

## Overview of Tennessee School for the Deaf, Nashville

The department, in collaboration with TSD, WTSD, and TSB is opening an additional Tennessee School for the Deaf campus in Nashville. This is an opportunity for TSD to extend its educational services and supports to young students within middle Tennessee.

The following are key points to inform staff and stakeholders.

- The school will be located on the TSB campus utilized the unused space of cottage 1. This is in accordance with Tennessee Annotated Code (law)

T.C.A. §49-10-902. Schools for deaf children -- West Tennessee and Davidson County.

(a)(1) The state, acting through the state board of education and the commissioner of education, shall establish, maintain and operate a school in Madison County for the hearing impaired children of west Tennessee.

(2) The West Tennessee School for the Deaf shall be located at either Arlington in Shelby County on a portion of that property now owned by the state and used by the school for people with intellectual disability or at such other site in Shelby County made available to the state board of education by the Shelby County legislative body and that is mutually agreeable.

**(b) There shall also be a branch school for the deaf located in Davidson County in connection with the Tennessee School for the Blind.**

- This is a win-win situation. Kindergarten through second grade students within middle Tennessee who are deaf or hard-of-hearing will now have access to the quality, specialized instruction that they need to be successful. Students at TSB will continue to have all the resources and educational opportunities currently available. Teachers at both schools may choose to collaborate in support of students who have dual sensory loss or are deaf-blind.
- No services will change for students currently attending TSB, TSD or WTSD. At TSB, there will be shared space such as the playground, gym, restrooms, front entrance, parking lot, and nurse, but great care is being given to ensure that each school can fully meet their students' needs.
- TSDN will provide the critical early education that is essential to literacy and school success. Students at TSDN will be supported in both language acquisitions and fluency as well as learning to read at an age-appropriate level.

As reported in the [Read to Be Ready](#) initiative,

Over the long term, national research shows that children who are not reading proficiently by third grade are **four times less likely to graduate** from high school by age 19. Dropping out of high school severely damages earnings and job market appeal, and it impacts chances of leading a healthy and productive

life, in addition to increasing odds of incarceration, poverty, and single parenting. This cripples not just our students' future, but our state's as well.

It is essential that we ensure that all students are well equipped for success, including students who are deaf or hard-of-hearing.

- TSDN will open for the 2018-19 school year for students in grades kindergarten through second grade who meet the admissions requirements and whose IEP team has recommended them for admission. TSDN is one option along the continuum of services to be considered by the IEP. Students may continue to attend their local school if it is determined that is the least restrictive environment at this time.

In future years, the TSDN school will expand, adding a grade level each year through the elementary years. We plan to expand to sixth grade, if student enrollment allows.