

## PRINCIPLES OF LEARNING FOR DEAF AND HARD OF HEARING STUDENTS

Deaf and Hard of Hearing students need access to Deaf and Hard of Hearing culture, a culture that may be defined by the individual and may evolve over time. In order to flourish, Deaf and Hard of Hearing students need a learning environment that fosters a sense of belonging. They need an environment that is welcoming and is designed to meet the needs of the students, where they are supported to participate and benefit from all aspects of their education. All students benefit when these principles of learning are in practice in the learning environment.

Deaf and Hard of Hearing students develop their full potential as members of their school and broader community when:

1. Students can identify their primary or preferred language and access their learning with their primary language established as a strong foundation

*Rationale: We recognize that all students are individuals and learn at different paces. We also recognize that students may have additional learning needs and may arrive at school without a first language. It is important that deaf and hard of hearing students acquire and continue to grow in their language development. It is through early acquisition and on-going development of language that students will best be able to learn and succeed in school.*

2. Qualified and certified personnel deliver supports and services

*Rationale: We recognize that for students to be successful, they must have access to, and be supported by, highly skilled teachers and support staff. We also recognize that the students learn best from adults who are highly trained.*

3. Assessment of student learning is a priority, is appropriate for deaf and hard of hearing students and reflects the expectation that students are able to meet their potential as learners

*Rationale: We know that deaf and hard of hearing students are each unique and may require unique assessment methods to ensure that they are progressing in their learning. We also recognize that appropriate assessment must take place regularly to ensure the best possible decisions are made regarding the learning environment and the student's progress.*

4. Learning takes place in a social setting with same language mode peers

*Rationale: Deaf and hard of hearing students, like all children, learn best in a social setting. This setting includes children and adults with whom they can share their thoughts, ideas, opinions and learning.*

5. Learning involves attachment with family, and interaction with peers, Deaf/Hard of Hearing adult role models and community

*Rationale: We recognize that students are part of a larger social network and to reach their potential this network must be taken into consideration when planning the learning environment and the learning opportunities provided for the student. It is through maintenance and nurturing of these relationships that the student will be most likely to succeed.*

6. The learning environment is designed to ensure that Deaf and Hard of Hearing students experience being fully engaged in all aspects of their education.

*Rationale: Deaf and hard of hearing students, like all students, learn best when they are fully engaged. This includes not only specific learning tasks but in the larger system of the school and the opportunities provided for all students. This requires system awareness of the learning and social needs of Deaf and Hard of Hearing students and system change to adapt to those needs.*