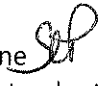


MEMORANDUM

TO: County Superintendents
High School Principals
Directors of Guidance Services
County Special Education Directors
Superintendent, WV Schools for the Deaf and Blind
Superintendent, Office of Institutional Education Programs

FROM: Steven L. Paine 
State Superintendent of Schools

DATE: March 17, 2010

RE: Students who are Deaf: Attaining Foreign Language Credit

West Virginia (WV) Code §18-2-7 establishes American Sign Language (ASL) as a credited course of study in a foreign language, and WV Board of Education Policy 2520.18 establishes the 21st Century American Sign Language Content Standards and Objectives for WV Schools.

This memorandum provides guidance on procedures by which students who are deaf and consider their native language to be ASL may obtain the necessary foreign language credit. The intent is for students who are deaf and whose native language is ASL to receive foreign language credit in their native language while continuing to learn English.

This guidance is consistent with the West Virginia Department of Education's (WVDE) August 2006 guidance for English Language Learners (ELLs), which clarified three options by which English Language Learners (ELLs) may obtain the necessary foreign language.

Testing Out in American Sign Language (ASL)

Students who are deaf, consider ASL to be their native language and have no formal transcripts showing previously earned coursework credits in ASL, may demonstrate their proficiency in ASL through a performance based assessment created by the WVDE, thereby earning foreign language credits for graduation. The student must demonstrate nothing less than above Novice for Level I and above Intermediate for Level II in both receptive and expressive proficiency in ASL. The assessment will measure receptive and expressive knowledge through two formats and will be videotaped. It will be scored on a rubric developed from the WV instructional standards. The transcript will reflect only Pass or Fail.

In following the assessment protocol, local **districts** must:

1. Identify the appropriate interviewer. This could be the educational interpreter or the teacher of the deaf. This person must be able to communicate fluently with the student in ASL.
2. Ensure the identified interviewer is familiar with the assessment format.
3. Ensure the student understands the reasons for this assessment, the format and performance expectations.
4. Secure permission for videotaping from the parent or guardian using the WVDE ASL Assessment Permission Form.
5. Coordinate video recording
 - a. Identify a person other than the interviewer to coordinate the video recording.
 - b. Provide a testing area that allows for the privacy of the child. The area should be quiet and arranged to ensure no interruptions.
 - c. Arrange area so the student can easily interact with the interviewer and be recorded at the same time.
 - d. Allow the student the choice to sit or stand.
 - e. Ensure the video recording allows for the full sign field to be visible, i.e., a viewing area of student that includes waist to top of head and both shoulders.
 - f. Include interviewer's written questions or audio voice in Part I of the assessment **or** include them within the sign field.
6. Maintain the signed permission form with the student's official record at the county office.
7. Submit completed assessment DVD to:
Director of Special Education
West Virginia Schools for the Deaf and Blind
301 East Main Street
Romney, WV 26757
(Scored Rubric and DVD will be returned to the district by Director.)

When accessing this option, school districts should issue the foreign language credit under the course title of American Sign Language with the placement of a Pass/Fail grade in the student's record. Costs for completing this assessment will be the responsibility of the school/county.

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A scoring rubric based on the WV instructional standards and objectives of Policy 2520.18 has been developed. In partnership with the West Virginia School for the Deaf, evaluators have been trained in its use. Directions and the recommended permission form for this assessment are enclosed with this memorandum.

If you have questions regarding this protocol, please contact Annette Carey at (304) 558-2696 or acarey@access.k12.wv.us.

Enclosures

cc: Amelia Courts, Ex. Director, International Schools & ESL

SLP/LB/AC/saf

G:\SFARMER\Annette & Ruth Ann\Memo ASL Foreign Language credit memo final

Directions for Administering the WVDE ASL Assessment

Assessment Format:

Part I Q and A Format (5 minutes):

Interviewer is to engage the student in a question and answer conversation for approximately five minutes. Questions such as name, description of town, hobbies, friends at school, favorite subjects and why, school routines and social topics could be used. *The primary focus of this part is to assess the child's receptive sign skills through a question and answer format.*

Part II Short Story (5 minutes): Student should come prepared to tell a brief story, fiction or non-fiction. Interviewer may prompt to continue the flow of the story. No paper may be used for this part. *The primary focus of this part is to assess the child's expressive sign skills.*

Assessment directions for the interviewer:

1. Come **prepared**.
2. Encourage the student to relax and become comfortable by allowing 10 – 15 minutes before beginning the assessment.
3. Review Testing Tips with the student.
 - a. Relax.
 - b. Sign at a rate that is comfortable for you.
 - c. Keep signing. Don't stop the conversation. Give details, explain your point and develop your thoughts. If you are not a "talkative" person, you must make an extra effort to communicate.
 - d. If you make a mistake with your signing, correct it and continue.
4. Student is not allowed paper during the assessment. Any written information used by the interviewer must be submitted with the assessment.

ASL Proficiency Scoring Rubric

Scoring the video recording of ASL proficiency for use in earning high school foreign language credit

Student's Name: _____ County/School: _____

*Using the criteria below, place one check for each domain based upon your review of the student's performance.
Reminder there can only be one level per domain.*

DOMAINS	NOVICE (1 Point)	INTERMEDIATE (2 Points)	ADVANCED (3 Points)
Vocabulary	<p><i>Receptive:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Limited understanding of signed vocabulary - Requires frequent repetition of sign words <p><i>Expressive:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Communicative attempts are gestural with a few signs 	<p><i>Receptive:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Understanding of the majority of signed vocabulary - Requires some repetition of signed vocabulary words <p><i>Expressive:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Communication is primarily signs or a mix of sign and gestural 	<p><i>Receptive:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Understanding of most signed vocabulary words - Rarely requires repetition of signed vocabulary words <p><i>Expressive:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Communication is primarily signs rather than gestural
Formation- Handshapes, Palm Orientation, Movement and Location (Includes Classifiers)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Few correct formation of signs (handshapes, palm orientation, movement and location) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Some correct formation of signs/rarely self corrects (handshapes, palm orientation, movement and location) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Many correct formation of signs/self corrects (handshapes, palm orientation, movement and location) - Easily understood
Space Referents Motion/Location of Verbs (includes eye gaze, body shifting and choice of signs)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Limited use of setting up points in space to refer to objects and people - Limited eye contact - Limited use of expressive behavior 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Some use of setting up points in space to refer to objects and people - Some eye contact - Some use of expressive behavior 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Consistent use of setting up points in space to refer to objects and people - Maintains eye contact - Use of expressive behavior
Non-Manual Markers Yes/No Questions "Wh_" Questions Location Negation Contrastive Structure (referents, time, intensity, etc.)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Limited use of intensifiers - Limited use of non-manual markers - Responds inappropriately to non-manual markers 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Some use of intensifiers - Some use of non-manual markers - Responds appropriately to some non-manual markers 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Consistent use of intensifiers - Use of non-manual markers - Responds appropriately to many non-manual markers

Scoring -- Total the point value earned in each domain.

Passing Scores:

ASL I 6 - 8

ASL II - 9 - 12

Rater: _____

Date Scored: _____