



February 15, 2022

Re: Description of Deaf/Hard of Hearing (DHH) Program Supports and Services Provided in the Olathe Public Schools

There are two center-based D/HH programs in the Olathe Public Schools, one at Scarborough Elementary and the other at Prairie Trail Middle School. Not all students that are Deaf/Hard of Hearing participate in D/HH programs. Some students receive support from an itinerant Teacher of the Deaf/Hard of Hearing (TOD) in their neighborhood school. The type, amount, and location of D/HH services is determined on an individual basis by each student's IEP team.

Most of the students that are Deaf/Hard of Hearing served in the Olathe Public Schools have some degree of hearing and utilize hearing aids or cochlear implants. Students that are Deaf/Hard of Hearing attend general education classes to receive their academic instruction. Paraeducator support is provided in general education classrooms if needed, as well as American Sign Language (ASL) interpreter services. General education teachers and peers in general education classrooms do not use ASL for communication.

Instruction provided by the center-based D/HH program is designed to reinforce what students are taught in their general education classrooms. TODs do this through pre-teaching, re-teaching, and reinforcing concepts and skills in the general education curriculum. TODs provide additional instruction in auditory skills, phonemic awareness, vocabulary, English grammar, written language, self-advocacy, and speaking skills.

The D/HH program in the Olathe Public Schools provides ASL interpretation for students if needed; however, many of the students that receive D/HH services are oral and just need more intensive academic support than the general education teacher can provide. The TOD and paraeducators communicate with students through a variety of modalities, including total communication (signing, speaking, gestures, etc.), oral communication, and ASL. Interpreters in general education classrooms interpret instruction, facilitate communication between the classroom teacher and peers, and ask clarifying questions on behalf of the student.

The D/HH programs in the Olathe Public Schools do not teach ASL and there are no classes in the district taught in ASL. The Olathe Public Schools cannot replicate the ASL language rich environment or ASL immersion only available at the Kansas State School for the Deaf. When necessary to meet an individual student's needs, the school district relies on the Kansas State School for the Deaf to provide this environment and ASL instruction.

SPECIAL SERVICES