www.handsandvoices.org/comcon/articles/totalcom.htm</p> <p>** Often used synonymously with SimCom.</p>
<p>AAC – Augmentative or Alternative communication</p>	<p>Devices and strategies that help individuals communicate when they have limited or no ability to speak or sign. Augmentative and Alternative Communication (AAC) refers to methods and tools that help children communicate by supporting or substituting speech, using a variety of techniques and technology. These can be simple or very complex depending on the communicator's unique needs.</p> <p>https://www.asha.org/public/speech/disorders/aac/?srsltid=AfmBOopUuyn4h4LLCmwOSPC8WDi8tYf8oJAD1qi2UaU173T2wamYWBDq</p>
<p>A COMBINATION of multiple of the above</p>	<p>Many families, individuals and educational or social settings will choose to use a variety of communication modes depending on the setting, communication partner, and objective of the communication. Be sure to ask about the languages being used and the communication modes being used and supported in your child's educational setting and be aware of the differences to best be able to advocate for your child's communication needs in all settings.</p> <p>Benefit of 'AND' instead of 'OR' article from ASHA</p> <p>https://pubs.asha.org/doi/10.1044/2021_PERSP-20-00267</p>

Classroom Supports and Information

Regardless of if your child qualified for an IEP, 504, or you are choosing a private school option, there are some things you can look for and be aware of in all classroom settings that will help support your child. You may be wondering “What do I look for? How do I know if this program is potentially a good match for my child?” Two different guides have been included in this packet. These lists are not designed to be comprehensive but rather to serve as guides when you are gathering information about classrooms. Not all of the areas may apply to all programs and not all of the listed areas may be important for your child. These are great tools to hold onto, and review annually as are not specific to preschool only. Discussing these areas with your CHIP Facilitator and CHIP Coordinator and school team is encouraged as well. Many teachers have never had a student who is d/hh in their classroom, typically they are happy to accommodate simple changes in the classroom to support your child.

As parents, and member of the educational team, you play a crucial role in helping to identify the most suitable classroom and support for your child. If your child is seeing private therapists or if your child has other providers, you should also discuss placement issues with those supporting your family (i.e. PT, OT, and vision.) Most school districts welcome visits from parents after the child has qualified for an IEP or 504. If this is not available, the checklists can be used as guidelines when requesting information on the potential programs from the district and used for structured observation after your child is enrolled.

**If you would like to see a more detailed list of things you can look for in classrooms, please see the attachment to this document called 'Preschool/Kindergarten Placement Checklist' or view it on this link:

https://www.handsandvoices.org/pdf/parent_checklist.pdf

CDE Standards for Placement of Preschoolers with IEPs

Classroom support for children who are DHH	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● A program that is truly individualized ● Ensure appropriate support for amplification and assistive technology is available ● A Language-rich environment ● A program that encourages parental involvement ● Opportunities for interaction with peers 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Well-trained, well-supported educational staff ● A range of support services for students and families ● Curriculum that is developmentally appropriate ● Appropriate physical environment that promotes learning
<p style="text-align: center;"><u>Physical Environment:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Lighting and windows - reduce silhouettes ● Carpeting or sound absorption ● Noise sources - heat/air, fish tanks etc ● Adjacent noise - other classrooms, hallways <p style="text-align: center;"><u>Learning Environment:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Are there visual schedules? ● Is there a behavior policy? ● Are peers visually accessible during circle time and learning times? ● Is the teacher's face and mouth easy to see? ● Does the teacher face the class when speaking? 	<p style="text-align: center;"><u>Language Supports:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Are peers' questions and responses repeated? ● Are there appropriate language model peers? ● Is visual communication supported as outlined in IEP? ● Do teachers and staff utilize wait time? ● Are social interactions supported and encouraged? ● Pre-teaching vocabulary and concepts ● Informing parents/guardians of topical vocabulary ● Development of receptive and expressive language skills focused on primary communication mode

<u>Auditory Support</u>	<u>Visual Language Support</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Is there a daily listening check system and who will be doing it? ● Is use of assistive listening tech used consistently and appropriately? ● Daily structured auditory training specific to your child's needs. ● Trained adult who is available to troubleshoot your child's technology? ● Are auditory skills being addressed in the classroom? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Are adult signers proficient? ● Is visual language used throughout the day? ● Are there peers using the same visual communication language or modality? ● Are there sign language peers and adults who sign at a higher level than your child? ● Are there d/hh peers and adults available in the classroom or school or community?

'School Placement' Options

Colorado offers various types of schools and programs to support students who are deaf/hard of hearing. The graph below aims to inform parents and caregivers about these options. Also see the Continuum of Educational Options Visual below. Remember there is no "one size fits all". The key is meeting the individual needs of your child. It is important to know because of new staff, etc

Neighborhood school with 504 Support	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -504 Plans will ensure appropriate accommodations to access the classroom and curriculum are identified -Does not include specialized support from a TOD -May include support from the district Audiologist to guide technology needs. -Will have identified staff to ensure the 504 Plan is being followed.
Mainstream Classroom with Itinerant Support from Specialists	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Communication modalities can vary by program from sign language, AAC devices, listening & spoken language, cued language etc -Students receive itinerant support from a TOD coming into their neighborhood school. -'Itinerant support' means the TOD and other specialists will come into the classroom and/or pull out to offer direct support to the child for a set amount of time during the week per the IEP. Typically the specialists are not 'housed' at the school all day. -The TOD will consult with the classroom teacher and the staff to ensure accommodations are being provided -The TOD will provide direct service to support IEP goals. -Consulting on areas of evaluation to ensure all needs are being addressed.

<p>'Cluster' Programs Magnet Program</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Newer terminology being used in Colorado -This is often used when districts offer classrooms where there are multiple students who are d/hh of the same age 'clustered' in the same classroom allowing for d/hh peer models and natural interactions. -These classrooms often have increased support from a teacher of the deaf. -Sometimes include interpreters -General education classroom. -Follow state guidelines related to numbers of students on IEPs and not in the room, meaning there will be a mix of students who are d/hh and peers with 'typical' hearing. -Often the main teacher in the classroom is an Early Childhood Special Educator, the TOD may Co-teach, or support.
<p>D/HH Center Based Programs</p> <p>**At the time of this publication, there are not any 'Oral' only center based programs for students who are d/hh in Colorado, however these may be available in other states .</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Deaf and Hard of Hearing center based programs support students with hearing differences in a separate classroom within a public school. -Often offer Simultaneous Communication as a common communication modality, may also use ASL during parts of the day. -These classrooms will follow district-approved curriculum and state standards. -A TOD will be the main teacher in this classroom -Heavy emphasis on language acquisition
<p>Charter Schools for the Deaf – only kids with IEPs, no 504s</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Rocky Mountain Deaf School is Colorado's Chapter School -Separate school, students MUST have an IEP -Classes are taught by fluent ASL users, in ASL -Must meet the criteria to choice in -Immersed in Deaf culture -ASL peers and staff available throughout the day -Traditional school hours offered Monday-Friday -Direct communication with peers and staff, classes are not interpreted -RMDS is a 'school of choice,' meaning students from across the state can opt in to going, however supports such as transportation may or may not be available. -Some school districts will offer RMDS as an option that will include transportation, this is an administrative decision that varies district to district. -Can support spoken language goals as well -Your local School District

<p>State School for the Deaf</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Colorado School for the Deaf and the Blind (CSDB) is in Colorado Springs. -Separate school, students MUST have an IEP -Preschool education is different than k-12 -Not all states have State Schools for the Deaf. -Classes are taught by fluent ASL users in ASL. - Immersed in Deaf culture - ASL peers and staff available throughout the day -Direct communication with peers and staff, classes are not interpreted -CSDB offers residential options for children at a specific age. Including 24 hour support from ASL staff. Transportation home is provided on weekends and holidays. -CSDB supports students who are deaf-Blind as well -Offers Outreach support to districts around the state -Students must meet the criteria to choice in to CSDB -Can support spoken language goals as well - If you are interested in this option, consult with your IEP team.
<p>Public Charter Schools (not specific to D/HH)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Each district runs Charter schools differently, each may have specific eligibility criteria for attendance, and each student would need to meet that criteria. -Charter schools have specific curriculum and philosophy that may not align with the district. -If on an IEP, Itinerant Support may be available -Talk to your child's IEP team and individual charter schools to determine if it is an appropriate placement. -May or may not have experience supporting students who have hearing differences. -If you choose a charter school, transportation is no longer available, because it is a parent choice.
<p>All public districts/programs should be able to support...move or take out?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Visual language and spoken language support as identified per the IEP, not at all schools -Classroom accommodations that support learning. -Educational Audiologist support for technology needs and ongoing monitoring of hearing difference and access to general ed. -Support and have a plan for DHH students with additional disabilities. -Students with varying degrees of hearing loss -Hearing technology being used -visual and spoken language goals can be supported

<p>Private School Options</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -IEPs are not in place when a parent <u>chooses</u> a private school setting. If a school district places a child in a private setting, agreed upon specialized supports may be available. -Parents often look for supports such as speech therapy privately in their community through private pay or insurance. -Parents are encouraged to communicate regularly with staff to ask about what accommodations can be provided to support learning. -Communicate directly with the school's administration and local school district's special education coordinator to see what special education supports may be available to support your child's unique needs. -Sometimes private schools may not have had a student who is DHH and parents will be the main educators for the staff.
<p>Home School Options</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Parent led home schools are very similar to private school options, please see above for more details. -Parents will be the point of contact, providers and advocates for supports and education of others. -Connecting with other parents who are home schooling their children who are d/hh is another opportunity to communicate with peers. <p>** Some say 'Home School' when referring to school district programs offering 'Virtual Learning' from home. These school led options will support your child's IEP or 504 plans if they are through a public school system. connecting directly with the school district's director of special education for details. Services will be virtual.</p> <p>** Home Bound School students, districts need to provide the supports in the home.</p>

Colorado Universal Preschool Program



During the 2022 Legislative Session, HB22-1295 was passed to establish the Colorado Universal Preschool Program, providing voluntary, high-quality preschool education to all Colorado children in their pre-kindergarten year. The Colorado Department of Early Childhood (CDEC) is responsible for administering this program, offering families a variety of preschool options, including licensed community-based programs, school-based programs, and licensed home providers. Research has shown that high-quality preschool education yields positive short-term and long-term benefits for both children and families.

If your child is eligible for an IEP, the team will make an individualized decision regarding how many hours they deem appropriate for the student. This may vary between a half-day or a full-day program. Should your student be deemed ineligible for an IEP and you opt to proceed with a 504 plan, it will be your responsibility to determine whether a half-day or full-day schedule is most suitable for your family.

“We are aware and acknowledge that a student’s IEP will determine the appropriate number of hours the student needs in order to meet the special education needs of the child. Although a child may be eligible for a full day (30 hours) of UPK, that may not mirror the requirements of the IEP, and in that case, the IEP will be the determining factor” - UPK

What UPK looks like outside of an IEP eligibility?

All Colorado children must register with UPK (Universal Pre-K) the year before kindergarten. Children aged 4 entering preschool will get 15 hours of free half-day schooling per week, either in the morning or afternoon, depending on the school and district. Full-day programs may incur additional fees for the extra hours. Below is the eligibility list from the CO UPK website ([Universal Preschool Colorado | Colorado Department of Early Childhood](#)).

Eligibility and Qualifying Factors for Additional Hours

Who is eligible for universal preschool?

Children in Colorado can register for up to 15 hours per week of free, high-quality preschool in their year before kindergarten through Colorado’s Universal Preschool Program, also known as Universal Pre-K (UPK).

- Families may qualify for more free hours based on a number of qualifying factors, per available funding.
- Depending on the provider, families have the option of paying for additional hours if desired.
- This school year, school districts will resume primary registration for 3-year-olds through their targeted 3-year-old program. If your child is more than one year away from being eligible for kindergarten, please reach out to your school district for potential preschool services.
- Special Education Administrative Units (AUs) and school districts will place preschool aged children eligible for special education according to their Individualized Education Program (IEP) throughout the school year.

Who is eligible for additional hours?

Depending upon available funding, additional hours may be available for children who are “low-income” (defined as household income at or below 270% (yes, you read that right) of the federal poverty guidelines) and have a “qualifying factor” listed below.

These qualifying factors include:

- The child who is DHH is identified as homeless and/or unhoused.
- The child who is DHH is a multilingual, meaning a child who is learning two or more languages at the same time, or a child who is learning a second language while continuing to develop their first language.
- The child who is DHH is eligible for special education with an Individualized Education Program (IEP).
- The child who is DHH is “in poverty,” defined as household income less than 100% of the federal poverty guidelines.
- The child who is DHH is currently in the custody of a state supervised and county administered foster care home or in non-certified kinship care, meaning a child is being cared for by a relative or kin pursuant to [19-1-103\(102\)](#), C.R.S., who has a significant relationship with the child in circumstances when there is a safety concern by a county department of human or social services and where the relative or kin has not met the foster care certification requirements for a kinship foster care home or has chosen not to pursue that certification process.

Information is always changing, so we recommend contacting a Hands & Voices ASTra Guide for more details. Stay updated by visiting the [Universal Preschool Colorado | Colorado Department of Early Childhood](#) for changes to Colorado UPK.

School Placement Checklist

Preschool/Kindergarten Placement Checklist for Children who are Deaf and Hard of Hearing

This checklist is intended to assist parents when considering preschool or kindergarten placement options for their deaf or hard of hearing child. The information should be obtained through observation and discussion with the current early intervention provider and the prospective teacher(s) and IEP team. Placement decisions should consider the child's communication, pre-academic, and social needs in the context of the proposed learning environment.

Teacher Interview

Name of School: _____ Date of Observation: _____

Individual Interviewed: _____

Title: ___ Deaf Education Teacher check type: classroom itinerant consultative
 ___ Preschool or Kindergarten Teacher ___ Special Education Teacher ___ Other

If not a deaf education teacher/specialist, describe previous experience with children who are deaf or hard of hearing: _____

Days program offered: _____ Hours per day: _____

Child's communication mode(s): _____ Mode(s) observed in classroom: _____

Total number of children in classroom: _____ Number of children with hearing loss: _____

Age span of children: ___ to ___ Child: adult ratio: ___

Average speaking/signing distance between teacher and child: ___ft

Number of children who are typical language models: _____

Amplification used or available: ___ Personal FM ___ Classroom FM/Infrared Other _____

<u>Area</u>	<u>Available?</u>		<u>Has had training with D/HH?</u>		<u># of hours in classroom/week</u>
Speech-language therapy	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No	_____
Educational audiology	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No	_____
Occupational therapy/physical therapy	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No	_____
Psychology	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No	_____
Counseling by psychologist or social worker	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No	_____
Other support services available:	___ Deaf/Hard of Hearing Role Models				
___ Parent counseling and training	___ Parent Support Groups/Activities				
___ Transportation	___ After school programs				

Comments _____

Classroom Observation

I. Classroom- Physical Environment	YES	NO
1. Is the room size conducive to learning? (A large room/high ceiling can distort sound; a small room may be noisier.)	___	___
2. Is the room adequately lit? (Lighting and shadows may affect speechreading and signing abilities.)	___	___
3. Is the ambient noise level for the classroom within recommended standards (noise ≤ 35 dbA and reverberation ≤ 6 msec, ANSI S12.60.2002)?	___	___
4. Is the room treated to reduce noise (carpet on floor, acoustical ceiling tiles, window coverings, cork or other wall coverings)?	___	___
5. Are noise sources in the classroom minimized (e.g., fish tanks, ventilation/heater fans, computers)?	___	___
6. Does noise from adjacent spaces (hallways, outside the building) spill over into classroom?	___	___
Comments _____		

II. General Learning Environment	YES	NO
7. Does teacher(s)/adult(s) use a variety of techniques to elicit positive behavior from children?	___	___
8. Are there a variety of centers (fine motor, art, manipulatives, science, music, dramatic play, sensory, literacy)?	___	___
9. Is there a schedule identifying daily routines?	___	___
10. Is there a behavior management system that provides clear structure for the class and consistent rules?	___	___
11. Does the curriculum standards-based including a variety of themes, topics, and children's literature?	___	___
12. Does the teacher use lesson plans to guide daily activities?	___	___
13. Are activities modified to meet a variety of children's needs?	___	___
Comments _____		

III. Instructional Style	YES	NO
14. Classroom Discourse and Language		
a. Are the teacher(s) and other adults good language models for the children?	___	___
b. Is language consistently accessible to the child? (If sign is used, do all adults in the classroom consistently sign, including their communications with other adults?)	___	___
c. Are peer responses repeated?	___	___
d. Is vocabulary and language expanded by an adult?	___	___
15. Teacher's Speaking Skills		

©PS/K Placement Checklist, C DeConde Johnson, D Beams, A Stredler-Brown, 2003, 2005.
 Downloaded from: www.handsandvoices.org

- | | | |
|--|-------------------|-------|
| a. Is enunciation clear? | _____ | _____ |
| b. Is rate appropriate? | _____ | _____ |
| c. Is loudness appropriate? | _____ | _____ |
| d. Is facial expression used to clarify the message? | _____ | _____ |
| e. Are gestures used appropriately? | _____ | _____ |
| f. Are teacher's (or other speaker's) lips available for speechreading? | _____ | _____ |
| g. Is teacher's style animated? | _____ | _____ |
| h. Is a buddy system available to provide additional assistance or clarification? | _____ | _____ |
| 16. Use of Visual Information | | |
| a. Are props or other visual materials used for stories and activities? | _____ | _____ |
| b. Are appropriate attention-getting strategies utilized? | _____ | _____ |
| c. Are fingerplays, action songs, and dramatic play used in circle time, story time, centers, etc. | _____ | _____ |
| 17. Small Group/Circle Time | | |
| a. Are all children encouraged to share and participate? | _____ | _____ |
| b. Does the teacher face children when speaking? | _____ | _____ |
| c. Do the children face one another when speaking? | _____ | _____ |
| d. Does the teacher lead group activities in an organized, but child-friendly manner? | _____ | _____ |
| e. Is appropriate wait time utilized to encourage children to think and participate? | _____ | _____ |
| f. Are children seated within the teacher's "arc of arms"? | _____ | _____ |
| g. Does teacher obtain eye contact prior to and while speaking? | _____ | _____ |
| h. Is the FM microphone passed around to all speakers? | _____ | _____ |
| 18. Use of Sign | ___Not Applicable | |
| a. Is sign consistently used by all adults in the class? | _____ | _____ |
| b. Is sign consistently used by all children in the class? | _____ | _____ |
| c. Does the type of sign used in the classroom match the signs used by this child? | _____ | _____ |
| d. Is fingerspelling used? | _____ | _____ |
| e. Are gestures used appropriately? | _____ | _____ |
| f. Are there opportunities for parents and peers to learn to sign? | _____ | _____ |
| 19. Opportunities for Hands-on Experience | | |
| a. Are a variety of materials available? | _____ | _____ |
| Check those used: _books _visual props _audio tapes _video tapes | | |
| _objects for dramatic play _manipulatives | | |
| b. Are stories experienced in a variety of ways? | _____ | _____ |
| c. Are there field trips? | _____ | _____ |
| d. Are cooking experiences available? | _____ | _____ |
| e. Are art and sensory activities conducted? | _____ | _____ |
| 20. Amplification/Equipment | ___Not Applicable | |
| a. Are personal amplification (hearing aids/cochlear implant) and assistive devices (FM, infrared) checked at school each day? | _____ | _____ |
| b. Is amplification used consistently in all learning environments? | _____ | _____ |

Comments _____

Reflection

IV. Individual Child Considerations	YES	NO
21. Language Considerations/Abilities Think about how your child communicates thoughts, ideas, and needs. Think about how your child communicates and interacts with other children. Will your child's communication needs be nurtured in this classroom environment? Does the child have sufficient language abilities to benefit from instruction in the classroom? Will this child develop English language competency in this environment?	___	___
22. Social Interactions Think about how your child plays alone and in groups. Think about how your child interacts with other children. Will your child's social needs be nurtured in this classroom environment? Will this child be encouraged to develop self-advocacy skills?	___	___
23. Auditory Skills Does your child attend well? Is your child able to listen in noise? Think about what your child does when he/she cannot hear? Does your child take responsibility for his/her hearing aids? Will your child's auditory needs be supported in this classroom environment? In the lunchroom and other school environments? Is the staff qualified and able to support the child's auditory needs?	___	___
Comments _____ _____ _____ _____		

V. School Culture	YES	NO
24. Is there evidence that the school administration supports students with disabilities?	___	___
25. Is the school/district administrator knowledgeable about hearing loss?	___	___
26. Is the school committed to making the necessary accommodations for children with hearing loss?	___	___
27. Is the teacher open to consultation with other professionals or specialists?	___	___
28. Does the teacher provide opportunities for individualized attention?	___	___
29. Is the teacher welcoming of children with special needs?	___	___
30. Is the teacher willing to use amplification technology (hearing aids, FMs, cochlear implants)?	___	___
Comments _____ _____		

The Transition Portfolio

As your child completes services through the Colorado Home Inclusion Program (CHIP) or your local Early Intervention Program, and begins a new chapter in their educational journey, it's important to begin planning for that transition. For young children who are deaf or hard of hearing, change can bring a mix of emotions—excitement, curiosity, and sometimes uncertainty—for families, teachers, and the child.

Children with hearing differences often have unique needs in their school programs, including:

- Complex communication support (both expressive and receptive)
- Hearing technology and equipment
- Medical or health considerations
- Key information needed by teachers and support staff to ensure a meaningful preschool experience (Davenport & Weir, 2022; Yoshinaga-Itano et al., 2020)

Transitions are more successful when the receiving team has clear, individualized information that's easy to understand and apply. While this doesn't replace official school or medical records, it focuses on practical, day-to-day insights that are vital to your child's learning and development.

The Transition Portfolio is a tool created to help share important details about your child as they move into preschool. As the parent or caregiver, you are the best source of this information. Your CHIP Coordinator and CHIP Facilitator can work with you to determine what to include. This portfolio is meant to be flexible and personalized—examples and guiding questions are provided, but not every section will apply to every child. There's also space for you to create custom forms specific to your child's needs.

Our hope is that this portfolio will be a helpful, positive resource for your family and your child's new school team as they prepare to welcome and support your child.



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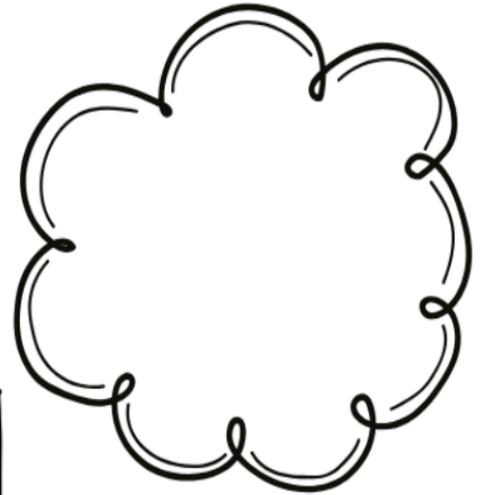
hello
MY NAME IS

ADD PICTURE HERE

MY COMMUNICATION, MY WAY:



MY FAVORITE THINGS
ARE:



WHEN I GROW UP:

[Empty rectangular box for drawing or writing]

HELPFUL
TIPS:

[Three horizontal lines for writing tips]



WHAT MAKES ME SHINE:



A more detailed portfolio, below, was adapted from the "Communication Competency Model" developed by the Massachusetts Match Maker Project.



IMPORTANT PEOPLE AND PETS

Here is a list of important family, friends and pets in my life and activities I enjoy doing with them

This is my family
(put family pictures here)

Family names and titles

_____ weekly, as needed, other

_____ or e-mail _____ weekly, as needed, other



COMMUNICATION METHODS

Communication is made up of two parts: receptive and expressive. Like all people your child uses a variety of ways to communicate. The communication section of the portfolio can introduce new teachers and support personnel to your child's communication system. You may want to check several items under each section or add your own ideas.

You can get my attention best by:

_____ calling my name

_____ touching me

_____ getting my eye contact and signing my name

_____ other _____

I understand you best when:

_____ I can see you face

_____ You use sign language

_____ You speak as you use sign

_____ I am close to you

_____ You show me a picture or act out what want

_____ You have me watch another child first

You communicate using _____ number of words in each sentence.

This is how my child will let you know how he/she is feeling

Tired _____

Sick _____

Angry _____

Frustrated _____

Hungry _____

Need for toileting _____

Here are some words that are difficult for people outside my family to understand

Word _____ how I say it _____

Here are some words that I have a home sign for

Word _____ How I sign it _____

Word _____ How I sign it _____

Word _____ How I sign it _____

Some Key Areas of the IEP to keep in mind for your child

- Strengths and needs - you know your child best, add things specific to your child
- Parent/Student input - you can always revisit this section at the end to be sure all of your ideas are included in the document
- Accommodations - classroom and school supports needed to support academic success
- Services - this section will outline which services, and for how many minutes, each service will be provided.
- The evaluation report will be reviewed and discussed.
- Each specialist will report out on findings including strengths observed and areas for growth.
- Parent feedback is ALWAYS welcome, ask to add and discuss any information to this section so it matches what you know of your child's skills and areas needing support.
- Remember that the IEP is always a 'live document.'
- Often the team will send you a draft of the document before finalizing it.
- Ask your CHIP coordinator, Facilitator or Hands & Voices to look it over with you if you have any questions!

All IEPs will have the similar formats based on the program being used, however the General IEP can be found here:

https://www.cde.state.co.us/cdesped/iep_forms#review

Consider an ASTRA Training through Hands & Voices

Advocate Thoughts:

-You are ready, and you are not alone! There is a lot of support available, this manual and your current support system can help you get connected!

-Do not be afraid to ask questions of the team. You are an important part of this process. Discuss this process with your CHIP Coordinator. They will have experience in your district and can assist you with the process.

-Being knowledgeable and prepared can help you feel confident during these meetings!

-Make sure to be on the lookout for more information on the Colorado Hands & Voices ASTra program in the pages ahead!

-Get to know your Case Manager. This will be your dedicated point of contact for all your questions and concerns.

Advocate tip for questions to ask about schools: What educational options are available in your local school district? Is the school district/administration supportive and knowledgeable about students who are deaf/hard of hearing?

Procedural Safeguards - El Colorado:

https://dcfs.my.salesforce.com/sfc/p/#410000012srR/a/4N000001glqd/TMtVmHkofKB084LLNONmYR2_KWix64yA0k9q8KDImlI

Advocate's Note:

The 2004 IDEA regulations note that even a child who is advancing from grade to grade, hasn't failed a course, or otherwise appears to be "doing well" can still meet the eligibility criteria for special education, though this may be a point of advocacy. Parents would do well to continue to document difficulties a child has with language acquisition and comprehension, understanding information in noisy and large group settings, social and emotional skills, and beginning self awareness and self advocacy skills to assist in showing the need for special education supports.

Deaf Child Bill of Rights
EDUCATION - PUBLIC SCHOOLS

HOUSE BILL 96-1041

BY REPRESENTATIVES Keller, Kerns, Sullivan, Sullivant, Armstrong, Chlouber, Clarke, Dean, Friednash, Gordon, Kaufman, Knox, Lyle, Mace, McElhany, Morrison, Nichol, Reeser, Saliman, Snyder, and Tucker;
also SENATORS Hopper, Meiklejohn, Feeley, Hernandez, Johnson, Martinez, Matsunaka, Pascoe, Perlmutter, Rupert, and Tanner.

An Act

CONCERNING THE EDUCATION OF CHILDREN WHO ARE DEAF AND HARD OF HEARING.

Be it enacted by the General Assembly of the State of Colorado:

SECTION 1. Legislative declaration. (1) The general assembly finds that:

(a) Pupils with low-incidence disabilities, as a group, make up less than one percent of the total statewide enrollments for kindergarten through grade twelve; and

(b) Pupils with low-incidence disabilities require highly specialized services, equipment, and materials.

(2) The general assembly further finds that:

(a) Deafness involves the most basic of human needs: The ability to communicate with other human beings. Many deaf and hard-of-hearing children use an appropriate communication mode, sign language, which may be their primary language, while others express and receive language orally and aurally, with or without visual signs or clues. Still others, typically young deaf and hard-of-hearing children, lack any significant language skills. It is essential for the well-being and growth of deaf and hard-of-hearing children that educational programs recognize the unique nature of deafness and ensure that all deaf and hard-of-hearing children have appropriate, ongoing, and fully accessible educational opportunities.

(b) It is essential that deaf and hard-of-hearing children, like all children, have an education in which their unique communication mode is respected, utilized, and developed to an appropriate level of proficiency;

(c) It is essential that deaf and hard-of-hearing children have an education in which teachers of the deaf and hard of hearing, psychologists, speech therapists, assessors,

administrators, and other special education personnel understand the unique nature of deafness and are specifically trained to work with deaf and hard-of-hearing pupils. It is essential that deaf and hard-of-hearing children have an education in which teachers of the deaf and hard of hearing are proficient in the primary language mode of those children.

(d) It is essential that deaf and hard-of-hearing children, like all children, have an education with a sufficient number of language mode peers with whom they can communicate directly and who are of the same, or approximately the same, age and ability level;

(e) It is essential that deaf and hard-of-hearing children have an education in which their parents and, where appropriate, deaf and hard-of-hearing people are involved in determining the extent, content, and purpose of programs;

(f) Deaf and hard-of-hearing children would benefit from an education in which they are exposed to deaf and hard-of-hearing role models;

(g) It is essential that deaf and hard-of-hearing children, like all children, have programs in which they have direct and appropriate access to all components of the educational process, including, but not limited to, recess, lunch, and extracurricular social and athletic activities;

(h) It is essential that deaf and hard-of-hearing children, like all children, have programs in which their unique vocational needs are provided for, including appropriate research, curricula, programs, staff, and outreach;

(i) Each deaf or hard-of-hearing child should have a determination of the least restrictive environment that takes into consideration these legislative findings and declarations;

(j) Given their unique communication needs, deaf and hard-of-hearing children would benefit from the development and implementation of state and regional programs for children with low-incidence disabilities.

SECTION 2. 22-20-103, Colorado Revised Statutes, 1995 Repl. Vol., is amended BY THE ADDITION OF A NEW SUBSECTION to read:

22-20-103. Definitions. As used in this article, unless the context otherwise requires:

(1.7) "COMMUNICATION MODE OR LANGUAGE" MEANS ONE OR MORE of the following systems or methods of communication applicable to deaf and hard-of-hearing children:

(a) AMERICAN SIGN LANGUAGE;

(b) ENGLISH-BASED MANUAL OR SIGN SYSTEMS; OR

(c) ORAL, AURAL, OR SPEECH-BASED TRAINING.

SECTION 3. 22-20-108, Colorado Revised Statutes, 1995 Repl. Vol., is amended BY THE ADDITION OF A NEW SUBSECTION to read:

22-20-108. Determination of disability - enrollment. (4.7) (a) IN

DEVELOPING AN INDIVIDUAL EDUCATIONAL PROGRAM PURSUANT TO SUBSECTION (4) OF THIS SECTION FOR A CHILD WHO IS DEAF OR HARD OF HEARING, IN ADDITION TO ANY OTHER REQUIREMENTS ESTABLISHED BY THE STATE BOARD, THE COMMITTEE SHALL CONSIDER THE RELATED SERVICES AND PROGRAM OPTIONS THAT PROVIDE THE CHILD WITH AN APPROPRIATE AND EQUAL OPPORTUNITY FOR COMMUNICATION ACCESS. THE COMMITTEE SHALL CONSIDER THE CHILD'S SPECIFIC COMMUNICATION NEEDS AND, TO THE EXTENT POSSIBLE UNDER PARAGRAPH (g) OF THIS SUBSECTION (4.7), ADDRESS THOSE NEEDS AS APPROPRIATE IN THE CHILD'S INDIVIDUAL EDUCATIONAL PROGRAM. IN CONSIDERING THE CHILD'S NEEDS, THE COMMITTEE SHALL EXPRESSLY CONSIDER THE FOLLOWING:

(I) THE CHILD'S INDIVIDUAL COMMUNICATION MODE OR LANGUAGE;

(II) THE AVAILABILITY TO THE CHILD OF A SUFFICIENT NUMBER OF AGE, COGNITIVE, AND LANGUAGE PEERS OF SIMILAR ABILITIES;

(III) THE AVAILABILITY TO THE CHILD OF DEAF OR HARD-OF-HEARING ADULT MODELS OF THE CHILD'S COMMUNICATION MODE OR LANGUAGE;

(IV) THE PROVISION OF APPROPRIATE, DIRECT, AND ONGOING LANGUAGE ACCESS TO TEACHERS OF THE DEAF AND HARD OF HEARING AND INTERPRETERS AND OTHER SPECIALISTS WHO ARE PROFICIENT IN THE CHILD'S PRIMARY COMMUNICATION MODE OR LANGUAGE; AND

(V) THE PROVISION OF COMMUNICATION-ACCESSIBLE ACADEMIC INSTRUCTION, SCHOOL SERVICES, AND EXTRACURRICULAR ACTIVITIES.

(b) TO ENABLE A PARENT TO MAKE INFORMED DECISIONS CONCERNING WHICH EDUCATIONAL OPTIONS ARE BEST SUITED TO THE PARENT'S CHILD, ALL OF THE EDUCATIONAL OPTIONS PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL DISTRICT AND AVAILABLE TO THE CHILD AT THE TIME THE CHILD'S INDIVIDUAL EDUCATIONAL PROGRAM IS PREPARED SHALL BE EXPLAINED TO THE PARENT.

(c) NO DEAF OR HARD-OF-HEARING CHILD SHALL BE DENIED THE OPPORTUNITY FOR INSTRUCTION IN A PARTICULAR COMMUNICATION MODE OR LANGUAGE SOLELY BECAUSE:

(I) THE CHILD HAS SOME REMAINING HEARING;

(II) THE CHILD'S PARENTS ARE NOT FLUENT IN THE COMMUNICATION MODE OR LANGUAGE BEING TAUGHT; OR

(III) THE CHILD HAS PREVIOUS EXPERIENCE WITH SOME OTHER COMMUNICATION MODE OR LANGUAGE.

(d) NOTHING IN THIS SUBSECTION (4.7) SHALL PRECLUDE INSTRUCTION IN MORE THAN ONE COMMUNICATION MODE OR LANGUAGE FOR ANY PARTICULAR CHILD. ANY CHILD FOR WHOM INSTRUCTION IN A PARTICULAR COMMUNICATION MODE OR LANGUAGE IS DETERMINED TO BE BENEFICIAL SHALL RECEIVE SUCH INSTRUCTION AS PART OF THE CHILD'S INDIVIDUAL EDUCATIONAL PROGRAM.

(e) NOTWITHSTANDING THE PROVISIONS OF SUBPARAGRAPH (II) OF PARAGRAPH (a) OF THIS SUBSECTION (4.7), NOTHING IN THIS SUBSECTION (4.7) MAY BE CONSTRUED TO REQUIRE THAT A SPECIFIC NUMBER OF PEERS BE PROVIDED FOR A CHILD WHO IS DEAF OR HARD OF HEARING.

(f) NOTHING IN THIS SUBSECTION (4.7) SHALL ABROGATE PARENTAL CHOICE AMONG PUBLIC EDUCATIONAL PROGRAMS AS PROVIDED IN SECTION 22-20-109 OR ARTICLES 30.5 OR 36 OF THIS TITLE OR AS OTHERWISE PROVIDED BY LAW.

(g) NOTHING IN THIS SUBSECTION (4.7) SHALL REQUIRE A SCHOOL DISTRICT TO EXPEND ADDITIONAL RESOURCES OR HIRE ADDITIONAL PERSONNEL TO IMPLEMENT THE PROVISIONS OF THIS SUBSECTION (4.7).

SECTION 4. Safety clause. The general assembly hereby finds, determines, and declares that this act is necessary for the immediate preservation of the public peace, health, and safety.

Approved: March 18, 1996

References utilized:

2004 IDEA Final Regulations Pertaining to Deaf Education and Audiology

<http://www.handsandvoices.org/idea04regs/index.htm>

DCBR Revisited: The Deaf Child's Bill of Rights, Six Years

[Laterhttps://handsandvoices.org/articles/education/law/dcbr_revisited.html](https://handsandvoices.org/articles/education/law/dcbr_revisited.html)

Wrightslaw: IDEA 2004 by Peter W. D. Wright, Esq. and Pamela Darr Wright, Harbor House Law Press Inc., September 2005.

Cognition in the Classroom: The Academic and Social Implications

An Interview with Dr. Brenda Schick, The Hands & Voices Communicator, Winter 2004, Volume VII, Issue 3.

The Eligibility Survival Kit

https://www.handsandvoices.org/articles/education/advocacy/V11-2_eligibSurvKit.html

Additional Resources worth consideration:

Deaf Students Education Services. US Department of Education

<https://www.ed.gov/about/offices/list/ocr/docs/hq9806.html>

Frequently Asked Question on Effective Communication for Students who are Deaf/Hard of Hearing. US Department of Education

https://archive.ada.gov/doe_doj_eff_comm/doe_doj_eff_comm_faqs.htm#_ftn2