



Accessibility Considerations for Students who are Deaf and Hard of Hearing

Need More Information?



<https://www.rmtcdhh.org/info@rmtcdhh.org>

1 (800) 356- 6731

Reopening Schools and Ensuring Communication Access for All



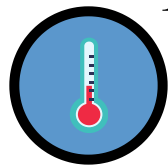
Facemasks

- Full fabric masks obscure visual information
- All masks negatively impact auditory signal
- FLEs need to be conducted to determine if additional accommodations need to be put in place to ensure equal access to learning environment
- [Continue reading in FAQ](#)



Sanitation of HAT

- Some hearing assistive technology (HAT), (e.g., pass-around microphones) may not be feasible as they would be considered a shared supply, the utility of which is in direct opposition to the most recent [CDC guidelines for opening schools](#)
- Teachers can accommodate this barrier to language by repeating what students say or ask



Temperature Screens

- Earmolds may cause false-positive temperature spikes when taking temperatures by ear
- Consider using an alternate thermometer (e.g. forehead thermometer) or re-screen after 10 minutes with earmolds removed ([California Hands & Voices, 2020](#))



Student Schedules

- Try to ensure that all kids an itinerant teacher sees in the same building or area are there on the same day
- Account for the presence of extra staff (e.g., interpreters, assistants) when thinking about group sizes for social distancing
- Consider protocols for alerting itinerants if someone in the school tests positive



Accessible Virtual Platforms

- May need to make revisions to distance learning approaches to address accessibility issues (synchronous online, online only, or hybrid models) to ensure **equitable communication access** ([ADA Title II](#)) (e.g., auto captions or real-time captions may be necessary)
- Refer to the [Captions Considerations Guide](#) for further information and guidance



Mental Health

- With COVID-19, virtual learning, conversations about social topics (e.g., Black Lives Matter), and hurricane season, students may be experiencing severe mental stress and anxiety
- Staff must be aware of and sensitive to these issues
- See the [Padlet, Mental Health for Students who are D/HH](#) of curated resources related to mental health