

Bridge to Preschool

Navigating a Successful Transition



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

Ohio

**School
for the Deaf**

Center for
Outreach Services



**HANDS &
VOICES™**

Produced by the Center for Outreach Services at the Ohio School for the Deaf

Adapted with permission from *Bridge to Preschool: Navigating a Successful Transition* by the Colorado School for the Deaf & Blind and Colorado Families for Hands & Voices

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**You can download a copy of this document at
www.ohioschoolforthe deaf.org/outreach
or
www.ohiohandsandvoices.org**

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Welcome

Dear Families,

Planning for the transition from early intervention (Part C) to preschool services at age three (Part B) is a very important time in the life of your child and family. You most likely became aware of this transition early on, but oh how time flies! This transition will 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)
- New opportunities

We're here to help!

This packet was developed by a group of professionals with training and experience in working with families who have infants and toddlers who are deaf/hard-of-hearing and parents who have “been there”. We hope the information will help guide you through the transition process, and lead you to further resources if needed. You'll need the input of other parents, professionals you trust, and adults who are deaf and hard-of-hearing to share 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!

Let us know if we can help, and we hope you find this packet of information useful in this transition.

Sincerely,

Center for Outreach Services at the Ohio School for the Deaf

Ohio Hands & Voices



What happens at transition?

Your child will soon be turning 3. Services that you have been receiving under Part C of IDEA (The Individuals with Disabilities Education Act) will be ending and your child will begin to receive services under Part B of this same law. Eligible children can receive special services and assistance (special education and related services) under this law.

You will be assisted by your Help Me Grow Early Intervention Service Coordinator and your Regional Infant Hearing Program Service Provider in this transition from Part C (birth to three services) to Part B (three – 21 services). Transition planning will begin months before your child enters preschool so that you have adequate time to explore your options and feel comfortable with your child's placement.

The first step in the transition process involves a transition meeting with your team. At this time the procedures in your school district will be shared with you. As part of this process you will be referred to your local school district. This referral will be made by your Service Coordinator from Help Me Grow.

The Local Education Agency (LEA) is responsible for assessment and identification of young children who might be eligible for services under IDEA. 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). An Evaluation Team Report (sometimes referred to as a Multi-Factored Evaluation) will be offered by the district at no cost to you as the parent/guardian.

The purpose of these evaluations is to identify your child's special education needs. It is important that someone be in attendance at this meeting who has expertise in the unique issues with young children who are deaf and hard of hearing. Some districts have designated professionals to participate in Evaluation Team Report (ETR)/ MFE meetings with young deaf and hard of hearing children, while others do not.

Do not be afraid to ask questions of the team. You are an important part of this process. Discuss this process with your Regional Infant Hearing Parent Advisor and your Help Me Grow Service Coordinator. They will have experience in your district and can assist you with the process.

Once the evaluations are completed, a team will be convened. Again, you are an important member of this team because you know your child best. At this meeting the assessment results will be shared and discussed as they relate to your child's educational needs and subsequent placement. Once your child has been determined eligible for services, the IEP team will develop an IEP (Individualized Education Plan) for your child. This plan will state the goals for your child and the services that will be provided by the school district.

There are many 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. As your child moves into Part B services, you will work with a team of professionals to develop a plan (IEP) that addresses the unique needs of your child.

A Brief Introduction: Laws Governing a Child's Transition to Preschool

Part C is a set of services created by a portion of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act, or IDEA, originally passed in 1973 and reauthorized in 2006. The current name is "IDEA 2004" which gives some idea how complicated the legislation is, as it took more than two years for the regulations to be written and approved by Congress. The Part C program ensures that your family is receiving early intervention services from the time your baby is born to age three years. Your baby receiving early intervention services from the start of intervention to age three is participating with your family in the federal Part C program.

Part C and Part B: What does this mean?

IDEA covers children birth through age 21 who have special needs. There is a division in the regulations and agencies in charge (or "lead agency") for children under three years of age (Part C) and over three years of age, or school age (Part B). The focus of this manual is on the transition from Part C (early intervention services) to Part B preschool and school-age services) through your school district.

Part C: The Zero to Three Years

Each state administers the Part C early intervention program somewhat differently. In Ohio, Part C is administered by the Ohio Department of Health. The Ohio Department of Health oversees the Regional Infant Hearing Programs (RIHP) which provides tracking and follow-up for infants who refer through the Universal Newborn Hearing Program and provides specialized habilitative services to families with infants and toddlers who are deaf and hard of hearing. The RIHP programs work in collaboration with the local Help Me Grow programs to ensure infants and toddlers and their families receive comprehensive Early Intervention Services. The Part C program is a federal program that partially funds states' efforts to provide services to babies and toddlers. It was established by the federal government in 1986 to:

- improve the enhance the development of infants and toddlers with disabilities
- reduce costs of special education through early intervention
- minimize the need for institutionalization and promote independent living
- enhance the capacity of families to meet their child's needs.

Agencies providing Part C services must provide services to every eligible child and family throughout the state, and follow the philosophy of natural environments. They must also involve the family in the service plan that is updated every six months, (Individual Family Service Plan, or IFSP), and provide for transition planning to the school age or Part B system.

Part C to Part B Transition: What the Law Says

There are guidelines in the law covering the different steps required to complete a child's transition between services. The Help Me Grow service coordinator must start the process of transition at least six months before the child's third birthday. This period is filled with assessments needed by the school, visiting school programs, learning even more about how one's child learns and communicates best. Most families would benefit from even more transition time to mull over decisions and meet the key people who will be involved in their child's life in school. This additional time can greatly ease pressure on parents as well as allow for more time for the family and the school personnel to develop a positive relationship.

A suggested timeline is listed below for families and service providers to be completed during home visits and community visits to area preschools.

9-12 months prior to the child's third birthday:

- Request information on transition, the law, options, and timelines in a format useful to you as parents.
- Consider articles or other resources on preschool selection and parent experiences from Hands & Voices.
- Begin to identify area preschools to visit together.
- Discuss the child's learning style and modes of communication across a variety of settings.
- Consider the option of meeting other families of preschoolers.
- Bring your questions to the continuing home visits.

6 months prior to child's third birthday:

- Visit preschools. Consider use of rating scales as one method to prioritize needs.
- Begin to become familiar with district IEP form.
- Check over current IFSP to be read by school district personnel. Does it fit your child's strengths and needs?
- Consider the need for private therapies as a bridge to a school-based program.

3 ½ months prior to third birthday:

- Finalize Transition plan draft in preparation for meeting. (See Section VIII: Transition at Age Three Outcome on the ODH IFSP form)
- Write down questions for team.

90 days prior to third birthday:

- Participate in eligibility determination.
- Complete the transition plan with your IEP team based on the individual needs of your child and family.
- Advocate as needed with school for equipment needs or environmental changes to be in place prior to first day of school.
- Create flexible plan based on child's developmental needs.

On or before the child's third birthday:

- The local school district will complete first IEP if eligible
- Consider the need for more parent to parent support.
- Continue facilitator visits at school if applicable to further ease the transition to preschool.



Who will attend the transition meeting?

The team needs to include parents and/or guardians, first of all. A representative must be present who can make decisions on behalf of the lead educational agency, (LEA) otherwise known as the school district. The Help Me Grow Service Coordinator or LEA representative will likely lead the discussion. The child's RIHP Service Provider may attend, and staff from the future delivery system in Part B, the school district, should attend. A deaf education teacher is generally present on behalf of the future service providers and the district. One regular education teacher may also attend. School audiologists and speech-language pathologists may attend as well.

If a child has additional health care needs, other professionals may also be invited. Childcare providers or extended family or others invited by the parents with a special interest or knowledge of the child may attend, including an advocate or another adult to support the parents and take notes at the parents' discretion.

Ahhh Paperwork: Content of the Transition Plan

- Current evaluation and assessment information
- Explanation of how the family will be included in the transition process
- List of steps to prepare the child for the new setting or services
- Detail of needs for modification of the new setting, educational needs (i.e. special health care needs) or typical service delivery based on the unique needs of the child.
- Documentation reflecting a discussion with the parents regarding the variety of service options and other issues related to the child's transition

Children Who Are Not Eligible for IDEA/ Part B

All children with hearing loss are eligible for services under Part C. Part B requires an educational need for specialized services that some children may not demonstrate (separate eligibility guidelines according to the Ohio Operating Standards. (See Guidelines on page 11).

If a child is not eligible for Part B preschool services, the transition plan must include options of other appropriate services for the child. This may include private therapies, other preschools, community activities, or the creation of a 504 Plan to ensure the continuing need for equipment or preferential seating is met. All children leaving early intervention at age three must have a transition plan whether or not they are eligible for services under Part B of IDEA.

Summer birthdays:

If a child turns three during the late spring or summer, it is the responsibility of the IEP team to determine when preschool services will begin for that child. Preschool services may be provided during the summer if the child meets that school district's criteria for extended school year (ESY) services. Otherwise, the school district is not responsible to provide preschool services until the date when school resumes for the next school year.

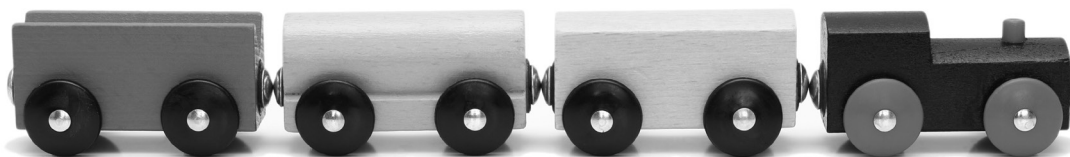
Transportation:

Children eligible for Part B services are also eligible for special transportation to and from school in order to provide access to special education. While parents may certainly transport their young child to preschool themselves, transportation by bus may be necessary to ensure that a child can regularly receive special education services.

TIPS for Transition between Early Intervention and School Age Programs

1. PREPARE for the IFSP/IEP transition meetings (i.e. observations, become familiar with rights and available services under the law)
2. Think of preschool as transition (transition doesn't have to conclude in 6 months!)
3. Maintain consistent and effective communication among team members
4. Establish roles and expectations together with everyone on your team (a "game plan")
5. Continue home visits
6. Be flexible in possibilities for programs and schedules (young children may not be ready for the same kind of schedule as older preschoolers. Individualize!)
7. Establish a parent support group, or even informal gatherings (parent-to-parent support is important!)
8. Participate in Hands and Voices as well as getting to know other parents at your school (See contact info for Ohio Hands & Voices on the Contacts page)
9. Facilitate kindergarten visitations (begin to visit early to allow time to process information, share information with perspective kindergarten teachers so that they are familiar with your child's needs)

*Adapted from Johnson, C. "Supporting Families in Transition between Early Intervention and School Age Programs"
Hands and Voices Communicator, Winter 2001.*



Comparison of Part C and Part B

	Part C	Part B
Lead Agency	Appointed by a state's governor. Ohio Department of Health is the lead agency; administered through the Help Me Grow system	Responsibility of the state local education agency (LEA), also known as the local school district.
Age	Focuses on birth through age two.	Focuses on ages three through 21.
Eligibility	Eligible through family assessment along with a developmental evaluation/assessment to show need for services. Additional considerations are made for those that have a specific diagnosis/condition.	A comprehensive evaluation (Evaluation Team Report- ETR) initially completed by local school district personnel, as well as Help Me Grow data, determines eligibility and an IEP is in place by the child's third birthday.
Goals	Focuses on meeting the developmental needs of the child with a delay or disability as well as supporting the family.	Focuses on the child and his/her educational needs.
Service Coordination	One service coordinator and one Regional Infant Hearing Program (RIHP) parent advisor are provided to each infant or toddler and family	There is no requirement under special education law that a service coordinator be provided for a child and family.
Services	Services and supports may be provided by a variety of agencies as determined and documented in an Individual Family Service Plan (IFSP)	All services are the responsibility of the local school district as determined and documented in an Individual Education Plan (IEP)
Delivery of Services	Requires services and supports to be provided in "natural environments."	Requires special education and related services to be provided in the "least restrictive environment."
Recipient of Services	Recipients of services and supports may be the infant/toddler and/or the child's family.	Recipient of special education and related services is the child only.
Fees	Services are provided at no cost to families through ODH/HMG; some specialized services are paid through ODH as "payer of last resort" through an application process completed by the family.	Under special education law, a "Free Appropriate Public Education" is provided at no cost to the child for special education and related services.

	Part C	Part B
Assessment	A developmental assessment process is completed to determine appropriate services needed. Assessment is ongoing to determine the unique strengths and needs of the child, the services appropriate to meet those needs, resources, priorities and concerns of the family, and supports/services to help the family meet the needs of the child. Parents may obtain their own assessment at their own expense if they disagree with the results or the appropriateness of the assessment used.	Assessments must be included in each IEP (reviewed and written yearly and progress reports done quarterly) and includes the results of child's performance on any state-wide or district-wide assessments. Parents may arrange with the school district for an independent educational evaluation (IEE) at school district expense if they disagree with the school district's evaluation. The school district can file a due process complaint to request a hearing to show that the district's evaluation is correct or appropriate.
Procedural Safeguards	Prior written notice of meetings or changes in the provision of HMG services, written consent before screenings, evaluations or any ongoing service begins, confidentiality of information, accept or decline any service at any time without jeopardizing other services, transition planning, review and inspect child's/family records at any time, right to have outside evaluation (obtained at parent expense) be considered by IFSP team and included in child's records, parents shall receive a response to complaints in writing within 30 days of submitting a complaint.	Prior written notice of meetings, confidentiality of information, right to examine school district records and obtain copies at reasonable cost, written consent before initial assessment and placement, extended school year services if child qualifies for it, transition planning, right to decline a service on the IEP without jeopardizing other services, right to have outside evaluations (obtained at parent expense) considered by IEP team and included in child's record.
Dispute Resolution	Complaint resolution process includes mediation or due process hearing, or civil hearing procedures	Administrative reviews at school district level. State dispute resolution procedures include mediation, IEP facilitation, state complaint procedures, or a due process hearing.

Taken and adapted from:

- 1) Long, M.J. (Ed.), (1999). *First Steps to Discovery: A Parent Guide to Colorado's Early Childhood Services Under Parts C and B of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act*. Denver: The Legal Center
- 2) *Whose Idea Is this? A Parent's Guide to the Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act of 2004 (IDEA)* Ohio Department of Education, June 14, 2010
- 3) www.ohiohelpmegrow.com

Transition From Help Me Grow (Part C): Roles and Responsibilities

PARENTS	HELP ME GROW (Part C)	SCHOOL DISTRICT (Part B)
Become involved in the transition process early to ensure as many choices as possible are available	Prepare transition in a timely manner and involve families for preschool, therapy, publicly and privately funded options. Share information with Part B. Inform school district on number of children and what their needs are	Assure an array of services is available based on individual needs of the child.
Consider a wide range of options when discussing transition with service coordinator	Share, explain and record information about transition at IFSP meetings and review Child Find/eligibility procedures and regulations	Share information about privately and publicly funded services and program options.
Be aware of your rights under Part C and Part B	Inform families of their rights/procedural safeguards in Part C	Inform families of their rights/assurances in Part B (i.e. <i>Whose IDEA Is This?</i> Ohio document)
Determine if you are willing to share with school district and sign for consent for release of records and/or evaluation	Identify the records to be released and obtain written parental consent for release of records and review what information has to be shared with Part B of Child Find	Share information with families about the initial evaluation process and competes assessment required for Part B eligibility.
Participate in transition planning conference at a level that feels comfortable	Host a transition planning conference at least 90 calendar days but not more than nine months prior to the child's third birthday	Attend and participate in transition planning conference.
Complete required enrollment forms if child is attending school district programs		Complete necessary consent forms
Be ready to state your child's present and anticipated activities, concerns you have, and family priorities in terms of goals and objective for the IEP	If possible, attend initial IEP and provide feedback on the IFSP to IEP transition.	Complete initial IEP by child's third birthday or it must be completed 90 days from parental consent, whichever comes first.
Learn as much as you can about communication and language opportunities, how to support social-emotional development, we well as literacy development	Provide information on the transition process from Part C to Part B	Provide specific information about district programs and service options available to meet the individual needs of the child.

Part B: School-Based Services According to IDEA: The Basics

The local school district is responsible for providing eligible children with hearing loss educational services after age three. (Part B) This may mean services in the preschool program or even home based services if the child's needs require that. Hallmarks of this system include such language as: eligibility, least restrictive environment (LRE), and "free and appropriate public education: or "FAPE". The Ohio Communication Plan for Students who are Deaf/Hard of Hearing is also recommended to IEP teams. This document is currently in draft form and is not a requirement, but can help guide the IEP team in discussing specific communication and language needs for your child.

In early intervention, a child is eligible if there is a risk for delay. Prematurity would be one reason that a child would qualify for early intervention. The school system has a different set of criteria for special education than the early intervention system. A child must have 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, until the child graduates or turns 21.

According to Ohio, a preschool child with a disability is a child who has one of the following disabilities, as defined in rule 3301-51-01 of the Administrative Code, based upon the evidence required in paragraphs (C)(1) to (C)(3) of this rule, and who, by reason thereof, needs special education and related services:(a) Autism;(b) Cognitive disability;(c) Deaf-blindness;(d) Deafness;(e) Emotional disturbance;(f) Hearing impairment;(g) multiple disabilities;(h) Orthopedic impairment;(i) Other health impairment;(j) Specific learning impairment;(k) Speech or language impairment;(l) Traumatic brain injury (m); Visual impairment; or(n) Developmental delay, as defined in paragraph (C)(6) of this rule.

Ohio defines "Hearing Impairment", "Deafness" and "Deafblind" as:

- "Hearing impairment means an impairment in hearing, whether permanent or fluctuating, that

adversely affects a child's educational performance but that is not included under the definition of deafness in this rule.

- "Deafness" means a hearing impairment that is so severe that the child is impaired in processing linguistic information through hearing, with or without amplification that adversely affects a child's educational performance."
- "Deaf-blindness" means concomitant hearing and visual impairments, the combination of which causes such severe communication and other developmental and educational needs that they cannot be accommodated in special education programs solely for children with deafness or children with blindness."

Looking at hearing loss specifically, Ohio lists specific criteria beyond diagnosis of a hearing loss in both ears that might qualify a child for education services. The following is summarized from the **Operating Standards for Ohio Educational Agencies Children with Disabilities 2008:**

(1) An average pure tone hearing loss of fifty decibels or greater, according to the "American Speech-Language-Hearing Association (ASHA) Guidelines for threshold Audiometry" (2005) for children six through twenty-one years of age for the frequencies five hundred, one thousand, and two thousand hertz in the better ear; [The guidelines referenced in paragraph (J) (1) of this rule are available Audiologic Assessment of Children From Birth to Five Years of Age" (2004) for children from birth to five years of age or according to the "American Speech-Language-Hearing Association (ASHA) Guidelines for Manual Pure-Tone 3301-51-06 - 122 - [www.asha.org.]

(2) An average pure tone hearing loss of twenty-five decibels or greater (ASHA) for the frequencies five hundred, one thousand, and two thousand hertz in the better ear, which has an adverse effect upon the child's educational performance related to documented evidence of:

- (a) A more severe hearing loss during the developmental years than is currently measured
 - (b) A history of chronic medical problems that have resulted in fluctuating hearing, presently or in the past; or
 - (c) A delay in diagnosis, provision of amplification, or initiation of special programming.
- (3) A hearing loss in excess of twenty-five decibels (ASHA) for the frequencies one thousand hertz through eight thousand hertz in the better ear, resulting in such poor auditory discrimination that it has an adverse effect upon the child's educational performance.

Ensure properly working equipment:

According to Ohio's Operating Standards, " Each school district must ensure that hearing aids worn in school by children with hearing impairments, including deafness, are functioning properly. And "(2) External components of surgically implanted medical devices" (cochlear implant(s)), "each school district must ensure that the external components of surgically implanted medical devices are functioning properly." However according to the Administrative code "a school district is not responsible for the postsurgical maintenance, programming, or replacement of the medical device." 3301-51-02 - 45 -

Audiological Evaluation:

As part of the evaluation for a child with hearing loss, children should receive "An audiological examination completed by a certified or licensed audiologist in cases where the disability is primarily the result of a hearing impairment."

Educational Audiological Services:

The child identified with hearing impairment, deafness and or deaf blindness shall receive Related Services. According to Ohio's Operating Standards related services means:

"transportation and such developmental, corrective, and other supportive services as are required to assist a child with a disability to benefit from special education, and includes speech-language pathology and audiology services, interpreting services, psychological services,

physical and occupational therapy, recreation, including therapeutic recreation, early identification and assessment of disabilities in children, counseling services, including rehabilitation counseling, orientation and mobility services, and medical services for diagnostic or evaluation purposes.

Related services also include school health services and school nurse services, social work services in schools, and parent counseling and training. Exceptions to this are:

- (a) Exception; services that apply to children with surgically implanted devices, including cochlear implants.
 - (i) Related services do not include a medical device that is surgically implanted, the optimization of that device's functioning (e.g. mapping), maintenance of that device, or the replacement of that device .(ii) Nothing in paragraph (B)(52)(a)(i) of this rule: 3301-51-01 - 30 -(a) Limits the right of a child with a surgically implanted device (e.g., cochlear implant) to receive related services (as listed in this rule) that are determined by the IEP team to be necessary for the child to receive FAPE.(b) Limits the responsibility of a school district to appropriately monitor and maintain medical devices that are needed to maintain the health and safety of the child, including breathing, nutrition, or operation of other bodily functions, while the child is transported to and from school or is at school; or (c) Prevents the routine checking of an external component of a surgically-implanted device to make sure it is functioning properly, as required in rule 3301-51-02 of the Administrative Code."

Audiology services included in Related Services in Ohio:

- (a) Identification of children with hearing loss;
- (b) Determination of the range, nature, and degree of hearing loss, including referral for medical or other professional attention for the habilitation of hearing;
- (c) Provision of habilitative activities, such as language habilitation, auditory training, speech reading (lip-reading), hearing evaluation, and speech conservation;
- (d) Creation and administration of programs for prevention of hearing loss;

-
- (e) Counseling and guidance of children, parents, and teachers regarding hearing loss; and
 - (f) Determination of children’s needs for group and individual amplification, selecting and fitting an appropriate aid, and evaluating the effectiveness of amplification. (3301-51-06)

FM Equipment:

Personal FM selection and fitting is under the Audiologist's scope of practice due to their specialized training and expertise.

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.

Least Restrictive Environment (LRE)

Considering the learning environment for the child with hearing loss is 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 out of past negative experiences of parents and 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 through the years. However, LRE placement is an IEP team decision.

FAPE

There is more alphabet soup in this field to learn! 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 life is that services necessary for your child to benefit from education must be free and be of educational benefit to the child. Skip to last sentence... Appropriate does not mean “best,” but... as parents, we can use current research to help a school delineate between most appropriate, research based practices and “what we’ve always done.” An educational plan designed with the unique needs of your child in mind and carried out by a knowledgeable team puts your child well on his or her way to receiving FAPE.

**Ohio Communication Plan
for a Student who is Deaf or Hard of Hearing**

Student's name: _____

DOB: _____

“Consider the communication needs of the child, and in the case of a child who is deaf or hard of hearing, consider the child’s language and communication needs, opportunities for direct communications with peers and professional personnel in the child’s language and communication mode, academic level, and full range of needs, including opportunities for direct instruction in the child’s language and communication mode” **Operating Standards for Ohio Educational Agencies Serving Children with Disabilities 3301-51-07 (L)(1)(b)(iv)**

1A. The child’s/student’s **primary language** is one or more of the following:

Check all that apply.

Expressive

Receptive

- | | | |
|--------------------------|--------------------------|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Spoken English |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Other native language (American Sign Language, Spanish, etc.), specify _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Combination of several languages |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Minimal language skills, no primary language |

Comments:

1B. The child’s/student’s **primary communication mode** is one or more of the following.

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

Expressive

- | | |
|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Spoken language | <input type="checkbox"/> Cued Speech/Cued 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"/> Manually Coded English (i.e. Signing Exact English, etc.) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> American Sign Language | <input type="checkbox"/> Conceptual signs (i.e. Pidgin Signed English, Conceptually Accurate Signed English) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Other: please explain | |

Comments:

Receptive

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

Comments:

2. Consider opportunities for direct* communications with peers and professional personnel and opportunities for instruction in the child's/student's language and communication mode. **Communication: CFR § 300.324(a)(2)(iv)**

The IEP team has considered:

1. Opportunities for direct* communication with peers.
Describe opportunities:

2. Opportunities for direct* communication with professional staff and other school personnel.
Describe opportunities:

3. Opportunities for direct* instruction:
Describe opportunities:

*Direct language/communication/instruction occurs person to person, not through an additional source (e.g. educational interpreter, captioner).

3. What supports are needed to increase the proficiency of parents and family members in communicating with the child/student? **Parent Counseling Training: CFR § 300.34(8)(i) and (iii)**

Issues Considered:

Action Plan, if any:

4. Describe the child's/student's need for adult role models who are deaf/hard of hearing and peer groups in sufficient numbers of the 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. **Placement determination: CFR § 300.116**

Issues Considered:

Action Plan, if any:

5. Was an accurate and complete explanation of the continuum of educational placement options provided and considered? The IDEA mandates that the placement for each student with a disability be only as restrictive as the student's individual needs require. The basic regulatory requirement is that students are only removed from regular education classrooms if they cannot be educated satisfactorily in regular classes with the use of supplementary aids and services. **Placement determination: CFR § 300.115 300.116, LRE: CFR § 300.114**
Were the following options presented?

- General Education Classroom
- Special Education Classroom
- Program within a school district for students who are deaf /hard of hearing
- Special school for students who are deaf /hard of hearing (i.e., Ohio School for the Deaf, St. Rita School for the Deaf, etc.)

Issues Considered:

Action Plan, if any:

6. The 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. **Qualified personnel:**
Operating Standards: (B)(50)

Issues Considered:

Action Plan, if any:

7. The communication-accessible academic instruction, school services, and extracurricular activities the child/student will receive have been identified. The team must consider the entire school day, daily transition times and what the student needs for full communication access in all activities. **Communication: CFR § 300.324(a)(2)(iv), Non-academic settings: CFR § 300.101 FAPE**

Issues Considered:

Action Plan, if any:

8. There is an alternate plan in place to maintain communication during academic instruction, school services, and extracurricular activities with the child student if any of the following events happen:

- Interpreter is absent
- Hearing Aids/Cochlear Implant(s) is/are not working (i.e. batteries are dead, components missing, left at home, etc.)
- FM System is not working

Issues Considered:

Action Plan, if any:

Guidance for Completing the Ohio Communication Plan for a Student who is Deaf/Hard of Hearing

The Ohio Operating Standards requires IEP teams to consider the unique communication needs for all students with a hearing loss receiving related services or support.

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

For whom does the Communication Plan need to be completed?

The Communication Plan should be completed for any student with a hearing loss who is receiving IEP services.

How is the Communication Plan developed?

The IEP team completes the communication plan at the IEP meeting. All team members, including educational audiologist, teacher of the deaf, interpreter, etc. should be present and ready to share pertinent information regarding the student’s language and communication. If the student’s team does not include a teacher of the deaf or other professional with significant experience working with students who are deaf/hard of hearing, it is highly recommended that such a professional be included given the unique needs of such students.

The Communication Plan is not a checklist. Meaningful discussions of each component will result in any necessary action plans to address relevant needs. Teachers must also ensure 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 often should the communication plan be reviewed?

Along with the student’s IEP, the Communication Plan should be reviewed at least annually.

What if the student’s family does not use the same mode of communication as their child?

Students cannot be denied instructional opportunities based on their family’s ability to communicate.

What if the student uses a different mode of communication than the one emphasized in our program?

A student’s experience with other communication modes cannot be the basis for denial of instructional opportunity. The amount of residual hearing a student has cannot be used as the basis for denial of instructional services, within the parameters of eligibility guidelines per the Ohio Operating Standards.

DIRECTIONS FOR COMPLETING THE COMMUNICATION PLAN

The IEP team must consider the following:

“Consider the communication needs of the child, and in the case of a child who is deaf or hard of hearing, consider the child’s language and communication needs, opportunities for **direct communications with peers and professional personnel in the child’s language and communication mode, academic level, and full range of needs, including opportunities for direct instruction in the child’s language and communication mode**”
Operating Standards for Ohio Educational Agencies Serving Children with Disabilities 3301-51-07 (L)(1)(b)(iv)

1A. The student’s primary language (expressive and receptive):

The IEP discusses and checks the appropriate box in each column for the student’s **expressive and receptive language**.

1B. The child’s primary communication mode (expressive and receptive):

The IEP team discusses and checks the appropriate box in each column for the student’s expressive and receptive communication. The student may or may not use multiple modes; the student’s expressive and receptive may differ (e.g., a student may use spoken language expressively and sign language receptively). Consideration must be given to each student’s unique communication. If the student uses multiple modes describe it in this section for multiple modes of communication if applicable, under “explanation”.

Is the student’s language level sufficient to acquire grade level skills and concepts of the general education curriculum?

What opportunities does the student have for “direct communications with peers and professional personnel in the child’s language and communication mode, academic level, and full range of needs, including opportunities for direct instruction in the child’s language and communication mode”?

2. Consider opportunities for **direct*** communications with peers and professional personnel and opportunities for instruction in the child’s language and communication mode.

*Direct language/communication/instruction occurs person-to-person, not through an additional source (e.g. educational interpreter, captioner).

The IEP team has considered:

1. Opportunities for **direct*** communication with peers.

Describe opportunities:

The IEP team will discuss opportunities for the student to communicate directly with peers who are hearing and/or deaf or hard of hearing using the student’s language and communication mode. Opportunities in and out of school should be discussed.

2. Opportunities for **direct*** communication with professional staff and other school personnel.

Describe opportunities:

The IEP team will discuss opportunities for the student to communicate directly with staff and school personnel using the student’s language and communication mode. This may include related services professionals, school principal, secretary, lunch room staff, bus driver, etc.

**3. Opportunities for direct* instruction:
Describe opportunities:**

The IEP team will discuss opportunities for the student to receive direct instruction from professional staff and school personnel in the student’s language and communication mode. Direct instruction means the teaching of general education curriculum and IEP goals.

3. What supports are needed to increase the proficiency of parents and family members in communicating with the student? Considerations: Parent Counseling Training 300.34(8)(i) and (iii)

Discuss with parents/family members what types of support and/or training they need to develop effective communication with their child in order to meet IEP goals and objectives. Describe the issues discussed as a team and document the action plan. What training is needed? Where can that training be obtained?

4. Does the student need adult role models who are deaf or hard of hearing and peer groups in sufficient numbers of the student’s communication mode or language, to support his/her IEP goals? Document who on the team will be responsible for arranging for adult role model connections and opportunities to interact with peers. Considerations: Placement determination 300.116

As a team, discuss how the involvement of adults and peers who are deaf or hard of hearing might facilitate the student meeting language goals and objectives on his/her IEP. Document the action plan made by the team. Describe opportunities for the student to interact with adults and peers who share his/her language and communication mode. Opportunities should be discussed for in and out of school activities.

5. Was an accurate and complete explanation of the continuum of educational placement options provided and considered? The IDEA mandates that the placement for each student with a disability be only as restrictive as the student’s individual needs require. The basic regulatory requirement is that students are removed from regular education classrooms only if they cannot be educated satisfactorily in regular classes with the use of supplementary aids and services Considerations: Placement determination 300.115 300.116, LRE 300.114

Were the following options presented?

- General Education Classroom
- Special Education Classroom
- Program within a school district for students who are deaf or hard of hearing
- Special school for students who are deaf or hard of hearing (i.e., Ohio School for the Deaf, St. Rita School for the Deaf, etc.)

Use the checkboxes to indicate whether or not the continuum of placement options was discussed as a team. Document the issues discussed as a team and describe an action plan, if any. Were parents/family members informed of all options? Do they feel that they have enough information? If they do not, who on the team will be responsible for gathering and sharing the information with them? Does the IEP team need help in gathering resources?

6. The teachers, interpreters, and other specialists delivering the communication plan to the student must have demonstrated proficiency in and be able to accommodate for the child’s primary communication mode or language. Considerations: 300.114 LRE

Discuss as a team whether or not teachers, interpreters and other specialists, such as the student’s audiologist, speech-language pathologist, OT, PT, etc have sufficient skill in the student’s language and communication mode to support development of higher levels of language and academic content. If not, what needs to happen?

7. The IEP team has discussed ways to ensure academic instruction, school services, and extracurricular activities will be fully accessible. The team must consider the entire school day, daily transition times and what the 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

Has the IEP team discussed how communication will be addressed in each of these areas (i.e. academic instruction, school services, and extracurricular activities)? What services are appropriate to ensure full access throughout each day?

8. There is an alternate plan in place to maintain communication during academic instruction, school services, and extracurricular activities with the student who is deaf or hard of hearing if any of the following events happen:

- **Interpreter is absent**
- **Hearing aids/cochlear implant is not working (e.g. batteries are dead, components missing, left at home)**
- **FM System is not working**

The IEP team will discuss alternative means for communication given unexpected circumstances. How will the educational team plan for finding and contacting a substitute interpreter? How will the educational team ensure extra hearing aid or cochlear implant batteries are available?

This guidance document is an adaptation of the following documents: Frequently Asked Questions: Communication Plans for Deaf and Hard of Hearing Students, Colorado; Directions for Iowa’s Communication Plan for a Student who is Deaf or Hard of Hearing; Addendum for Students who are Deaf or Hard of Hearing, Communication Considerations, New Mexico.

Created at the Center for Outreach Services - Ohio School for the Deaf
by Carrie Davenport and Tabitha Belhorn
Updated 9/2013

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

School Placement Considerations for Students Who are Deaf or Hard of Hearing

The one thing that parents of children who are deaf and hard of hearing understand better than anyone else is that the choices in communication, educational placement options, and other decisions about raising their children are complex and individualized. Flexibility and understanding the issues are key. Unfortunately, parents often lack the necessary knowledge and advocacy skills when confronted with a “one size fits all” model by the systems that are there to support them. How can parents be truly “equal partners” when considering educational placement for their child? By knowing the law and understanding the communication needs of their child.

You’re in the Game – Come Prepared

Do you know the answers to these questions?

- Can you question a school districts’ “philosophy” of educational placement?
- Do you, as the parent, have the right to participate in this decision?
- How do you effectively advocate for appropriate school placement based on the individualized needs of your child?

What are the legal considerations in school placement decisions?

- LRE, or “Least Restrictive Environment”, placement for students in special education is not just a place, but also the setting in which the students will be in the least restrictive environment based on his individual needs.
- IDEA Section 300.46 (a)(2)(iv) addresses the consideration of the unique communication needs of students who are deaf or hard of hearing, including:
 - o Opportunities for direct communication with peers and professional personnel
 - o The child’s unique language and communication mode, academic level, and full range of needs
 - o Opportunities for direct instruction in the child’s language and communication mode

- o Only when the individualized needs of the student have been addressed should a team begin the discussion of WHERE those needs will be met
- o Factors which cannot be used in determining placement: Category of disability, significance of disability, availability of special education and related services, configuration of the service delivery system, availability of space, administrative convenience.

Looking at the big picture of School Placement: Academics, Communication, and Social Interaction

Three of the main issues in considering placement are of equal importance and intertwined in such a way that they must be addressed in the context of one another in order to effectively place a student in the appropriate school setting:

- Academic level of the student
- Communication mode or language (regardless of the degree of hearing loss)
- Opportunities for direction interaction with peers

A Continuum of Placement Options

A full continuum of placement, program and service options to serve students who are deaf/hard of hearing more effectively, including those students with additional disabilities should include, but not be limited to:

- Regional programs (combined in resource and general education settings) that provide the critical mass of age and language-appropriate opportunities for direct instruction and communication with staff, peers, personnel, and services.
- A state school for the deaf (residential and day school).
- General education placements with all necessary support services, such as itinerant teachers credentialed in d/hh education, interpreters, and assistive listening technology.

-
- Special day classes and resource programs, as required by federal and state laws, which may include reverse mainstreaming, partial mainstreaming, and team teaching opportunities.
 - Nonpublic schools, virtual schools, home instructions, hospital instructions, and institutions required by federal and state laws to meet the needs of students with disabilities that cannot be met within the traditional public school setting.

Possible issues to address when considering placement:

- Philosophy of center-based program and compatibility to student's communication needs.
- The "Least Restrictive Environment" should be defined in context to the communication needs of the child.
- More than one type of placement should be discussed (i.e. mainstream or inclusion, center-based, etc.).
- There may be biases within the team about communication methods or range of placement.
- Preconceived ideas on placement based on degree of hearing loss.
- Itinerant services – availability and appropriateness.
- NCLB (No Child Left Behind) regulations regarding schools that do not meet "Adequate Yearly Progress."

Finding the right school placement for a student who is deaf or hard of hearing requires an IEP team to truly look at the individual needs of that student. A successful education for our children is accomplished when their academic, social, cognitive, and communication needs are met. In this way, the mission of special education is fulfilled, to prepare students for employment and independent living. Only then, will the efforts of educating students who are deaf or hard of hearing be fulfilled.

This fact sheet is derived from a full article on this topic which can be accessed through www.handsandvoices.org. Click on the "What Parents Need to Know" Series link.

Note: If you are experiencing difficulty in understanding or navigating the transition process into an IEP, check out the Resources on the Law and Advocacy on pages 30-31. for information on Advocacy and where to get help! The Center for Outreach Services provides support to families and school districts statewide at no cost. Go to www.ohioschoolforthe deaf.org/outreach for more info. Also, Ohio Hands & Voices provides support to families. Visit www.ohiohandsandvoices.org to learn more. The Ohio Department of Education, Office for Exceptional Children provides assistance if you experience conflict resolution or procedural safeguards issues. exceptionalchildren@education.ohio.gov.

Preschool Programs

Now it is time to observe preschool programs in your area! 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 checklists have been included in this packet to assist you in this task. One is the *Preschool/Kindergarten Placement Checklist for Children who are Deaf or Hard of Hearing*, the other is the *Preschool Evaluation Chart*. Please review these observation guides and select the one that is most “user-friendly”. Both lists highlight the same information.

These lists are not designed to be comprehensive but rather to serve as guides when you are observing preschools. They should assist you in observing different areas that are important to your child’s success. Not all of the areas may apply to all programs and not all of the listed areas may be important for your child’s programming. Discuss the critical areas with your RIHP Parent Advisor, private speech-language pathologist or other professional. The Parent Mentor at the Center for Outreach Services is also available.

If your child has multiple needs, you should also discuss placement issues with other providers serving your family (i.e. PT, OT, and vision).

Remember there is no “one size fits all”. The key is meeting the individual needs of your child.

Guidelines for Programs

Below are some suggestions for parents when pursuing an appropriate educational program:

- Look for a program that is truly individualized
- Program should encourage parental involvement through support and guidance
- Look for a language-rich environment
- Opportunities for interaction with peers
- Ensure appropriate amplification and assistive technology is available
- Well-trained, well-supported educational staff
- Commitment to educational options
- Adherence to IDEA
- Offers a range of support services for students and families
- Curriculum is developmentally appropriate with expectations supporting one year’s growth in one year’s time
- Appropriate physical environment that promotes learning



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 _____

Related and Support Services:

<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 $\leq .6$ 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		

-
- 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 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 _____ _____		

Preschool Evaluation Chart

Development Needs	School #1	School #2	School #3	School #4	School #5
Development of receptive and expressive language skills focused on primary communication mode.					
Exposure to additional sign language vocabulary on a daily basis.					
Daily structured auditory training specific to my child's needs.					
Daily speech therapy specific to my child's needs.					
All communication and instruction using simultaneous speech and _____ at a language level above child's current communication level.					
Daily classroom activities focused on speech and language development.					
Accessibility					
Full access to classroom materials via my child's communication mode.					
Daily listening check for equipment and knowledge of how to resolve any problems so that student does not have any "down time" for hearing.					
Access to the use of assistive technology devices.					
Qualified, experienced instructors/interpreters.					
Social Needs					
Opportunities for frequent exposure to adults with hearing loss fluent in child's language modalities.					
Daily opportunities to interact with peers with hearing loss using child's language modalities.					
Access to school wide programs and activities via student's communication mode.					
Full access to classroom activities via student's communication mode.					
Average					

Rate each category from 0-5

Resources on the Law and Advocacy

WEBSITES

<http://www.ohioschoolforthe deaf.org/Outreach.aspx>

Ohio School for the Deaf - Center for Outreach Services. "Our mission is to share and promote best practices among all educational partners serving deaf, deafblind and hard-of-hearing learners in Ohio. The Center for Outreach Services provides services to learners, families and schools using any communication mode, including both visual and auditory methods."

<http://education.ohio.gov/GD/Templates/Pages/ODE/ODEPrimary.aspx?Page=2&TopicID=968&TopicRelationID=967>

The Ohio Department of Education, Office for Exceptional Children provides technical assistance and resources for parents and school districts related to IDEA requirements. Ohio transition guidelines and other documents can be found on the ODE website.

www.ohiohelpmegrow.org

Help Me Grow/Ohio Department of Health Bureau of Early Intervention promotes the well being of young children with disabilities through home-based, health and specialized developmental services.

http://www.odh.ohio.gov/odhprograms/ei/hear_inf/hearinfl.aspx

The Ohio Department of Health's "Regional Infant Hearing Program, which is part of Help Me Grow, offers families of children with hearing loss support and help your baby learn to communicate by providing specialized services."

www.yellowpagesforkids.com/help/oh.htm

"Find educational consultants, psychologists, diagnosticians, health care specialists, academic tutors, speech language therapists, advocates, and attorneys. You will also find government programs, grassroots organizations, special education schools, and parent support groups."

www.handsandvoices.org

"Hands & Voices is dedicated to supporting families with children who are Deaf or Hard of Hearing without a bias around communication modes or methodology." They are a parent-driven, non-profit organization providing families with the resources, networks, and information they need to improve communication access and educational outcomes for their children.(Ohio Hands & Voices: www.ohiohandsandvoices.org)

www.wrightslaw.com

An useful website on the law and advocating for your child with special needs; includes information on IEPs and 504 Plans.

www.ndepnow.org

Information about Deaf Education Reform movements around the country.

www.gallaudet.edu/Clerc_Center/Information_and_Resources.html

“At the Laurent Clerc National Deaf Education Center, we share information and provide resources related to the development and education of deaf and hard of hearing children.”

www.deafchildren.org

American Society for Deaf Children is a national non-profit organization that believes “...deaf or hard-of-hearing children are entitled to full communication access in their home, school, and community. We also believe that language development, respect for the Deaf, and access to deaf and hard-of-hearing role models are important to assure optimal intellectual, social, and emotional development.”

<http://ohiodeafblind.org>

Ohio Center for Deafblind Education (OCDBE) provides services in Ohio for individuals, birth through 21 years, with deafblindness, including free collaborative technical assistance to families, educational personnel and service providers through training and information dissemination.

www.ocecd.org

Ohio Coalition for the Education of Children with Disabilities (OCECD) is a statewide, nonprofit organization dedicated to advancing the educational interests of children with handicapping conditions. The Coalition offers free materials and statewide training programs for families with handicapped children. OCECD also offers assistance in the areas of advocacy, legislation, educational rights, transition from high school to community, and team work between families and service providers.

BOOKS

Wright, Pamela. & Peter W. D. Wright. Wrightslaw: From Emotions to Advocacy: The Special Education Survival Guide, 2nd Edition. Hartfield, VA: Harbor House Law Press, Inc., 2006

Wright, Pamela. & Peter W. D. Wright. Wrightslaw: Special Education Law, 2nd Edition. Hartfield, VA: Harbor House Law Press, Inc., 2007

Tucker, Bonnie P. IDEA Advocacy for Children who are Deaf or Hard of Hearing: A Question & Answer Book for Professionals and Parents. Singular Pub Group / Cengage Learning, 1997

Siegel, Lawrence. The Complete IEP Guide: How to Advocate for Your Special Ed Child, 7th Edition. Berkeley: NOLO, 2011.

Appendices

APPENDIX A: The Transition Portfolio

APPENDIX B: Frequently Asked Questions about Transitions from Part C to Part B

Appendix A: The Transition Portfolio

An exciting tool that you can use during the transition process

How to development a relationship with your future preschool staff (portfolio)

- Introduction
- Cover page
- Biopoem
- Important people and pets
- Communication methods
- Parent/caregiver information

Introduction

As your child leaves services through Help Me Grow and the Regional Infant Hearing Program and moves on into a new and exciting phase in their education, it is necessary to plan for that upcoming change. Any transition-particularly for young children who are deaf/hard of hearing-can be a time of both excitement, anticipation, and concern for parents/caregivers, teachers, as well as the child. For these children, there can be many issues surrounding their school program: complex expressive and receptive communication, equipment needs, health needs, and information teachers and para-professionals need to create a quality preschool experience (Demchak & Greenfield, 2000).

Transitions are more likely to progress smoothly if pertinent information is comprehensive and individualized and is presented to the new team members in a manner that is easy and useful to use. *This is not intended to replace any required records maintained for your child*, but rather than focuses on details that are critical to your child's everyday functioning and learning.

A transition portfolio is designed to be a strategy that documents critical information about your child. As the child's parent, you are the most crucial person to provide that information. Your Help Me Grow Service Coordinator and Regional Infant Hearing Program Parent Advisor can discuss with you what information is needed to include in this portfolio to help your child be successful in preschool. This is designed as a guide and should look different for every child. Examples with questions are provided, but all may not be relevant to your child. There is also an opportunity to create additional forms specific to your child.

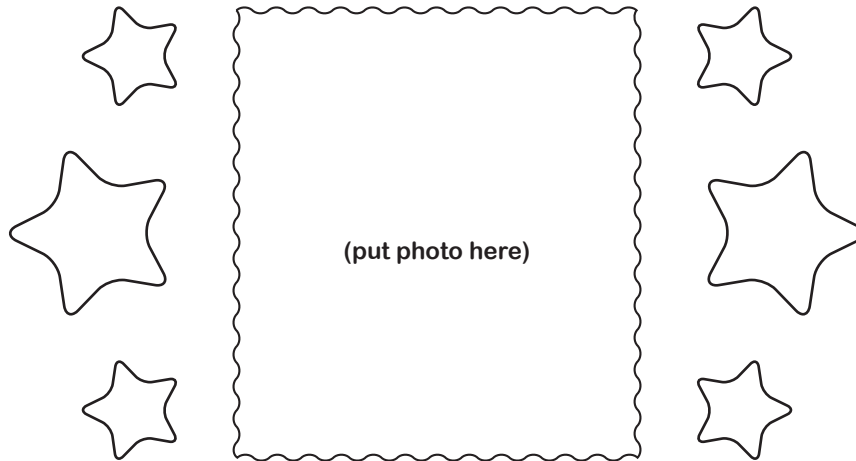
We hope that this portfolio is a positive helpful guide for your family and the new school team to prepare for your child.

This portfolio was derived from "A Communication Competency Model-Massachusetts Match Maker Project".

MY PORTFOLIO

Initial Portfolio Date _____

This is me!



My name is _____

This is how I say/sign my name _____

I have had a hearing loss since _____

My RIHP Parent Advisor is _____

You can contact her/him at _____

My HMG Service Coordinator is _____

You can contact her/him at _____

My primary mode(s) of communication are:

Circle: Sign language speaking picture system pointing gesturing

My primary language is:

Circle: English Spanish Other _____

The type of amplification I use in my left ear is:

Circle: None hearing aid bone-anchored hearing aid (BAHA) cochlear implant

The type of amplification I use in my right ear is:

Circle: None hearing aid bone-anchored hearing aid (BAHA) cochlear implant

I keep my batteries in _____

A BIOPOEM

Writing a Biopoem is a great way to provide a written snapshot about your child.

- Line 1: First name
- Line 2: Traits which describe your child's character (list 4)
- Line 3: Relative (brother, sister, son, daughter, etc. of.....)
- Line 4: Lover of...(3 things or people)
- Line 5: Who feels...(3 items)
- Line 6: Who needs...(3 items)
- Line 7: Who fears...(3 items)
- Line 8: Who gives...(3 items)
- Line 9: Who would like to see...(3 items)
- Line 10: Resident of...
- Line 11: Last name

MY BIOPOEM

Line 1 _____

Line 2 _____

Line 3 _____

Line 4 _____

Line 5 _____

Line 6 _____

Line 7 _____

Line 8 _____

Line 9 _____

Line 10 _____

Line 11 _____

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)

This is how I say their names and/or this is their name sign:

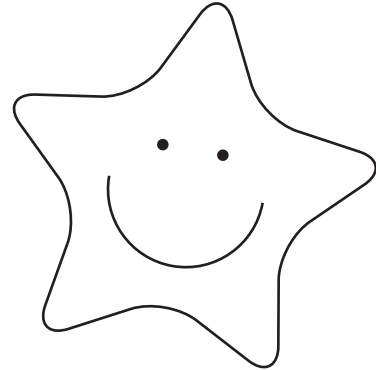
Family names and titles

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
- speak as you use sign
- I am close to you
- show me a picture or act out what you 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 _____
- Word _____ How I say it _____
- Word _____ How I say it _____
- Word _____ How I say it _____

Here are some words that I have a home sign for:

- Word _____ How I say it _____
- Word _____ How I say it _____
- Word _____ How I say it _____
- Word _____ How I say it _____

PARENT/CAREGIVER INFORMATION

What are things that you feel will help the new teacher/team build a relationship with you and your child?

Parent/Caregiver Name _____

The best way(s) to contact me to share information about my child and her/his school day are:

_____ call _____ (phone #) at _____ (best time of day)

_____ email _____

_____ note home

How will I know about what is happening at preschool?

_____ notes home _____ (weekly, as needed)

_____ email _____ (weekly, as needed)



Appendix B: Frequently Asked Questions about Transitions from Part C to Part B

Not all children who have been receiving Part C services will make a transition to Part B services when the child turns three years old. For example, some children who were eligible for Part C services may not meet the eligibility criteria for special education services when they turn three years old. When children do transition to Part B, however, some common issues and questions may arise.

What do we do about summer services for children who turn three years old in the late spring or summer?

Good transition planning will insure that, prior to the end of the school year when the child turns three, the appropriate assessments and the Individualized Education Plan (IEP) have been completed so that the child can begin services at the start of the school year. This will insure that families know what services their children will be receiving and will prevent delays at the beginning of the school year. IEPs developed in the spring should be reviewed again in the fall to insure that services identified are still appropriate given growth and change that will occur in the summer. Help Me Grow (HMG) and Regional Infant Hearing Programs (RIHP) should not be paying for services after a child turns three years old. The transition planning team needs to assist families in identifying alternatives for the summer months, including accessing community activities that take place during the summer.

Who will be the service coordinator once a child turns three years old?

The Part C service coordinator will serve as the child's service coordinator until the child turns three and the family begins to assume this role. In Part B, there is no requirement for a child and family to have a service coordinator, however, one strategy for assisting families is to make sure that they have the opportunity to connect with other families. Ohio Hands & Voices can help connect families to each other.

What might happen if our family does not think that the school district preschool program is appropriate for our child?

The family is part of the IEP planning team and should have input in the design of their child's educational plan. The development of this plan should include consideration of the amount and type of service appropriate for the child and a discussion of the least restrictive environment (LRE) for receiving those services. The school is required to provide appropriate educational services based on the child's needs outlined in the IEP. The school district may contract for these services so that a child could continue to receive the same services that were provided under Part C, the only change being the funding source. If the family and district are not in agreement, there are established dispute resolution procedures, such as the federal complaint process, mediation, or due process. The family always has the option to refuse services.

The Center for Outreach Services (COS)

The mission of the Center for Outreach Services (The Center) is to share and promote best practices among all educational partners serving deaf, deafblind and hard-of-hearing learners in Ohio. The Center provides services to learners, families and schools using any communication mode, including both visual and auditory methods. There is no cost to parents or eligible school districts and employees for services provided by The Center. The Center receives funding and support from the Ohio School for the Deaf and from federal Part B funds through the Office for Exceptional Children of the Ohio Department of Education.

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Please let us know how this packet has supported or helped you.
Let us know how we could improve this information for your use.

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