

TEXAS SCHOOL FOR THE DEAF

**EMPLOYMENT REQUIREMENTS AND EXPECTATIONS
EMPLOYEE SIGNED COMMUNICATION**

DB

PHILOSOPHY

Meaningful and understandable communication among students, staff, parents and other consumers is a critical component in creating positive and healthy learning and living environments at the Texas School for the Deaf. American Sign Language (ASL) is an integral part of the communication environment at TSD.

Each employee is a valuable resource for enhancing the quality and quantity of such communication and, as such, the School shall assume responsibility for providing each employee the opportunity to develop and strengthen the employee's ASL proficiency. The employee's process of becoming proficient in ASL is a continuing process that should extend throughout an employee's employment with the School. ASL staff development is an ongoing process that promotes continuous learning and skill development regardless of an employee's standard of proficiency.

The School environment should be one that promotes clear communication between students, employees, parents, consumers and others.

Students, parents, consumers and others who are deaf or hard of hearing will have access to the same communication that is accessible to hearing persons under similar circumstances;

The ASL communication proficiency level of employees will vary significantly depending on a number of factors including length of employment, previous learning opportunities for ASL communication and opportunities for interaction with persons skilled in ASL communication;

Employees who do not have the proficiency level to communicate effectively using ASL will have a need to communicate and understand communication with deaf and hard of hearing individuals in the school environment.

The Superintendent, with input from students, employees, and the District Advisory Committee, shall establish School rules and enforcement activities related to the use of ASL by employees within the School environment and at School activities. The rules shall be designed to promote student acquisition and use of communication skills and to facilitate communication and access to communication by all persons—deaf, hard of hearing and hearing—within the School environment and at School activities.

**EMPLOYEE SIGNED
COMMUNICATION
PROFICIENCY**

Each School employee shall have or develop the ASL skills necessary to perform the employee's job responsibilities effectively. The level of skills required will vary according to the frequency of contact and the level of interaction required with deaf or hard of hearing individuals.

**ASSIGNMENT OF
STANDARD
COMMUNICATION
PROFICIENCY BY
POSITION**

Each employee position or group of positions shall be assigned a standard of expected ASL proficiency based on the skill level needed to perform the job responsibilities effectively. An employee shall participate in ASL learning opportunities on a regular basis until the employee has achieved the standard for the position or group.

**FAILURE TO ACHIEVE
STANDARD
COMMUNICATION
PROFICIENCY**

Where achieving the standard of ASL proficiency is critical to performing the job responsibilities effectively, as for positions responsible for direct student instruction, and the employee is unable to perform the duties in the job description because of their level of ASL proficiency, the employee may be

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subject to reassignment or progressive disciplinary action including termination from the position if the employee does not achieve the standard of expectation. Any reassignment or disciplinary action under these circumstances must be accomplished in accordance with all applicable laws and School policies and procedures.

**PROGRAM OF EMPLOYEE
SIGN LANGUAGE
INSTRUCTION**

The School, shall make available regular learning opportunities and resources to assist employees in meeting their expected level of proficiency

**PROGRAM
COMPONENTS**

The School's program of employee ASL instruction shall include:

1. A reliable method for assessing employee proficiency and determining an appropriate course of instruction.
2. A variety of conveniently scheduled instructional opportunities structured to meet employee needs based on proficiency level.
3. Enrichment opportunities and resources including provision of information about deaf culture and the linguistics of American Sign Language and
4. Opportunities to participate in instructional offerings offered in the community.

**EMPLOYEE
PERFORMANCE
EVALUATION**

The performance evaluation of each employee shall address the employee's ASL staff development activities and progress towards achieving the ASL proficiency for the employee's position.

PROCEDURES REQUIRED

The Superintendent shall ensure that a procedure is adopted to implement this policy. The procedure shall include but is not limited to the following topics:

1. The method for determining the standard of ASL proficiency assigned to each position or group of positions.
2. A reliable and efficient assessment for determining an employee's ASL proficiency.
3. Responsibilities of supervisors to monitor and review ASL proficiency activities in performance evaluations.
4. Requirements for employee participation in instructional opportunities to attain expected standard of proficiency including provisions for allowing employees to participate in instructional offerings offered in the community. A description of community offerings that will be approved and the method for the School to reimburse employees for participation in these offerings.

Issued: 10-12-84

Adopted: 10-12-84

Amended: 03-28-87
12-11-92
07-26-96

08-16-91
07-29-94
02-08-02
08-06-10
12-13-18