

Annual Resources Update for Serving Students with Sensory Disabilities (Revised October 2024)

The Virginia Department of Education (VDOE) provides information on its website about educational services and resources to support students who are deaf or hard of hearing, blind or visually impaired, or deaf-blind. The following resources are sourced from VDOE's [Sensory Disabilities](#) webpage and websites for partnering agencies, centers, and college/university programs in Virginia.

Guidance Documents

Deaf and Hard of Hearing (including Deaf-Blindness)

- [Guidelines for Working with Students Who are Deaf and Hard of Hearing in Virginia Public Schools \(Revised September 2019\)](#)
- [Virginia Communication Plan for a Student Who is Deaf or Hard of Hearing \(Revised September 2019\)](#)

Blindness and Visual Impairment (including Deaf-Blindness)

- [Guidelines for Working With Students Who are Blind or Visually Impaired in Virginia Public Schools \(Revised December 2017\)](#)
- [Unified English Braille Implementation Plan for Virginia Public Schools \(Updated September 2019\)](#)

State Agencies

- The [Virginia School for the Deaf and the Blind \(VSDB\)](#) is located in Staunton, Virginia, and provides a comprehensive PreK-12 educational day program, outreach services, and residential services exclusively for Virginia students who are deaf or hard of hearing, blind or visually impaired, or deaf-blind. The [VSDB Outreach Services](#) assists early intervention programs, local school divisions, and families in meeting the needs of children with sensory disabilities across the Commonwealth. The VSDB's admissions policy is available on its website.
 - Contact: [Pat Trice](#), Superintendent; telephone: (804) 536-0591
- The [Virginia Department for the Blind and Vision Impaired \(DBVI\)](#) includes an Education Services Program to provide services to early intervention providers, school personnel, and families to assist children with visual impairment, blindness, and deaf-blindness to be successful in school and the community and to prepare for the future. The [DBVI Library and Resource Center](#) provides services to local school divisions to support the education of children who are blind or visually impaired and persons who are print disabled. The [Virginia Rehabilitation Center for the Blind and Vision Impaired](#) offers training in the skills of blindness.
 - Contact: [Donna Cox](#), Director of Education and Library Services; telephone: (804) 887-7327

- The [Virginia Department for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing \(VDDHH\)](#) provides information and services for telecommunication services and equipment, interpreter standards, referrals, Deaf mentors for families, and other services. These resources promote accessible communications so that students and parents who are Deaf and Hard of Hearing may fully participate in programs, services, and opportunities throughout Virginia.
 - Contact: [Eric Raff](#), Director; telephone: (804) 404-9090 or (800) 552-7917

Technical Assistance Centers

- The [Accessible Instructional Materials Center of Virginia \(AIM-VA\)](#) developed an extensive library and alternative system for providing accessible educational media under standards set by federal law to students who meet the federal requirements for print disabilities and who are eligible for accessing educational media through an Individualized Education Program. The AIM-VA Center, in conjunction with partnering agencies, provides required accessible educational materials to students and training for school division staff at no cost to local educational agencies.
 - Contact: [AIM-VA Help Desk](#); telephone: (888) 496-0252
- The [Center for Family Involvement \(CFI\) at the Partnership for People with Disabilities at Virginia Commonwealth University](#) provides information and training to support children with disabilities, their families, and professionals.
 - Contact: [CFI Office](#); telephone: (877) 567-1122
- The [Technical Assistance Center for Children Who Are Deaf and Hard of Hearing \(TAC-DHH\)](#) provides information, training, and technical assistance pertaining to children who are deaf and hard of hearing. Assistance is available to Virginia public school divisions, including early childhood special education and early intervention programs, through the [Virginia Network of Consultants for Professionals \(VNOC\) Professionals Working with Children Who are Deaf and Hard of Hearing](#).
 - Contact: [Tracey Yurechko](#), Project Director; telephone: (804) 828-1342
- The Virginia Hearing Aid Loan Bank (HALB) program loans hearing aids and hearing assistive technology to eligible children in Virginia whose hearing loss is confirmed by an audiologist. Devices are loaned at no cost for up to six months while families and school divisions are waiting for a permanent device to arrive.
 - Contact: [Sandra Woodward](#), Program Director; telephone: (434) 924-0222
- The [Virginia Deafblind Project \(VDBP\)](#) provides technical assistance, training, distance education, and networking information to service providers and families of children with deafblindness and dual sensory disabilities.
 - Contact: [Dr. Ira Padhye](#), Project Director; telephone: (804) 828-2052

Professional Education and Training Programs

- [Radford University's Deaf and Hard of Hearing Program](#) offers Virginia's only academic program leading to Virginia teacher licensure with an endorsement in Special Education-Deaf and Hard of Hearing PreK-12. Courses are taught through combined on-campus, distance education, and varied educational field experiences. The comprehensive program teaches all communication and instructional approaches used with students who are deaf and hard of hearing. Tuition assistance is available for qualified Virginia teachers.
 - Contact: [Karen Stinson](#), Deaf/Hard of Hearing Program Faculty; telephone: (540) 831-5549
- The [Virginia Consortium for Teacher Preparation in Visual Impairment \(VI Consortium\)](#) is the only academic program in Virginia for teacher preparation leading to Virginia teacher licensure with an endorsement in Special Education-Visual Impairment PreK-12. Classes are offered through combined on-campus, video, and web conferencing through three universities: George Mason, Old Dominion, and Radford. Tuition assistance is available for qualified Virginia teachers.
 - Contact: [Dr. Kimberly Avila](#), Coordinator; telephone: (703) 993-5625
- The VDOE Educational Interpreter Services Training Program is supported with grant funding from the VDOE to assist Virginia educational interpreters and cued language transliterators with acquiring and maintaining the required skills and qualifications to work with children who are deaf and hard of hearing in Virginia public schools. Free regional workshops and mentoring support are available.
 - Contact [Becky Hillegass](#), Region 2 Interpreter Training Grant Coordinator; telephone: (757) 263-2825
- American Sign Language-English Interpretation programs and courses are offered at the following Virginia community colleges and universities:
 - [Liberty University](#); telephone: (434) 582-2064
 - [Northern Virginia Community College](#); telephone: (703) 323-3192
 - [Radford University](#); telephone: (540) 831-5549
 - [Reynolds Community College](#); telephone: (804) 523-5604
 - [Tidewater Community College](#); telephone: (757) 214-6157

For questions regarding this guidance, contact Wanda Council, Specialist for Sensory Disabilities, at (804) 750-8614 or Wanda.Council@doe.virginia.gov.