

# COMMUNICATION GUIDELINES

## 1 PHILOSOPHY

The Utah School for the Deaf (USD) believes students should communicate effectively in English. We also believe that students should develop communication skills that will enable them to function with people who are deaf or hearing impaired. The communication mode selected for students should facilitate this. However, it is important to understand that neither speech nor signs is language in themselves. They are the means by which language is conveyed.

## 2 DEFINITIONS

2.1 **American Sign Language (ASL)** is a natural visual-gestural language used by deaf people in the United States and Canada. Concepts are executed through the use of a unique grammar, syntax, signs, fingerspelling, as well as manual and non-manual markers. ASL is not merely a signed representation of English.

2.2 **Cued Speech or Cued Language** is a visual communication system which, in English, uses eight hand shapes that represent groups of consonant sounds, and four different locations about the face to represent groups of vowel sounds. Consonant sounds are "cued" in the appropriate vowel locations allowing the cued to be synchronized with what is actually being spoken, syllable by syllable. The cueing of a traditionally spoken language is the visual counterpart of speaking it. Cueing makes available to the eye the same linguistic building blocks that speaking provides to the ear.

2.3 **The Oral Approach** combines the use of speech, residual hearing, and speechreading as the primary means of communication. Heavy emphasis is on the trained use of residual hearing. The child is trained to acquire language through the use of residual hearing augmented by speechreading (lipreading). In addition, emphasis is placed on assistive devices that maximize the use of residual hearing.

2.4 **Pairing** is a teaching strategy by which one language (such as ASL) is used for clarification of concepts presented in another language (such as English) during instruction.

2.5 By USD's definition, **Total Communication** is a philosophy that advocates using conceptually accurate signs, signs derived from ASL, fingerspelling, speech, audition, speechreading, reading and writing for communication.

## 3 EVALUATION INSTRUMENTS

3.1 **Basic Cued Speech Proficiency Rating Profile (BCSPR)** is an instrument available from the National Cued Speech Association used to evaluate the proficiency level of an individual cuer and provide a diagnostic profile of cueing skills achieved or which need further development.

3.2 **Sign Communication Proficiency Interview (SCPI)** is a conversational approach

available from Gallaudet University used to assess proficiency in the use of ASL or general sign communication skills.

3.3 The Administration will work toward identifying a means of evaluating teachers using the Oral Approach.

#### **4 ORAL AND TOTAL COMMUNICATION CLASSES**

4.1 Oral and Total Communication classes are two types of classes currently available for students. Alternative types of classes may be added by the administration with the approval of the Institutional Council.

4.2 In Total Communication classes, students will use conceptually accurate signs in English word order. ASL may be used for clarification of concepts (pairing), or when it is required by the student's Individual Education Plan (IEP).

#### **5 GOALS OF INSTRUCTION**

5.1 Literacy is a major goal of instruction for students who are deaf. Therefore, intense instruction in reading and writing is included in all classes. USD will follow the Utah State Core Curriculum. The IEP Team may make modifications in the objectives of the Core to enable students who are deaf to achieve the goal of literacy and an understanding of the content areas (e.g., history, science, etc.)

#### **6 SPEECH, AUDITION, AND SPEECHREADING**

When appropriate, USD will use the following:

6.1 Speech. To facilitate the development of speech the Ling program should be used.

6.2 Audition. To enhance the child's use of residual hearing, the following are recommended: The Utah School for the Deaf Listening Skills Training Manual, the Developmental Approach to Successful Listening Skills (DASL), or the Speech perception instruction curriculum and evaluation (SPICE).

6.3 Speechreading. No specific training materials are recommended.

#### **7 DEAF MENTOR PROGRAM**

7.1 The Deaf Mentor Program provides adult deaf role models of American Sign Language and Deaf Culture. English is modeled concurrently by the Parent Infant Program advisor or by the classroom teacher. This program is available to families of children from birth to six years of age.

#### **8 COMMUNICATION NEEDS**

8.1 In developing each child's IEP, the IEP Team shall consider the following:

8.1.1 Child's language and communication needs

8.1.2 Opportunities for direct communications with peers and professional

personnel in the child's language and communication mode

8.1.3 Academic level

8.1.4 Full range of needs, including opportunities for direct instruction in the child's language and communication mode.

8.2 A plan for determining how to meet the child's needs specified in section 8.1, a-d, will be developed by the IEP Team. The IEP Team may consist of the following members:

8.2.1 The student (where appropriate)

8.2.2 One of both of the child's parents

8.2.3 The regular education teacher

8.2.4 The representative of the Local Education Agency

8.2.5 The student teacher(s)

8.2.6 An individual (other than the student's teacher(s) who is qualified to provide or supervise the provision of special education

8.2.7 Other individuals at the discretion of the parent or agency

8.2.8 Other individuals that may be required by law.

8.3 In developing a student's IEP and/or prior to placement or a change in placement. The student's Sign Language/communication skills and ability to use an interpreter will be evaluated and a written report shall be made. The evaluation shall include careful consideration of the student's preferred mode of communication especially for those students in grades 7-12 or age 12 and older. The student's preferred mode of communication shall be stated in the report. The results of the evaluation shall be considered by the IEP Team. The individual conducting the assessment shall be invited to be a part of the Team.

8.4 The assessment of the student's Sign Language/communication skills will be done by an individual who is proficient in Sign Language and with the student's expressive and receptive communication mode. The evaluator's proficiency in Sign Language will be measured by the SCPI.

8.5 Any member of the IEP Team, who does not agree with the Team's direction with respect to Sign Language or other related communication issues, may request the Assistant Superintendent to have the IEP Team reconsider its decision. When requested to so do, the program director or administrative representative at the IEP meeting shall forward a copy of the results of the Sign language/communication assessment to the Assistant Superintendent within five working days of such request.

## 9 INTERPRETING/TRANSLITERATING

## 9.1 Definitions

- 9.1.1 A Sign Language interpreter changes spoken English into ASL and ASL to English
- 9.1.2 A Sign Language transliterator listens to the spoken English message and then signs that message into a code of that same language and vice versa.
- 9.1.3 An oral transliterator listens to the spoken English message and then uses verbal and nonverbal support techniques to render the message clearly and accurately.
- 9.1.4 A Cued Speech Transliterator (CST) is an individual, certified or otherwise, who functions in keeping with the CST Code of Conduct. A CST provides complete access to the acoustic environment (linguistic and non-linguistic components), does not change the nature of that environment, facilitates communication between deaf and hearing individuals, and performs no other duties.

## 9.2 Sign Language Interpreters/Transliterators

- 9.2.1 The IEP Team will determine whether the options of interpretation and/or transliteration shall be used for a student in accordance with the following provisions:
  - 9.2.1.1 An interpreter will be invited in a timely manner to be a member of the IEP Team when a need for interpreting services is anticipated or when issues related to interpreting are being considered.
  - 9.2.1.2 When interpreting for three or more students at a given time, the interpreter will use the option which best meets the needs of the majority of the students.
  - 9.2.1.3 The interpreter shall notify the USD teacher in writing of any student who appears to have difficulty with the option recommended by the IEP Team. The teacher shall provide the parents with a written (e.g., e-mail, or letter) timely notification of their child's difficulty. Copies of the dated notification with a brief explanation of when and how the problem was resolved shall be given to the interpreter, program director, parent, and Assistant Superintendent in a timely manner.
- 9.2.2 All individuals working as Sign Language interpreters or Sign Language transliterators must hold Utah state certification and/or abide by the State of Utah Interpreter Provisional Permit process.
- 9.2.3 The Superintendent or designee will be responsible for ensuring that the rules and regulations related to state certification of interpreters and

transliterators are followed.

## 10 SIGN LANGUAGE TRAINING FOR EMPLOYEES

- 10.1 Effective the beginning of the 1998-99 school year, all employees who are not career educators and are paid according to the teacher's salary schedule who are required to have adequate Sign Language skills will demonstrate the level of proficiency required by their job (e.g., intermediate, intermediate plus, or advanced) as measured by the SCPI prior to being issued a contract as a Career Educator. At the time of hire, the employee shall agree to this requirement as a condition or continued employment.
- 10.2 Effective the beginning of the 1998-99 school year, all employees under the State of Utah Merit System who are required to have adequate Sign Language skills will demonstrate the level of proficiency required by their job (e.g., intermediate, intermediate plus, or advanced) as measured by the SCPI within three years of the date of hire. At the time of hire, the employee shall agree to this requirement as a condition of continued employment.
- 10.3 Effective the beginning of the 1998-99 school year, all current employees paid according to the teacher's salary schedule or under the State of Utah Merit System who are required to have adequate Sign Language skills as measured by the SCPI shall be required to participate in a USD approved training program until they have attained the level of proficiency required by their job.
- 10.4 By the 1998-99 school year, a Sign Language training plan will be developed for both current and new employees by the administration in consultation with staff, parents, and adults who are deaf, including but not limited to the following:
  - 10.4.1 Purpose of the training
  - 10.4.2 Course content
  - 10.4.3 How training will be conducted
  - 10.4.4 The minimum competency expected
  - 10.4.5 How the proficiency levels for various jobs will be determined
  - 10.4.6 How employee Sign Language skills will be initially diagnosed
  - 10.4.7 How employee progress will be determined
  - 10.4.8 A list of references, and the titles of any tests, videos or other materials
  - 10.4.9 How recognition will be given to those who achieve the required Sign Language competency.
- 10.5 Training for all employees will be offered to help them achieve the competencies outlined herein.
- 10.6 An individual plan will be formulated for each employee whose job required them