



## CEASD Legislative Priorities April 2025

**Teacher and Administrator Shortage.** *Shortages of qualified Deaf Education teachers, administrators and support staff negatively impacts our schools' ability to prepare our students to achieve their college, career and independence goals. CEASD believes that we must be committed to innovative approaches to address the issues of recruitment, retention and preparation of all Deaf Education professionals and support funding grants and research that advance this goal.*

- Support measures that help with recruitment, retention and funding of the workforce.
- Advocate for the removal of state barriers for teacher candidates, such as expensive exams or requirements that deter candidates from entering the profession.
- Continue to support our Leadership Academy
- Address the barriers of license reciprocity across states

**Early Childhood Education.** *About 2 to 3 out of every 1,000 children in the United States are born deaf or hard of hearing. Over 90% of these children are born to hearing parents who are unfamiliar the critical need for early and accessible language input. CEASD believes Early Childhood Intervention (ECI) for deaf babies is crucial because it maximizes their potential for language and communication development, social skills, and overall well-being, especially during the critical period of brain development from birth to age three.*

- Support for Early Childhood Identification and early language acquisition with families and qualified early intervention providers.
- Connect families with resources that support early childhood intervention.
- Collaborate with state Part C EDHI to promote timely follow-up testing and intervention services.

- Empowering parents with the knowledge, skills and resources they need to effectively advocate for their child's development.

## **Improve Language Outcomes for DHH and End Language Deprivation**

*CEASD believes the acquisition of language from birth is a human right. Deaf and hard of hearing infants should be given the opportunity to acquire American Sign Language (ASL), a fully accessible visual language, as early as at birth, in addition to the opportunity to access and acquire the spoken language(s) used by their families with assistive technologies and other strategies.*

- Support strategies that highlight the devastating impact of lack of exposure to consistent and meaningful language from birth and its impact on cognitive, social and emotional development.
- Provide information how the lack of early language input can lead to delays in language acquisition, literacy challenges, and difficulties in academic and social interactions.
- Advocate for bilingual education programs that incorporate ASL as the primary language of instruction, alongside English or other spoken languages, to promote full language access and development.
- Collaborate with other organizations to provide training and evidence-based research support for educators, medical professionals, and other professionals who work with DHH students to ensure they understand the impact of language deprivation.

**Support the reauthorization and full funding of the IDEA.** *CEASD believes that while some provisions in IDEA such as LRE are frequently misapplied in Deaf Education, it remains an important vehicle for providing specialized instruction and services for our students. Without the support of IDEA many of our students would not have access to the quality educational programs they deserve.*

- Advocate for a better understanding of the meaning of LRE in the education of DHH students.
- Revise and refocus the Cogswell-Macy Act to reflect critical gaps in deaf education and continue to promote and support additional sponsorship for the Cogswell-Macy Act.
- Re-issue the NASDSE Guidelines: *Optimizing Outcomes for Students who are DHH; Educational Service Guidelines to state Special Education Directors.*

- Maintain access to school based Medicaid to offset costs of School Health and Related Services.