

## Supporting Children Who Are Deaf or Hard of Hearing as They Return to School

### Parent-to-Parent Tips

- Read all the documents and school plans published by the school district. Continue to check the district's website for additional information.
- Write down any questions you still have about your district's "Return to Learn" plan and how it will impact your child.
- Consider requesting a phone call or virtual meeting with your child's individualized education program (IEP) case manager or school administrator prior to the start of school. Talk about potential hurdles and brainstorm potential solutions.
- If needed, request a meeting with your child's entire IEP team prior to the beginning of school. Work together to find solutions on how your child's IEP will be met during this different learning environment.
- If your district is offering multiple learning options, weigh the pros and cons of each option, make your decision, and stick with it! Don't second-guess yourself. You know what is best for your child.

### Face-to-Face Learning: Questions to Consider With Your Team

- How will the physical environment changes impact learning and access?
- How will teachers and students wearing face masks impact my child?
- How will the sound quality of my child's teacher's voice change?
- What additional support may be necessary in the classroom?
- Who will be responsible for sanitizing the hearing assistive technology?
- Can a functional listening evaluation be completed to assess my child's auditory access in the classroom?

### Virtual Learning: Questions to Consider With Your Team

- What daily routine and schedule can be established to support my child's learning?
- What additional or modified accommodations may be needed for my child to learn using an online platform?
- What accommodations may be needed to meet my child's social/emotional needs?
- How will my child have access to an interpreter using a virtual option?
- What are ways to improve the sound quality of live and recorded videos?
- What type of captioning options will be available?

## Family-Based Organizations

[Michigan Hands & Voices](http://mihandsandvoices.org) (mihandsandvoices.org): Supports families of children who are Deaf/Hard of Hearing (DHH) regardless of language or communication mode.

[Michigan Alliance for Families](http://michiganallianceforfamilies.org) (michiganallianceforfamilies.org): Provides information, support, and education for families who have children and young adults (birth to 26 years of age) who receive special education services.

## Resources and Information to Consider

- [Deaf/Hard of Hearing Resources for Educators and Families](https://bit.ly/2UJv9di) (bit.ly/2UJv9di)  
The Michigan Department of Education – Low Incidence Outreach (MDE-LIO) offers a list of resources to support students returning to the classroom, including personal protective equipment (PPE) resources and how to clean hearing assistive technology.
- [Guidance to Address Foregone Learning for Students With IEPs as a Result of the COVID-19 Pandemic \[PDF\]](https://bit.ly/3klmjzD) (bit.ly/3klmjzD)  
This Michigan Department of Education (MDE) document provides considerations for districts with regard to children with IEPs and the learning they missed due to the pandemic.
- [Ask MDE-OSE! \[Google Form\]](https://bit.ly/2Y1b5pf) (bit.ly/2Y1b5pf)  
The Michigan Department of Education (MDE) Office of Special Education (OSE) would like to hear from you regarding COVID-19-related issues and questions that intermediate school districts (ISDs), local districts, parents, and students are facing and experiencing.
- [School Decision-Making Tool for Parents, Caregivers, and Guardians](https://bit.ly/2DYaMEF) (bit.ly/2DYaMEF)  
The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) offers tools to help you assess your child's risk of COVID-19, consideration factors that will help you make a choice, and preparing for the school year.
- [Memo of Guidance for Administrators: Continuing Educational Interpreting Services](https://bit.ly/3kEPfSp) (bit.ly/3kEPfSp)  
In this memo, the National Association of Interpreters in Education (NAIE) provides clarification and support regarding the essential continuation of educational interpreting services for students who are DHH or DeafBlind.
- [The Effects of Face Coverings and Remote Microphone Technology on Speech Perception in the Classroom \[PDF\]](https://bit.ly/2PUV3c5) (bit.ly/2PUV3c5)  
This article from the Moog Center for Deaf Education summarizes a study of speech perception using different face coverings with or without a Roger remote microphone system. The findings encourage a functional listening assessment to be conducted within the classroom to determine the best listening condition for the individual child.
- [Effective Communication in School Settings for Deaf/Hard of Hearing Students and Others: Face Masks and Face Shields \[PDF\]](https://bit.ly/3arqPae) (bit.ly/3arqPae)  
This resource from Colorado Hands & Voices provides guidance on effective communication in school settings during the COVID-19 pandemic.

- [Masked Challenges for People Who Are Deaf and Hard of Hearing](https://bit.ly/3kKSqbb) (bit.ly/3kKSqbb)  
This AG Bell Volta Voices article shares the difficulties a face mask can create in sound quality for a person who is DHH.
- [Connect-Hear.com](https://connect-hear.com)  
Connect-Hear has collected information for individuals who are DHH regarding face masks, videoconferencing, captioning, and assistive technology to provide the best audio connection.
- [Helping Children Understand Emotions When Wearing Masks \[PDF\]](https://bit.ly/31Uu8mm) (bit.ly/31Uu8mm)  
The National Center for Pyramid Model Innovations (NCPMI) offers ten helpful tips for helping children identify emotions when someone's face is covered by a mask.
- [COVID: School Decisions and In-Person School Considerations](https://mihandsandvoices.org/astra) (mihandsandvoices.org/astra)  
Michigan Hands & Voices' Advocacy Support & Training (ASTra) program provides resources and support for gaining access to captioning for Zoom and videos.