



**SINTON**

INDEPENDENT SCHOOL DISTRICT

# **Evaluation**

**DEAF OR HARD OF HEARING**

**October 22, 2021**



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## **DEAF OR HARD OF HEARING**

### **What is Required**

A student must be assessed under the IDEA in all areas of suspected disability. Deaf or Hard of Hearing or “DHH” is one of the areas of eligible disabilities under the IDEA.

A student who is deaf or hard of hearing (DHH) is one who has been determined to meet the criteria for deafness or for hearing impairment under the IDEA. Deafness means a hearing impairment that is so severe that the student is impaired in processing linguistic information through hearing, with or without amplification, that adversely affects the student's educational performance. Hearing impairment means an impairment in hearing, whether permanent or fluctuating, that adversely affects the student's educational performance but that is not included under the definition of deafness.

To assess for DHH, the District or Campus Assessment Personnel will comply with the general evaluation procedures. See [EVALUATION PROCEDURES]. In addition, the procedures and materials used for the assessment and placement of the student who is deaf or hard of hearing must be in the student's preferred mode of communication. The evaluation data must also include:

- An otological examination performed by an otolaryngologist or by a licensed medical doctor, with documentation that an otolaryngologist is not reasonably available;
- An audiological evaluation performed by a licensed audiologist;
- A description of the implications of the hearing loss for the student's hearing in a variety of circumstances with or without recommended amplification; and
- An assessment of the student's potential for communications through a variety of means, including:
  - Oral (spoken) and aural (hearing);
  - Fingerspelling; or
  - Sign language.

For a student from birth through two years of age who meets the criteria for deafness or for hearing impairment under the IDEA, an IFSP meeting must be held in place of an ARD Committee meeting and the District must comply with the evaluation procedures for students ages 0-5. See [AGES 0-5].

### **Additional Procedures**

The terms “auditory impairment,” “hearing impairment,” and “deaf or hard of hearing” are all terms referred to in Texas law and have the same meaning while federal law



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generally uses the term “deafness” and “hearing impairment.” However, the Texas legislature in 2019 passed a law directing the legislature and the Texas Legislative Council to avoid using in any new statute or resolution the terms “hearing impairment,” “auditory impairment,” and “speech impaired” in reference to a deaf or hard of hearing person, and to replace those phrases with “deaf” or “hard of hearing.” District Personnel should attempt to use the terms “deaf” or “hard of hearing,”

When evaluating a student to determine if the student is DHH, District or Campus Assessment Personnel will follow the procedures set out state and federal law. See [EVALUATION PROCEDURES]. District or Campus Assessment Personnel will also ensure that all assessment information is summarized in the appropriate sections of the FIE, and that doctor’s signatures are on the audiological and otological reports.

When conducting the communication part of the assessment, District or Campus Assessment Personnel may:

- Review the otological and audiological evaluations of the student and consider
  - at what age the student was identified as having a hearing loss,
  - what type of hearing loss the student has,
  - what is the student’s aided hearing, including speech recognition and discrimination,
  - whether the student uses amplification and whether the amplification is consistently worn, and
  - other relevant and current information, if any, from the student’s ENT
- Ensure collaboration among the evaluation professionals to determine what areas will be addressed and by whom
- Review a communication evaluation report provided by a speech-language pathologist, a person certified in deaf education, or another qualified individual that assesses the student’s ability to use a variety of methods of communication such as sign language, speech, speech reading, or fingerspelling
- Assess the student’s functional listening skills, with or without recommended amplification, including
  - how the student uses his/her hearing in different settings,
  - student’s hearing fluctuation,
  - student’s ability to generalize previously taught auditory skills, and
  - skills that need to be taught or reviewed
- Assess speechreading and determine whether it is functional and ensure that the means of communication the student commonly uses is incorporated into the assessment
- Assess intelligibility across a variety of people and consider motor dexterity for signing
- Collect video or audio recordings of the student to evaluate the student’s



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language and communication skills, including, if applicable, the student's use of an interpreter

- Collect parent information, including the primary language used in the home and the skill and consistency of family communication with student
- Determine the student's primary/preferred mode of communication and ensure the procedures and materials used for assessing and placing the student are in the student's preferred mode of communication
- Consider the student's language and communication needs, opportunities for direct communication with peers and professional personnel in the student's preferred communication mode, and student's academic level
- Write the communication section of the evaluation report; ensuring that the assessment professionals know where to include the specific information in the FIE. If a "Part C" form is utilized as part of the evaluation, ensure that key points are highlighted on the form but that the form by itself does not constitute the assessment of the student's language and communication. All members of the assessment team should receive a copy of the form.

If the parent does not provide to the District an examination report by an otolaryngologist or a licensed medical doctor and/or an audiologist that provides the required evaluation data, the District is responsible for obtaining such information at no expense to the parent. The District or Campus Assessment Personnel should first request this report from the parent. If the parent refuses, or does not have a current report, and/or is not responsive to the request, the District or Campus Assessment Personnel should contact the Special Education Director or designee for assistance in setting up the appropriate examination. This may be accomplished by contracting with an otolaryngologist or a licensed medical doctor and /or an audiologist, asking the parent to obtain the report and reimbursing the parent, or any other appropriate method to obtain the evaluation data at the District's discretion. A hearing screening conducted by a school nurse is not sufficient.

An ARD meeting (or IFSP Team if the student is 0-2) will review the completed evaluation and determine whether the student is a student with a disability and the services the student needs. See [SPECIAL FACTORS – Deaf or Hard of Hearing] and [ADMISSION, REVIEW, AND DISMISSAL COMMITTEE MEETING]. If the student does not meet the eligibility criteria for DHH, or any other eligibility criteria under the IDEA, or does not need special education or related services due to his/her disability, Campus Personnel should refer the student to the Campus or District Personnel responsible for compliance with Section 504 to determine whether the student is eligible for accommodations or services as a student with a disability under Section 504.

Upon completion of the DHH evaluation, each member of the evaluation team should sign the FIE. If the student is eligible for special education as a student who is Deaf or Hard of Hearing, a Disability Report in the area will be completed.



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The District will maintain documentation requirements of compliance associated with Texas Student Data System (TSDS), Public Education Information Management System (PEIMS), and State Performance Plan 9SPP). District staff will provide training, with follow up, to ensure the documentation required is in place and compliant.

### **Evidence of Implementation**

- Notice of Evaluation
- Consent for Evaluation
- Referral Information
- Assessment Plan
- Otological Examination
- Audiological Evaluation
- Communication Evaluation Report
- Medical Information Related to Hearing Loss
- FIE
- ARD/IEP or ISFP
- Disability Report: Deaf or Hard of Hearing
- Documentation for the state in TSDS, PEIMS, and SPP
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### **Resources**

[The Legal Framework for the Child-Centered Special Education Process: Deaf or Hard of Hearing - Region 18](#)

[Evaluating Students with Auditory Impairments - Region 4](#)

[Registry of Interpreters for the Deaf](#)

[OSEP Letter to Blodgett \(Nov. 12, 2014\) - U.S. Department of Education](#)

[OSEP Letter to Anonymous \(Nov. 28, 2007\) - U.S. Department of Education](#)

[DOJ/OSERS/OCR Frequently Asked Questions on Effective Communication with Students with Hearing, Vision, or Speech Disabilities in Public Elementary and Secondary Schools \(Nov. 12, 2014\) - U.S. Department of Education](#)

[Deaf and Hard of Hearing - SPEDTEX](#)



Deaf or Hard of Hearing

## **CITATIONS**

Board Policy EHBH; Board Policy EHBAC; Board Policy EHBAA; Board Policy EHBAB;  
20 USC 1414(d)(3)(b)(IV); 34 CFR 300.8(c), 300.29(b), 300.324(a)(2)(IV); Texas  
Education Code 29.303, 29.310(c), 30.004, 30.057(a)(2); 19 TAC 89.1050(b)–(c);  
89.1085, 89.1090