

**Changing Services from the Top Down:
Navigating Conversations with Your Administration
Keynote Presentation: Shelley Ardis & Carmelina Hollingsworth**

Students who are deaf and hard of hearing are often placed in general education classrooms. Administrators and classroom teachers need supports from district level itinerant teachers of the deaf. It is critical to have effective conversations with administrators at all levels, from the school site to the state educational agency, to ensure students in the low-prevalence/low-incidence population are provided with appropriate educational experience allowing them to meet or exceed their educational goals.

Objectives: Attendees will be able to:

1. Identify the roles and responsibilities of stakeholders within levels of a state's Deaf Education Program.
2. Identify information and frameworks which drive systems improvement and how they have been utilized in Florida.
3. Identify data and topics which matter most in conversations with an administrator.

Florida - Students are dispersed across the state with Local Education Agencies (LEA's) being fully responsible. Counties are a school district. There is one public state boarding school, a few auditory-oral schools, and many private, charter and virtual school options across Florida.

Florida Department of Education's (FDOE) **Bureau of Exceptional Education and Student Services (BEESS)** has statewide discretionary projects which support stakeholders serving students who are deaf or hard of hearing.

The FDOE and BEESS have **initiatives** and **indicators** which are disseminated and measured to drive services consistently across the state. Information is disseminated through various plans and programs, such as the Strategic Plans and Best Practices for Inclusive Education (BPIE). Various departments in school districts are charged with overseeing data collection and measures as well as training and support. These may include Accountability and Professional Development offices.

School District Models for serving students who are deaf/hard of hearing vary based on size and capacity. The majority of students are served in inclusion settings, many have itinerant teacher of the deaf services, and some of a classroom teacher

of the deaf. Many are served by various other related services and support services providers. Parents are important members of the educational team at all levels.

Issues within School Districts include:

- Low-incidence in numbers
- Even clustered, the numbers are misleading and there is an illusion about the overall population at the site versus the district
- What is highly effective in our field

Discussions at each level will vary. What discussions need to happen?

- School
- School District
- State Level

What do they need to know and what **data** do you have related to each level?

- School
- School District
- State Level

District/School level supports include: (How relevant to our students?)

- Professional Learning Communities
- Progress Monitoring Practices

Field related supports include:

- Statewide training events
- Statewide supports and assistance
- Regional meetings and events
- Memorandums of Understanding (MOU)

District level relationships and conversations. Who is involved? Are conversations aligned with initiatives? Is data on hand for discussions? Are solutions brought to the table? Are success stories shared?

Do you know the **research** or have the ability to connect with someone who does?

Can you be a part of finding a solution through **Action Plans** at the school or district levels?

**Worksheet: Changing Services from the Top Down:
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Shelley Ardis & Carmelina Hollingsworth - 8:00 - 9:00 am

1. Identify the roles and responsibilities of stakeholders within levels of a state's Deaf Education Program.

How is your state's system organized?

What is the role at the state level?

Are there regional or state resources?

Do you have a district coordinator with expertise in deaf education?

Are there supports locally for professionals in deaf education?

2. Identify information and frameworks which drive systems improvement and how they have been utilized in Florida.

State Indicators

State & BEESS Strategic Plan

School Improvement Plans

3. Identify data and topics which matter most in conversations with an administrator and your role and ability to be part of Action Planning..

Is the student "Alone in the Mainstream"?

Are you at a cluster school? Do you have a special population of students?

Do you have partners? Do you bring solutions?