



May 3, 2016

## **Council Supports Schools' Use of Communication Plan Developed by Louisiana Experts**

All students deserve access to education instruction presented in a manner that accommodates their language needs. Additionally, students who are language delayed or language deprived need instruction to address their specific communication needs. Schools are required to include a communication plan in the Individualized Education Program (IEP) of every student who is identified as deaf, hard of hearing, or deafblind. However, perhaps due to the relatively low rate of children being identified as deaf, hard of hearing, and deafblind, schools often struggle to understand all the components necessary to consider in offering children who require alternate forms of communication and accommodations.

Last year advocates brought attention to issues many of these students face in schools and supported the passage of [Act 250 of 2015](#). Subsequently, experts in educating students who are deaf, deafblind, and hard of hearing and the Louisiana Department of Education collaborated in developing [Tools for Developing Communication Plans](#).

This Communication Plan guide book is recommended for IEP teams to develop a comprehensive and effective plan for students who are deaf, hard of hearing and deafblind. With proper planning and diligent implementation, students will receive full consideration of appropriate language modalities, expanded opportunities for direct communication, have language and communication supports that enable the student to fully participate in the classroom, and be an engaged member of their school community.

### National Deaf Rights Rallies

On May 4<sup>th</sup> 2016 from 9 a.m. – 4 p.m. National Deaf Rights Rallies will occur simultaneously at State Capitols across the nation. The Louisiana branch of the Deaf Grassroots Movement is hosting the rally at the State Capitol in Baton Rouge.