



# UTAH STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION

1400 UNIVERSITY CLUB BUILDING, 136 EAST SOUTH TEMPLE STREET  
SALT LAKE CITY, UTAH 84111

WALTER D. TALBOT, STATE SUPERINTENDENT OF PUBLIC INSTRUCTION

June 10, 1975

To: Harvey Hirschi, Robert Sanderson, Jay J. Campbell, Charles Schmitt

From: Walter D. Talbot *W.D.T.*

Subject: Community Center for the Deaf

During the last legislative session we introduced a resolution calling for the State Board of Education and the State Building Board to study the feasibility and desirability of a Community Center for the Deaf. That resolution failed. We then hoped that the Legislative Council would assign the study to one of its own interim committees so that preparation could go forward in time for the next legislative session. It now appears that such a study will not be made.

Accordingly, then, I am taking this opportunity to establish our own committee to make the study in the hope we can have a good plan to recommend to the next legislature. I would like to have you serve on such a committee. In addition, I am asking that each person named above select one additional person from the deaf community to serve on the committee. I would further like Robert Sanderson to serve as chairman.

Following the selection of the additional committee members would you move right ahead on the study. I would like to have a report and recommendation by December 1, 1975.

Thank you.

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# Utah Association for the Deaf

OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT

November 10, 1975

Dr. Robert G. Sanderson  
Chairman, Center for the Deaf Committee  
Services to the Deaf Unit  
Board of Education Building  
250 East 500 South  
Salt Lake City, Utah 84111

Dear Dr. Sanderson:

Although I am serving as a member of this committee on Center for the Deaf, it seems proper that I write on behalf of members of the Utah Association for the Deaf and make known their feelings and desires.

Rather than repeat what the committee already knows or has discussed, I might mention an item or two of interest that has circulated among the deaf community.

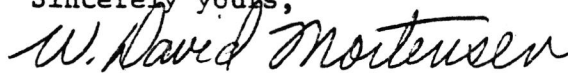
It has long been known and expressed by the deaf that a Comprehensive Community Center for the Deaf has been needed in Utah. The deaf have expressed freely the fact that they have been full tax payers for years and they have the feeling that they have not obtained concrete benefits from these taxes. They profess readily the lack of available facilities in which they can meet, socialize and hold activities.

It may not be well thought of in a hearing world, but deafness has been called one of the most misunderstood disabilities or handicaps because it is invisible. I need not write of the ramps constructed for the crippled, nor of centers for the blind that have been built. These are understandable because these handicaps are visible.

Only when people put themselves in a deaf persons place: learn to think the way he thinks and feel the way he does will the deaf be understood. And only then will the tremendous need for a community Center for the Deaf be fulfilled.

It is reassuring to know that the formation of this feasibility study committee on a Center for the Deaf shows the interest that the State Board of Education has in the deaf. It shows they care.

Sincerely yours,



W. David Mortensen



# NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF THE DEAF

301-587-1788  
814 THAYER AVENUE  
SILVER SPRING, MARYLAND 20910

FREDERICK C. SCHREIBER  
*Executive Secretary*

October 10, 1975

Robert G. Sanderson, Ed.D.  
Chairman, Center for the Deaf Committee  
Utah State Board of Education  
1400 University Club Building  
136 East South Temple Street  
Salt Lake City, Utah 84111

Dear Dr. Sanderson:

We are advised that the State of Utah is engaged in a feasibility study for a Comprehensive Community Center for the Deaf. This is a most encouraging undertaking and one which we hope will lead to the creation of such a center.

While I feel I will be merely repeating things that are already known, for the record at least I hope you will bear with me.

First of all, deafness is a major sensory disability. The impact of the loss of a major sense has long been recognized with the blind, but to date little consideration has been given to the fact that like blindness, deafness involves a major sensory loss. Further it is acknowledged that the world we live in is auditory rather than visual, the loss of the main source of communication and learning creates problems that are even more unique and difficult to deal with than those posed by people who are blind. I hope I will not be misinterpreted here because it is my intention only to point out that the problems of the blind are very real and have not only been recognized but positive steps have been taken on the state and national levels to combat these problems whereas the needs and unique handicap of hearing loss have been almost totally ignored.

Because communication is the base for human relationships and language is the tool by which humans communicate, the deaf population can never be served unless they are served by persons skilled in our language -- that is the language of signs. Because of the unique educational and psychological factors involved in deafness -- ordinary evaluation and testing processes are unreliable. Some of the causative factors can be traced back to the communication problem and the isolation a deaf person finds in the bosom of his own family. Some stem from the way in which we are educated but whatever the reasons are -- it is a fact that without knowledgeable professionals the deaf person does not get served. When I use the term "knowledgeable" I am referring both to professional knowledge as rehab counselors, psychologists, etc. AND knowledge of deafness. This is because the 95 year history of our association has shown that the former is useless without the latter.

October 10, 1975

There are so many areas of need I hardly know where to start. Further I wish to note that they are all interrelated in one way or another. Thus I can note the need for recreational facilities. As stated previously -- an auditory world means such recreation as movies, TV, radio are automatically denied the deaf. We cannot compete either to any large extent in athletics because the ear provides the split second advantage that makes the difference between a champion and an "also-ran." Too often this fact is passed over without proper realization that recreation has a bearing on one's mental health which is a concern of the community. Hearing loss is especially prevalent among the elderly who are already subjected to heavy pressures by their failing health and strength and compounded by their deteriorating hearing and attendant loss of social and recreational opportunities.

As you know, there are such things as captioned films which serve the hearing impaired well -- provided there is a place and a means by which they can be viewed. Social and recreational needs are most readily met by interaction with others of similar disability if a place and assistance were available. Nationally speaking, hearing loss represents the largest single chronic disability with 13 million people who have some degree of impairment. Our recent census notes that six million or almost half of this population have a significant loss while over one million are classified as "unable to hear and understand speech with or without amplification." This is a really huge population.

While I feel I have not even begun to explore the needs and the reasons for a comprehensive center, let me close with one last point. This is that as can readily be verified from your own records -- given proper evaluation and training a good percentage of deaf people can readily be rehabilitated and made employable. While we are getting increasing numbers of multihandicapped deaf people -- we have a large group whose only limitation is hearing and who thus are not limited by poor mobility or physical strength. These can easily become assets if properly evaluated and trained. The multihandicapped on the other hand will be harder to deal with. Again without specialists in the area of deafness these individuals will only become an additional burden on the State. So it makes sense to invest in a facility that will insure that some if not all of these individuals do not become either permanently on welfare or institutionalized.

If we in the NAD can do anything to further this goal please let me know.

Sincerely,



Frederick C. Schreiber  
Executive Secretary

FCS:ms

November 9, 1975

Dr. Robert G. Sanderson  
Chairman, Center for the Deaf Committee  
Services to the Deaf, Utah State Board of Education Bldg.  
250 East 500 South  
Salt Lake City, Utah 84111

Dear Dr. Sanderson:

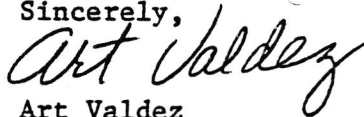
As president of the Utah Athletic Club for the Deaf, I wish to express the feelings of the club membership towards a Community Center for the Deaf.

Our club is in great need of a Community Center for the Deaf. It would aid very much in carrying out the purpose of our organization in fostering more sport activities and positive, sound recreation programs for the deaf of all ages throughout the year.

In past years and at the present, we have been without facilities to hold meetings. We have not always been successful in finding a gym for our teams. Even then if we found one, it was on a limited basis and a high fee was charged. Our club operates on a very limited and tight budget.

We earnestly hope a Center for the Deaf can become a reality in the near future. We are grateful to hear that the committee is now studying the feasibility of this center.

Sincerely,



Art Valdez

President, Utah Athletic Club for the Deaf