

Outreach Services

For Deaf and Hard of Hearing Children



January 2009

The National Deaf Agenda Goal Four...

Accountability, High Stakes Testing and Standards Base Environments

By: Carol Wild and Cynthia VanManen

**Goal 4: Assessment and Accountability:
Ensuring assessments are valid and reliable
measures for Deaf and Hard of Hearing students.**

Deaf and Hard of Hearing students across the state of Indiana are assessed annually using the same high stakes testing that is given to all students in Indiana. The only difference is that specific accommodations may be provided to Deaf and Hard of Hearing students as determined by each student's case conference committee. The accommodations are used to help ensure that the testing is a valid and reliable measure of the student's skills. The allowable accommodations can be found at the website given at the end of the article. The following is a summary of the changes that are being made to the high stakes testing in Indiana which is referred to as ISTEP+.

The Indiana Statewide Testing for Educational Progress-Plus (ISTEP+) is designed to ensure students have mastered basic reading, writing and math skills before graduating from high school. Based on the Indiana's Academic Standards, it measures what students have learned at each grade level and helps identify those areas where each student may need extra help or instruction.

This year, the ISTEP+ is making a change from taking the test in fall to taking the test in the spring. This means that for the 2008-2009 school year, students in grades 3-8 will take the ISTEP+ twice as part of the move to spring testing. Beginning in 2009-10, students will only take ISTEP+ in the spring.

The spring 2009 ISTEP+ will be given during the months of March, April or early May. Each school establishes their own testing schedule based on the ISTEP+ testing window. Like the fall test, the spring ISTEP+ includes questions on English and Math at grades 3-8, Science at grades 4 and 6 and Social

Studies at grades 5 and 7. Incoming freshmen this fall (class of 2012) will be the first group of students to take the new ISTEP+ (GQE) which consists of Algebra I and English 10 tests taken whenever students complete the corresponding course. For most students, that will be in late spring. The exams are referred to as End of Course Tests or Assessments.

These changes are part of a larger testing plan for Indiana that includes moving ISTEP+ to the spring (grades 3-8), replacing the current Graduating Qualifying Exam (GQE) with Algebra I and English 10 end-of-course tests and offering new computer-based teaching tools to local schools on a voluntary basis for grades K-8.

The GQE is being changed for the following reasons:

- When students took the GQE in the fall of grade 10, the test covered material that was learned the previous year or earlier. By testing at the end of each course, the content will still be fresh.
- Some students take Algebra I in middle school, so allowing students to meet this testing requirement earlier clears the way for them to pursue other higher-level math courses.
- Because students already take end-of-course tests in Algebra I, changing the GQE requirement actually cuts down on the number of tests students have to take.

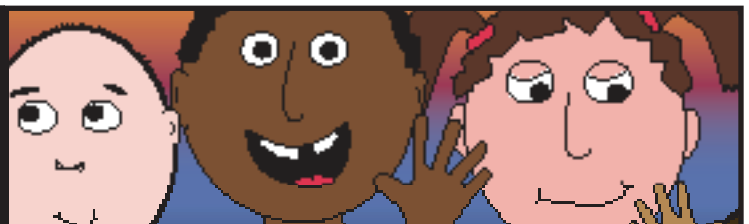
If a student doesn't pass the GQE:

- The student will have the opportunity to complete extra help sessions and to retake the Algebra I and English 10 exams.
- The student who has not passed the GQE after completing extra help sessions and retaking the test may qualify for a GQE waiver. Talk to your school counselor for more information.

For more information on these changes and other topics related to the ISTEP+ and GQE go to: <http://www.doe.in.gov/istep/>

Outreach Mission:

To identify and find resources to meet the needs of deaf and hard of hearing children and their families throughout the state of Indiana.



First Deaf Nursing Student

Megan Sturges, Indiana School for the Deaf alumna, pursues career in Nursing.

Megan Sturges is the first deaf student enrolled in the nursing program at Indiana- Purdue Fort Wayne. Her stethoscope magnifies heart, bowel and lung sounds 65 times. An interpreter moves with her from class to class, using American Sign Language as rapidly as professors pronounce such phrases as percutaneous endoscopic and gastrostomy.



With the help of the nonprofit League for the Blind & Disabled, as well as Vocational Rehabilitation and IPFW's Services for Students with Disabilities, Sturges is training to be a nurse. In addition to an interpreter, she has a note-taker - another student who writes class notes using carbon paper so Sturges has a copy.

"I've always been interested in the medical field, in health and nutrition," said Sturges, who has a sister who's a doctor and another sister and sister-in-law who are nurses.

"We had to make sure she could hear with an enhanced stethoscope, that she could adequately assess patients' lungs, heart, blood pressure," said Carol Sternberger, nursing department chair. While she uses an interpreter for classes and during on-site clinical training now, when on the job an interpreter will not be available.

"I'm not sure how I'll do everything, but I have to be creative, to think out of the box," Sturges says. "I can speak, but I know I have to speak more clearly, pronounce things more like the way hearing people do."

Megan grew up in a lake home in Steuben County. She attended the HEAR Preschool in Fort Wayne, was in a special-education class for a time in Angola, and then was mainstreamed. But when she started middle school, the difficulty of changing teachers for each class, adjusting to reading lips of so many people, was frustrating and discouraging. In seventh grade, she transferred to the Indiana School for the Deaf in Indianapolis.

"There I was able to be better educated. I was with my peers. I felt at ease with them," she said. She excelled in math, a subject that baffled her before.

Today's technology - the Internet, text-messaging and personal digital assistants, or PDAs, for example - are a boon to the deaf, Megan said.

The League for the Blind & Disabled offers a lending library of adaptive equipment and technological devices to help people with varying kinds of disabilities live as independently as possible.

Sturges knows hurdles are ahead. One health-care site where she was to do hands-on clinical coursework this semester told IPFW that having a deaf student working with patients was too great a liability.

Parkview Hospital, on the other hand, has encouraged her to do her clinicals there, she said. This semester, she's getting hands-on experience in the hospital's extended-care unit. The only problem has been some patients want to ask a lot of questions about her deafness and about sign language, Sturges said, noting, "I answer some of their questions, then I say, 'I'm here to talk about you.'"

An online site for deaf people in medical professions has given her encouragement that others are working as nurses, doctors, technicians and in related jobs. "Being deaf does not mean I will not be a good nurse," she said. "I know I will be a good nurse."

Excerpts chosen by Diane Hazel Jones from an article appearing October 15, 2008 in The News-Sentinel, by Jennifer L. Boen.

Save the Date

June 24 – 28, 2009, Blazing New Trails!

American Society for Deaf Children

21st Biennial National Conference

Oklahoma School for the Deaf, Sulphur, Oklahoma

"This conference is held biennially for families of deaf children as an opportunity to access information to help them with education, parenting, communication and technology in raising a child with deafness."

Quote taken from www.osd.k12.ok.us.

You can register for the conference at

www.deafchildren.org.

Deadline to register is on May 30, 2009

Jodee Crace, the Outreach Service for Deaf and Hard of Hearing Children's Early Intervention Coordinator, is currently a board member of the ASDC. She is planning to present a topic or two at the Biennial Conference. She hopes to see many Indiana families of Deaf and Hard of Hearing Children attend the conference in Oklahoma.

Please feel free to contact Jodee, jcrace@isd.k12.in.us

or 317-920-6262 (VP/Voice)



Upcoming Events

January 3

Signing Play Date In Michawaka

11 am - 12 pm

Please contact Karen Horvath at 574-323-9255 or go to www.sign2me.com as dates and locations may change.

January 3

American Sign Language Storytime in Merrillville

2 pm - 3 pm

Barnes and Noble, 2240 East 80th Avenue
Merrillville, IN 46410

Please contact Signing Kids of Northwest Indiana for more information, www.nwideaf.org

January 16 & 30

February 20

March 6, March 20

April 24, May 8

Infant Toddler Playgroups

9:30 am - 11 am

Indiana School for the Deaf

1200 E. 42nd Street

Indianapolis, IN 46205

Preschool Building, Preschool Gym #131

contact Lori at Ldille@isd.k12.in.us

January 19, ASL I

January 20 ASL III

January 21 ASL II

Evansville American Sign Language Classes

6:30 pm - 8:30 pm

N. Weinbach Avenue, Suite 107, Evansville, IN 47711

Please contact connectionsdeafcenter@yahoo.com

or call 866-921-1046 or Fax 812-491-6099

January 21

Workshop for Hearing Siblings of Deaf and Hard of Hearing Children

6 pm - 9 pm

Indiana School for the Deaf Multi-Purpose Room

1200 E. 42nd Street, Indianapolis, IN 46205

Please contact Diane Hazel Jones to register at dhjones@isd.k12.in.us or call 317-924-8418

January 24

February 7

March 14

April 18

May 9

June 12

St. Joseph Institute for the Deaf Playgroup

10 am - 11:30 am

St. Joseph Institute for the Deaf

9192 Waldemar Road

Indianapolis, IN 46268

For more information and to RSVP

Contact Carrie at ctamminga@sjid.org

or 317-442-4233, 317-471-8560

Please call two weeks in advance if an ASL interpreter is desired.



Upcoming Events for Interpreters

January 30, 5 pm - 9 pm

January 31, 9 am - 4:30 pm

"It All Depends..."

Introduction to the Demand Control Schema

Gateway Community Technical College

790 Thomas More Parkway

Edgewood, Kentucky 41017

For more information:

email nkysdeaf@knysd.com

or call 859-372-5255

February 12, 2009

April 16, 2009

June 18, 2009

"Boost Your Voicing Techniques"

Basic - February 12 5:30 - 8:30 pm

Mid-Range - April 16 5:30 - 8:30 pm

Advanced - June 18 5:30 - 8:30 pm

Polk Conference Center, Anixter Center

2023 N. Clybourn, Chicago, IL 60614,

For more information: www.ilrid.org

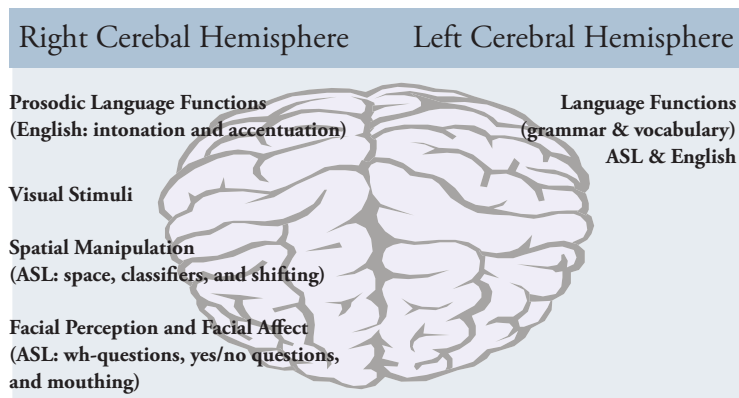
Email Tim Mahoney at AustinCop@aol.com

To view a list of upcoming events online visit <http://www.deaf-kids.com/IND/FamilyEducation/Events.asp>

The Neurology of Sign Languages

Linda Charlebois and Sheryl Whiteman

Linguists and neuroscientists at several research centers are now studying neurology as it relates to language processing in the brain; specifically, to sign languages. The information coming from such studies has confirmed that the brain processes sign languages similarly to spoken languages; however, there are some variations in where and how it is processed. ASL is a visual-spatial language and spoken English and English-based sign systems, such as SEE, are linear-sequential languages. Therefore, there are some variations in how the brain processes these languages.



The human brain is separated into two distinct cerebral hemispheres. Each hemisphere functions differently. Language functions, such as grammar and vocabulary, lateralize to the left hemisphere of the brain. In contrast, prosodic language functions, such as intonation and accentuation, as well as the processing of visual stimuli, spatial manipulation, and facial perception appear to lateralize to the right cerebral hemisphere.

Since American Sign Language (ASL) is a visual-spatial language, one might assume that ASL is processed solely in the right cerebral hemisphere. But studies show that ASL production and perception occur primarily in the left cerebral hemisphere, just as with spoken languages (Gordon, 2003).

Various research studies cited by Gordon also indicate that the right cerebral hemisphere contributes significantly to

processing ASL. There is also a great deal of interplay or cooperation between the two hemispheres.

When considering language access, communication methodologies, and other aspects of cognitive-linguistic development, parents and professionals should take into account how languages differ and how the brain processes languages.

The Neurology of Sign Language by Neil Gordon, Brain & Development, Published in 2003, by Elsevier B. V. With appreciation to Brenda Nicodemus, Ph.D. at the Laboratory for Language and Cognitive Neuroscience, San Diego, CA

Meet some of the Outreach Staff

Michelle Coleman, Early Intervention Coordinator, brings seven years experience from working as a First Steps Intake Coordinator in Central Indiana. Michelle has a degree in Deaf Education and Elementary Education as well as her First Steps credentials. Michelle can be reached at mcoleman@isd.k12.in.us or (317)-924-8415 or 1-800-724-9550 TTY/Voice.



Jodee Crace, Early Intervention Coordinator, has been involved in the Human Development field for over 22 years. Currently, she networks, partners, and trains with various stakeholders in providing high quality and unbiased, comprehensive early intervention services. In addition, Jodee provides developmental therapy and parent advising to families. She may be reached at jcrace@isd.k12.in.us or (317) 920-6262 TTY.



Diane Hazel Jones has worked at ISD since 1973. As the Family Resource Coordinator she provides a variety of services to families with Deaf and hard-of-hearing children from birth to age 21. The services include: educational visits, family workshops, and education consultations for families and professionals. She may be reached at dhjones@isd.k12.in.us or (317) 924-8418 TTY/Voice.



Outreach Services for Deaf and Hard of Hearing Children has a website, www.deaf-kids.com, which allows you to share your event information with the entire state of Indiana.

We value diversity and respect all viewpoints and opportunities for communication; therefore, please contact sponsors of events supporting specific methodologies. We suggest the questions on the following link be considered when viewing website and newsletter information:

<http://www.deaf-kids.com/IND/Links.asp>

Please submit information at least one month in advance of your event. Questions? Call Joanie Jones at 1-800-722-6166 or email jjones@isd.k12.in.us