

(Approved by the Board of Directors of the Educational Audiology Association February 2018)

Educational audiologists, teachers of the deaf and hard of hearing, and speech-language pathologists are critical partners on the school education team. Together, they address the needs of students who are deaf and hard of hearing and promote language and communication access that is essential for participation and learning in today's educational environments. The Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act, and the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) all contain regulations pertinent to the services and accommodations contained in this guidance document.

Language and Communication Regulations (Title II and IDEA)

Title II of the ADA includes the following requirements for schools:

- Communication for students who are deaf and hard of hearing must be “as effective as communication for others” [ADA Title II 28 C.F.R. §35.160 (a)(1)].
- Provision of appropriate aids and services “affording an equal opportunity to obtain the same result, to gain the same benefit, or to reach the same level of achievement as that provided to others” [ADA Title II 28 C.F.R. §35.130 (b)(1)(iii)].
- Students who are deaf and hard of hearing should be able to participate in and enjoy the benefits of the district’s services, programs, and activities” (DOJ-DOE p14)¹.
- These requirements apply to all school-related communications, and when a public school is deciding what types of auxiliary aids and services are necessary to ensure effective communication, it must give “primary consideration” to the particular auxiliary aid or service requested by the person with the disability. (DOJ-DOE p27).

IDEA (2004) “Special Factors” regulations specify that schools must provide the following supports for students who are deaf or hard of hearing [34 C.F.R. §300.324(a)(2)(iv)]:

- Opportunities for direct communication with peers in the student’s language and communication mode.
- Opportunities for direct communication with professional personnel in the student’s language and communication mode.
- Opportunities for direct instruction in student’s language and communication mode.

IDEA (2004) also requires:

- Routine checking of hearing aids and external components of surgically implanted medical devices to ensure they are functioning properly [34 C.F.R. §300.113(a)(b)(1)]
- Audiology Services [34 C.F.R. §300.34(c)(1)]
- SLP Services [34 C.F.R. §300.34(c)(1)]
- Assistive Technology Devices and Services [34 C.F.R. §300.34(c)(15)]
- Highly Qualified Special Education Teachers [34 C.F.R. §300.18]

To assist schools in meeting the language and communication requirements above, the following checklist describes supports to be considered for each student who is deaf or hard of hearing and those with other auditory learning needs. This checklist was developed and field-tested with input from all three professional groups via focus group meetings and online surveys. Categories are described as “student assurances” with activities and expected outcomes that should be addressed by the student’s team of educational professionals, including educational audiologists (Ed. Aud), speech-language pathologists (SLP), and teachers of the deaf and hard of hearing (TODHH). Because student needs change over time, this checklist should be completed at least annually.

¹ U.S. Department of Justice & U.S. Department of Education (2014, Nov 12). *Frequently Asked Questions on Effective Communication for Students with Hearing, Vision, or Speech Disabilities in Public Elementary and Secondary Schools*. <http://www2.ed.gov/about/offices/list/ocr/docs/dcl-faqs-effective-communication-201411.pdf>

When the student's team is designating primary responsibility for each activity listed, the professional scopes of practice and state licensure/certification requirements, as well as training and experience, should guide considerations for specifying responsible personnel. Areas with direct scope of practice implications are checked.

Student Assurances: Audiological and Equipment Needs	Ed Aud	TODHH	SLP	Other
1. Audiological evaluations that include recommendations to enhance communication access and learning.	✓			
2. Diagnosis of auditory processing disorders (APD) with recommendations to manage APD issues provided to school personnel for the classroom and to parents for out of school consideration.	✓			
3. Management of auditory access in all educational environments				
4. Assessment of classroom acoustics with recommendations made to improve classroom listening environments where necessary.				
5. Evaluation and fitting for personal hearing instruments, classroom, and other hearing assistive technology.	✓			
6. Management of hearing assistive devices including maintenance and troubleshooting.				
7. Provision of training for school personnel and students, when appropriate, to perform listening checks and basic troubleshooting to maintain proper functioning of personal hearing instruments and hearing assistance technology.				
8. Provision of hearing assistive technology services including educating students, teachers of the deaf/hard of hearing, and other school personnel regarding technology performance and expectations.				
9. Use of daily listening checks to monitor functioning of hearing technology used by students.				
10. Other:				
Student Assurances: Communication - Speech, Language, Auditory, Visual Needs	Ed Aud	TODHH	SLP	Other
11. Evaluation of current speech production skills including articulation, fluency, voice, and resonance, as appropriate for the student's preferred language and communication mode.			✓	
12. Evaluation of current language skills in the student's preferred language and communication mode, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Comprehension, expression, and language processing in oral written, graphic and manual modalities • Phonology, semantics, syntax, morphology and pragmatics/social aspects of communication • Pre-literacy and language-based literacy skills, including phonological awareness • Description and interpretation of specific language communication skills and needs identified through appropriate formal and informal, standardized and non-standardized assessments. 				
13. Evaluation of communication-related visual and/or auditory skills and needs as appropriate in the student's preferred language and communication mode.				
Student Assurances: Communication - Speech, Language, Auditory, Visual Needs	Ed Aud	TODHH	SLP	Other

14. Implementation of an appropriate therapy plan to develop speech, language, pragmatics, speechreading and auditory skills including strategies for generalization in the general education classroom.				
15. Self-advocacy instruction and support to enable students to advocate for their needs with peers, school personnel and other communication partners including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Evaluation and inclusion of communication goals targeting identity, self-advocacy and communication repair strategies • Inclusion of language and communication goals related to classroom accommodations and modifications • Orientation and /or instruction for peers, families, and school staff regarding communication development, the impact of hearing loss, and communication repair strategies. 				
16. Services that ensure opportunities for students to develop peer-to-peer social communication skills including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Facilitated support groups for children who are deaf or hard of hearing or who have other auditory disorders. • Goals for communication repair strategies that will facilitate communication with peers. • Orientation to hearing peers that encourages social interactions and communication. 				
17. Other:				
Student Assurances: Academic Needs	Ed Aud	TODHH	SLP	Other
18. Evaluation of educational performance in accordance with the requirements of IDEA 330.304 (b) that includes: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use of a variety (no single measure) of assessment tools and strategies to gather functional, developmental and academic information. • Use of reliable and valid tools administered in the child’s preferred language or other mode of communication to yield accurate information. • Measures administered by trained and knowledgeable personnel, according to procedures by the producers of the assessment tools. 				
19. Assessment that distinguishes learning issues related to hearing status from those related to other cognitive, sensory or physical challenges.				
20. Specialized academic instruction to include preview and review of academic material to help optimize learning.		✓		
21. Specialized instruction including expanded core curricular areas such as communication, career education, self-determination and advocacy, social-emotional skills, technology and family education.				
Student Assurances: Academic Needs	Ed Aud	TODHH	SLP	Other

22. Assessment of literacy skills conducted in the child's preferred language and communication mode.				
23. Literacy development plans designed and implemented according to the individual student's needs.				
24. Provision of interpreting, notetaking, captioning, transliteration, and/or voice-to-text services to optimize access to instruction for those who require these supports.				
25. Provision of optimal visual and auditory access for both assessment and instruction.				
26. Other:				
Collaboration Program Management Needs for Students who are Deaf/Hard of Hearing: Identify Individual Responsible for Coordination	Ed Aud	TODHH	SLP	Other
27. Educational plans developed, reviewed, and implemented in a timely manner by team members who have knowledge, skills, and resources related to the impact of hearing loss/deafness on communication, access to classroom instruction and academic performance.				
28. Communication that is consistent between school-based instructional staff and other specialized personnel (e.g., private SLPs, interpreters, audiologists).				
29. IEP and 504 development and meeting participation by one or more specialists in hearing loss/deafness to address student communication, education, access needs and to develop a transition plan for post-secondary education/training/employment.				
30. Education of students and their families regarding hearing status, communication approaches, associated accommodations, technology options, and self-advocacy.				
31. Observation of classroom and school environments that continuously evaluates and monitors communication access, classroom acoustics, and how children are functioning in these settings.				
32. Consultation activities that ensure school personnel understand the language, communication, social, and educational effects of hearing loss/deafness, technology options and associated accommodations.				
33. Education of students and their families about resources in the community, financial resources (for personal hearing technology), educational resources and opportunities to connect with other students who are deaf and hard of hearing and their families.				
34. Other:				