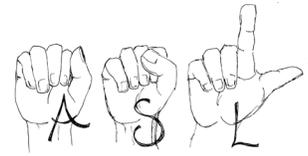


# Deaf/Hard of Hearing Community Gathering

## Seattle Public Schools

February 24, 2015



Focus Group: ASL Group

### Question?

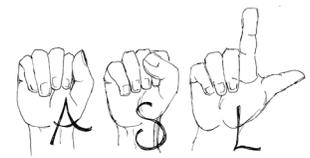
### Comments:

- Accountability test results for each language modality. Does WA state? SPS?
- Need high expectations—don't settle!
- Preschool has too little time—must increase critical time period
- Need interpreter coordinator, ITP
- ITP coordination
- Need DHH curriculum, teachers are creating as we go
- Deaf education should be its own. Get lost in SPLD, we want DHH and SPED separated
- Why not a regional program?
- History-Law=budget=follow budget
- Edmonds has long history SPS numbers change too much
- SPS must respect the Deaf in schools, support students advancement like doing running start, staff will tell students they can't
- Mentor support group
- Coordination for K-12
- Need Deaf identity, Deaf class, ASL class
- Problems with inclusion philosophy
- ASL clan needed for all students in school peer equality among all students
- Bilingual ASL-BiBi/Bimodal and language delay
- Bimodal approach
- Pre-school foundation
- Staff retention
- Want to know who decides, need teen coordination
- Stability required for foundation
- Do parents have resources, who is giving resources and information for informed decisions making
- Parents are hurt by not being involved
- SPS weak in using parents
- Hire Bob Huven as DHH director
- Positive comments: WA req. certified ITP at child's school. ITP mainstreamed needs to be integrated in community more, it is very isolated, Numbers are shrinking
- Parent of 3 deaf boy—future high school wants to know more planning and opportunities
  - Communication access
  - Use of natural language
  - Speech support, Deaf culture
  - Concerns about isolation in mainstream
  - Needs balance, strengths in numbers
  - Bob—previous language was respected, but had critical mom
  - Look at history to move forward

### Suggestions

### Comments:

- Kids need counseling and standardization of ASL program
- Non ASL country, India signs and very successful, student gets choice later
- Standardize learning and teaching
- Ask Madrona how it works
- It is successful, they go onto college
- Seattle needs to see what works
- SPS must prove they are listening
- Need a person who understands in leadership
- Many leave Washington
  - Reputation here is poor
  - Need to pull them back



## Focus Group: ASL Group

### Areas of Concern (Group Notes)

#### Comments:

- Positive comments: WA req certified ITP
- At child's school = 1:1 ITP – mainstreamed – needs to be integrated in community more – very isolated
- Parent of 3 deaf boys – future HS – want to know more of planning – what opportunities
- \*Communication access
- \*Use of natural language
- \*Speech support, Deaf Culture
- \*Concerns about isolation in mainstream
- \*Previously language was respected – had critical mass
- \*Look @ history to move forward
- \*Numbers are shrinking

### Suggestions

#### Comments:

- \*Kids need counseling
- \*Standardization of ASL program
- \*Nordic country, India signs & very successful. Student gets choice later
- \*Standardize learning & teaching
- \*Ask Madrona how it works – it is successful, they go on to college
- \*Seattle needs to see what works
- \*Many leave Washington
- \*Reputation here is poor
- \*Need to pull them back
- \*Must have a resource center

### Another Group Notes

#### Comments:

- \*Need high expectations – DON'T SETTLE
- \*Preschool has too little time – must
- \*Need interpreter coordinator, I + P shared around
- \*ITP coordination
- \*Need DHH curriculum, teachers are creating as we go
- \*Deaf Ed should be its own. Get lost in SPED – want DHH → SPED separated
- \*Why not a regional program
- \*History – Law = budget = follow \$
- \*Edmonds has long history – SPS #'s change too much
- \*Critical mass!
- \*SPS must respect the Deaf in the schools, support students advancement like joining Running Start – staff will tell students you can't
- \*Mentor support group
- \*Coordination for K-12
- \*Need Deaf identity, Deaf class, ASL class
- \*Problems inclusion philosophy
- ASL class needed for all students in school – peer equality among all students
- \*Bilingual ASL – BiBi/BiModel
- \*BiModel approach
- \*Staff retention!
- \*Language delay
- \*Preschool foundation
- \*Want to know who decides
- \*Need team coordination
- \*Stability required for foundation
- \*Do parents have resources, who giving resources & info for informed decision making
- \*Parents are hurt by not being involved
- \*SPS weak in using parents
- \*Hire Bob Huven as DHH Director



## Focus Group: Community

What is going well in the program?

### Comments:

- History of DHH program from 1970s until he was hired in 2003 under the teacher of Gary Smith and Cindy Beck. Nothing is going well at this moment.
- Nothing

Specific services needs improvement, what we need.

### Comments:

- Everything
- “Special Education” needs to be removed and replaced with Deaf Education. Focus on Deaf Education, not special education. Gallaudet University has Deaf education. Time to change the name to Deaf Education.
- Person to run the Deaf Education program
- Person must have a master’s degree in deaf education in any deaf classroom
- Students to have full access to fluent ASL signers
- Full access to after school program and social life
- Inclusion service is not good for the student. They need direct instruction. Fluent ASL direct instruction. Teachers to have high expectations. Grades do not reflect their potential.
- Resources for SPS staff/principal to contact SPS for ADA coordinator
- Decision based not uniform among schools
- Centralized oversight
- Hire Deaf person as director of DHH program
- Safe space for deaf students to self-advocate for themselves
- Deaf children of color’s perspective in this (Deaf Black, Deaf Latino, Deaf Asian, so forth all need their space as well)
- ASL interpreter must be certified
- Full communication access all day
- CDI

From a teacher (via email)

### Comments:

- The school with the DHH program needs to be able to give siblings priority placement at that school.
- The DHH program needs to be at a school where the administration is interested in the program, and supportive of the program
- The school needs to commit to gen ed staff training about the needs and challenges of DHH kids
- The gen ed classes where the DHH kids are mainstreamed should not be overfilled because there are empty desks for part of the day. The DHH kids take extra time and attention when they are there, and that should not be spread even thinner than already happens in the already too large class size.

From a parent (via email)

### Comments:

- There is already a school that provides what my child needs, the Northwest School, why won’t Seattle contract with them?

Teacher  
Responses

Comments:

- Strong team, teachers know what they are doing; sharing information across the team, do their best to get the job done
- Focusing on individual needs of student and meeting them there...modify when needed
- The scheduling at TOPS is impossible to work with, almost no collaboration planning SPED with Gen Ed because of the range of graders
- Longer pre-school days
- Supervisor that is dedicated to special Ed DHH
- District needs to recognize the struggles of being spread to so thin
- Can't get into gen ed classes—no time
- Gen Ed teacher is not familiar with the hearing aid/CI equipment—there should be training for the whole gen ed staff
- Gen ed teacher only used sound field as accommodation “sometimes.”
- Gen ed teacher needs to understand the importance of the accommodations (like loud chairs, and need to follow the accommodations)
- Sensitivity of Gen Ed. Teacher toward Deaf and Hard of Hearing kids
  - Not feeling “burdened” by DHH kids
  - A person available to support the Gen Ed teacher

 What advice  
would you give  
the state?

Comments:

- Take DHH issues more seriously
- Be more open to other (out of district or private programs)
- Advise our program where other programs are working—like NWS/Edmonds where else?
- Teachers should be able to use both SEE and ASL equally
- Funding adequately
- Lower class size/case load
- More speech therapy
- Need to address the needs of immigrant (second language) and underprivileged families and engage all families
- Focus on the needs of the child not what the district can afford—if the child needs SEE sign interpreter now, then they should be getting it.
- Listen to the parent's concerns about child's academic development
- What is graduation rate of the DHH kids? Tracking high school students after learning SPS
- Teaching kids how to survive outside the school setting in the real world
- Better communication between districts and parents
- Why can't students stay at TOPS through 8th grade
- Better communication between district administration and DHH teaching staff—if a teacher was told about this meeting tonight from a parent who saw it in a flyer outside of school

 What works  
well in  
your child's  
program?  
(Parent  
responses)

Comments:

- Parents could participate in activities, art and fieldtrips
- Communication with Audiology and SLP, and DHH teacher but problem with Gen Ed teacher with no time constraint
- Accommodations are not being provided
- Small group accommodations are helping
- NWS—the program supports both speech and sign language writing and saying signing English

What information/services do you need for child to succeed?

Comments:

- Needs a different placement—there is no support from district audiologist, needs to be informed when the audiologist visited daughter, audiologist did not respond—needs better communication, needs SDI provided
- Full time teacher of the Deaf supporting the mainstreamed in the gen ed classroom
- Gen ed needs full inclusion, not to be bypassed in the larger group
- Full time signing IA support in the classroom
- Longer pre-school day to provide adequate support
- Needs more support in specific academic areas—writing, the issue has been there for years, may need one-on-one tutoring
- Needs to provide access to NWS
- Districts needs to listen to the parent as the expert
- After school daycare to provide sign language staff to support children

Teacher responses to above question

Comments:

- More planning/collaboration time built into the day for DHH teachers—allowing for creating lessons targeted to the kids
- Students at elementary level are in the class more that middle school—extra minutes tend to be more art, library time to that is when push-in time happens
- Funding
- Smaller class sizes
- Group with appropriate age (not having K-4 kids in the same room)
  - Grade level span needs to be peer age appropriate
- In Seattle, because we are so supportive of ASL our auditory/verbal kids are not getting good English models or support

Handwritten notes

Comments:

- Teacher responses
  - Strong team, teachers know what they are doing; sharing information across the team, do their best to get the job done.
  - Focusing on individual needs of student & meeting them there..modify when needed
  - The scheduling at TOPs is impossible to work with almost no collaborative planning sp ed with gen ed because of the range of grades.
  - Longer pre-school days
  - Supervisor that is dedicated to special ed DHH
  - District needs to recognize the struggles of spread so thin
    - Can't get into gen ed classes – no time
  - Gen ed teacher is not familiar with the hearing aid/CI equipment – there should be training for whole gen ed staff
  - Gen ed teacher only used sound field as accommodation “some times”.
  - Gen ed teacher needs to understand the importance of the accommodations (like loud chairs) & need to follow the accommodations –
  - Sensitivity of gen ed teacher toward deaf & hard of hearing kids.
    - Not feeling “burdened” by DHH kids
    - A person available to support the gen ed teacher

What advice would you give to the state?

Comments:

- Take DHH issues more seriously
- Be more open to other (out of district or private programs)
- Advise our program where other programs are working – like NWS/Edmonds/where else?
- Teachers should be able to use both SEE & ASL equally
- Funding – adequately
- Lower class size/case load
- More speech therapy

## Anything else?

Comments:

- Second language
- Need to address the need of the immigrant & underprivileged families to engage ALL FAMILIES.
- Focus on the needs of the child not what the district can afford – If child needs SEE sign interp now, then they should be getting it.
- Listen to the parent's concerns about child's academic development
- What is graduation rate of DHH kids? Tracking HS students after leaving SPS
- Teaching kids how to survive outside the school setting – in the real world
- Better communication between district and parents
- Why can't students stay at TOPs through 8th grade
- Better communication between district admin and DHH teaching staff (ie: teacher was told about this meeting tonight from a parent who saw it in a flyer outside of school)

## Parent responses

Comments:

- What works well in your child's program?
  - Parents could participate in activities, art & field trips
  - Communication with audiology & SLP, & DHH teacher but problem with gen ed teacher
  - Accommodations of no time restriction are not being provided
  - Small group accommodations are helping
  - @ NWS – the program supports both speech and sign language writing and saying and signing English

 What information/services do you need for child to succeed?  
(Parent responses)

Comments:

- Needs a different placement. There is no support from district audiologist, needs to be informed when the audiologist visited daughter, audiologist did not respond – needs better communication, needs SDI provided
- Full time teacher of the deaf supporting the mainstreamed in the gen ed classroom
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## (Teacher responses)

Comments:

- More plan/collaboration time built into the day for DHH teachers – allowing for creating lessons targeted to the kid
- Students at elementary level are in the class more than middle school – extra minutes tend to be art, library – that is when push in time happens
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- Group with appropriate age (not having K-4 in same room) \*grade level span needs to be peer age appropriate
- In Seattle, because we are so supportive of ASL, our auditory/verbal kids are not getting good English models or support.

Focus Group: Listening & Spoken Language

Comments:

What's working well for services that your child is receiving?

- Great having IEP team that is cohesive/ITOD/Audiologist working with Special Ed staff/SLP & incorporated L&T AVT/cohesiveness
- Student has a transcriber (Captioner) going from class to class/laptop can read and/or follow along
- Responsiveness of audiologist – Liz shout-out – host of other needs/audiology is just one of them; hearing would have fallen behind w/o Liz's support – absolutely key to what student is doing & keeping hearing needs at the forefront
- Liz keeps everyone on track/not letting my student slip through the cracks
- Head teacher (Stina) at my child's school – end of last year made sure everyone was on same page/everyone got to meet each other & we know each other & easy to talk w/ each other when there's an issue
- Seamless transition to kindergarten – Audiologist – comes with us & school had not seen CI's before but works well to
- Time they pull their student out – is working well
- 13 years ago this wasn't happening –
- Suzanne – shared this was happening for her – in terms of district having people helping
- Echo that about Listen & Talk – Erin & Emily – working with us – prepare as we plan to move into the system
- Supported at Listen & Talk – Erin has been flexible/responsive/smooth
- Took a fair amount of work but was able to convince the team to make changes that work for my child.
- Worked with Listen & Talk – had worked with Erin/Emily/Kay – Stephanie has been supportive
- Audiology team has been proactive – people have been doing things before you even ask; without asking for us
- Kids with hearing loss but not primary concern – great preschool teacher who help me – great SLPs/train them & they call when hearing aids/FM aren't working
- Part is working with kids who have HL & part is working with kids who we identify – seen the school reach out to me looking for extra services before they slip through the cracks; better communication
- Liz – 2nd year into a new position – trying to figure out how to make the position work & meet needs of students; that is what makes the job doable – ability to work with other adults
- New budget process; working with team at TOPS
- Working with teacher of the deaf – Liz

Comments:

What kinds of services are needed?

- We've started – now we need more support – for us, how do we get classroom acoustics/padding on the walls/tennis balls – the physical accommodations – classroom hearing – hearing non teacher – student conversation – how to make this more seamless – how to make it more automatic renewal/supports/physical/education of staff
- Put that into an IEP – here's what we need
- Having to wait – teacher doesn't understand his loss & how it affects him; half a year goes by
- Need more staff – have kids in every school – all need equipment the first day; we do the best we can; prioritize all of our students – speed up implementation of supports they need
- Same issue – access with pass around microphone – not hearing peers for two months – needs to be more equipment oversight
- Audiologists are traveling all over and they need the staff to support all students; equipment is going to break
- Wondering about FM system – sound field currently but does not have FM
- Why are there three different sites for DHH – TOPS/Eckstein/Roosevelt
- Is there a way possibly that the information could be shared more easily – clearinghouse of information – best practices around what to do with students
- Too many kids – certificated teacher
- Met Liz & part of 504 team – just a few times that she's felt her daughter might have needed more support but she can't help with 504 – other kids in other districts deal with kids with hearing loss differently – in terms of special education eligibility
- Other services – classroom – PD (paid time) that's not technology based, but rather figuring out the nuances of a child with hearing loss and his/her education
- Go to daughter's class to observe to determine how daughter is doing in class – should be on the school professional/not the parent's role- group of professional development is unique and tell teacher
- What they teach a child with hearing loss benefits the other kids; never want to give up anything
- Visual Phonics

Focus Group: Listening & Spoken Language

Given the opportunity to give input to SPS for Deaf/DB/HOH, what advice would you give?

Comments:

- Not advice – but what is the pathway – didn't know the options – do I choose TOPS/do I choose more general education – tell everyone what the options/branding
- Provide access/information/what are our choices – how do we navigate the system that we don't know about
- There is a problem in all of special education – it changes – and we can give you information, and then things change- stability in programs
- Pros/cons to be dynamic – hard to communicate it to families
- Listserv of parents
- Advice to districts – bring together different modalities in SPS; high emotions in the room and different modalities that I don't know about what they're talking about – maybe a time to get together with other parents
- Various groups – at Seattle Children's – for kids – not a listserv so there's not a good way to share that information
- Earlier statement – bring PD from a ITOD – include admin + SLP; parents
- Related service providers – OT/PT/SLP/Psychologists – knowing how to work with kids with hearing loss
- Using the test information – but being able to use the testing to figure out how that's impacting the child – extrapolate the data
- Biggest piece of advice – take what CDHL – know best practices – ask them what to do & do it
- Supervisors who know your child – they need to look at the child's information prior to the meeting; maybe with a DHH supervisor that will help
- Need to have more than just DHH supervisor b/c there are so many kids in the general education
- Psychologists/SLPs do assessments who understand hearing loss and that makes it very difficult

Closing thoughts

Comments:

- Is there going to be a school for kids who are Deaf/Hard of Hearing – I'd be interested – where all the things we've been talking about is in one place – structural issue – is there a school for kids with hearing? Well sort of -
- Isn't
- The move now in Special Ed is to move kids into more their neighborhood schools
- Critical mass – would like larger groups of children with hearing loss, then the question is – does that place exist? And the question is – should that place exist
- Very much wants to be part of his neighborhood school/communities – kids that you play with
- Benefits all kids if the teachers are taught how to teach D/HH; packet of information – given to teacher b/c teachers want the resource (who to contact/mini manual/ thoughtfully planned out information) tips for where to put kids
- UHL – where do those kids fit in? I might be helping their teacher know how to work with them with UHL; adding that teacher training is
- Need a steering committee for access/general education /oral kiddos
- Hearing loss is low incidence
- Varies by year; just depends; self-advocacy goals included in IEPs
- Collaboration between agencies – B to 3 to SPS
- How do we know which teacher will have what kids – give them to parents; document on the website
- Asking for priority scheduling in the IEP

Thoughts from a student using Listening & Spoken language

Comments:

- I just wanted to give you a thought since I didn't feel like talk last night. You asked what advice I would give the district. My thought is using a laptop with a person typing what the teacher and the other kids say would help me better in the classroom too. In case I miss something. We got to try that at John Hay when I attended there and I would like to try that again with the person typing in the room with me.



## Focus Group: **Preschool**

What do you feel is working well in your son or daughter's preschool program?

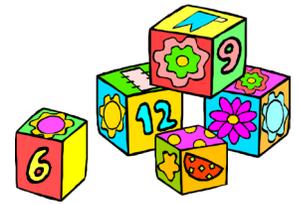
### Comments:

- Teacher is great (Michael) The audiologist and resources within the program are great.
- Very happy that Seattle was willing to work with us to provide a private preschool. They were also willing to work together.
- We have been happy with early intervention at HSDC but transition communication has not been as smooth.
- The IEP, Corey Clark and the speech development and language development. It has been much better since Corey got involved in the IEP. That wasn't done before and now it is being done, it is going well. And the communication of their choice
- I really appreciate our early intervention services, people coming to our house. There is a lot of support. I am nervous about the transition coming.
- The communication during IFSP is working and we are getting evaluation things done. The transitions have been successful (professional person)

What information and/or services do you need to help your child to succeed?

### Comments:

- More communication between the teacher and parents, letter or vocabulary list
- Support beyond Birth to three, Birth to 16 which would include the family. Continue with the kinds of supports that the birth to three programs has.
- I think (from what I hear about the program, we're not there yet) the day has to be long enough to really get learning to occur. The students in preschool need longer and more time devoted to learning because they are learning multiple things at the same time, two hours isn't enough.
- Similar thought, a longer day so there is more language exposure, to see some curriculum, lesson plans so we know our kids are not being left behind. Parent education.
- Tacoma SD preschool program is all day, and Madrona is too. SPS has 2.5 hours/5 days a week.
- For many of these kids, they don't have language access or instruction at home so they need more hours at school.
- I would like to have the preschool start a bilingual program.
- Right now I think it is limited. They get to school at 8:30, have bathroom time, then play, they may have a 1:1 for a couple of minutes then it's snack time, and bathroom time again. We need to build a program.
- As a grandmother, I want to know that my granddaughter will have access to learning academics. If you go to a hearing preschool, they learn numbers, colors and many things but in the deaf preschool it's all about language. By the time they get to kindergarten they are left behind.
- My daughter goes to Madrona, she is learning reading, writing, and math. She knows how to spell her name. Seattle families are shocked when they see she can spell. My daughter just started school. It took me a year to get a contract with Edmonds. The two programs are night and day. She goes 9 a.m. to 2 p.m. /5 days per week. Next year it will be 9 a.m. to 3:30 p.m.
- There is an article relating to Theory of Mind, if kids are exposed to language their TOM will improve because of a lack of language. The more language they have the more ability they will have for meta-linguistics.
- We are not in the system yet, when I hear about Madrona, I know they have a lot of deaf adults, which helps them see a lot of models, a lot of language models. In Seattle I don't want to have a lot of SEE models because it's hard for kids to understand but I want to have a lot of role models for kids to see.
- I would like to see SPS preschool start with the standards, not hear are the expectations for the deaf student but what are the standards and expect that my child will meet the standards. They need to be held accountable to achieve them.
- Right now there are no peers for the kids to look up to, no models. I would like SPS to look at the National Association for the education of young children. (NAEYC)
- I have noticed that some kids are not qualifying for special education. They should be able to have the continual services. Many HH students aren't qualifying. Doesn't matter, they still should get services.
- Deaf kids of deaf parents, they also don't qualify because they are equal to the hearing kids but they need to maintain.
- There needs to be a clear path for the kids. Right now it's not clear where they go after preschool. Will my child be mainstreamed? Which program will she be going to?



## Focus Group: **Preschool**

What information and/or services do you need to help your child to succeed?  
*Continued*

### Comments: *(Continued)*

- The preschool needs to have their own preschool. The teacher needs to have more control of the visual aids he doesn't have his own classroom so he can have a more visually appropriate classroom. Dedicated space
- When we first started the transition process, there was no clear direction. I did not like to hear that SEE, ASL and Listening and spoken language students were all together. I like that they can hang out together but they don't get their individual instruction
- The teachers should go to IECC training.
- ASL classes for the families
- Different families have different perspectives on how much exposure students have to other students. Neighborhood schools are a challenge. That needs to be set up from the start. Do you want your student to go out to hearing classes, or with other deaf students. That needs to be built in, so different families with different values can have that.

Given the opportunity to give input to SPS for DHH, what advice would you give?

### Comments:

- Look at other preschool programs in the state. It would be valuable to have them see other programs are doing \*\*\*\*\* many agreed
- Have an advisory committee they can turn to for questions as a connection to the community.
- SPS needs to depend on the deaf community for resources. Deaf story telling, panels, many deaf children are born to hearing parents, the deaf community can help
- SPS needs to stop dragging their feet

Is there anything more you want to express?

### Comments:

- I am thrilled they are going to have a supervisor for the dhh program
- It is imperative that we hire someone who understands the deaf community and a lot of things, not just "fill" the position. Do a national search. Someone who is "all in" Someone willing to take and help build the program, so it's excellent. The focus needs to be on excellence.
- The situation has broken my heart. I have always
- We had to have a discussion at home. We felt our choice was excellent hearing mainstream program or have deaf peers. So we settle for bad education and deaf peers.
- We need to look for someone to fill this position now
- Bring the person in now so we can all start to work together.
- From an early age, my son was age 1, we decided we needed to move to CA. for the school for the deaf. I didn't know what school my son was going to until 4 days before preschool started. It has been so stressful. There has been no communication, like a roller coaster ride.
- We have already lost a lot of good families because of the weak program.
- What is the SPS doing to get interpreters ready to take the EIPA. The Seattle SD is suppose to make sure the interpreters can pass it before they hire them. I have sat on interviews and 30 minutes isn't enough time to evaluate signing skills. Some choose not to sign at all. Some of the teachers don't sign well enough and our students are learning from them.
- I think it would be valuable if we make sure we have highly skilled psychologists, SLPs, people current in deafness and understand what that means. If we don't use the right assessments, we will get skewed results.
- The staff needs to understand deaf culture. You can't tell an entire community "this is the way it's going to be" without consulting the community" Deaf adults need to be included.
- They need to feel accepted not isolated. I grew up very isolated. Deaf kids need peers so they feel normal.