



Deaf Student's Bill of Rights

“Nothing in this act shall be construed to give any greater rights or protections than can be found under the “Individuals with Disabilities Education Act,” 20 U.S.C. s. 1400 et seq., or under section 504 of the federal “Rehabilitation Act of 1973,” 29 U.S.C. s.794, or any other federal law.”

How Can the Department of Education Support Implementing the Bill of Rights?

By providing technical assistance and professional development to school districts on the implementation of the Deaf Student's Bill of Rights, as well as all aspects of Deaf Education.

Wendy Eufemia, Coordinator of Deaf Education

Technical Assistance regarding new program development or the improvement of existing programs, the Deaf Student's Bill of Rights, child study teams, and evaluations.

Wendy.Eufemia@doe.nj.gov

(609) 376-3557

Kara Rogers, Educational Consultant for Students who are Deaf or Hard of Hearing

Kara.Rogers@doe.nj.gov

(609) 376-3561

Student-level technical assistance, including classroom observations, staff in-services, and accommodations guidance.

The New Jersey Deaf Student's Bill of Rights P.L. 2019, Chapter 204 Signed August 5, 2019



The Deaf Student's Bill of Rights is a statement of responsibility to ensure that school districts meet the unique needs of students who are deaf, hard of hearing, or deaf-blind and use varied communication modalities.



*Artwork by George Valhos, student
attending the Marie H. Katzenbach School
for the Deaf*

**The Deaf Student's Bill of Rights
Directs School Districts to Provide:**

- a. Access to appropriate screening and assessment of hearing and vision capabilities and communication and language needs at the earliest possible age and the continuation of screening and evaluation services throughout the educational experience;
- b. Access to individualized and appropriate early intervention to support the acquisition of solid language bases developed at the earliest possible age;
- c. Information to the families of students of all placement considerations and available educational options, including the Marie H. Katzenbach School for the Deaf, and options available to children who are deaf, hard of hearing, or deaf-blind and provide opportunities for parents and guardians to fully participate in the development and implementation of their child's education plan;
- d. Strive to provide opportunities to meet and associate with adult role models who are deaf, hard of hearing, or deaf-blind and who utilize varied communication modalities to learn advocacy skills, including self-advocacy;
- e. Opportunities to meet and associate with their peers in the school environment and during school-sponsored activities;
- f. Direct instruction;
- g. Include a communication plan in the student's Individualized Education Program and 504 plan;
- h. A placement that is best suited to the student's individual needs including, but not limited to, social, emotional, communication, and cultural needs, with consideration for the child's age, degree and type of hearing loss, academic level, mode of communication, style of learning, motivational level, and amount of family support;
- i. Individual consideration for a free, appropriate education across a continuum of placement options required by law;
- j. Full support services provided by qualified and certified professionals in their educational settings. The Department of Education, through the coordinator for educational programs, must work with school districts to ensure that technical assistance is available to support boards of education in meeting the needs of children who are deaf, hard of hearing, or deaf-blind. As used in this subsection, "technical assistance" means guidance and support provided to a school district to enable the school district to meet State and federal policy and regulatory requirements and to ensure the provision of a thorough and efficient education;
- k. Full communication access to all programs in their educational settings including, but not limited to, extracurricular activities, recess, lunch, media showings, driver education, and public announcements;
- l. Information to families from appropriately qualified and certified professionals on the medical, ethical, cultural, and linguistic issues of individuals who are deaf, hard of hearing, or deaf-blind; and
- m. Access to mental health services and supporting services from qualified and certified providers fluent in the student's primary mode of communication, including American Sign Language.