

Senate Bill 444

Senate Education Committee Hearing

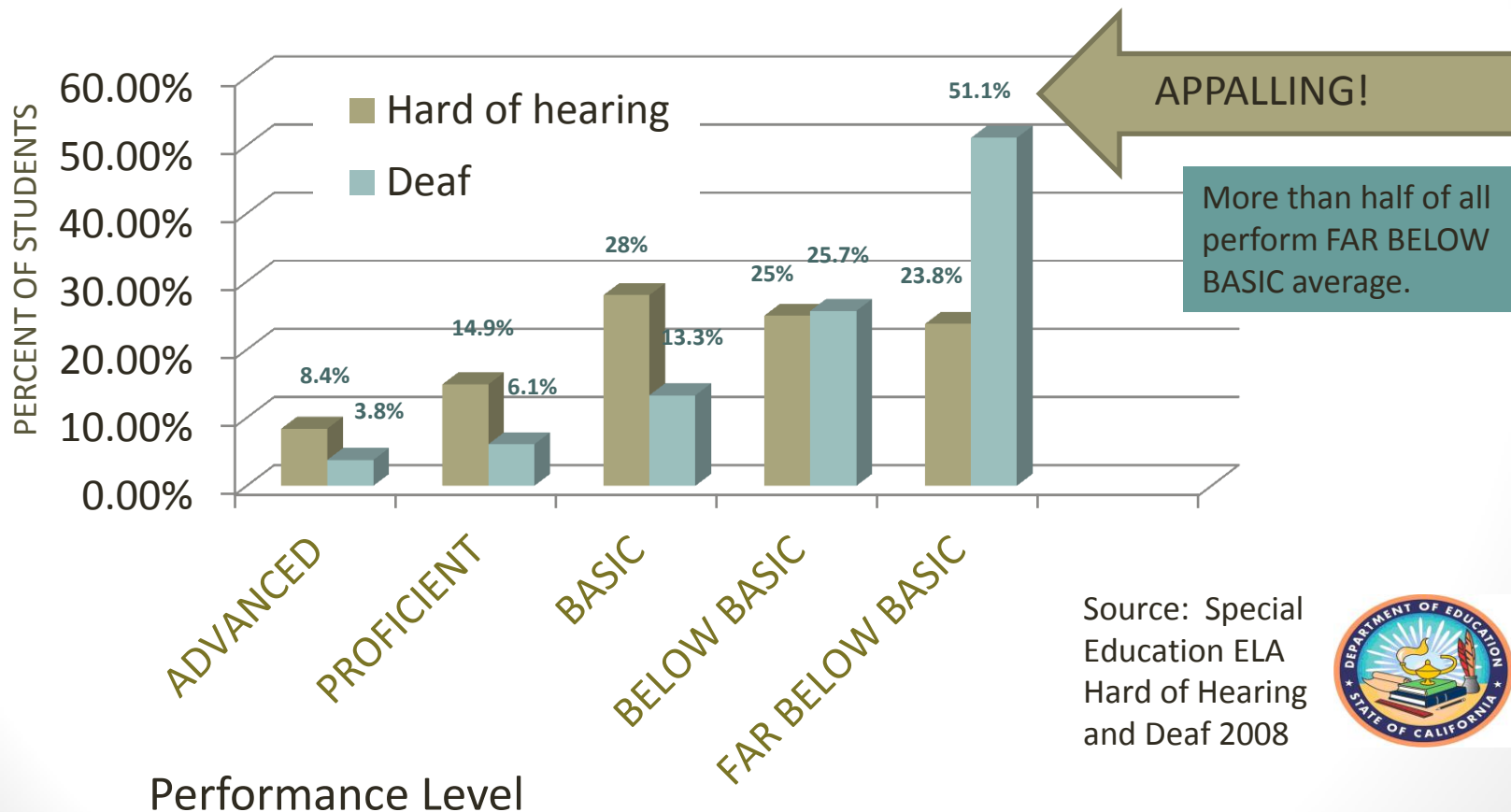
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Tokepa, KS

By Chriz Dally, LEADK Spokesperson

WHAT'S THE PROBLEM?

California statistics reflective of what's happening nationwide



Staggering statistics is what lead to the creation of the bill

A nationwide epidemic of language deprivation with no system accountability or best use of known evidence-based best practices

Appalling statistics for decades

- **3rd & 4th grade** is the average reading level for Deaf & Hard of Hearing adults
- **More than 30%** of Deaf children leave school functionally illiterate
- **8%** of Deaf and Hard of Hearing students graduate from college
- **Less than 15%** of Deaf Children can read and write fluently K-12
- **Approximately 80%** of deaf and Hard of Hearing adults are unemployed and rely on government benefits
- Deaf and Hard of Hearing full-time workers make **40 cents** for every dollar earned by workers who can hear

LANGUAGE & LITERACY is the key to decreasing illiteracy, unemployment and dependency on government benefits.

SOLUTION?

Create a language assessment program to assess deaf or hard of hearing children, ages 0 to 8, to ensure they are on track in meeting expected language milestones

What is a language assessment program?

A language development “check-up” at intervals from ages 0 to 8 to ensure the children are monitored and on track with their Language development milestones.

LANGUAGE ASSESSMENT

There is a need for an appropriate and consistent use of measuring language acquisition for Deaf and Hard of Hearing infants/children as early as possible, preferably starting from day one using tools that are available

Language assessment needs to be made available for both ASL and English by appropriate professionals. Both ASL and English are the two languages most commonly used among Deaf and Hard of Hearing individuals.

AMERICAN SIGN LANGUAGE

A visual language. It is the **third** most commonly used language in the United States, after English and Spanish respectively.

ASL is composed of positions and gestures made with the hands, body and facial expressions to convey abstract concepts as with any spoken language. Being its own language, ASL has a distinct grammatical structure which is quite dissimilar to English.

ENGLISH

A spoken and written language. It is the **most** commonly written and spoken language in the United States.

Modern English relies on auxiliary verbs and word order for the expression of complex tenses, aspect and mood.

Common communication modes of English for deaf and hard of hearing include, S.E.E. II, CASE, Oral Method, Cued Speech, to name a few.

SENATE BILL 444

In a snapshot, the purpose of SB 444 is three-fold:

- Standardize processes of language assessment that will track and monitor language acquisition of every deaf and hard of hearing child to change the tide on the epidemic of language deprivation and delays.
- Establishment of Advisory Committee that pulls together all appropriate professionals/ experts to determine guidance and Improves collaboration of all departments to improve language assessment processes.
- Will give us access to data so we can make the system accountable to ensuring language acquisition is happening in the earliest, critical years of a child's life.

ADDITIONAL POINTS OF SB 444

- This bill intends to ensure all Communication Choices remain available. Focus is on Language Acquisition of the child.
- This bill will NOT mandate the assessment of ASL if the parent do not want it but still ensures their child is on track in meeting language milestones in English
- This bill enhances KSDE and KDHE in providing better educational services to their deaf and hard of hearing consumers/ students and their families.
- This bill utilizes KCDHH as a vital organization that exists in Kansas's system network (housed under DCF) to assist the coordination and collaboration of various agencies and community resources.
- The bill assures the public (including our community) that KSDE and KDHE can be held accountable by the release of aggregated data

STOP the HARM



Together, we can achieve Language Equality & Acquisition for Deaf Kids!

The LEAD-K Campaign is a visual civil rights movement to end the nationwide epidemic of language deprivation by promoting language equality, as a basic human right for all Deaf/HH babies, leading to a new generation of Deaf/HH children who are Kindergarten-ready.

QUESTIONS?

THANK YOU!

Contact Chriz Dally if have any questions!
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