

History of the Educational Impact Matrix for Students Who Are Deaf or Hard of Hearing

In the late 1990's, Oakland ISD teacher consultants for students who are Deaf/Hard of Hearing (DHH TC), began to develop a Severity Rating Scale for the Hearing Impaired. Inspired by the forms used by the consultants for the Visually Impaired, the DHH group tried to use the BVI/OM forms. The group attempted to replace the VI information with DHH information, but was unsuccessful in using that format for categories related to hearing impairment. Next, the DHH TC group reviewed models and content from the Oakland ISD Language Rating Scale, the Colorado Individualized Profile for DH/H, the Montgomery County Intermediate Unit 23 PA ISD (Pennsylvania), and the Minnesota Department of Education. They surveyed local districts and DHH teacher consultants as to methods for gathering information including criteria for dismissal. The DHH TC group developed criteria for student dismissal due to ineligibility as an offshoot project.

The DHH TC group started to identify categories through reviewing legal requirements (Laws and Rules) and through searching research/literature, including the Michigan Outcome Indicators, for important factors and best practices which were contributing to the success of students who are DHH. This assisted the team in identification of pertinent information which became the categories. The numerical point scale was suggested and reviewed by the statistician at Oakland Schools for good inter-test reliability. The Oakland ISD group met monthly for a half-day with the whole DHH TC group (9-11 persons) over approximately 2 year period and the original version called the *Severity Rating Scale for the Hearing Impaired* form became usable in the early 2000's.

Spurred by the initial fee-for-services discussion (WIRE Report), Oakland ISD DHH Teacher Consultants used the *Severity Rating Scale for the Hearing Impaired* on every child on their caseloads (over 275) to track goal progress and in an attempt to establish a baseline for services. Feedback was used to adjust the form including a name change to the *Deaf and Hard of Hearing Student Profile*. The form was used annually to track data and kept in the students' files to follow multi-year progress. This version of the form was presented at a statewide DHH Teacher Consultant meeting after which other counties began using versions of the form.

The Oakland Schools DHH Consultant group found that the form and the data were useful. Additionally, they found that the form was *not* applicable for some populations: severely involved children and very young children.

The DHH TC group completed a form for Preschool children and began work on one for DHH children with significant additional disabilities.

In the mid-late 2000s, Oakland DHH teacher consultants stopped using the forms because there was concern from administrators that it was predetermining services and service determination is the function of the IEP team.

In 2010 at the Michigan School Professionals for Students who are Deaf or Hard of Hearing (MSPSDHH, formerly MSPSPHI) meeting, discussions began about the need for a data collection tool which could provide service guidelines for IEP teams. Data based decision making, inclusion of more DHH students, and budget reductions were factors. Forms, most of which were modifications of the Oakland Schools form, were collected and reviewed. A small committee, supported by Michigan Department of Education-Low Incidence Outreach, was formed. A teacher consultant from Oakland Schools, who had worked with the earlier version, was asked to bring her experience to the group. The committee was cautioned to be sure that the product was not a determiner but a tool.

The committee began meeting in the Spring/Summer of 2010 to revise/update the Oakland form. The form began with general education information and added disability specific information related to students' needs which would impact their success in the general education curriculum/setting. The form was renamed the *Educational Impact Matrix for Students who are Deaf or Hard of Hearing (DHH Matrix)*. In October 2010, the *DHH Matrix* was presented at the DHH Teacher Consultant meeting to more than 80 teacher consultants. Feedback was obtained and changes were made prior to presentation at the DHH Academy, a state-wide biannual conference. Again feedback was obtained and the form was revised.

From January to June 15, 2011, the form was available for use as part of a data collection pilot project and 225 matrix responses were received. In June and July of 2011, the committee analyzed the data to relate *DHH Matrix* scores with ranges of services currently being provided. Specific details of the analysis can be found in the document: "Matrix Data Summary" at mdelio.org.

Additionally an electronic survey was conducted in early June, 2011 for feedback on the form itself. Data was collected and analyzed from 37 respondents. This data is contained in the "Matrix Data Summary" document.

The *DHH Matrix*, the Orientation & Mobility and the Blind/Vision Impairment forms were presented at the Michigan Association of Administrators of Special Education (MAASE) conference in August of 2011.

The *DHH Matrix* is posted on the MDE-LIO website, as well as on the DHH wiki (members only). The *DHH Matrix* "Factors for Consideration" was the topic of the DHH TC Annual Fall meeting, October 2011. *During the School Year 2011-2012, additional Matrix data was collected and minor changes were made to the Matrix.* *

The *DHH Matrix* was developed with the support of MDE-LIO. *During the 2011-12 school year, a committee began development of a Preschool Matrix.* *

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