



**Division for
Communicative
Disabilities and
Deafness**

To: CEC Board of Directors

From: Becca Jackson,
Division for Communicative Disabilities and Deafness

Date: June 29, 2018

Re: DCDD name change

The Division for Communicative Disabilities and Deafness (DCDD) proposes to change the name of our division. After careful consideration, we would like to propose that DCDD become the Division for

Communication, Language, and

Deaf/Hard of Hearing

With DCD as the official Division acronym.

The rationale for such a change is grounded in DCDD's mission and its potential for growth as a division.

Member Recruitment:

Within the field of education of students who are deaf and hard of hearing (DHH), as well as in the Deaf Community, terms such as 'disability' and 'impairment' are being used less frequently. Increasingly, stakeholders in the field are choosing to avoid this type of terminology in favor of language that focuses on communication or culture. Anecdotally, members of the Board of DCDD have received feedback that the inclusion of the word 'Disabilities' in the Division title is inappropriate, and in some cases, it is found offensive. Throughout DCDD's current review and revision of the DHH Specialty sets, as well as during the writing of the recently disseminated DCDD Position Statement, Teachers of Students who are Deaf or Hard of Hearing: A Critical Resource Needed for Legal Compliance, Board members were advised by multiple stakeholders to avoid utilizing the word 'disability'.

Like all CEC divisions, DCDD faces challenges in maintaining and growing its membership base. Though the reasons for this are complex, involving both economic and demographic shifts, DCDD is challenged to make its services and connections relevant to the professional community that it serves. Concurrently, many professionals who serve students who are DHH and/or those with unique communication needs are looking for a professional “home” and a place where they may both contribute and grow as professionals. By amending the division name, to be responsive to currently acceptable language, DCDD stands to increase its relevance, credibility, and outreach.

Teacher Retention:

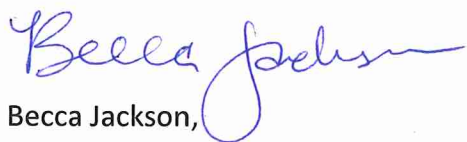
Given the nationwide shortage of teachers of students who are deaf or hard of hearing, as well as teachers of students with unique communication needs (U.S. Department of Education, 2017), DCDD is committed to supporting CEC’s efforts to promote best practices to keep special education teachers in the field. Updating the Division name to reflect currently acceptable language is an example of a high leverage practice (HLP) that includes cultural responsiveness.

Strengthen Relationships with General Education:

Simplifying the Division name and removing language that may be found offensive will also serve to make the Division and its resources more accessible to teachers in both special and general education.

By amending the Division name to reflect the current terminology used in the field, DCDD stands to increase its relevance, credibility, and outreach.

Sincerely,



Becca Jackson,

DCDD Past-President

U.S. Department of Education, Office of Postsecondary Education. (2017). *Teacher shortage areas nationwide listing 1990–1991 through 2017–2018*. Washington, DC: Author. Retrieved from <https://www2.ed.gov/about/offices/list/ope/pol/teacheshortageareasreport2017.pdf>