



Philosophy of Inclusion

Manitoba Education is committed to fostering inclusion for all people. *The Public Schools Amendment Act (Appropriate Educational Programming)* reflects Manitoba's commitment to providing all students with appropriate programming that supports student participation in both the academic and social life of schools.

Inclusion is a way of thinking and acting that allows every individual to feel accepted, valued, and safe. An inclusive community consciously evolves to meet the changing needs of its members. Through recognition and support, an inclusive community provides meaningful involvement and equal access to the benefits of citizenship.

In Manitoba, we embrace inclusion as a means of enhancing the well-being of every member of the community. By working together, we strengthen our capacity to provide the foundation for a richer future for all of us.

The Accessibility for Manitobans Act requires the development of accessibility standards and the promotion of barrier-free environments for Manitobans.

An Inclusive Environment

One exciting framework for making an inclusive environment and facilitating new ways to meet the needs of today's diverse student population is **universal design**. Universal design (UD) involves planning at the outset for the greatest accessibility and for the widest range of individuals so that retrofitting or adapting "after the fact" is not necessary. Seven guiding principles can be used as a framework to support planning and creating universally accessible learning environments:

- equity
- flexibility
- simplicity
- perceptible use
- tolerance for error
- comfort
- appropriate space

The better the learning environment adheres to the principles, the more universally designed it is. Universal design is widely accepted as best practice in planning for all students.

There are a number of factors that need to be considered in making an inclusive environment for students who are DHH. The information in this resource will be helpful for teachers, professional staff, and parents* in understanding the following:

- the student's hearing loss
- the use of amplification and technology
- Deaf culture and identity
- the social, developmental, and educational implications of hearing loss
- classroom programming, strategies, and considerations

* In this document, the term *parents* refers to both parents and guardians and is used with the recognition that in some cases only one parent or guardian may be involved in a child's education.

Students who are DHH may receive educational programming

- within the context of the regular classroom in their neighbourhood school, supported by a variety of professionals
- at the Manitoba School for the Deaf

School-Based Teams

A school team, including parents, is established for each student. The school-based team can include the school administrator, resource teacher, counsellor, and classroom teacher. Students with a hearing loss may require the support of additional team members, depending on the students' individual needs. These may include the following:

- an **educational assistant**, an **ASL-English interpreter**, a **signer**, or a **computerized notetaker**
- a **teacher of the DHH**
- an **auditory-verbal therapist (Listening and Spoken Language Specialist)**
- a **speech-language pathologist**
- an **ASL specialist** or a Deaf ASL instructor
- an **audiologist**
- a number of other clinicians, including a reading clinician, a social worker, a **physiotherapist**, and/or an **occupational therapist**
- a **psychologist**, a psychiatrist, and/or other health personnel
- school division and community resources

The team is important in helping schools develop exemplary practice in inclusion and in promoting the planning, development, and monitoring of **individual education plans (IEPs)** for students in all aspects of their school life. In cases where students require an IEP, a member of the school-based team is generally designated as the case manager. The following diagram identifies some of the personnel who may be part of the IEP team.

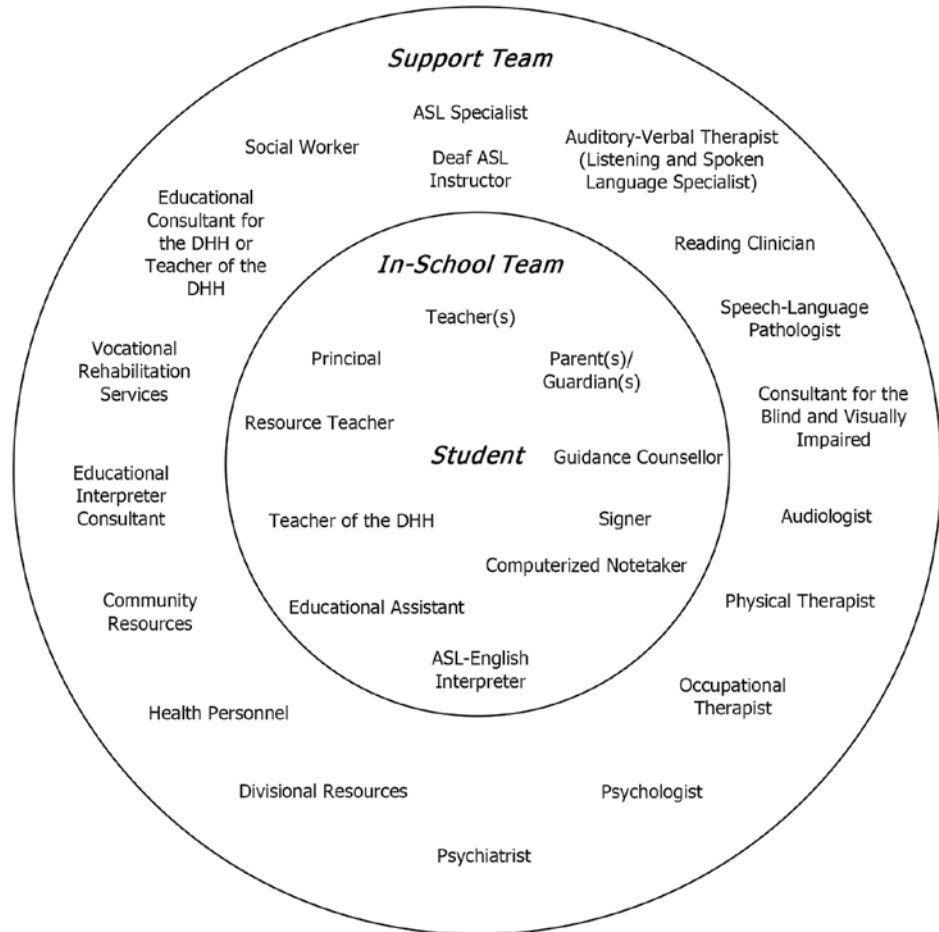
Refer to the Glossary for definitions of bolded terms.

Acronyms in Deaf Education

ASL	American Sign Language
AVT	auditory-verbal therapy
CN	computerized notetaker
DHH	Deaf or hard of hearing <i>or</i> Deaf and hard of hearing
EIC	educational interpreting consultant
LSLS	Listening and Spoken Language Specialist
SLP	speech-language pathologist
TDHH	teacher of the DHH

Figure 1

The Team



Collaboration and flexibility among team members is essential in determining the best possible programming for the individual student. Establishing good communication with students, families, and community service providers will foster the student’s social, emotional, communicative, and educational development.

Manitoba Education Supports

School teams can access supports to assist them in programming for students who are DHH by making a referral to the Deaf and Hard of Hearing Services Unit in the Inclusion Support Branch. Information on the services available and a link to the referral form are available at www.edu.gov.mb.ca/k12/specedu/dhh/.