

Draft letter to Nevada Early Intervention services

Recently the Education subcommittee of the Nevada Commission for Persons who are Deaf and Hard of Hearing has reviewed the Nevada Early Intervention Services reporting under NRS 388.5195 on communication, cognitive and social/emotional outcomes for deaf and hard of hearing children under the age of 6 (available at <https://doe.nv.gov/inclusive-education/early-childhood/language-and-literacy-skills/>). The numbers reported there are discouraging and show that the vast majority of children in this population are presenting with delays in these areas of early childhood development. This confirms what many of us have experienced anecdotally, which is a great many kids showing up in pre-kindergarten or kindergarten classrooms with significant delays that impede their educational progress.

As we are sure you are aware, Nevada has recently passed a version of a Lead-K law (NRS 388.518 and 388.519), which aims to further support and monitor communication outcomes for children under 6, with the goal of bringing a greater number (hopefully all) deaf and hard of hearing children up to grade-level in time for kindergarten. We feel that Nevada still has very far to go to achieve this goal and that further efforts and support for early intervention in this population will be essential if we are to make progress toward this goal.

As the commission works toward an agenda for the 2025 legislative session, we would like to engage in the conversation about what changes are needed in law and or policy to bring about improvement in the language acquisition outcomes for deaf and hard of hearing children under age 6. Please let us know at your earliest convenience when we can bring representatives from our subcommittee to the table with early intervention leadership to discuss options for improving developmental outcomes for deaf and hard of hearing children throughout Nevada.

Sincerely,

Eric Wilcox
Chair, Nevada Commission for Persons who are Deaf and Hard of Hearing.