

Deaf & Hard of Hearing Program at Hersey High School

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Welcome to the Deaf and Hard of Hearing Program at John Hersey High School

Hearing loss and its adverse impact on spoken language access can result in barriers to academic and vocational success and feelings of social isolation. The NSSEO Program for Students who are Deaf or Hard of Hearing is designed to provide intensive academic, language, listening, and speech instruction that address the unique educational needs of students. The program focuses intensely on developing a way each student's unique voice can be heard. By learning with like peers, students develop the important communication and social skills that assist them in becoming contributing members of society.

Program Design

The Deaf and Hard of Hearing high school program is located at John Hersey High School in Township School District 214 and has been part of the Hersey community since 1978. The academic program is based on the general education curriculum and assessments are designed to develop instructional strategies to meet individual student needs. Students have the opportunity to integrate into general education classes and electives with support and interpreter assistance as needed. Students are encouraged to engage in community life at Hersey High School and regularly participate in extracurricular activities. Transition services provide opportunities for work experience, self-advocacy, independent life skills, and healthy leisure activities.

Who We Are

The certified/licensed staff is comprised of highly qualified teachers of the deaf and hard of hearing, interpreters, audiologists, ALD technician, speech language pathologists, school psychologists, social workers, transition/vocational teacher, and physical/occupational therapists. All team members are trained in communication methodologies to support students in their learning environment. The team is knowledgeable and experienced in amplification, cochlear implants, and the impact of a hearing loss on language, speech, and academic development. Highly qualified paraprofessionals and interpreters are an integral part of the program and work closely with the certified/licensed staff in providing assistance to students that supports programmatic and individual needs.

Instructional Focus

- Access to general education curriculum through individualization and adaptation of core academic programs.
- Integration in general education courses and electives with support and interpreter services.
- Research-based curriculum and instruction in English, math, science, and social sciences.
- Intensive communication and language development including the use of total communication, visual supports, and aural training.
- Assistive and instructional technology to provide individualized access to learning, promoting greater independence.
- Positive behavioral supports (PBIS) that foster students' self-confidence, independence, and positive attitude towards learning.
- Participation with same-age peers in academic and social settings.
- Life skills instruction that addresses social, communication, daily living, and leisure/recreational skills.
- Opportunities for participation in building-wide activities, including field trips and assemblies.
- A collaborative partnership between program and family that enhances students' communication development and success.
- Audiological support to assess student's degree of hearing loss and impact on learning, make recommendations, and provide support.
- The Assistive Listening Device (ALD) Technician provides support to staff and students to create an optimum listening environment for students.

Program Supports

- Audiological services
- Assistive listening devices
- Consultation and coaching
- Experiential learning at Sunrise Lake Outdoor Education Center
- Instructional technology
- Sign language classes for families
- Partnerships with special recreation associations
- Sign Language Interpreters
- Extracurricular activities and athletic teams at Hersey High School
- Interscholastic programs including the local, regional and national Academic Bowl for Deaf and Hard of Hearing High School Students and state-wide Deaf Volleyball Tournament

