Welcome to the Deaf and Hard of Hearing Program at MacArthur Middle 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/Hard of Hearing middle school program is located at MacArthur Middle School in Prospect Heights District 23 and provides opportunities for students to integrate into co-taught exploratory classes. Language instruction is an integral part of the program and specific learning activities are modified to accommodate the needs of each student while addressing the goals in his or her Individual Educational Plan (IEP). The academic program is based on the general education curriculum and assessments are designed to adjust instructional strategies to meet individual student needs. The program focuses on creating opportunities to develop appropriate social skills and peer relationships. Students participate in extracurricular activities, field trips, and other school events with an interpreter as needed.

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, 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 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.
- Research-based curriculum and instruction in literacy, math, science, and social studies.
- 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.
- Opportunities for participation in extra-curricular activities.
- 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 leaning at Sunrise Lake Outdoor Education Center
- Instructional technology
- Sign language classes for families
- Partnerships with special recreation associations
- Sign Language Interpreters.