Deaf and Hard of Hearing

Program Review
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Executive Summary

The Calgary Board of Education (CBE) offers specialized programming for children in grades 1 to 12 who are deaf or hard of hearing. Additionally, there are 2 students in a kindergarten program at the Stanley Jones site. For 2013-2014, ninety-one (91) students are enrolled in the Deaf and Hard of Hearing Program (DHH) system site programs located at Queen Elizabeth School, Queen Elizabeth High School and Stanley Jones School. Additionally for 2013-2014, more than two hundred and fifty (250) Deaf and Hard of Hearing students are enrolled in community school settings and receiving audiology, strategist and other supports as appropriate to their needs.

Deaf education has been influenced historically by a number philosophies and approaches. New educational and philosophical approaches are continuously evolving for education in general and deaf and hard of hearing education in particular. The following are very brief background descriptions of current approaches, recognizing that each has broader components. Descriptors do not purport to reflect a thorough review of the literature or every emerging methodology:

- the aural/oral approach emphasizes the use of residual hearing, speaking and lip reading to communicate in the predominant language of the community/country
- the total communication approach combines spoken language and signing as languages of instruction, complemented by a variety of other techniques
- the simultaneous communication approach presents signs simultaneously with spoken words
- the bilingual/bicultural approach emphasizes an equal value to spoken and signed language as well as exposure to Deaf and hearing culture

The Deaf and Hard of Hearing Program was last reviewed at the system level in 2000. Principals and staff review all school programming on an annual basis as part of the adjustment cycle of school development planning. An updated system review was initiated in December 2013 by Directors Gouthro and Church. The review was designed to investigate, describe and make
recommendations as to the ways in which programming currently aligns with the educational and social/emotional needs of the students being served. An external reviewer from Alberta Health Services and a CBE specialist undertook this review. A total of 130 stakeholders were included as part of the data gathering.

Through analysis of the data the reviewers found:

- a focus on literacy in the aural/oral program at Stanley Jones and in the junior/senior high school setting at Queen Elizabeth High School
- a continuum of service that is personalized to student needs
- access to communication through technology and interpreters as appropriate to the needs of students
- opportunities for integration, particularly at the junior/senior high school level
- self-advocacy by students at all levels
- international and domestic families searching out and enrolling in DHH programs
- a high percentage of students (eg. 86% in 2013 in the aural/oral program) who transition successfully into neighbourhood schools when that is their goal

Observations and interviews revealed consistent themes which then guided the reviewers in making recommendations for program adjustments. These themes include:
Academic Success

- in elementary schools student literacy is a focus at all levels, with concerns identified regarding the lack of early language intervention (ECS) to promote later academic success
- in junior/senior high school, literacy is supported through allowing students access to multiple opportunities for literacy in the modality/language of their choice

Program

Multiple participants noted inconsistencies across sites, giving rise to the possibility of the need for a system guiding document. These inconsistencies were in the areas of:

- availability/equity of educational opportunities for integration
- equity of exposure to grade level teaching and learning based on the Alberta Education Programs of Study
- openness to partnerships with agencies, other partners and stakeholders in support of each student
- criteria and processes for student placement
- opportunities for meaningful and targeted professional development within and across sites
- access to efficient, predictable and sustainable resourcing for teaching and support staff
- stewarding and sharing of resources

Learning Environment

- all three schools received recent acoustic modifications to classrooms, still leaving some sites as better physical environments than others
- parents and staff raised concerns about student safety in elementary school non-classroom settings, due to inadequate access to communication outside the classroom and/or mobility challenges for some students
- concerns were raised at Stanley Jones about the need for access to a sensory space in order to attend to the complex needs of students
Based on the findings, the reviewers had four recommendations, which are presented here in summarized form:

1 | Program; Early Literacy
   The Deaf and Hard of Hearing Program focus on excellence in communication, language and literacy should begin in pre-school (ECS) and continue through to grade 12. (Alberta Education Curriculum Redesign’, Alberta Education video on literacy)

2 | Development of a School Parent, Student and Community Advisory Committee
   The Calgary Board of Education might invite selected educators, students, community stakeholders and members of the Deaf community into a collaborative relationship in support of students who are Deaf and Hard of Hearing.

3 | Development of a Guiding Document
   The Calgary Board of Education might invite appropriate and interested educators to assist with the development of a guiding document for Deaf and Hard of Hearing education, with the end goal of supporting students through building a common understanding of best practice.

4 | Accommodation
   Based on feedback from multiple stakeholders regarding equity of educational opportunity, personalization of learning, capacity building, and stewarding of resources, the reviewers are recommending that the CBE explore the feasibility and advisability of providing a common site for elementary students enrolled in the Deaf and Hard of Hearing program.

\[1 \text{ Available: } \text{http://education.alberta.ca/department/ipr/curriculum.aspx}\]
Introduction

The CBE Deaf and Hard of Hearing (DHH) Program is evolving due to changes in research, technology, pedagogy and new understandings of student learning needs. The program has not been formally reviewed at the system level since 2000. A comprehensive review of Deaf and Hard of Hearing programming was therefore initiated in December 2013 at the request of Directors Gouthro and Church. The review was designed to investigate if the programming at CBE system sites:

- meets the educational and
- social/emotional needs of students,
- aligns with current DHH best practice/research
- aligns with the CBE Three-Year Education Plan.

According to the information provided on the Calgary Board of Education website\(^2\), the DHH Program offers communicative supports to students who are Deaf and Hard of Hearing as follows:

Communication is facilitated through the use of American Sign Language/English, an Aural/Oral approach, or the Total Communication approach to personalize the programming in response to the learning needs of each DHH student.

The program sites include Queen Elizabeth School offering grades 1-6 total communication, Queen Elizabeth High School offering grades 7-12 ASL/English and Aural/Oral (WHI-Based/TRANS-3) and Stanley Jones School offering k-6 Aural/Oral. Additional information can be found on school websites as well as the CBE education website.

\(^2\) Available: [http://www.cbe.ab.ca/Programs/spec_ed/se-dhh.asp](http://www.cbe.ab.ca/Programs/spec_ed/se-dhh.asp)
Background

In 1937, a congregated class for Speech and Hearing students was opened in the Calgary Board of Education so that students could attend a program within the province. In the 1950’s the Alberta School for the Deaf in Edmonton provided a residential and day program setting for Deaf and Hard of Hearing children in Alberta.

A congregated program with an aural/oral approach to learning became available in 1974 in the Calgary Board of Education at the request of a parent group. This program started with three elementary classes at Stanley Jones and only one certified teacher of the deaf from England. A junior high site was available at Colonel McLeod School until September 2008 when it was moved to Queen Elizabeth High School.

During the 1970’s The Deaf community requested a second site to provide a simultaneous/total communication approach to learning (speaking, hearing, and some signing of English). Queen Elizabeth Elementary began this approach in 1976 and is now mostly total communications focused. Students from Queen Elizabeth School and Stanley Jones School are then accommodated at Queen Elizabeth High School (QEHS) for grades 7 to 12, should they so desire. Until its closure in 2011, high school students could also attend Van Horne High School. Queen Elizabeth High School is thus the sole system program site grades 7 through 12.

Historically, two diverse perspectives on deafness and modes of communication have dominated the understandings and practices of educators, other professionals and community members:

- Medical model suggests that there is a challenge for deaf and hard of hearing students and they can be supported through medical interventions, auditory technology and prostheses thus enabling them to participate fully in the larger society.
• Cultural model regards Deaf people as members of a cultural and linguistic minority with its own language and culture and does not support a disability view.

Historically the oldest educational approach was termed aural/oral, where the emphasis is on hearing and speech. In recognition that this approach did not meet the needs of all students, a total communication approach was developed in the 1950’s in the United States which valued each student’s right to accessible and comfortable communication that would not be limited to the aural/oral approach, but might include signing (Signed English).

Significant advances in hearing aids and cochlear implant technology have resulted in an expectation that families will have access to interventions that will support their children in meeting their listening, spoken language, and academic potential with their devices.

International and national changes in understanding of the benefits of early language acquisition has identified a third philosophy; a bilingual /bicultural (bi-bi) approach that recognizes the authenticity and importance of both hearing and Deaf cultures, and incorporates both in the classroom. Both American Sign Language (ASL) and English are used for instruction, assessment and demonstration of student learning.

The Deaf and Hard of Hearing program in the CBE is evolving to personalize learning for all students, focusing on the continuum of service they require for communication and to best make meaning of their learning. Students require (and parents request) support for a variety of philosophies and methodologies in both general and DHH education. Students may well require and/or request different strategies at different ages and stages of their educational journey. Choices and offerings should always be guided by good research and evidence-based practice, in combination with student (and parental) views about what is educationally and personally best for them.
Methodology

The Calgary Board of Education has developed a program review and evaluation process in order to:

- better understand the impact a program has on students’ learning
- highlight the success of a program,
- provide stakeholders with an opportunity to give feedback
- make recommendations for possible program adjustments

The process includes communication transparency and the use of multiple sources of data. The outcome of the process is a report of findings and recommendations for program adjustment that becomes available to CBE administration and all other stakeholders.

The methodology is based on a modified qualitative research approach to data collection including semi-structured interviews, focus groups, observations and a parent survey. This is followed by triangulation of data, categorizing of data into emergent themes and patterns, and ultimately, recommendations.

In 2000 a system Review of Services to Students who are Deaf and Hard of Hearing was conducted by Dr. Debra Russell, University of Alberta, on behalf of and in consultation with, parents. Arising from this work, a system leadership position was created in 2001 for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing program. The System Principal brought together a Steering Committee, who developed goals for the program and produced an internal document. (Appendix 1)

The CBE process normally used for program review bases its indicators on a program integrity framework or goals and characteristics communicated to parents on the program website. Information for parents about the Deaf and Hard of Hearing programs available on the CBE website is limited for elementary students, providing no goals or characteristics of the program from

3 For example see Alternative Programs: http://www.cbe.ab.ca/Programs/program-choice.asp
which to determine indicators of program accountability. Queen Elizabeth High School has a “Deaf and Hard of Hearing Program Articulation” to inform parents and community. In the absence of a k-12 integrity framework, two documents were used to develop indicators:

- Calgary Board of Education (September 2011). Unique Settings and Specialized Program Descriptions (internal document)

CBE administration chose an objective review committee: a specialist from the Calgary Board of Education and an educational consultant from Alberta Health Services. They developed tools (survey, observation checklists) to build an understanding of how well the program is meeting the educational needs of students and families in the three settings.

The review committee observed the learning environment at the three sites. Semi-structured interviews and focus groups were also conducted to gather data.
Table 1: Number of participants in data collection

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Data Source</th>
<th>Participants</th>
<th>n</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Interviews</td>
<td>Administrators</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Learning Leaders</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Specialist</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Audiologist</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Strategist</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Historian</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>U of A professor</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Freelance Interpreter</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Focus Groups</td>
<td>Teachers</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Educational Assistants/Interpreters/Intervener</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Students (grades 3 - 11)</td>
<td>32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Community and alumni</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parent survey</td>
<td>3 sites</td>
<td>40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td></td>
<td>130</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

A limitation of the data gathering process was the absence of the collection of data from relevant participants at schools other than these three sites and the inability to collect data from every potential participant.
System Data

Communication to the public

Parents with children who are deaf or hard of hearing are provided with an overview of the available programming options, definitions, resources and the locations of system sites on the Calgary Board of Education public website\(^4\). Each school maintains a website as follows:

Stanley Jones School\(^5\): a comprehensive description of what parents may expect in an aural/oral approach to education for their children is provided on the school website, which is reinforced by a presentation at the school’s information evening.

Queen Elizabeth School\(^6\): the reviewers could find no evidence of a Deaf and Hard of Hearing program through the website.

Queen Elizabeth High School\(^7\): the website has a very comprehensive description of what grade 7 to 12 students and their parents can expect in the DHH program, including a program articulation document, a digital tour in ASL and English, resources and videos accessible to deaf and hard of hearing students.

Throughout the year, each school provides opportunities for communication via combinations of individual and group parent meetings, print documents, multimedia presentations, assemblies, tours, open houses and other events specific to the individual student, grade, and school.

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\(^4\) Available: [http://www.cbe.ab.ca/Programs/spec_ed/se-dhh.asp](http://www.cbe.ab.ca/Programs/spec_ed/se-dhh.asp)

\(^5\) Available: [http://schools.cbe.ab.ca/b233/dhh.htm](http://schools.cbe.ab.ca/b233/dhh.htm)

\(^6\) Available: [http://schools.cbe.ab.ca/b227/](http://schools.cbe.ab.ca/b227/)

\(^7\) Available: [http://schools.cbe.ab.ca/b806/student_services/DHH.htm](http://schools.cbe.ab.ca/b806/student_services/DHH.htm)
Enrolment

Two DHH strategists support over 250 students in their caseload who have codes for deafness, hearing disability, and other complex needs and choose placement in community classroom settings. Additional support is provided by: one DHH specialist, one educational audiologist, one complex needs specialist, school based educational assistants as required and a speech and language pathologist from Alberta Health Services.

There are 91 students enrolled in the k to 12 system program site settings, many of whom have co-existing complex needs. In addition to teachers trained for the DHH classroom, these students are supported one specialist, two strategists, school based educational assistants (most trained in this specialty), certified educational interpreters, DHH Program Learning Leaders, an educational audiologist, a speech and language pathologist from Alberta Health, and a complex needs strategist.

Non-school based staff member normally support students across the spectrum of DHH placements and student needs.

Table 2: Congregated setting enrolment

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Congregated setting</th>
<th>Grades</th>
<th>Number</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Stanley Jones School (SJS)</td>
<td>K - 6</td>
<td>42</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Queen Elizabeth School (QES)</td>
<td>1 - 6</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Queen Elizabeth High School (QEHS)</td>
<td>7 - 12</td>
<td>33</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Please note that school enrollments are constantly changing, these numbers represent the numbers at the time of the review.
Class Size

According to the CBE website:

Class sizes range from 8-12 students, depending on grade level and student complexity, thus providing excellent professional to student ratios.

The researchers observed that the class sizes at all three sites were within the recommended number as defined by program expectations for specialized programs within the Calgary Board of Education. Staff at all three schools raised concerns about the ever-increasing complexity within classes: severe social/emotional issues; huge variance in cognitive, linguistic, grade and general academic levels; and some students with backgrounds that may include geographic upheaval or personal/family trauma. While these concerns exist in any group of learners, educational stressors may be compounded when they co-exist with deafness or hearing loss. As one school staff commented:

The school community has felt challenged by the growing complexity of student needs. We are learning ways in which we can access appropriate resources and staffing to meet these needs.

Analysis

Data gathered through the analysis of observations, interviews, focus groups and a parent survey gave rise to four predominant themes that then informed the recommendations made by the reviewers:

- academic success/learning
- programming
- policy and process
- learning environment
Academic success

The reviewers looked for evidence of a focus on literacy in English and American Sign Language (ASL) where appropriate, and the use of a variety of modalities (visual, auditory, print, kinesthetic) for instruction and assessment.

From QEHS:

A QEHS alumnus was observed working in one of the DHH classrooms as a Mount Royal University Education Practicum Student. His parents moved him from an oral program in Montreal and he believes he did not reach his potential until he learned American Sign Language, and then began to reach grade level in high school, achieving a high school diploma. He and his parents attribute his success to two opportunities in the program; an intensive focus on language development in both ASL and English, and taking as many English classes as possible including English as a Second Language class (for optimum exposure to written English). This student is the recipient of 3 scholarships and attending Mount Royal University. (Story from parent)

An alumnus student from Queen Elizabeth Elementary who communicated in ASL with her peers provided a second story. She chose to enrol in an integrated classroom with an interpreter for her junior/senior high school, but did not receive ASL instruction, even though that is her first language. She is currently enrolled in the Information Design program at Mount Royal School, but admits to struggling with written English. As a Deaf student she believes in the importance of bilingual ASL and English instruction from birth. (Story from alumnus student)

A student in grade 12 in Queen Elizabeth High School was interviewed who has chosen to return for a fourth year of school to improve her English competencies. She began communication orally, but now prefers her education to be delivered in both ASL and
aural/oral. She stated that she has always wanted to continue on to post-secondary education, but the trip to Gallaudet University motivated her to take the necessary courses to make this possible. (Story from student)

Academic success is improved through access to supports. One QEHS student explains:

*An interpreter is great for helping me understand. Sometimes if it is not clear through interpretation. I'll ask an education assistant and it's been really great having the extra on-line support (with a teacher of the deaf) as well so that when I get home and I'm stuck with homework I can send an email or go on-line. Support for that is really good.*

*From Stanley Jones*

Parents have told us that they researched world-wide to find programs to meet their child's needs and decided to come to Calgary, Alberta because of the aural/oral methods being offered at Stanley Jones within the Calgary Board of Education. Parents are informed at the Open House that the purpose of the aural/oral program is to give children enough of a base in spoken and written English that they can thrive in an integrated setting. Within two years, one student from an African country was fully integrated into the community school, with the younger brother is soon to follow.

One of our students made a public address to the Calgary Board of Education three years ago. His parent, who expressed his worry repeatedly about how his son would be received by the larger society, let us know after the presentation how proud he was of his son that day. He said his son could now speak anywhere even at community religious functions. The story is emblematic of the kind of individual success we realize with our students, supported by their parents.
(Stories from Principal)

The predominant theme arising from the elementary administration, staff and parent data is the need for early literacy intervention. Parents from Queen Elizabeth School, for example, valued the development of American Sign Language as a first language and recommended the return of a pre-k (ECS) program.

Staff and administration in the aural/oral program also expressed the need for early intervention for speech/language training and have requested the consideration of a pre-school for the past five years.

Academic success is supported at the elementary level by a collaborative team approach to student learning by teachers, education assistants, interpreters, parents, students, speech language pathologists, occupational and physiotherapists, audiologists, complex needs consultants, multicultural liaisons and psychologists. All of these stakeholders work collaboratively to craft individual program plans.

The junior/senior high school meets academic needs by exposing students to a wide variety of opportunities for literacy and learning in various modalities through:

- Strategies to improve ASL competencies
- Teaching literacy through content area instruction
- Comprehensive course planning using a 6+ year approach that includes four to five English courses, including English as a Second Language
- Acquiring appropriate resources to support teaching and learning (QEHS, 2013)

Academic success is supported by a collaborative team approach to student learning by DHH credentialed teachers, regular classroom teachers, education assistants and interpreters. This collaborative team approach is important for the consistent and sustainable delivery of supports and services.
Early Intervention

For all children, including those who are deaf or hard of hearing, research shows that “full and early access to language, whatever its form, is the most important foundation for success” (Marschark & Hauser, 2012). For students who are deaf or hard of hearing and use spoken language, it is often assumed that they understand and process more information than is actually the case (Spencer & Marschark, 2010). The same argument is made regarding students who are taught ASL in pre-school; their level of fluency is extremely variable as they enter school from outside agencies. It is critical that there is an understanding of each child’s preferred first language and preferred mode of communication at home and at school, to best support the development of literacy for each student in keeping with his or her individual gifts and abilities. (CBE Annual Education Results Report and Three-Year Education Plan, 2013)

Many participants spoke to the past availability of an early intervention program in the Calgary Board of Education and the need for a pre-school and kindergarten program to be re-introduced. (CBE Early Learning Principles and Practices, 2013)

Discussions regarding an early intervention program have occurred as recently as June 2013 with the CBE Early Education team and with Connect Society in Edmonton. With changes in personnel within the CBE, these conversations appear to have been put on hold. In this review process, contact was made with Deaf and Hear Alberta, who are currently reviewing pre-school services and are willing to provide support to the Calgary Board of Education.

The reviewers recommend that this work re-commence so that students and families are supported through the provision of Early Childhood Services (ECS) and kindergarten programming for DHH children and educational interventions can begin as soon as possible. This would not be out of scope, as similar programs exist for other groups of students.
Assessment

Schools may receive assessment and/or progress reports (with or without recommendations) from speech and language pathologists, psychologists, specialists, strategists, occupational and physical therapists and audiologists. This is not consistent student to student.

Administration and teachers at the DHH program school sites have concerns regarding access to and timing of the receipt of student records and information from other school boards and the various agencies, including the Alberta Children’s Hospital. A child can be placed in a program months before audiological, language, psychological and other relevant assessments are received. This can make individual programming, placement and appropriate for the student difficult or inappropriate.

Stanley Jones uses the IRIS system of student learning and assessment and finds this approach a successful way to assess the learning journey and Individualized Program Plan (IPP) process for DHH students. As alignment at the provincial and jurisdiction level for a renewed IPP process for students with exceptional needs is still in progress, best practice in reporting for DHH students is on-going work.

As standardized assessments that are normed for DHH individuals are relatively rare, ensuring appropriateness, validity, accuracy and reliability of such assessments for DHH students is difficult.

Locally developed courses for American Sign Language and for ASL Deaf Culture have been acquired for use in the Calgary Board of Education. Report card stems have also been created to match these curricula and were introduced in 2013-14.
Transitions

Transitions for students include initial intake and program placement, post- high school planning, movement from grade to grade; movement from site to site; and program to program movement.

System processes and support for transitions have been unclear and inconsistent. The CBE hired a system principal in 2001 to oversee a team of strategists and an audiologist, but without a specialist. The system principal took on the dual role, which caused confusion over roles and responsibilities. There is no longer a System Principal, rather just a strategist. This has resulted in elementary principals doing some of their own transitioning from agencies such as GRIT, PACE, Providence, Renfrew and the Alberta Children’s Hospital.

Transition of student information between grades 6 and 7, and support for students as they transition, is a process of collaboration between schools. It typically consisted of a program transition meeting at the system level and coordinated activities at the school level. School staffs report being unsure as to how the system positions might support them, and how exactly student placements and transitions should occur. This results in inconsistencies and miscommunication over some transitions and placements that are frustrating to all and not in the best interests of students. Clarification and process delineation is needed.
Programming

Reviewers gathered multiple sources of evidence demonstrating the need for a Program\(^8\) document to guide all processes, procedures and programming that lead to success for Deaf and Hard of Hearing students.

Themes that emerged from the evidence gathered were:

Collaboration

Evidence from support staff at elementary schools indicates that they do not always feel included in educational and social/emotional planning for student learning and would like to see clearly defined and consistent roles and responsibilities. They all applaud the teachers that they work with.

Staff at the high school feels empowered by the team approach to educational programming and planning for the personalized needs of each student. There is evidence of a set of policies and procedures that are now followed.

Parents at Queen Elizabeth School recommend that everyone needs to work together as a team, for example: Alberta Health Services, Alberta Children’s Hospital, pre-schools, agencies, schools, and Hands and Voices

Support

In the absence of a defined system Program Integrity document, programming for students is site-based and dependent on decisions made or supported by the principal.

System support also comes through the provision of funding. Every student is provided with a per-capita amount from Alberta Education. Each school is provided with a formula for funding 8 -10 students within a class with one teacher and one education assistant. One elementary principal personally

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\(^8\) Program: a system approach to providing consistent values, learning opportunities, programming and supports for students e.g. alternative programs, GATE
works to apply for grants (Children and Youth with Complex Needs) to support the complex needs children with extra educational assistants, so their needs can be met. It is unclear whose work this should be. Another elementary principal is supported through Area and Learning Services funding to provide extra interpreters and teachers for the program. The junior/senior high school worked with the system to improve this formula to include a school budget line (RAM) for interpreting services, but met with limited success. However, funding was made available based on the complexity of the students' needs.

Parents state that there is a "weak bridge between Deaf and Hear Alberta (DHA), Calgary Association of the Deaf (CAD)," schools, and the system. Deaf and Hard of Hearing organizations speak to the difficulty of accessing the schools to communicate their ability to provide support for students and families. Schools report past issues that resulted from different operating guidelines and accountabilities for such organizations and schools. Forging a pathway to strategic and well defined partnerships could perhaps be part of any future guiding document.

Professional development

Where there are multiple programs in a school, common practice is that professional development is driven by all staff. Elementary principals spoke about attempts to have inter-school opportunities. Professional development is provided by the CBE audiologist to Stanley Jones School. A lack of qualified substitute teachers limits the use of regular school days for professional development at the elementary level.

At the high school there is more flexibility to provide days for specialized professional development for the DHH team, and still balance whole school or general PD needs with program specific needs throughout the school.

Lack of DHH specific content at Teachers’ Convention was noted, and could be addressed to some degree by working with the relevant ATA committee around speakers or other approved alternatives for those days.
Staffing

School administrators commented on the ongoing difficulty in accessing appropriate, trained staff. In the past three years administrators have been more intentional in their hiring, however there are still gaps. This is an on-going issue that has been exacerbated by the lack of opportunities for post-secondary education for teachers and education assistants for Deaf and Hard of Hearing in Alberta. The majority of teachers and support staff come from British Columbia or the USA. Currently, there is no CBE position description specific to a teacher of the deaf and hard of hearing, or DHH education assistant.

To improve stewarding of resources and access to support staff, a common pre-school to grade 6 site might provide more flexibility and opportunities for internal professional development. The inconsistencies raised by multiple participants and noted throughout the report could likely be remedied over time by a system guiding document.
Learning

The Calgary Board of Education believes that “personalized learning is a highly intentional and responsive practice that centers on developing learning experiences for all students so that they can participate, progress and achieve.” (CBE Early Learning Principles and Practice) The Alberta Education Ministerial Order (Appendix 2) delineates in section 2.4 the competencies that all students will incorporate into their learning.

The CBE has a process developed for alternative programs; each program has a Framework for Program Integrity\(^9\) that outlines the values, key characteristics, outcomes and many other factors that frame a system program. An inclusive standing committee worked on the Framework, a process in which multiple stakeholders had input. The standing committees continue to oversee adjustment, integrity and sustainability for each program. This process could be investigated for its applicability for non-alternative DHH programming. Such might:

- provide an opportunity for shared and dispersed leadership and responsibility, drawing on resources in the community beyond education
- encourage capacity-building
- move attention away from a preoccupation with micro-level change at the individual site to strengthened interconnections

\(^9\) Available: [http://www.cbe.ab.ca/Programs/prog-choice.asp](http://www.cbe.ab.ca/Programs/prog-choice.asp)
Learning Environment

Excessive background noise and poor acoustics can lead to poor understanding of speech, reading deficiencies, delayed language acquisition, and other negative consequences for student performance. All three schools have had recent (within three years) modifications to classrooms to improve acoustic quality.

At the junior/senior high school, adjustments are made to the physical environment and accessible communication and integration opportunities are provided for students.

Both elementary sites have limitations to the physical environment (particularly at Stanley Jones). Providing appropriate opportunities for integration and inclusion is impeded by the limited number of hearing peers in the two schools.

Parents and staff of elementary students at Queen Elizabeth School communicated concerns over safety at school and in the playground, particularly for students who are profoundly deaf or have exceptional needs. Making sure that all school staff has knowledge and awareness of the individual needs of these students and ensuring appropriate levels of supervision would help to provide a safe and caring environment.

Students from grade 1-12 are well served by technologies such as amplification systems, SmartBoards, CART and VRI services.

Based on the feedback from multiple stakeholders, the reviewers are recommending that the CBE explore the potential to provide a common site with an improved physical learning environment for elementary students in the Deaf and Hard of Hearing program. Given the current shortage of space across the CBE, finding a site that can house all DHH elementary students, including ECS programming, and also provide sufficient opportunities for inclusion and

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integration may be challenging. Planning and Transportation would need to be included in all aspects of this recommendation.

Data from parent on-line survey

Parents from all three sites were given the opportunity to provide feedback on programming for their students through an on-line survey. Thirty-five parents participated in the survey.

Respondents were asked through which primary mode of communication their children learned; 77% indicated Aural/Oral and 23% indicated American Sign Language.

Participants were provided with a five-point likert satisfaction scale for sixteen questions
Table 3: Response from on-line survey in percent

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Very Satisfied</th>
<th>Satisfied</th>
<th>Unsatisfied</th>
<th>Very Unsatisfied</th>
<th>Don't Know</th>
<th>Top Two</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Quality of programming your child receives.</td>
<td>71.4</td>
<td>22.9</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>5.7</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>94.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The program addresses your child's social/emotional needs.</td>
<td>71.4</td>
<td>22.9</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>5.7</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>94.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The program develops the learning potential of your child.</td>
<td>71.4</td>
<td>20.0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>2.9</td>
<td>2.9</td>
<td>91.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The program addresses your child's academic needs.</td>
<td>60.0</td>
<td>28.6</td>
<td>2.9</td>
<td>2.9</td>
<td>5.7</td>
<td>88.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The program enhances your child's feelings of self-esteem and identity.</td>
<td>60.0</td>
<td>34.3</td>
<td>2.9</td>
<td>2.9</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>94.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The program prepares your child for life-long learning.</td>
<td>57.1</td>
<td>31.4</td>
<td>2.9</td>
<td>2.9</td>
<td>5.7</td>
<td>88.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The program prepares your child to thrive in the community.</td>
<td>60.0</td>
<td>25.7</td>
<td>5.7</td>
<td>2.9</td>
<td>5.7</td>
<td>85.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The level of opportunity for involvement in decisions about your child's education.</td>
<td>60.0</td>
<td>25.7</td>
<td>5.7</td>
<td>5.7</td>
<td>2.9</td>
<td>85.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The level of opportunity for involvement in the social/cultural aspects of the program.</td>
<td>54.3</td>
<td>34.3</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>5.7</td>
<td>2.9</td>
<td>88.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The level of safety your child feels at school.</td>
<td>71.4</td>
<td>22.9</td>
<td>5.7</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>94.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The level of caring your child feels at school.</td>
<td>77.1</td>
<td>20.0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>2.9</td>
<td>97.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The level of collaboration among key players involved in your child's education.</td>
<td>65.7</td>
<td>25.7</td>
<td>5.7</td>
<td>2.9</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>91.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The level of resources necessary to support an accessible learning environment.</td>
<td>42.9</td>
<td>37.1</td>
<td>5.7</td>
<td>8.6</td>
<td>5.7</td>
<td>80.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The level of course choice.</td>
<td>54.3</td>
<td>28.6</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>5.7</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>82.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The level of information about DHH programming and resources on the CBE's website.</td>
<td>40.0</td>
<td>25.7</td>
<td>20.0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>14.3</td>
<td>65.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The teaching practice of teachers in the program.</td>
<td>68.6</td>
<td>28.6</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>2.9</td>
<td>97.1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The highest levels of satisfaction from parents (97% very satisfied and satisfied) were reported to be in teaching practice and level of caring children felt at school.

High levels of satisfaction (between 90% and 94% very satisfied and satisfied) were reported in the areas of: quality of programming; addressing social/emotional needs; enhancing feelings of self-esteem and identity; levels of safety in school and the level of collaboration between key players in a child’s education.

Levels of reasonable satisfaction (very satisfied and satisfied between 80% and 89%) were reported in the areas of: program addresses academic success; prepares a child for life-long learning; prepares a child to thrive in the community; provides opportunities for parents to be involved in decisions; and provides opportunities for parents to be involved in cultural aspects of school. Levels of resources and the levels of choice fall in this range, but have a lower level of very satisfied ratings.

The lowest level of satisfaction (66% very satisfied and satisfied, 20% unsatisfied, 14% don’t know) was reported regarding the information provided about the Deaf and Hard of Hearing program on the CBE website. This is a relatively easy issue to attend to.

Should results of the parent survey form part of the information considered by any future committe, disaagregation by school site and ensuring that sufficient respondents from any one site participated to be valid would both be useful pieces of data. In addition, school generated data on these same topics might be available for further triangulation.
Three open response questions were posed.

1 | Are we meeting the mandate of the program?

Seventy-seven percent of the 35 participants responded with a ‘yes’. Seven percent responded with a ‘yes’ but added that they were unsure about the mandate, as it was not communicated on the CBE website. Twelve percent, or 4 parents, responded with a ‘no’.

2 | How do you know if your child is being successful in the DHH program?

Parents reported recognizing a child’s success through regular feedback and constant communication with teachers (31.4%) and through report cards and IPPs (31.4%). Twenty percent of the respondents regarded their child’s improved confidence and social/emotional behaviours as being indicators of success. Twenty percent of respondents noted how happy and engaged their children were in the DHH program.

3 | Is there anything you would recommend to improve the DHH program?

Thirty parents responded to this question. Of that number, eight responded that they had no recommendations for improvement. In an open question such as this, there is a broad range of responses. These have been clustered in the following table, listed by number of responses.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>Number</th>
<th>Comment</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>American Sign Language</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>As a first language (2) Help for parents in learning ASL (2) Some teaching of ASL to aural/oral student to help with integration into Queen Elizabeth High School(1)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Transitions and continuous support</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>Monitoring of skills and communication tools throughout schooling to prepare for graduation and living in a hearing community.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Integration</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>Integration into a hearing population as soon as possible.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>On-line</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>Communication with parents Programming for students</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Technical support</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>Support for staff in dealing with hearing devices Use of assistive technologies e.g. iPads</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Transportation</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>Addressing long bus rides for special needs students</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Collaboration</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>Parents with teaching teams</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Speech Therapists</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>More access in one-to-one speech therapy for students that have a big gap in oral language.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reading and resources</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>Program needs more reading More resources for parents to help students</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Early Interventional</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>Starting DHH program in Kindergarten</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Trained teachers</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>Need for trained teachers of the DHH and training for educational aides</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
A wide variety of responses emerged on a variety of topics, and any future committee could take into consideration the feasibility and advisability of the suggestions.

A fourth comment box was accessible for any ‘other’ comments. Twenty-two participants made comments. Sixty-four percent of comments thanked teachers for their dedication and hard work, and the Calgary Board of Education for offering a Deaf and Hard of Hearing Program. Other comments included suggestions for free transportation and field trips, increased access to text resources, improvements in communication on the CBE website and increased access to assistive technologies.
Parents from Queen Elizabeth School requested of Directors that they have the opportunity to offer their voice through a focus group. The parents also invited alumni and representatives from Alberta School for the Deaf, Deaf and Hear Alberta and Calgary Association for the Deaf.

Participants in this focus group indicated what they most valued and wanted the CBE to pay attention to:

- ASL language development as a first language
- a bilingual/bicultural setting
- the right to a quality education
- full access to supports, including interpreters
- trust and transparency
- equality and common respect
- a safe and caring environment

Parents at Queen Elizabeth School expressed the need for support in learning American Sign Language. The Calgary Board of Education offers sign language courses through Chinook Learning but parents do not always find them financially accessible. This might be something that the various supporting community organizations could facilitate.

As this work moves forward, similar focus groups from the other schools would provide useful comparative data, as would student focus groups from each school (as age appropriate).

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Recommendations

Reviewers made the following four recommendations with suggested actions and timelines.

Recommendation 1: Program; Early Literacy

The Deaf and Hard of Hearing Program focus on excellence in communication, language and literacy should begin in pre-school (ECS) and continue through to grade 12. (Alberta Education Curriculum Redesign12, Alberta Education video on literacy)

**Action:** support early intervention with ECS providers (e.g. Alberta Health Services, Deaf and Hear Alberta, Connect Society)

**Action:** explore with CBE professionals how best to ensure that students entering k or grade1 have emerging competencies in constructing and communicating meaning, including the future provision of ECS programs within CBE

**Timeline:** re-open the conversations before the end of the 2014 school year, with the objective of providing early learning opportunities in CBE schools by September 2015 if that is advantageous to young learners and otherwise feasible.

**Action:** provide increased support around language immersion, literacy and assessment in spoken and written language and ASL from CBE early education and literacy specialists *(Kindergarten Program Statement, Early Literacy, Alberta Education)*

**Timeline:** September 2014 and throughout the year

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Recommendation 2: School, Parent, Student and Community Advisory Committee

Queen Elizabeth High School has researched and implemented aspects of a good DHH program for their particular constituents that would support the work of an advisory committee for DHH moving forward. A wider diversity of stakeholders would bring other voices and different perspectives to this work.

An advisory committee could also ensure alignment and accountability to CBE strategies (CBE Three-Year-Plan), Alberta Education’s *Components, Essential Components of Educational Programming for Students who are Deaf or Hard of Hearing*, Inspiring Education and Ministerial Order, 2013.

An advisory committee should review a variety of models and approaches to providing excellent teaching and learning for deaf and hard of hearing students in community schools. The relevant research gathered by QEHS and other CBE professionals would be a good place to start.

In Timperley and Earl (2012), Chapman and Aspin suggest that such a network can promote change through assisting in policy implementation and providing a process for cultural and attitudinal change, embedding reform in the interactions and actions of a range of stakeholders.

**Action:** convene a facilitated committee of stakeholders with appropriate expertise, inclusive of the voice of age-appropriate students, with the purposes of (but not limited to):

- optimising educationally appropriate connections between schools, parents and community
- exploring current beliefs and practices in a culturally intelligent and sensitive way
- reviewing and improving on-line communication with the CBE’s external communities
- providing feedback on the outcomes of recommendation 3 that follows
Timeline: Initial meeting May 2014, with follow-up at least 3 times for the initial full year, to be reviewed thereafter

Recommendation 3: Development of A Guiding Document

The Calgary Board of Education might invite a team of appropriate and interested educators to assist with the development of a guiding document/framework for Deaf and Hard of Hearing education, with the end goal of supporting students who are deaf and hard of hearing by building a common understanding of best practice.

Action: Convene a facilitated committee to begin development of a system document/framework with the purpose of generally providing leaders, teachers, learners and communities with a visible framework that supports all aspects of programming. Mandates might include (but not be limited to) providing guidelines for:

- creating staffing standards and procedures for the hiring of teachers, education assistants and interpreters in DHH programs within the guidelines of collective agreements
- aligning practice with recent CBE and Alberta Education foundational documents
- creating policy and process for admissions, placement and transitions that are conducive to consistency and students’ best interests k-12 (Standards for Special Education: Essential Components of Educational Programming for Students who are Deaf and Hard of Hearing. Alberta Education, June 2004; Indicators of Inclusive Schools: Continuing the Conversation 2013)
- adjusting the support model of strategists, educational assistants, interpreters and speech pathologists, through the lens of personalization and student needs
- developing a consistent and personalized process for meeting the complex needs of students
- determining the levels and kinds of support needed to provide excellent language immersion, literacy skills and assessment in spoken/written language and American Sign Language
- describing best practice for assessment and IPP’s, and outlining the related processes and procedures
- describing appropriate professional development both at the school and program level
- facilitating the best stewardship, sharing and management of resources

**Timeline:** initial meeting before June 30, 2014 and ongoing until complete and vetted as appropriate (including but not limited to the advisory committee named in Recommendation 2)

**Action:** communicate system guiding documents and all time-sensitive relevant information to the community and CBE through corporate website, schools sites and intranet (inside) as appropriate

**Timeline:** upon document completion, no later than spring 2015

(See Appendix 3 for example of Terms of Reference).
Recommendation 4: Accommodation

Based on feedback from multiple stakeholders regarding equity of educational opportunity, personalization of learning, capacity building, and stewarding of resources, the reviewers are recommending that the CBE explore the feasibility and advisability of providing a common site for elementary students enrolled in the Deaf and Hard of Hearing program.

**Action:** explore the feasibility and advisability of a single location for ECS through elementary students with the Planning and Transportation department. Benefits might include:

- opportunity for better stewardship of human and physical resources
- opportunity to provide a continuum of access to a full range of programming and better personalized learning for each student
- opportunity to provide more appropriate teaching and learning environments based on the preferred modality for each child
- opportunity to develop a culturally and linguistically sensitive environment which is increasingly inclusive
- opportunity for increased access to external supports e.g. AHS, REACH, Deaf and Hear Alberta, Hands and Voices
- opportunity to increase and centralize access for parents to information and counselling
- opportunity for improved transitions ECS through to junior high
- opportunity for provision of early intervention with new ECS and increased kindergarten classrooms
- opportunity for the essential components of integration into curriculum-based classrooms
- opportunity for consistent and sustainable support for each student from early learning through to future transition points
- opportunity to address the specific learning environment needs of this group of students
Challenges might include

- finding an appropriate space that attends to acoustical and physical environment needs
- providing possibilities for integration due to space constraints in a single building
- ensuring already long transportation times are not increased
- overcoming any barriers arising from differing educational beliefs and methodologies about deaf and hard of hearing education co-existing in one building, with one set of leaders

**Timeline:** the need must be identified by Planning and Transportation in their 2014 3 Year Student Accommodation Plan which is developed in the spring, for consideration in the fall of 2014
Conclusion

Highlights of the Deaf and Hard of Hearing program in the Calgary Board of Education that emerged from the review process are:

- a focus on literacy in the aural/oral program and in the junior/senior high school setting
- a continuum of service that is personalized to student needs ie. in the aural/oral program through the use of IRIS
- access to communication through technology at all sites, and access to interpreters as needed
- opportunities for integration, most significantly at the secondary level
- self-advocacy by students at all levels
- international and domestic families who search for appropriate programming and then enroll in CBE programs
- students able to transition into integrated settings in community schools when appropriate and desirable
- desire for and focus on best practice among staff
- strong parental perception that students’ social and academic needs are being met in current programs

The Deaf and Hard of Hearing program in the Calgary Board of Education has a long history during which two competing philosophies of education have a) not always aligned with Alberta Education’s expectations and b) worked against optimum learning conditions and personalized curriculum-based opportunities for children.

A review process was designed to listen to a variety of stakeholders and observe the learning environments of Deaf and Hard of Hearing students in the three system settings. The objective was to determine if current programming is meeting the educational and social/emotional needs of students. The reviewers believe that in general, students’ needs are being met. As well, these concerns existed in terms of some issues around the physical environment, policy and process.
In order to support future program adjustments, the reviewers recommend that the CBE invite multiple stakeholders into an inclusive advisory network to provide input and suggestions. Additionally, the formation of a committee of informed educators is proposed, to develop a system framework/guiding document that will inform the vision, processes and procedures so they become clear to staff, transparent to parents and community, and provide for best practice in the service of students.

Additionally, the reviewers recommend that a focus on literacy begin as early as ECS and kindergarten to ensure that each student has equal opportunity for future academic and social success.

Finally, the reviewers recommend that the CBE explore the feasibility and advisability of the two elementary sites being housed within a single community school.

The reviewers would like to thank the multiple participants involved in this process. We were privileged to hear from so many passionate and responsive people involved in the education of deaf and hard of hearing children. We were honored to meet so many children who enjoyed school in general and appreciated the opportunity to be with other deaf and hard of hearing children in particular.

It is with these children in mind that we wish all those who work with deaf and hard of hearing children a positive and collaborative educational future.
References


Other references

Alberta Education. (2011) *Inspiring Education*


Glossary

**American Sign Language (ASL):** Is “natural language used by members of the North American Deaf community. It is a language that has developed naturally over time among a community of users. ASL exhibits all of the features of any language, in that it is rule-governed, its symbols are organized and used systematically, it is a productive, the number of sequences that can be made is infinite, and new messages on any topic can be produced at any time. In ASL, hand shape, movement and other grammatical features combine to form signs and sentences.” (Alberta Education, 2007)

**ASL Interpreting:** is the process of interpreting ASL into spoken English and spoken English into ASL.

**Assistive technology:** technologies used to amplify hearing such as: hearing aids, FM systems, infra-red systems, real time transcription (CART), and Video Remote Interpreting (VRI).

**Aural/Oral (Auditory-Oral approach):** is based on the principle that many “deaf and hard of hearing children can be taught to listen and speak with early intervention and consistent training to develop their hearing potential. The focus of this educational approach is to use the auditory channel (or hearing) to acquire speech and oral language.” (Alberta Education, 2007)

**Bilingual/bicultural (bi-bi) education for deaf students:** an approach of teaching two languages (ASL and English) and cultures (Deaf and non-deaf [hearing]) that recognizes the authenticity and importance of both, that incorporates elements of both in the classroom, and that reflect an empowering environment for Deaf students, where Deaf and hearing staff model respect for one another, collaboration in decision making and advocacy for the rights of Deaf individuals within and outside of the school system. The program uses dual language programs and a bilingual framework to develop competencies in
language and literacy through access and exposure to both ASL and English. While there are many different models of how bilingual/bicultural education could be implemented, all of them must have at their basis a structure that reflects Deaf empowerment. This necessitates a model that incorporates the school environment, the residence, the home, the Deaf community and the hearing community. (Alberta Education, 2007)

**Communication Access Realtime Translation (CART):** the instant translation of spoken word into text by a CART writer, using stenotype software, which is then displayed on a computer or TV monitor for deaf and hard of hearing students to read.

**Education Assistant, DHH:** a person designated to work with students who are deaf or hard of hearing. He/she is fluent in the language of their specific setting such as ASL and/or English.

**Inclusion:** the opportunity to be fully and meaningfully integrated into a typical learning environment. Inclusion also refers to an attitude of acceptance of, and belonging for, all students such that they feel valued as part of the school family. (Alberta Education, June 2009)

**Integration:** a student who is deaf or hard of hearing integrated with hearing peers in a classroom setting.

**Personal Frequency Modulated (FM) System:** a personal assistive listening device that transmits the speaker’s voice through a microphone to the listener wearing the corresponding FM receiver. The receiver is connected to the listener’s personal hearing aid or cochlear implant. It increases the loudness of the speaker’s voice and reduces the negative effects of background noise. (Alberta Education, 2007)

**Program:** a system approach to providing consistent values, learning opportunities, programming and support for students.
**Signed English:** is a broad term referring to a visual representation of English language that combines ASL signs, English signs, finger spelling and standardized markers to show inflections, plurals and verb tenses. (Alberta Education, 2007)

**Sign language interpreters:** possess post-secondary training and certification to perform the task of interpreting between two languages, such as spoken English and American Sign Language. Interpreters are members of professional associations and are governed by strict code of ethics and guidelines for professional conduct. The Association of Visual Language Interpreters of Canada is a national professional association which represents interpreters whose working languages are English and ASL. The provincial association is the Association of Sign Language Interpreters of Alberta (ASLIA). (Alberta Education, 2007)

**Speech-language pathologist:** university trained professionals who work with individuals or groups of students to identify, assess, evaluate, treat, manage and educate. (Alberta Education, 2007)

**Strategist:** a person designated to work on an itinerant basis with students having special needs who are being educated in integrated classrooms.

**Total Communication:** the use of a combination of: spoken language, signed English, fingerspelling, lipreading, amplification, reading, writing, gestures and visual imagery. (various sources)

**Video Remote Interpreting (VRI):** an interpreting service conveyed via videoconferencing, where at least one person, typically the interpreter, is at a separate location.
## Appendix 1: Deaf and Hard of Hearing Program indicators

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Indicators</th>
<th>Data Sources</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Goals</strong> 13</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1. To develop learning potential for deaf and hard of hearing students</td>
<td>Observation/Interviews (A,T, EA, I, S, P, Specialist, Strategists)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. To prepare deaf or hard of hearing students for life-long learning</td>
<td>Interviews (A,T, EA, I, S, P, Specialist, Strategists)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. To encourage collaboration among key players involved in the deaf or hard of hearing child's education</td>
<td>Interviews (A,T, EA, I, P, Specialist, Strategists)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. To develop resources necessary to support accessible learning environment for all DHH students</td>
<td>Interviews (A,T, EA, I, P, Specialist, Strategists)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. To provide an array of core and complementary course choices for DHH students</td>
<td>Interviews (A,T, S, P, Specialist,)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. To build and empower leaders within the DHH population</td>
<td>Interviews (A,T, EA, I, P, Specialist, Strategists)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. To provide for the diverse communication needs of DHH students</td>
<td>Observation/Interviews (A,T, EA, I, S, P, Specialist, Strategists)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. To develop literacy</td>
<td>Observation/Interviews (A,T, EA, I, S, P, Specialist, Strategists)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Programming</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ASL, A/O, bi-bi</td>
<td>Observation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Professionals in classroom</td>
<td>Observation/Admin interview</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Class size</td>
<td>Observation/Admin interview</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Learning Team</td>
<td>Interviews (T, S)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Partner support (AHS, pathologist etc)</td>
<td>Interviews (T, A, EAs)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Flexible scheduling</td>
<td>Interviews (A,T)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assessments</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Audiology/speech pathologist, psychologist</td>
<td>Interviews (A, Audiologist)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Coding</td>
<td>Interviews (T, A)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IPP process</td>
<td>Interviews (A, T, S, P)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parent input</td>
<td>Interviews (A, P)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Indicators</td>
<td>Data Sources</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>-------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Transition Planning</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Identification of goals</td>
<td>Interviews (A, T, P)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Communication with receiving environment</td>
<td>Interviews (A, T, P)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Consistency of staff/student/parent expectations</td>
<td>Interviews (A, T, P)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Academic</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Literacy focus and assessment</td>
<td>Interviews (A, T, EA, I, P)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Curriculum modifications</td>
<td>Observation/Interviews (T, EA, I)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Variety of modalities of instruction</td>
<td>Observation/Interviews (A, T, EA, S)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Opportunities for communicative interactions</td>
<td>Observation/Interviews (A,T, EA, S, P)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Array of core and complementary course choices</td>
<td>Interviews (A, P, S)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Assistive technologies</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Amplification</td>
<td>Observation/ Interviews (audiologist, S)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Appropriate equipment and strategies</td>
<td>Observation/ Interviews (audiologist, S)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interpreters/CART</td>
<td>Observation/ Interviews (audiologist, A, T, S)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Environment</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Professionally determined acoustically friendly</td>
<td>Observations/ Reports/ Interview (Audiologist, A)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student/teacher appropriate seating</td>
<td>Observations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Access to appropriate communicative technologies, including interpreters</td>
<td>Observation/Interviews (A,T, EA, I, S, P)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Safe and Caring</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Opportunities for reduced isolation</td>
<td>Observation/Interviews (A,T, EA, S, P)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Students feel safe</td>
<td>Interviews (S, EA, P)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student self-advocacy and esteem</td>
<td>Observation/Interviews (T, EA, S, P)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Legend: A = Administration, T = Teacher, EA = Educational Assistant, I = Interpreter, S = Students, P = Parents

Calgary Board of Education (September 2011). Unique Settings and Specialized Program Descriptions (unpublished)
APPENDIX

SCHOOL ACT

MINISTERIAL ORDER (#001/2013)

STUDENT LEARNING

An Order to Adopt or Approve Goals and Standards Applicable to the

Provision of Education in Alberta

WHEREAS the fundamental goal of education in Alberta is to inspire all students to achieve success
and fulfillment, and reach their full potential by developing the competencies of Engaged Thinkers and
Ethical Citizens with an Entrepreneurial Spirit, who contribute to a strong and prosperous economy
and society.

WHEREAS education in Alberta is based on the values of opportunity, fairness, citizenship, choice,
diversity, and excellence.

WHEREAS the educational best interest of the child is the paramount consideration in making
decisions about a child’s education.

WHEREAS education in Alberta will be shaped by a greater emphasis on education than on the
school; on the learner than on the system; on competencies than on content; on inquiry, discovery and
the application of knowledge than on the dissemination of information; and on technology to support
the creation and sharing of knowledge than on technology to support teaching.

WHEREAS competencies are interrelated sets of attitudes, skills and knowledge that are drawn upon
and applied to a particular context for successful learning and living, are developed over time and
through a set of related learner outcomes.

WHEREAS students will study subjects; learn reading, writing and mathematics; and focus more
deeply on a curriculum that allows for more interdisciplinary learning through competencies that are
explicit in all subjects.

WHEREAS an Engaged Thinker knows how to think critically and creatively and make discoveries
through inquiry, reflection, exploration, experimentation and trial and error; is competent in the arts
and sciences including languages; uses technology to learn, innovate, collaborate, communicate and
discover; has developed a wide range of competencies in many areas, including gathering, analysis
and evaluation of information; is familiar with multiple perspectives and disciplines and can identify
problems and then find the best solutions; as a team member, integrates ideas from a variety of sources
into a coherent whole and communicates these ideas to others; adapts to the many changes in society
and the economy with an attitude of optimism and hope for the future; as a lifelong learner, believes
there is no limit to what knowledge may be gleaned, what skills may be accumulated, and what may
be achieved in cooperation with others; and always keeps growing and learning.
WHEREAS an Ethical Citizen understands that it is not all about them, has learned about and is appreciative of the effort and sacrifice that built this province and country and sees beyond self-interests to the needs of the community; is committed to democratic ideals; contributes fully to the world economically, culturally, socially and politically; as a steward of the earth, minimizes environmental impacts; builds relationships through fairness, humility and open mindedness, with teamwork, collaboration and communication; engages with many cultures, religions and languages, values diversity in all people and adapts to any situation; demonstrates respect, empathy and compassion for all people; cares for themselves physically, emotionally, intellectually, socially and spiritually; is able to ask for help, when needed, from others, and also for others; and assumes the responsibilities of life in a variety of roles.

WHEREAS an individual with an Entrepreneurial Spirit is motivated, resourceful, self-reliant and tenacious; continuously sets goals and works with perseverance and discipline to achieve them; through hard work, earns achievements and the respect of others; strives for excellence and personal, family and community success; is competitive and ready to challenge the status quo; explores ideas and technologies alone or as part of diverse teams; is resilient, adaptable, able and determined to transform discoveries into products or services that benefit the community and, by extension, the world; develops opportunities where others only see adversity; has the confidence to take risks and make bold decisions in the face of adversity, recognizing that to hold back is to be held back; and has the courage to dream.

WHEREAS graduation requirements, education delivery and standards for student learning are set out in other legislative and policy instruments.

1 Ministerial Order No. 004/98, dated February 10, 1998, is hereby repealed by this order.

2 The goal of this Student Learning Ministerial Order for an inclusive Kindergarten to Grade 12 education is to enable all students to achieve the following outcomes:

(1) be Engaged Thinkers and Ethical Citizens with an Entrepreneurial Spirit;
(2) strive for engagement and personal excellence in their learning journey;
(3) employ literacy and numeracy to construct and communicate meaning; and
(4) discover, develop and apply competencies across subject and discipline areas for learning, work and life to enable students to:
   (a) know how to learn: to gain knowledge, understanding or skills through experience, study, and interaction with others;
   (b) think critically: conceptualize, apply, analyze, synthesize, and evaluate to construct knowledge;
   (c) identify and solve complex problems;
(d) manage information: access, interpret, evaluate and use information effectively, efficiently, and ethically;
(e) innovate: create, generate and apply new ideas or concepts;
(f) create opportunities through play, imagination, reflection, negotiation, and competition, with an entrepreneurial spirit;
(g) apply multiple literacies: reading, writing, mathematics, technology, languages, media, and personal finance;
(h) demonstrate good communication skills and the ability to work cooperatively with others;
(i) demonstrate global and cultural understanding, considering the economy and sustainable development; and
(j) identify and apply career and life skills through personal growth and well-being.

3 This Order shall be effective on the date of signing.
Appendix 3: Terms of Reference

Example

Terms of Reference, November, 2012

*Arts Centred Learning Alternative Program*

The Advisory Committee will review the philosophy, intent and structure of the Arts Centred Learning Alternative Program.

Outcomes

The outcomes of the advisory committee are to:

- define the philosophy, outcomes, profiles, and selection process for the alternative program
- make recommendations on shared standards of practice for building capacity in professional learning
- develop processes and communication to engage the public
- make recommendations for resources and accommodations that support sustainability of the alternative programs
- define program measures for accountability and program monitoring
- explore potential partners and/or sponsors
- revise the current Quality Control for Program Integrity to align with the current values and processes within the Calgary Board of Education and for communication to the public

Guiding Principals

The Advisory Committee is committed to improve student learning by:

- honouring the Board of Trustees values (Students come first, Learning is our central purpose, Public education serves the common good)
- aligning with outcomes and strategies in the CBE 3 Year Plan
- establishing and respecting clear communication and accountability within the Calgary Board of Education
Foundation Documents

- Ends Statements
- Three-Year Education Plan
- ACL Backgrounder

Advisory Committee Members

- Diane Nowlan (Facilitator, Specialist, Learning Services)
- Julie Barton (Specialist, Learning Services)
- Jane Rogerson, Susan Church (Directors, Area V and II)
- Principals (Leslie Robertson, Todd Cave, Keith Johnson)
- Assistant Principal James Fowler
- Teacher/Learning Leader
- Students(s)

Meetings

- Two three-hour meetings (one in November, one in January

Diane Nowlan, Specialist, Learning Services
On behalf of Deborah Lewis, Superintendent, Learning Services