

Deaf and Hard of Hearing Children's Bill of Rights Legislation



ASK

Please ask for Senate and House sponsors for a bill and to support the passage of the Deaf Children's Bill of Rights.

WHAT

1. All children have the right to receive their education in the Least Restrictive Environment (LRE) (Individuals with Disabilities Education Act – IDEA).
 - The LRE for children who are deaf and hard of hearing must support and consider the child's communication needs; therefore, the LRE for a deaf child may be one in which American Sign Language (ASL) is the primary language in that setting.
2. Deaf children are born with the same ability to acquire language as any other children and deserve the same chance to acquire language.
3. Deaf children have the right and the capacity to be educated, to graduate high school, to obtain further education, and to pursue a career.
4. Deaf and Hard of Hearing Children have the right to:
 - Have their ability to communicate and to acquire language treated as a priority.
 - Learn from qualified professionals who can communicate directly with Deaf children – rather than through a translator – and who are proficient in developing the child's acquisition of language throughout the early intervention and school year.

- Sufficient number of Deaf peers of same language mode level and age.
- Opportunities to interact with Deaf adult role models to internalize their self-worth and visualize their potential.
- Benefit from all services and programs at their schools to fully access education and society. This means every deaf child must have full access to all information, specialized personnel, school programs, social activities, and extra-curricular activities. Communication skills and/or modes by themselves do not equate language proficiency.
- To be assessed appropriately and timely.
- Seventeen states have passed a Deaf and Hard of Hearing Children's Bill of Rights.

ASK

*Please support the passage of a Deaf and Hard of Hearing Children's Bill of Rights.
(Draft legislative language attached)*