

FROM THE
PRINCIPAL'S
DESK

The Highland Avenue Newsletter

In the Newsletter:

- Highland School welcomes students with total hearing loss
- Clubs and activities at Highland School

TEST YOURSELF (answers on back)

True or False

1) Your ear's only purpose are to help you hear.

2) Deaf children also have deaf parents.

Which of the following suffered from hearing loss?



Volume II, Issue 2

December 2018

Continuing a Decade Old Partnership *The Hearing Impaired Program at Highland School becomes even more inclusive.*

Bergen County Special Services has partnered with the Midland Park School District for a number of decades. However, over the past 2 years we have added a new element to our program as Bergen County Special Services has brought over students from their Hackensack Hearing Impaired Program to Midland Park. This made the Hearing Impaired Program even more dynamic and inclusive, as Midland Park is now hosting students who mostly communicate via sign language (ASL) as they suffer from profound hearing loss. Because the hearing impaired program is a big part of the Highland School's culture, we spoke with Dana Dispoto, Teacher In Charge / Case Manager for HIP at Highland and Godwin Schools. Ms. Dispoto described the partnership between Midland Park and the HIP/SHIP Program and we felt it important to share elements of this evolving partnership.



Can you please give some background about the Hearing Impaired Program (HIP/SHIP) here in Midland Park?

The Hearing Impaired Program for the deaf and hard of hearing has been collaboratively hosted in Midland Park since the 1970's. Our Hearing Impaired Program (HIP) caters to our elementary students as SHIP (Secondary Hearing Impaired Program) caters to our upper level students. Through the years, our programs have serviced students in grades preschool through grade 12. Students come from their home districts, sometimes travelling up to 45 minutes by bus, to take advantage of a program tailored specifically to meet their communication and hearing needs in a safe and nurturing environment like Midland Park.

In the beginning, the HIP/SHIP Program was actually much larger than it is today. But, as technological enhancements afforded better audio devices for the deaf and hard of hearing, students were able to return to their home district, which is always the goal. The fluctuation in enrollment allowed some more HIP students an opportunity to come to Midland Park from our Hackensack program, which is a total communication program. These students suffer from profound hearing loss and have difficulty with the spoken language because they do not have access to all the sounds we use every day. These students utilize American Sign Language, or ASL to communicate. This year, fifth and sixth grade students who have profound hearing loss have joined us here in the Highland School and we are happy at how accepting and patient the school community has been.

In the past, students have come to our program to help gain a foundation in listening and spoken language using hearing assistance technology such as hearing aids, cochlear implants, and even bone anchored hearing aids. These new students, however, use various combinations of ASL and listening and spoken language to communicate. So now we have a full range of students who are hard of hearing and deaf using various communication modalities and learning together alongside their typically hearing peers.

THE HIGHLAND SCHOOL

Highland School Main Office
201-445-3880

Quick Contacts:

Mr. Galasso, Principal
pgalasso@mpsny.org

Ms. Callesano, Secretary
mcallesano@mpsny.org

Mrs. Scala, Guidance
kscala@mpsny.org

Mrs. Kessler, Nurse
rkessler@mpsny.org

Clubs and Activities offered at Highland

If anyone is interested in joining a club go to the Highland homepage and click on Clubs and Activities

Student Council (Gr. 4-6)

Intramurals (Gr. 3-6)

Newspaper (Gr. 4-6)

Math Club (Gr. 6)

Science Club (Gr. 6)

Musical (Gr. 5 and 6)

Yearbook (Gr. 6)

Art Club (Gr. 4-6)

Environmental Club (Gr. 4-6)

Digital Photo. Club (Gr. 5-6)

ASL Club (Gr. 4-6)

Literary Magazine (Gr. 3-6)

Safety Patrol (Gr. 6)

How do both students with limited hearing and general education students benefit from the inclusion?

All students, regardless of their hearing abilities, learn differently. Various teaching methods are used by the teachers to best meet the needs of all students. Multisensory instruction, which is often very beneficial for students who are Deaf and/or Hard of Hearing, is also a technique that might be appealing for other students in that classroom. Inclusive classrooms are filled with diverse learners allowing students to talk about and acknowledge that everyone learns in their own way. Students might find out that they have more in common with the way another student learns than they thought. This enhances student character and can often reduce stigmas for all students varied learning preferences.

Often there is a collaborative teaching pair in the classroom. This serves as a tool for all students in the classroom and allows for additional support to any student who might need it, in addition to allowing the flexibility for differentiated instruction throughout the day.

What is the proper terminology to use when speaking about students who are Deaf and/or Hard of Hearing?

With a whole spectrum of possible hearing abilities, it is important to ask the individual how they identify. Some individuals prefer the terminology "hard of hearing," some prefer "deaf" and others might just identify that they have a loss of hearing. Best thing to do if you are not sure, is to just ask.

What can you do to make these children feel comfortable? How should you communicate with them?

Kids are kids, regardless of their hearing ability. They want friends, they want to laugh, they want to play. The best thing to do to make hearing impaired students comfortable is to just treat them as you would your other peers.

Some students use sign language to communicate. These students often have interpreters with them in the classroom. The interpreter will interpret in sign language to the deaf student and then voice back to a typical student what is being said so a conversation can be had. Sometimes, but not always, students who sign have the ability to read lips. Although this isn't a perfect formula so hearing impaired students may miss some of what is said. Please be patient when this happens.

Article by: Ms. Walsh, Ms. Dispoto, and Mr. Galasso

Spotlight: An interpreter from a teachers perspective

Having an interpreter has brought full inclusion into the classroom. All students have complete access to the curriculum as well as the capability to interact with one another in an easy and efficient manner. The interpreter teaches both the teachers and the students in the class signs in order to help form a better relationship with the hearing impaired students. The interpreter is not just an interpreter, she is truly part of our classroom community. —Ms. Tamburri, 6th grade Sp.Ed.

Some common ASL signs



"Hello"



"Good Bye"



"Yes"



"No"



"Thanks"



"You're Welcome"



"Please"



"Sorry"

Answers
from Page 1

"True or False": 1) False— your inner ear also helps you balance 2) False— More than 90% of deaf children have hearing parents
"Which of the following": All suffer from hearing loss; A,B,C,D.