

# ACDHH Language Acquisition Task Force

June 18, 2022

*Thank you for joining!*

*This Powerpoint is available on the ACDHH website for those who view the meeting.*

## Communication Access Tips



Keep microphones muted



Keep cameras off to assist with visibility for interpreters and PPT



Use Raise Hand option for comments/questions during public input



Meeting will be livestreamed on YouTube and available for later viewing



Select to view captioning (LIVE captioner/CART)



ASL interpreters and Spanish translation available (via chat or phone)

# Purpose of the taskforce

The Arizona Commission for the Deaf and the Hard of Hearing was tasked with the aim to establish a task force that is composed of diverse community members and partnering agencies that can advise and assist with the implementation of SB 1092.

# Overview

- Opening remarks and welcome
- Overview and background of the task force
- Sharing of experiences by subcommittee representatives
- Sharing of draft recommendations
- Opening up to public input
- Closing remarks

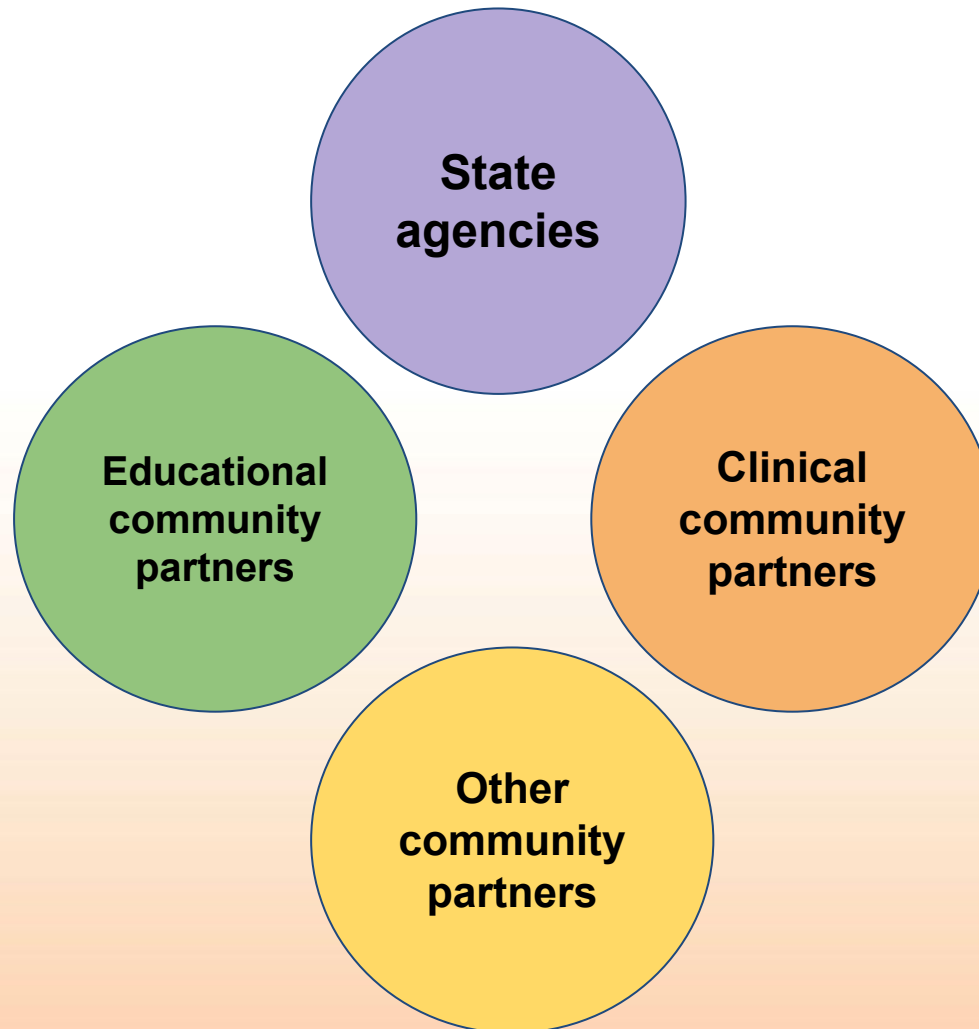
# Opening Remarks

- Introduction of ACDHH staff
- Welcome to the forum
- Purpose and goals of the forum
- Role of ACDHH with SB 1092

<https://legiscan.com/AZ/text/SB1092/id/2276141>

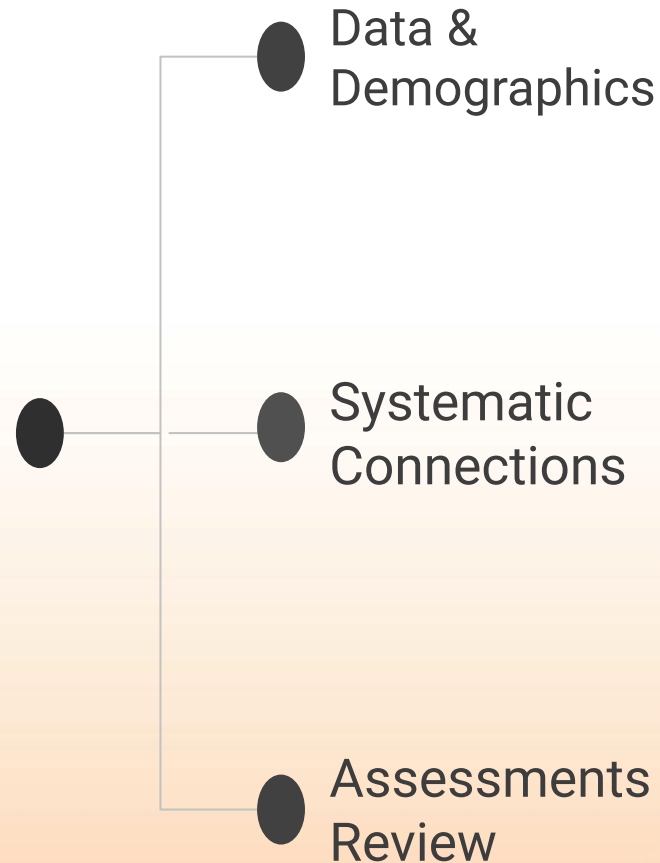
- Introduction of facilitator

# Who's at the table



# Subcommittees

Language Acquisition  
Task Force





**Language Acquisition  
Task Force Subcommittees**

**I-Data and Demographics**

ACDHH Staff Assigned- Beca Bailey

- [Janna Murrell](#) \*  
Raising Special Kids
- [Kendra Benedict](#) \*  
Arizona State Schools for the Deaf and the Blind
- [Fran Altmaier](#) \*  
Arizona Department of Health Services
- [Suzy Perry](#) \*  
Arizona Department of Education
- [Trisha Waddell](#)  
Arizona State Schools for the Deaf and the Blind
- [Martin Keller](#) \*  
Sequoia School for the Deaf
- [Shanna Dewsnap](#) \*  
Happy Ears Hearing

**II-Systematic Connections**

ACDHH Staff Assigned- Betty/Nikki

- [Germain Graham](#) \*  
Deafinitely Communicating
- [Mollie Harding](#) \*  
Arizona State University
- [Janet Vilorio](#) \*  
Arizona Department of Health Services
- [Ana Herron-Valenzuela](#) \*  
City of Phoenix Head Start Program
- [Amber Hansen](#)  
U.C.E.D.D./Arizona State University
- [Robin Eichner](#)  
Arizona State Schools for the Deaf and the Blind
- [Christopher Fears](#)  
Arizona State Schools for the Deaf and the Blind
- [Lyis Olsen](#)  
Ear Foundation of AZ
- [Julie Willoughby](#)  
Parent/Community Member

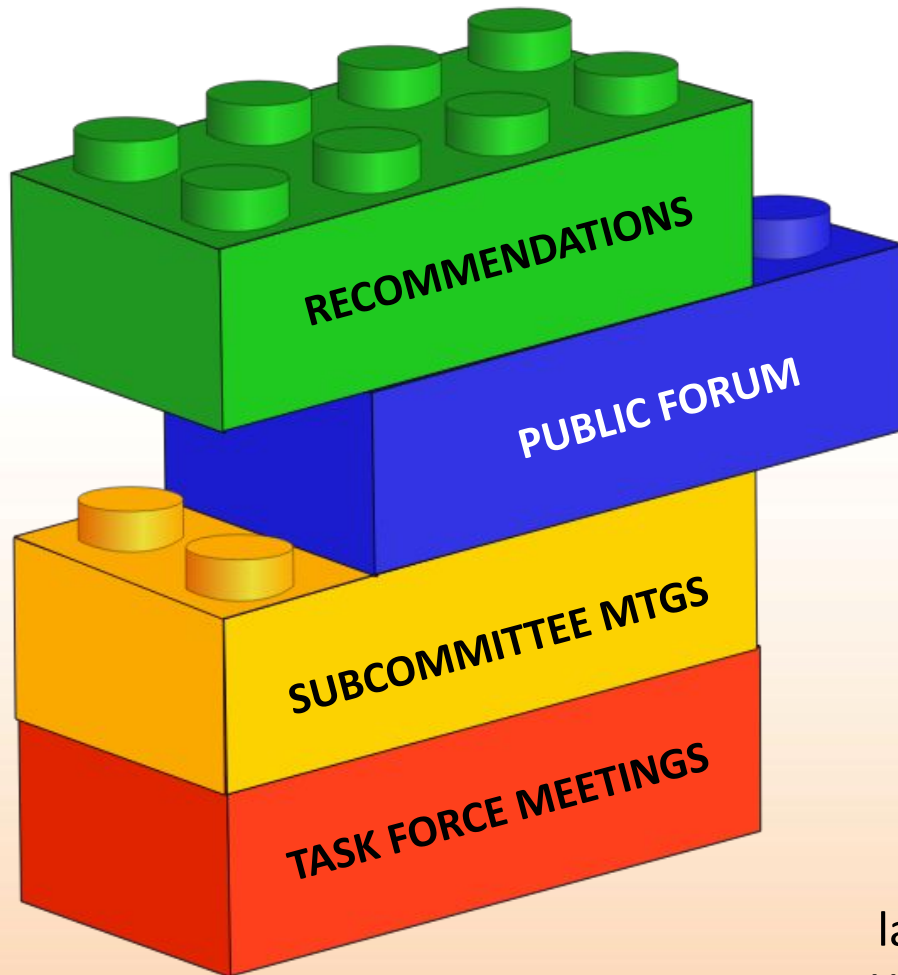
**III-Assessments Review**

ACDHH Staff Assigned- Sonia Samaniego

- [Caroline Nailor-Oglesby](#) \*  
Arizona Early Intervention Program
- [Christy Hegebush](#) \*  
Arizona Department of Education
- [Christina Rivera](#) \*  
University of Arizona
- [Jennifer Scarboro](#) \*  
Arizona State Schools for the Deaf and the Blind
- [Karina Johnson](#)  
Arizona State Schools for the Deaf and the Blind
- [Tina Shartzter](#)  
Arizona State Schools for the Deaf and the Blind
- [Michael Olivier](#) \*  
Arizona State Schools for the Deaf and the Blind

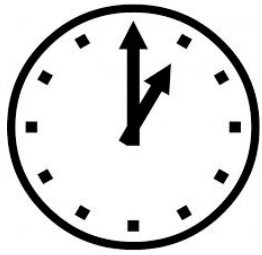


## BUILDING BLOCKS



With the ultimate goal of ensuring language access for ALL Deaf, Hard of Hearing, and DeafBlind children in the state of Arizona

# Timeline of work



January- start screening & selection of task force members

February- start regular biweekly meetings

April 2022- draft plan of implementation

May 2022- complete the feedback process

June 2022- public forum and finalize document



# Sharing of experiences

- **Data & Demographics**
- **Systematic Connections**
- **Assessment Review**



# Overview of the recommendations

## Assessments Review

- Widespread use of the same assessments
- Increased training and # of assessors

## Systematic Connections

- Maintain agency partnerships
- Increase strength in transition
- Make information more accessible

## Data & Demographics

- Central repository of data needed
- Increased agency sharing
- Tracking across age spectrum

# Findings

Data indicates that there are currently over 2,400 deaf, hard of hearing, and deafblind children identified in the state of Arizona.

Around 1,760 (who are on IFSP/IEP plans and between the ages of 0-21) of this number are currently being served by ASDB which partners with half of the school districts in Arizona and AZEIP.

# Assessments Review

## PRELIMINARY FINDINGS (INCLUDING GAPS & CHALLENGES)

- Varied use of assessments- not consistent in which assessments are being used, not all school districts use the same assessments
- Lack of assessors and training in using the assessments
- Not all assessments are normed for DHH or DeafBlind students or students with multiple disabilities

## RECOMMENDATIONS

- Re-establish a statewide assessment team for ALL DHH/DB children, regardless of educational placement
- The team would consist of qualified and trained language assessors for ASL and written/spoken English
- The biannual/annual language assessment results would be used to support the students' education.

# Recommended Assessments

Ages	Name of Assessment
Birth to 5.11 years	Visual Communication Sign Language Checklist (VCSL)
Birth to 5.11 years	DAYC-2
Birth to 5 (0-24 months)	Communication Matrix
2-21 years	Expressive One-word Picture Vocabulary Test - 4th Edition (EOWPVT-4)
3-12 years	Test of Auditory Comprehension of Language (TACL)
4-18 years	ASL Assessment Instrument (ASLAI)
4-14 years	ASL Expressive Skills Test (ASL-EST)

# Systematic Connections

## PRELIMINARY FINDINGS (INCLUDING GAPS & CHALLENGES)

- Families receive incorrect or conflicting information from professionals involved in the hearing screening, diagnostic evaluation, and options for intervention
- Families need more access to information in their native languages or to information that is culturally and linguistically appropriate
- The professionals involved should connect families with financial resources for hearing aids and assistive listening technology
- Families need more support in navigating the challenges of raising a child with a disability - social workers may be an important part of an early intervention team
- Families should receive information and education about deafness through the lens of the social model



# Systematic Connections

## RECOMMENDATIONS

- Pediatricians/medical providers need more training against the “wait and see approach” and they must refer babies born at home or in a birth center so that families receive timely re-screens and diagnostic evaluations
- Screening providers need more training in relaying information to parents; often, parents have the wrong impression about reasons why their child could have failed a screening and why they require a diagnostic evaluation
- Screening providers require more training on the informational needs of diverse populations
- Social workers may help families overcome denial or grief or fear which could lead to more timely diagnosis and appropriate intervention

# Systematic Connections

## RECOMMENDATIONS

- Screenings and diagnostic evaluations must be available in more rural areas. Currently, diagnostic evaluations are only available in the Phoenix area, Tucson, and Flagstaff; many have long waitlists for evaluation appointments
- Provide training to hearing screeners and audiologists on how to properly use interpreting services or hire more bilingual providers
- Audiologists and medical providers need more access to training in other forms of communication beyond oral/auditory/verbal approaches
- Audiologists and medical providers should make recommendations for parent-to-parent support and for Deaf mentors, and other supports which align with other forms of communication beyond oral/auditory/verbal to give access to these supports sooner
- Audiologists should use neutral language and present resources as opportunities rather than options

# Data & Demographics

## PRELIMINARY FINDINGS (INCLUDING GAPS & CHALLENGES)

- Scarcity of data.
- Accessibility of data.
- Reliability and validity of data.
- Lack of action/follow-up on findings.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

- Examine the reliability and validity of data available on the language acquisition and academic outcomes of children who are deaf, hard of hearing and deafblind in Arizona.
- Collect longitudinal data with the purpose of identifying trends in screening, diagnostic, intervention, and outcome data.
- Consider using a common identifier to link data across systems (newborn hearing screening, to Part C, to Part B).

# Data & Demographics

## RECOMMENDATIONS, CONTINUED

- Determine who should have oversight of the collection and analysis of data.
- Conduct in-depth analysis of data, summarize findings, create an action plan, monitor progress.
- Research how other states gather, analyze, and respond to findings.
- Standardized definitions across agencies.
- Specific to preschool and K-12, encourage the use of multi-disciplinary teams and provide professional development on categories of eligibility and least restrictive environment.

# Public input

- Guidance:
  - For ASL or spoken English/Spanish
    - Raise your hand via the feature on Zoom
  - For written English or Spanish
    - Share your question in the chat
    - ACDHH staff will sign aloud and the interpreter(s) will voice it
  - Remember this should be a safe space- no name-dropping or singling out individuals
  - Thoughts and feedback are welcome regarding the draft recommendations or very closely related topics re: language acquisition
  - Please be mindful of time for others- keep it to 2 minutes

## Closing remarks

Thank you for joining us today and for providing valuable input to help inform ACDHH on what is needed to ensure quality language acquisition and access for deaf, hard of hearing, and deafblind children in Arizona!

- For more information and/or questions, please contact:
  - Beca Bailey  
ACDHH Community Engagement Liaison  
[b.bailey@acdhh.az.gov](mailto:b.bailey@acdhh.az.gov)
  - Sonia Samaniego  
Family Engagement Coordinator  
[s.samaniego@acdhh.az.gov](mailto:s.samaniego@acdhh.az.gov)
  - Nikki Soukup  
Director of Public Policy and Community Relations  
[n.soukup@acdhh.az.gov](mailto:n.soukup@acdhh.az.gov)