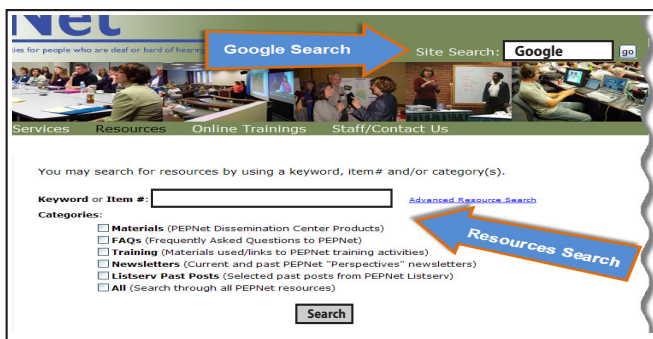




Web Tool Locates Needed Resources

Submitted by the PEPNet Resource Search Workgroup



- Frequently Asked Questions
- PEPNet Listserv Past Posts
- Current and Past PEPNet *Perspectives*
- Training Materials

Searches may be done a variety of ways: title, key word, topic, audience, and/or format. When searching our site, you can now use either the Google search box or the Resources Search feature. The Google site search is a broader tool and will search everything on our website; the new Resources Search will search only those items in the PEPNet resources database, as listed in this article. For example, if you type the word "transition" into

See Search , p. 3

PEPNet has launched a new "Resources Search" tool for www.pepnet.org which will improve access to the rapidly growing variety of PEPNet resources which address issues related to providing quality services to students who are deaf or hard of hearing.

The revamped search feature makes it easier to find resources, and provides immediate and accessible references for site visitors, while expanding the site's search capabilities.

The new feature will search everything in the PEPNet Dissemination Center (PDC) where we house a variety of products, such as handbooks, articles, conference proceedings, tipsheets, curricula, training materials, CDs/ DVDs, videoclips, etc. In addition to searching the PDC, you also will be able to search the following offerings:

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TechSpectives

Family Center on Technology and Disability

Submitted by Ana Maria Gutierrez, Family Center on Technology

Assistive and instructional technologies allow children with disabilities to participate fully, both academically and socially, in the world around them. The Family Center on Technology and Disability (FCTD) is a national resource center funded by the U.S. Department of Education to provide current, accurate, and relevant technology information to organizations that serve children with disabilities and their families.

FCTD resources are suitable for both the novice and the experienced professional. They span the full range of assistive technology (AT) topics, including assessment, evaluation, the IEP process, funding, universal design, inclusion, and more. The FCTD website, www.fctd.info is fully accessible and provides many resources, including:

Searchable Assistive Technology Resource Database

Assistive technology specialists review articles, websites, guides, videos, and other technology-related materials for inclusion in the FCTD's resource database. Teachers, disability professionals, and families can search the database by topic and disability. Each entry provides a description of the resource, publication information, and an easy link to the material.

Searchable Organization Database

The Family Center maintains a database of more than 3,000 disability-, education-, and technology-related organizations. Each listing contains a description of the organization's mission, range of activities, and contact information.

Archive of Monthly Newsletters

FCTD newsletters explore assistive and instructional technology topics in depth. Each monthly issue of its *News & Notes* includes a feature article, highlighted resources, and profiles of member organizations.

FCTD Online Discussion Conference Series

FCTD-hosted online discussions are moderated by nationally recognized subject-matter experts. The annual Assistive Technology Institute enables participants to earn CEU credits. Information-rich transcripts of all discussions can be found on the web site.

Fact Sheets, PowerPoints®, and Family Information Guide to Assistive Technology

The FCTD's 2-3 page fact sheets are succinct resources that can be distributed easily to families and professionals. They include: *AT 101* (an introduction), *Assistive Technology and the IEP*, and *Assistive Technology Laws*. FCTD also produces an AT Glossary filled with important terms for families and service providers. The Family Information Guide includes an

introduction to assistive technology; a discussion of AT in schools, including the IEP process, due process and relevant laws; a section on AT funding; an illustrated glossary; and annotated resources.

AT Success Stories

Inspiring stories about students with a range of disabilities who have experienced success with the use of AT help others see the world of possibilities.

En Español

FCTD resources translated into Spanish include the *Family Information Guide to Assistive Technology*, all of the AT fact sheets, and success stories.



To join the FCTD listserv and receive our monthly newsletter please visit
www.fctd.info/members/signupindividual.php

To see if your organization is listed in our network database visit

www.fctd.info/members/search.php

To see AT Resource Reviews visit

www.fctd.info/resources/search.php

Search, from p. 1

the Google search box, the results will give you anything on www.pepnet.org that includes the word “transition.” If you search using the word “transition” in the Resources Search feature, the results will list the items that PEPNet has deemed

useful for those searching for transition-related resources.

As always, all print products are downloadable at the PDC. If a product is over 25 pages, it can be purchased via a dedicated PEPNet page on Lulu, a commercial print-on-demand

service. These products are available via a Lulu link at the PEPNet PDC site, or directly from the Lulu PEPNet store at <http://stores.lulu.com/pepnet>. DVDs and CDs are still available for purchase through an online order form on the PDC site.

Resources for Educators:

PEPNet Launches New Web-based RKit

PEPNet has a new web-based resource designed for teachers, support service professionals, administrators, parents, and others who work with middle and secondary school students who are deaf or hard of hearing.

Resource Kit for Itinerant Teachers (RKit) Supporting Students who are Deaf or Hard of Hearing can be found at the PEPNet website: www.pepnet.org, under Resources.

The RKit includes downloadable materials, handouts, and educational links, all designed as resources for professionals to share with mainstream teachers, support personnel, administrators, parents, and students. With one click, users can locate, print, and share information related to access, educational success, teaching, transition, positive self image, self-advocacy skills, and professional development opportunities. Website and resource links support justification of the provision of support services during IEP meetings and also can help dispel the myth that providing support services is complex and/or not available.



The site is divided into these categories:

- Support services (Captioned Media, Notetaking, ALDs, Interpreting, and Speech-to-Text)
 - Teacher resources (Tips and Tools)
 - Transition tools (iTransition, Achieving Goals, Financing Your Education, PEPNet *College Guide*)
 - Student organizations (Advocacy, Cultural, Sport Activities)
 - Government mandates (ADA, IDEA, Section 504)
 - Professional development (Conferences, Webcasts, Readings)
- Use these categories to find PEPNet and national resources that are easily searchable and accessible.

As a web-based resource, the RKit is a “living” document designed to grow and change with time. Feedback and suggestions can be offered on the RKit “home page” to help maintain this site as a relevant and useful resource. Those who provide an email address on the home page will be notified of RKit updates as they occur.

We welcome your feedback on the RKit as we continue to develop and add new resources.

Comments, questions? Please email Desiree Duda
desiree.duda@pepnet.org

Transition Summit Highlights Partnerships

Submitted by Greta Palmberg, Transition Specialist, PEPNet-Midwest

Effective transition programming involves collaboration with schools, agencies, providers, and communities. Only when these groups come together to communicate, coordinate, plan, and share responsibilities and resources can we create successful post-school outcomes for our students who are deaf or hard of hearing. But how can we build this collaborative framework in our state, region, or local transition project/program? This was the key question at this year's Transition Summit.

More than 80 transition personnel and stakeholders attended the second biannual Transition Summit June 23 – 24 in St. Paul, Minnesota. The goal of the Summit was to enhance transition programming through interagency collaboration. This was indeed a timely topic given current economic times. The PEPNet Transition Workgroup, planners of the event, invited national experts, regional transition models, and 20 state teams to attend the Summit.

"Interagency Collaboration: An Essential Piece of the Taxonomy for Transition Programming" was the keynote address by Jennifer Coyle (formerly Hill), Project Coordinator with the

National Secondary Transition Technical Assistance Center (NSTTAC). NSTTAC partnered with PEPNet to create a "Team Planning Tool" to help state teams collaborate to develop strategies for implementing transition-focused education.

Other presenters included Parent Advocacy Coalition for Educational Rights (PACER),

www.pacer.org,

Hands & Voices,

www.handsandvoices.org

and The National Employment Team (NET). In addition to national speakers, an interagency state panel from Minnesota presented on "Collaboration at its Best! Using Interagency Planning to Align Four Primary Transition Planning Tools: IEP, ITP, ISP, and IPE".

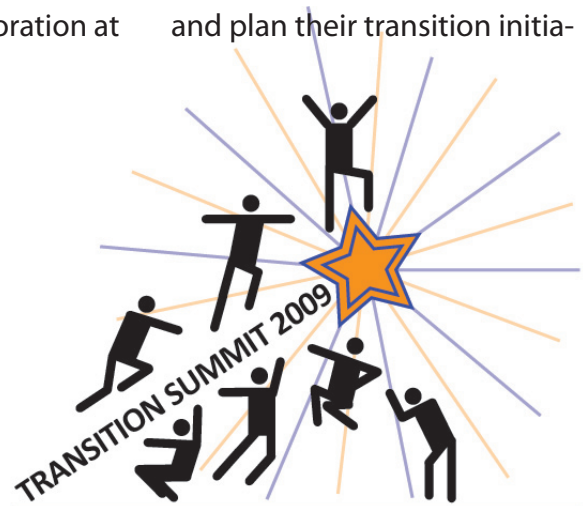
To showcase interagency collaboration in "real" transition initiatives, the Summit invited three transition models to present from Arkansas (iTransition Summer College Camp), Minnesota (VECTOR Transition Program for D/HH), and Georgia (Deaf Extreme Statewide Transition Conference).

The Summit also provided

time for each state team to develop their transition initiatives as well as network with presenters and other state teams.

Another agency partnership that resulted from the Transition Summit was the Communities of Practice and the SharedWork website. The IDEA Partnership and the National Association of State Directors of Special Education (NASDSE) working with the U.S. Department of Education's Office of Special Education Programs (OSEP) developed the Communities of Practice approach to bring together multiple stakeholders.

PEPNet's Transition Summit participants are using the SharedWork website to communicate with their state teams and plan their transition initia-

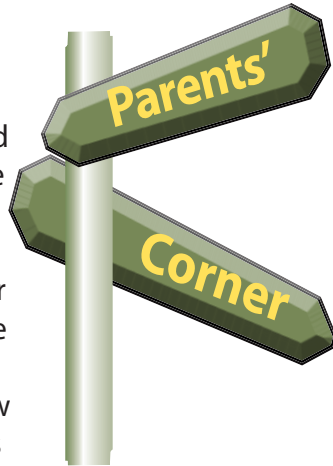


Community. Collaboration. Transition.

PEPNet

tives. This website also allows the 20 PEPNet state groups to share with other states and national stakeholder groups, developing a support system to

See Summit, p. 7



Persons Considered Low Functioning Deaf

*Submitted by Anne Levy, Executive Director,
Community Outreach Program for the Deaf-AZ and NM,
Valley Center of the Deaf and Community Living Program*

Within the population of persons with a hearing loss are people who face significant barriers to achieving their goals in employment, independence, and socialization. These persons, considered Low Functioning Deaf (LFD), have a hearing loss with complicating factors such as minority status, lack of appropriate education, secondary disability, and lack of adequate communication. Often individuals in this group lack documented medical conditions or are misdiagnosed. They often are identified by behavioral referents, with poor skills in the areas of impulse control, problem solving, language processing, and family relationships. LFD individuals also have reading levels somewhere between survival skills and the second grade. (Harmon, Carr & Johnson)

Although a precise definition for this target group is not available, these persons generally tend to have functional limitations in the area of academic achievement, making it difficult for them to pursue training at the postsecondary level, the communication and social skills needed for independence on the job, as well as vocational skills necessary to independently obtain and maintain employment. (Hurwitz (1989), Long, Long, & Ouelette (1993), and Mathey & Lafayette (1990)).

The Community Outreach Program for the Deaf (COPD) has provided services to this population for more than 35 years. During this time, many assessments and program options have been tried. We have found that the LFD population generally requires highly specialized and comprehensive services and programming.

Since many of these individuals lack ASL skills, the most effective method to accommodate this language development barrier is to focus on highly visual, experiential and non-language

based techniques, such as:

- **Assessment tools** designed to determine an individual's likes, dislikes, and lifestyle preferences as they relate to social, recreational, and employment outcomes. Tools include person-centered planning such as Personal Futures Planning developed by Beth Mount, and environmental or community assessments (work, community, social and home) developed by Mike Callahan.
- **A comprehensive model** of service that relies on the choice of an individual to select among meaningful options, supports, and environments. This includes services for work, home and recreation, environmental supports (personal support, technological devices, and adaptations), mentoring from the adult deaf community, and peer support groups.
- **Cognitive skill building** taught experientially or in real situations. Skill development areas include self-control, problem identification, resolution, and reduction of impulsive behaviors. Teaching identification of self-talk patterns and new thinking patterns can then lead toward healthy choices.

Ultimately, long-term planning is necessary with a community agency. Community agencies provide the link for persons considered low functioning as they build an on-going relationship and meet ongoing needs as the person ages. Additionally, through collaboration with many different funders, eligibility requirements and outcomes are not always necessary.

Ongoing support, options for training, and full community inclusion are as important to this group as for other members in the deaf community. Providing these essential components assures that deaf persons considered Low Functioning are given the same choices and opportunities as all others.

New FAQs from PEPNet's Website

Here are a few of the newest Frequently Asked Questions from the PEPNet website:

Question:

Are colleges/universities responsible for providing interpreting services for individuals other than students, such as parents or people from the community who are deaf?

Response:

Yes, colleges/universities are responsible for providing communication access for sponsored programs and activities. If a parent who is deaf wants to attend an event that is open to all parents, then the college/university is responsible for providing communication access. Under the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), a "public entity" is required to take appropriate steps to ensure that communications with members of the public with disabilities are as effective as communications with others with an equal opportunity to participate. Providing an interpreter takes time. It is reasonable to expect requests for accommodations in advance. Keep in mind, requests by parents or community members may not be limited to only sign language interpreting services. People may request services such as speech-to-text services, assistive listening devices, or even

reserved seating at events.

Policies regarding who locates and pays for interpreting services vary. At some institutions, the disability support office handles the requests and payments. At other institutions, individual departments or divisions find and fund interpreters. The individual who is deaf or hard of hearing is never responsible for the costs of accommodations.

Resources:

U.S. Department of Justice, A Guide to Disability Rights Laws
www.ada.gov/cguide.htm#anchor62335

www.ada.gov/pubs/ada.htm

National Association of the Deaf
www.nad.org/issues/civil-rights/ADA

Americans with Disabilities Act: Responsibilities for Postsecondary Institutions Serving Deaf and Hard of Hearing Students – Questions and Answers; Jeanne M Kincaid, Esq. & Sharaine J. Rawlinson, M.S.W., 1999
<http://pdcorder.pepnet.org/media/1054secondedition.pdf>

Question:

Can the office of Disability Support Services at a postsecondary institution cancel interpreting or speech-to-text services because of excessive student absences?

Is it appropriate to continue to pay for services that are not being used?

Response:

Deaf and hard-of-hearing students have the same rights as their hearing peers, which includes the right to be absent from class. Interpreting and speech-to-text services should not be canceled due to student absences, but services may be temporarily suspended, according to clearly written policies, until a student completes specified tasks required to reinstate services. A postsecondary institution's attendance policies, or the attendance policy of an academic department or instructor, may be used as a guide to determine the service suspension policies of the office of disability services regarding interpreting and speech-to-text services.

The disability services office should review service provision policies with the student at the beginning of the semester or quarter; some schools require that the students sign the agreement. This agreement might specify the college's attendance policy and describe the circumstances, such as excessive absences, that would result in service suspension. The steps that a student must take to reinstate services should be defined in the agreement as well.

While it is not appropriate to discuss specific costs of interpreting and speech-to-

See FAQs, p. 8

PEPNet Offers DVD on ADA in ASL with Voiceover

PEPNet has posted a two-part DVD on its website (www.pepnet.org/ADADVD.asp) to explain the Americans with Disabilities Act and how it applies to postsecondary education for students who are deaf or hard of hearing.

The DVD, designed for students, their families, and advocates, was produced by PEPNet and is narrated by Chicago attorney Howard A. Rosenblum, whose practice focuses on disability rights and special education.

Rosenblum, who is deaf, is chairman of the Public Policy Committee for the National Association of the Deaf (NAD) and is the founder and board chair of the Midwest Center on Law and the Deaf.

Part One, "The Basics of the Americans with Disabilities Act," explains the history of the ADA, including its passage, its definitions of disability, and its recent Amendment Act. The ADA's four sections—Employment, Public Entities, Public Accommodations, and Telecommunications—are discussed, along with information on the various federal agencies responsible for enforcing ADA laws.

Part Two, "The Americans with Disabilities Act and the College Years," explains how the ADA applies to postsecondary education by clarifying

differences between the ADA and other legislation, such as the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act, which applies to K-12 education.

It also discusses how the ADA and the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 may impact postsecondary faculty and staff, reviews how students who are deaf and hard of hearing may be protected by the ADA, and shows how the law impacts access and accommodations (physical, programs and activities) as well as the provision of equipment

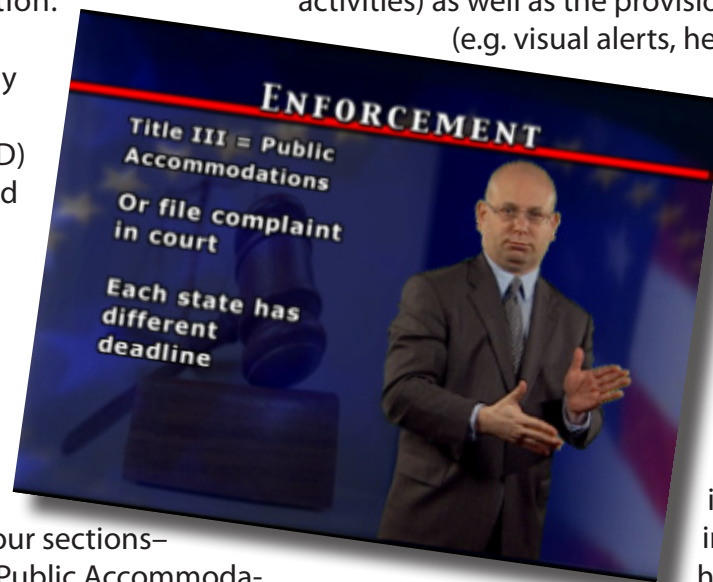
(e.g. visual alerts, hearing devices

and telecommunications). Rosenblum

outlines services that postsecondary institutions need to provide to students, including interpreting, captioning, and notetaking, and discusses how postsecond-

ary students may effectively request services and advocate for themselves.

The DVD was produced in American Sign Language with voiceover and open captioning. It will also be available through the PEPNet Dissemination Center.



Summit, from p. 4

share successful strategies and knowledge. All Transition Summit resources, materials, and presenters' PowerPoints® are on the SharedWork website. Interested stakeholders can create a login to review and download transition materials and to view

each state's transition plans.

1. Go to www.sharedwork.org.
2. Click on the "National Community of Practice on Transition."
3. Register by creating a username and password.
4. In the left column you will see

"PEPNet (Deaf/Hard of Hearing)" under state sites. Click on this to go to the PEPNet home page.

5. Scroll down to the "Repository" to find the Transition Summit resources and PowerPoints®.

FAQs, from p. 6

text services with students, students should be aware that institutions have limited budgets and know they should be responsible for giving advanced notice of an absence whenever possible.

The PEPNet Product Dissemination Center (PDC) has resources for Disability Support Services, including:

- Handbook Templates; these downloadable files in MS Word contain separate handbook templates for students, parents, faculty, captionists, interpreters, and notetakers. These templates may be adapted for use at any postsecondary institution. http://pdcorder.pepnet.org/order/product_result.aspx?prodcode=&prodtitle=templates&first=&last=®ion=&format=&classtype=&audience=
- Also available through the PDC: Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA): Responsibilities for Postsecondary Institutions Serving Deaf and Hard of Hearing Students: Questions and Answers Book – 2nd Edition. Attendance issues are particularly addressed on pages 40 – 42. <http://pdcorder.pepnet.org/media/1054secondedition.pdf>

Question:

The student communicates fine with me in my office. Why does he need a sign language interpreter for class?

Response:

Students who are deaf or hard of hearing may rely on a variety of communication

modes, depending on the setting and purpose of the dialogue or communication.

Speechreading skills and residual hearing may be effective in one setting, but ineffective in another. This may even be true for students who use assistive listening technology or speech-to-text services and/or who may have a cochlear implant. Students who experience hearing loss vary on degree of loss, type of loss, age of onset, and preferred communication mode. All of these factors impact a student's ability to speechread.

Approximately 30 % of English speech sounds are visible on the mouth. Speechreading involves using residual hearing, watching body language and facial expressions, and knowing the topic. A student will not be able to follow if there are group discussions or instruction given while the instructor is looking down or has his back to the class. The following factors impact a student's need for a sign language interpreter:

- acoustics, size, lighting of the room
- student's familiarity with the subject
- lecture vs. discussion format
- instructor's accent or facial hair that obscures lips.

These factors also influence a student's need for a sign language interpreter in one class but possibly not in another.

It may be difficult for the student to monitor her speech

for loudness and clarity in a classroom versus a small office. A classroom interpreter can project what the student is signing to the instructor and class with appropriate loudness and clarity and enables the student to participate in class discussions effectively.

One-on-one communication with a student in a quiet disability services office often includes information already familiar to the student. When compared to the classroom, where the information is new and unfamiliar and the acoustics may vary, it is easier to understand why students may require sign language interpreting services, speech-to-text services, or assistive listening devices.

The student truly is the best judge of when he needs support services such as interpreting. This is further supported by Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act, which states that institutions must give "primary consideration" to the communication preferences of the individual with the disability.

Additional Resources:

http://pdcorder.pepnet.org/media/1047TPSHT_ADA.pdf

http://pdcorder.pepnet.org/media/1042TPSHT_Language_Learning.pdf

<http://pdcorder.pepnet.org/media/1054secondedition.pdf>

Pilot Program Enhances Notetaking Accommodations

*Submitted by Tia Ivanko, Coordinator and Maria Bohn, Project Associate
Center for Collegiate Deaf Education, Bergen Community College*

In 2008, The Center for Collegiate Deaf Education [CCDE] at Bergen Community College was awarded supplemental grant funds from the Commission on Higher Education to pilot improvements on services currently funded by the New Jersey Regional Center. The approved proposal submitted by CCDE was for implementing a Professional Notetaking Service as a means to improve upon the existing notetaking accommodation process and protocol.

Currently, CCDE provides peer notetaking services as an accommodation in conjunction with the Office of Specialized Services (OSS); however, the service enhancement brought about an opportunity to explore potential changes for the



larger service. This service entails securing a peer notetaker with the assistance of the instructor after the first or second week of class. Thus far, notetaking procedures have been a fairly efficient method of obtaining notes for students, yet student

concerns have been brought to our attention.

Why Notetaking?

- Notetaking services are an accommodation provided to eligible students based on disability diagnosis.
- There often are situations where students experience difficulty in securing a notetaker for their college-level class.
- Students often have concerns about the quality of the notes they are receiving from their peers.

Notetaking is a widely used accommodation and a valuable service for students with disabilities. By piloting improvements and changes with a small population, CCDE along with OSS can explore opportunities to expand the service to assist other students receiving notes on our cam-

pus. The ultimate goal is to create an efficient and effective service that students can easily access.

Our Pilot Program

In a joint effort with student service departments, CCDE employed Professional Notetakers. (PNTs) hired under specified academic requirements and criteria from the pool of current students. PNTs were provided comprehensive training in both notetaking training and deaf awareness.

PNTs were assigned to specific courses, and provided with mobile notetaking equipment, the Pegasus Mobile Notetaker and the DigiMemo. This equipment allowed notetakers to record notes onto plain paper, then upload the handwritten notes as text files which can be edited and sent to the student(s) receiving notetaking services, and the course instructor. A hard copy of the notes is archived in the CCDE for assessment and evaluation.



PNTs are responsible for keeping detailed records of classes in which they took notes, securing a back-up notetaker in the case of their absence, and reporting to the notetaking supervisor as necessary.

Service Enhancement Goals

- Improve the quality, availability, and accessibility of notetaking services
- Incorporate technology into current services to improve the quality and efficiency of notetaking
- Fulfill students' requests by providing reliable, accurate notetaking services.

Read more at:

<http://ccdebcc.wordpress.com/2009/07/28/upgrading-note-taking-accommodations/>

Fair and Equal Testing for Students Who Are Deaf/HH

How Do We Improve Test Equity? PEPNet Has Some of the Answers

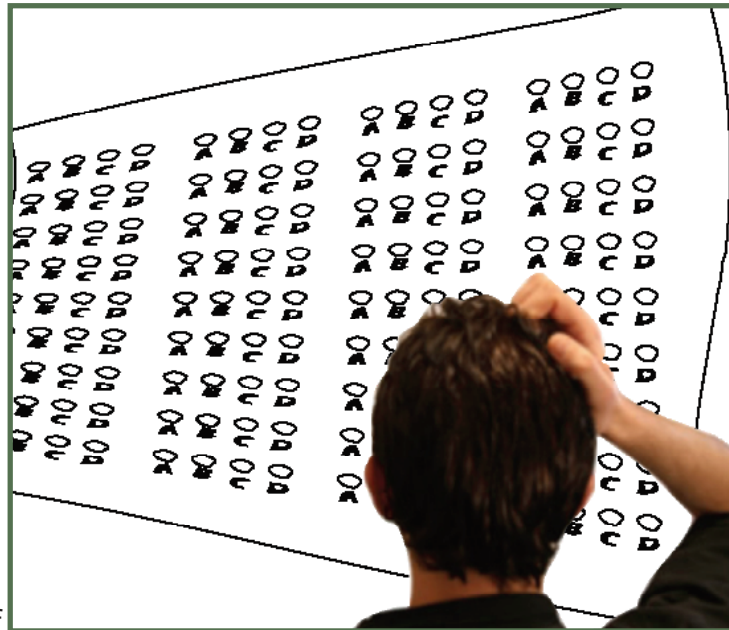
Submitted by the PEPNet Test Equity Workgroup

Individuals who are deaf or hard of hearing face unique challenges when they take a test in school or for employment or licensing. Compared to their hearing peers, individuals who are deaf or hard of hearing are more likely to fail a test—even if they know the subject.

In the Spring 2009 PEPNet *Perspectives*, we explained why this happens. One reason is that experience with English differs widely among individuals who are deaf or hard of hearing and their hearing peers. Test equity is a way to ensure that tests accurately measure the abilities of every individual. To improve test equity, experts at PEPNet's 2008 Test Equity Summit made these recommendations:

- Schools need formal guidelines on accommodations for testing, such as when interpreters are needed for giving the questions and whether students can sign the answers.
- Schools should use various ways to measure abilities. Instead of tests alone, portfolio assessments or interviews by a team of professionals can help determine whether a student knows a subject.
- Sign language interpreters should have at least a day to become familiar with a test before it is given to the student.

- All students need to be taught test-taking skills. Test-taking is a learned skill, not an innate skill.



- Teachers and college instructors should consult teachers of the deaf or other experts in deafness when designing tests given to deaf or hard-of-hearing students.

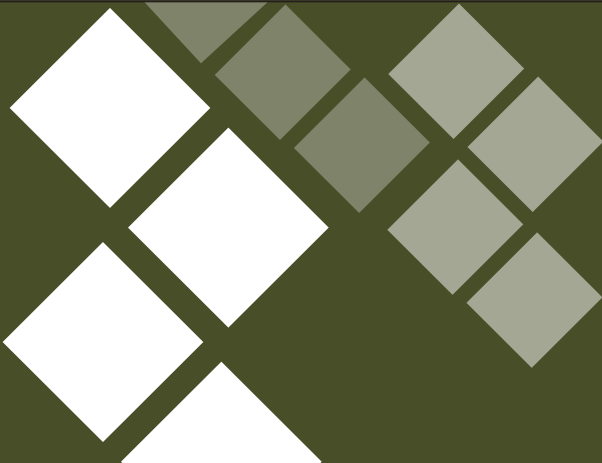
- School psychologists who assess students for learning disabilities and other conditions need to understand the student's hearing loss and its implications.

Standardized and achievement tests are developed by

independent testing companies. These companies should employ individuals who are deaf and hard of hearing in test design. Before finalizing any test, a company needs to try out the test on both individuals who are deaf and individuals who are hearing. Each test should be written so that it is clear and understandable for anyone who has to take it. This is considered "universal design."

Public policymakers need to look at how tests are being given and used in our schools. The current failures and problems with testing can result in long-range costs to society.

Achieving test equity will take a concerted effort by individuals who are deaf and hard of hearing, parents, schools, psychologists, test developers, and public policy makers. Raising awareness of test equity in your community is a first—and essential—step.



PEPNet

*a partner
in building
futures*

PEPNet collaborates with professionals providing training and resources to enhance programs and outcomes for individuals who are deaf or hard of hearing.

Visit www.pepnet.org for a listing of outreach specialists by state/territory.

PEPNet Perspectives welcomes your articles.

Share your "best practice," work experience, technique, or insight with others in our field.

Submitted articles must:

- be no more than 500 words
- be original work or from a non-profit organization
- suggest only resources that are free (or nearly free) and readily available in accessible, electronic formats.



PEPNet

Suggestions?

Feedback?

Write us!

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*Design, Layout, Copyediting
by FotoBlender Graphics
Published by PEPNet*

PEPNet, a collaboration of four regional centers, is supported by cooperative agreements with the U.S. Department of Education, Office of Special Education Programs.



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pepnetwest@pepnet.org

PEPNet's mission is to improve transition services and educational access for students who are deaf or hard of hearing, including those with co-occurring disabilities, thus enhancing educational opportunities.