



SPECIAL EDUCATION RESOURCES

Expanded Core Curriculum for Students who are Deaf or Hard of Hearing

This document is intended to provide the reader with an understanding of the needs of students who are deaf, hard of hearing and in some instances, deafblind in order to successfully develop the skills identified in the [Wisconsin Academic Standards](#). The Expanded Core Curriculum (ECC) targets areas of functional skill development that are required of students who are deaf or hard of hearing to access the General Education curriculum and achieve the Wisconsin Academic Standards. Academic achievement alone does not determine the need for specially designed instruction. The ECC should be considered as part of a comprehensive special education evaluation as well as incorporated into the development of a student's Individualized Education Program (IEP) to identify a student's functional needs that require special education services. Providing opportunities for students to experience a variety of accommodation options will empower students to engage in self-advocacy and self-determination. For example, if students have never experienced a "U" shaped seating arrangement or a loop system, students will not know to ask for these accommodations.

The individual areas of focus for the ECC are described below, however, it is important to note that these areas do not develop in isolation. Each area overlaps, interfaces, and supports the other areas of development that have been identified. Within each of these areas of functional development, the ECC should be used within the [Framework for Comprehensive Special Education Evaluation](#) to identify student ability, plan IEP goals, and provide supplementary aids and services, related services, [specially designed instruction](#), or program modifications and support for school personnel.

The Following Areas are Included within the ECC Introduction

Topics within each subcategory are provided as examples and are not meant to be exhaustive or to endorse specific programs or services.

Communication and Language

For the majority of students with typical hearing, language and communication are learned naturally and incidentally from repeated exposure to overhearing others interact. Students with hearing loss may need additional support and direct instruction to develop language and communication skills, because they do not have full auditory access to overhear what is happening in the surrounding environment. Students may require

additional practice to learn and generalize skills across environments. In addition, auditory development and speech perception skills, which develop naturally in hearing children, may need to be specifically taught.

- Academic language and curriculum content (background knowledge, connection to content, academic vocabulary, literacy)
- American Sign Language (ASL components - parameters, non-manual markers, classifiers, use of space, fingerspelling, vocabulary, ASL communication - ASL is a visual-gestural language different from spoken language, ASL discourse)
- Auditory development, speech perception, listening skills (detection, discrimination, identification, comprehension) both in quiet and noise
- Bilingual strategies for students who use ASL as a first language (access English through print media, building literacy using ASL handshapes)
- Communication access supported by educational interpreting services (educational interpreter role, how to effectively communicate through an interpreter, interpreting options - ASL, oral, clarification, receptive only)
- Communication repair strategies (communication breakdowns, clarification, joint attention, environmental factors)
- Compensatory strategies (visual Phonics, cued speech, speechreading, gestures and body language, facial expression)
- Conversational skills (turn-taking, shared topic, transitioning, questioning)
- Speech production (phonological development, prosody, pitch, intonation and inflection)
- Understanding bilingual strategies (separation of languages, grammar, message clarity and effectiveness)

Social and Emotional Development

[Social and Emotional Learning](#) is defined as the process through which children and adults acquire and effectively apply the knowledge, attitudes, and skills necessary to understand and manage emotions, set and achieve positive goals, feel and show empathy for others, establish and maintain positive relationships, and make responsible decisions. Students who are deaf, hard of hearing or deafblind may require additional specialized instruction to learn about their hearing loss, the amplification devices they use, how their hearing loss impacts their relationships, and how to self-advocate for their unique needs. It cannot be assumed that a student will be able to learn these skills without support and guidance. Professionals and service providers who implement SEL for students who are deaf or hard of hearing should have knowledge of the population.

Eight Areas for Social and Emotional Growth

There are eight key areas for intervention for social and emotional growth with deaf or hard of hearing (DHH) students:

- **Social and Emotional Vocabulary:** DHH students with limited access to language may not have adequate vocabulary to express their emotions. Educators need to evaluate students' individual knowledge of emotion vocabulary in order to

- determine how best to address additional language needs. Direct instruction of emotion vocabulary may be required.
- **Social Pragmatic Communication:** According to the American Speech-Language Hearing Association, social communication includes “using language for different reasons, changing language for the listener or situation, and following rules for conversations and storytelling.” DHH students may need direct instruction in the use of social communication skills in order to master communication skills like greeting, informing, demanding, requesting, as well as reciprocal conversation, turn-taking, and using body language.
 - **Theory of Mind (Empathy):** Due to limited access to incidental information and communication with others, students who are DHH may struggle to understand the thoughts and feelings of others. If a student has limited vocabulary and lack of access to communication, he or she may have a hard time processing outside information in order to analyze the perspectives of others. This can cause challenges with establishing and maintaining social relationships and can additionally impact academic skills like reading comprehension.
 - **Emotion Regulation:** Students who are DHH who struggle with expressive language may have a hard time regulating emotions appropriately. If they cannot adequately communicate their feelings due to lack of either vocabulary or conversation partners who understand their language, the student can struggle to regulate challenging or difficult emotions. As a result, a student may present with challenging and age-inappropriate behaviors.
 - **Self-advocacy:** A student who is DHH needs to learn how to advocate regarding the student’s unique and individual communication and functional needs. A student may need to advocate regarding equipment and interpreting needs, the ability to explain the student’s hearing, and facilitation of communication with hearing individuals. Self-advocacy instruction includes skills for assertiveness, asking for assistance, and clarifying needs. Students should learn how to “repair communication breakdowns and advocate for their listening and learning needs appropriately,” (Supporting Success for Children with Hearing Loss). The Guide to Self-Advocacy Skills Development developed by Karen Anderson and Informal Inventory of Independence and Self-Advocacy Skills for Deaf-Hard of Hearing Students developed by George Clark and Laura Scheele are examples of tools for evaluating self-advocacy skills in students who are DHH. Self-advocacy instruction can also include legal rights at the state and federal levels and how to interact with law enforcement. Self-advocacy instruction can also help students seek out further mental health support if needed.
 - **Problem Solving:** Students who are DHH who struggle with language can also have a hard time using problem-solving skills such as identifying the problem and brainstorming solutions. The ability to problem-solve can enhance several other positive skills like conflict resolution, self-advocacy, and self-regulation. Psychologist Neil Glickman explains the use of problem-solving instruction as a cognitive behavioral therapy modality in Cognitive-Behavior Therapy for Deaf and Hearing Persons with Language and Learning Challenge (2008).

- **Executive Functioning:** Executive functioning skills include self-regulation, self-management, organization, and planning skills. Without adequate language development, students who are DHH may struggle to develop these skills. Direct instruction in organization, self-management, emotion regulation, goal setting, and planning may be necessary.
- **Culture and Self-Determined Identity:** As many students who are DHH are born to hearing parents, they may not have an awareness of the rich culture in the Deaf community. While some DHH individuals do not identify with the Deaf community, the language, history, norms, values, connections, and social opportunities can be a benefit. A major tenet of Deaf culture is that deafness is not a disability but a variation in the human experience. There is often a sense of pride within the culture. Instruction in Deaf culture can be helpful for students who are developing a sense of identity. Also, exposure to deaf adults in the community can help students understand that they have bright futures. According to Hoffman and Andrews (2016), “Deaf children can be exposed to both worlds - deaf and hearing - and both languages - English and ASL- through bilingualism and biculturalism in the school” (p. 426). Students who struggle to communicate clearly with their families may also face challenges in understanding their family’s cultural background. Teachers and staff can help students seek out information and facilitate communication when formulating a cultural identity based on various heritages and native languages. Building communication skills can also help students express personal identity factors such as gender or sexuality.

[Social and Emotional Learning for Deaf and Hard of Hearing Students - FAQ](#), Illinois State Board of Education

Resources and Technology

The majority of students who are deaf or hard of hearing, regardless of type or degree of hearing loss, will utilize some type of technology to improve their access to the world around them. Learning about the variety of technologies, how to access them, how to use them, and when they are appropriate will allow the student to become an independent learner.

- Agencies & Networks
 - Department of Vocational Rehabilitation (DVR)
 - Office for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing (ODHH)
 - Hearing Loss Association of America (HLAA)
 - National Association of the Deaf (NAD))
- Amplification Management
 - Managing Hearing Aids
 - Cochlear Implant(s)
 - Bone Conduction Processors or Devices
 - Personal Hearing Assistance Technology (FM, DM, RM)
 - Classroom Amplification Distribution Systems (CADS, Soundfields))
- Apps for Smartphones and Computers
- Captioning

- Open Captioning Services
- Closed-Captioning
- Movie Theaters
- CART
- C-Print
- Speech-to-Text Services
- Real-Time vs. Remote
- Funding
 - Eligibility criteria, scholarships, funding sources and application of funds
 - Telecommunications Equipment Purchase Program or Telecommunications Assistance Program (TEPP, TAP)
 - Department of Vocational Rehabilitation (DVR)
- Interpreting Service Resources
 - Accessing Community Interpreting Services
 - How to make a request for appointments, public events
- Legal Rights
 - Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA)
 - Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA)
 - Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973
- Note-Taking Services
 - Options for notetaking
 - C-Print
 - CART
 - Determining style preferences
 - How to use notes
- Specialized Telecommunication Technology
 - Voice Carry Over (VCO)
 - CapTel
 - Video Phones (VP)
 - Video Relay Services
 - Loop Systems
 - Smartphones
 - Video Conferencing Platforms
- Visual Alerting Devices
 - Emergency alarms
 - Visual and tactile alerting systems
 - Public accessibility

Environmental Management

Students with typical hearing are generally able to communicate and learn in most environments. For students who are deaf, hard of hearing and deafblind, noise, distance from the speaker, group size and lighting can influence successful communication and access to classroom learning. Students with hearing loss may require specific instruction to understand how the environment impacts their ability to access information and how to modify the environments to meet their individual needs. Development of these skills will increase student independence across environments.

- Access to visual supports - text, notes, environmental cues, peer cues, visual signals
- Accommodations - appropriate and specific to environment or activity
- Acoustics - background noise, sources, adaptations
- Communication environments - small group alternative setting, seating arrangement, lighting
- Interpreter placement - near the speaker, near the board or visual support, moving around the room
- Interpreter use and preferences - time to process information received through interpreting before participation within group discussions
- Listening Fatigue - physical, mental or emotional fatigue from communicating, listening and understanding ([Vanderbilt Fatigue Scales](#), Vanderbilt University)
- Specialized Telecommunication Technology - Voice Carry Over (VCO), CapTel, Video Phones (VP), Video Relay Services, Loop Systems, Smart Phones
- Visual Alerting Devices - emergency alarms, visual and tactile alerting systems, public accessibility

Transition

Wisconsin state law requires transition plans for students with disabilities age 14 and above. Students that are deaf, hard of hearing or deafblind may require additional instruction and specialized support to be successful beyond high school and independent within their community.

In addition, students who are deaf, hard of hearing or deafblind may require specific instruction related to:

- Benefits of specialized post-secondary programs that:
 - Are specifically designed for student who are deaf or hard of hearing
 - Gallaudet, National Technical Institute for the Deaf (NTID)
 - California State University - Northridge (CSUN)
 - Have established disability service centers
 - University of Wisconsin - Milwaukee Access Resource Center (ARC)
 - University of Wisconsin - Madison McBurney Resources Center
- How to contact post-secondary programs to determine if they have a disability service center or how they can ensure their disability related needs can be met

- Resources and technology for post-secondary, workplace and community environments (PEPnet2, DVR resources, or application)
- Understanding “Entitlement” for K-12 students (IDEA 2004) and “Eligibility” for post-secondary students and individuals in the workforce (Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and ADA)

Additional Transition Resources

[The Pennsylvania Expanded Core Competencies for Students who are Deaf or Hard of Hearing](#), Pennsylvania

[National Center for College Students with Disabilities](#), University of Minnesota

[Campus Disability Resource Center \(CeDaR\) - Wisconsin](#), University of Minnesota



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