

EFFECTIVE COMMUNICATION

In compliance with federal and state law, all NWESD 189-sponsored programs, activities, meetings, and services will be accessible to individuals with disabilities, including persons with hearing, vision, and/or speech disabilities. When communicating in this context with students, families, applicants, participants, members of the public, and their companions with disabilities, the NWESD 189 will take appropriate steps to ensure that any communications are as effective as communications with persons who have no disabilities. Such steps will include furnishing in a timely manner appropriate auxiliary aids and services when necessary to afford an individual with a disability an equal opportunity to participate in, and enjoy the benefits of, programs, activities, meetings, or services conducted or sponsored by the NWESD 189. The information contained within the NWESD 189 website, digital content, and online services will be accessible to all individuals with disabilities in accordance with the standards of the World Wide Web Consortium's Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG) and the Web Accessibility Initiative Accessible Rich Internet Applications Suite (WAI-ARIA) for web-based content, except when doing so would impose a fundamental alternation or undue burden. In the event of such a burden, the NWESD 189 will identify a method for providing equally effective alternative access.

When an IDEA-eligible or a Section 504-eligible student's disability impacts his/her hearing, vision or speech, the program will apply both a FAPE (free and appropriate public education) analysis and the effective communication requirements of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (Title II) in determining how to meet the student's communication needs and how to formulate the student's Individual Education Program (IEP).

For families, applicants, participants, members of the public, and their companions, the NWESD 189's website will provide information on how to request auxiliary aids and services, ask related questions, or raise concerns. When necessary and upon request, such information will also be provided in an accessible format for the requestor at no cost. A form for requesting auxiliary aids and services will be available on the NWESD 189's website, at the NWESD 189 office and attached as an appendix to the implementing procedure for this policy. When determining an appropriate auxiliary aid or service, the NWESD 189 or program will give primary consideration to the auxiliary aid or service specifically requested by the person with a disability.

For purposes of this policy, "auxiliary aids and services" include a wide range of services, devices, technologies, and methods for providing effective communication, and may include:

- 1) Effective methods of making aurally-delivered information available to individuals who are deaf or hard of hearing, such as:
 - qualified interpreters (on-site or through video remote interpreting services)
 - note-takers
 - real-time computer-aided transcription services ("CART")
 - written materials
 - the exchange of written notes
 - telephone handset amplifiers
 - assistive listening devices

- assistive listening systems
 - telephones compatible with hearing aids
 - closed caption decoders
 - open and closed captioning, including real-time captioning
 - voice, text, and video-based telecommunications products and systems, including text telephones (TTYs), videophones, and captioned telephones, or equally effective telecommunications devices
 - videotext displays
 - accessible electronic and information technology
- 2) Effective methods of making visually-delivered information available to individuals with visual impairments, such as:
- qualified readers
 - taped texts
 - audio recordings
 - braille materials and displays
 - screen reader software
 - magnification software
 - optical readers
 - secondary auditory programs (SAP)
 - large print materials
 - accessible electronic and information technology
- 3) Effective methods of enabling a person with a speech disability to communicate with the program or NWESD 189 personnel, such as:
- a word or letter board
 - writing materials
 - spelling to communicate
 - a qualified sign-language interpreter
 - taped texts
 - a computer
 - a portable device that writes and/or produces speech
 - telecommunication devices
- 4) Acquisition or modification of equipment or devices.
- 5) Other similar services and actions.

Auxiliary aids and services will be provided for any school-initiated program, activity, meeting, or service, which may include:

- Parent/teacher conferences
- ESE/IEP/504 meetings
- Conferences or hearings involving student corrective action
- Planning meetings
- Interviews for NWESD 189 employment
- Staff meetings
- Interactive meetings regarding accommodations
- Graduation ceremonies
- Field trips
- Program performances or sporting events
- Board meetings
- Website information, including on-line information regarding curriculum, policies, and Board materials and agendas.
- Reports of student grades and academic progress
- Parental alerts regarding program closures or events

The Superintendent is granted the authority to develop procedures in order to implement this policy.

First Reading: 11/13/17
Second Reading: 12/11/17

Reference:
RCW 28A.642
RCW 49.60
WAC 392-400-215
42 U.S.C. §§ 12131-12134
28 C.F.R. Part 35
29 U.S.C. § 794
34 C.F.R. Part 104
20 U.S.C. §§ 1400-1419
34 C.F.R Part 300

Cross Reference:
Policy 2161
Policy 2162
Policy 3210