

## Optimizing Outcomes for Students who are Deaf or Hard of Hearing; Educational Service Guidelines, NASDSE 2018: Chapter 7 Post-Secondary Transition

Discussion Guide for MN School District Implementation Teams, 2019-2020

Mary Cashman-Bakken, State Specialist-Deaf Hard of Hearing, MN Department of Education  
[Mary.Cashman-Bakken@state.mn.us](mailto:Mary.Cashman-Bakken@state.mn.us)

### **NASDSE 2018, page 51: Key Points for Discussion:**

- *When students who are deaf or hard of hearing are actively engaged in their own transition planning, successful post-school transitions are most likely to occur.*
- *Students who are deaf or hard of hearing need to have members on their transition IEP team who have specialized knowledge of the unique communication and language challenges they face and their impact on postsecondary education, employment and independent living.*
- *The amount of time for students who are deaf or hard of hearing to complete post-secondary education programs may be longer than it is for students who are not deaf or hard of hearing.*
- *Students with higher levels of self-determination are more likely to have positive adult outcomes.*
- *Access, discrimination and, communication barriers can all contribute to employment struggles for students who are deaf or hard of hearing. As a result, employability training and work-related experiences while in high school are important programming considerations.*

### **Federal Laws and Policies:**

- *In the 2004, regulations promulgated after the reauthorization of the IDEA added to the purpose statement to focus on transition to post-secondary opportunities: The purpose of IDEA is to “ensure that all children with disabilities have available to them a free and appropriate public education (FAPE) that emphasizes special education and related services designed to meet their unique needs **and prepare them for further education, employment and independent living** (34 C.F.R. § 300.1(a)).” (NASDSE 2018, page 52)*
- *“Prior to graduation, IDEA requires that school personnel, with student input, prepare a Summary of Performance (SOP). The specific requirements for the SOP are found in the Federal Regulations at 34 C.F.R. § 300.305(e)(3).” (NASDSE 2018, page 53)*

**MN State Laws and Policies:**

[Students Who are Deaf and Hard of Hearing in Minnesota](https://education.mn.gov/MDE/dse/sped/cat/dhh/), Report to the MN Legislature, 2018. (<https://education.mn.gov/MDE/dse/sped/cat/dhh/>). Eighty-five percent (85%) of Minnesota students who are Deaf or Hard of Hearing are graduating high school with a diploma.

[MN Administrative Rule 3525.0755 Extended School Year Services](https://www.revisor.mn.gov/rules/3525.0755/)

(<https://www.revisor.mn.gov/rules/3525.0755/>). Eligibility considerations for Extended School Year services has 3 prongs. Regression, recoupment and unique needs.

**Evidence-Based/Experienced-Based Information:**

- In 2014 only 48% of deaf people (including individuals who may identify as deaf, hard of hearing, hearing impaired, late deafened, or deafplus) were employed, compared to 72% of hearing people (Garberoglio, Cawthon, & Bond, 2016).
- Most students are enrolled in an associate degree program. 51% (National Deaf Center on Post-Secondary Outcomes ([NDC](https://www.nationaldeafcenter.org/))) (<https://www.nationaldeafcenter.org/>)
- Average age of a DHH student is 31 who finished college. (National Deaf Center on Post-Secondary Outcomes ([NDC](https://www.nationaldeafcenter.org/))) (<https://www.nationaldeafcenter.org/>)
- Over the past three decades, transition practices research has demonstrated that post-school outcomes of students with disabilities improve when educators, families, students and community members and organizations work together to implement transition-focused education (Kohler, Gothberg, Fowler, & Coyle, 2016). This collaboration is critical because approximately 85% of deaf or hard of hearing students attend general education classrooms (U.S. Department of Education, 2013). Often, these programs do not have access to deafness-specific experts; as a result, schools are moving away from disability-specific transition services by providing generic preparation for work or postsecondary training. Because of these standard and nonspecific transition services, many deaf or hard of hearing students who attend public schools fail to acquire key transition competencies (e.g. adult literacy skills, career exploration, employment soft skills, self-advocacy skills, postsecondary readiness, independent living skills, accommodation training) in comparison to their peers with other disabilities (Luft & Huff, 2011; Newman, et al., 2011).
- Restricted language and communication access and missed opportunities of incidental learning can also negatively affect a student's ability to gain the knowledge and life skills necessary to make appropriate decisions about his/her employment, postsecondary education and daily living needs.
- A study using self-assessment of technology skills with secondary-aged students who are deaf or hard of hearing found that many students self-rated based on desired skills or what they thought was important, while others had a very unrealistic assessment of themselves (Luft, Bonello, & Zirzow, 2009). For these reasons, designing a transition assessment plan can be challenging for IEP teams.

- What kind of transition information should be gathered?
- Labor statistics show that for 2014, almost half of people who are deaf (47%) were not in the labor force, compared to less than a quarter (23%) of hearing individuals (Garberoglio, Cawthon, & Bond, 2016). Job retention and advancement disparities are also a concern (Walter & Dirmyer, 2013). Students who are deaf or hard of hearing who have additional disabilities experience the most employment challenges (Garberoglio, Cawthon, & Bond, 2016). Access, discrimination and communication barriers are the primary areas that contribute to employment struggles. For these reasons, general education and generic transition planning may not be sufficient to meet the unique employment needs of students who are deaf or hard of hearing.
- *For students who are deaf or hard of hearing, acquiring independent living skills informally may be difficult through interactions with families or peers. In fact, studies suggest that many of these students are not acquiring the daily living skills that they need, even those students who are college-bound (Luft & Huff, 2011; Luft, 2012) ...One contribution to this statistic may be language deprivation or poor reading skills along with the lack of knowledge about adult activities, such as understanding contracts for credit cards, rent, or financial situations and understanding medical information or prescriptions. Classes may be necessary to supplement this knowledge, including hands-on activities and community-based objectives such as filling out credit card applications on-site or seeking a place to rent. Some students may need direct training to increase communication skills in the community, assistive technology for the home environment or understanding their rights and responsibilities for communication access in the community, especially regarding interpreters. Therefore, transition team members need to carefully assess independent living skills and address them in the IEP...IEP teams need to recognize that general education and generic transition planning may not be sufficient to meet the unique needs of these students.” (NASDSE 2018. Page 57)*

**Resources:**

See Transition resources listed in NASDSE 2018, pages 58 and 59.

For more information on laws and transition services, see the 2017 guide from the U.S. Department of Education, Office of Special Education and Rehabilitative Services (OSERS), [A Transition Guide to Postsecondary Education and Employment for Students and Youth with Disabilities, Updated May 2017.](#)

(<https://www2.ed.gov/about/offices/list/osers/transition/products/postsecondary-transition-guide-may-2017.pdf>)

[National Deaf Center on Post-Secondary Outcomes \(NDC\)](#)

(<https://www.nationaldeafcenter.org/>)

[Deafverse, NDC 2019](#), a game for students to build confidence

(<https://www.nationaldeafcenter.org/deafverse/>)

[National Technical Center on Transition](https://www.transitionta.org/?utm_content=&utm_medium=email&utm_name=&utm_source=govdelivery&utm_term)

([https://www.transitionta.org/?utm\\_content=&utm\\_medium=email&utm\\_name=&utm\\_source=govdelivery&utm\\_term](https://www.transitionta.org/?utm_content=&utm_medium=email&utm_name=&utm_source=govdelivery&utm_term))

Hands & Voice's [Post-Secondary Transition Module for Parents and Transition Age Teens](https://handsandvoices.org/hvcourses) is one example of a program that can be provided to parents or utilized in classes.

(<https://handsandvoices.org/hvcourses>)

[MN Department of Education, Secondary Transition](https://education.mn.gov/MDE/dse/sped/sec/)

(<https://education.mn.gov/MDE/dse/sped/sec/>)

[MN Department of Education, Person Centered Planning](https://education.mn.gov/MDE/fam/sped/)

(<https://education.mn.gov/MDE/fam/sped/>)

[MN Disability Hub](https://disabilityhubmn.org/) (<https://disabilityhubmn.org/>)

[Employment Resource Guide: Successfully Preparing Students with Disabilities for Competitive Integrated Employment](https://mn.gov/deed/assets/employment-resource-guide_tcm1045-290595.pdf), ([https://mn.gov/deed/assets/employment-resource-guide\\_tcm1045-290595.pdf](https://mn.gov/deed/assets/employment-resource-guide_tcm1045-290595.pdf))

[MN DEED Office of Youth Development](https://mn.gov/deed/programs-services/office-youth-development/) (<https://mn.gov/deed/programs-services/office-youth-development/>)

[MN Transition Guide for Teachers of Deaf, Hard of Hearing](https://www.cehd.umn.edu/dhh-resources/Transition-Guide/default.html), (<https://www.cehd.umn.edu/dhh-resources/Transition-Guide/default.html>)

**Discussion Questions/Reference to Chapter 9:**

1. Are students actively engaged in their own transition planning? (Chapter 9 Checklist 2A, page 81)
2. Are there opportunities for specialized instruction? (Expanded Core Curriculum- see chapter 5). (Chapter 9 Checklist 2D, page 81)
3. In light of data that says students who are Deaf or Hard of Hearing are not ready for transition, are you providing ESY with these students? Consideration of Unique Needs is a component of determining ESY.
4. Are your goals and services including transition?
5. Have you included VR in your planning?
6. Do you know about WIOA and Pre-Ets?

7. What assessments do you have for transition? Are they comprehensive enough?  
(Chapter 9 Checklist 4B, page 86)
8. With regards to independent living, are your students ready? Shopping cooking, bills...
9. What is your district doing for Personal Learning Plans?
  - a. How are your students fitting into that model?
10. Are you doing a Summary of Performance for each of your students addressing transition?
11. Are you filling out the Minnesota Post–Secondary Outcome Survey for all DHH students who graduated one year after graduation?