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### Introduction

- 85% of DHH children and youth are now educated in neighbourhood schools.
- Generalist classroom teachers are DHH students' primary educators.
- The voices of classroom teachers have not been included in the literature.
- There are very few Teachers of the Deaf/Hard of Hearing in Alberta and all provide consultative rather than direct itinerant services.
- The purpose of this study is to explore the current state of education for DHH students in Alberta, from the perspectives and experiences of classroom teachers and TDHHS.

### Research Design



#### Participatory Mixed Methods Design:

- A mixed methods exploratory sequential design
- Phase I : Qualitative Interviews: 19 Classroom Teachers and TDHHS
- Phase II: Two quantitative surveys: One for Teachers and one for TDHHS
- Phase III: Focus Group Corroboration
- Data is integrated throughout the phases to inform the research design and results.
- Theoretical Framework: Access to Equitable (Equity) opportunities to achieve curricular outcomes (Quality).

### Research Questions

1. What do classroom teachers and TDHHS identify as the instructional needs of students who are DHH?
2. What accommodations and instructional practices do teachers and TDHHS report implementation of for DHH students.
3. What are classroom teachers' and TDHHS' experiences with access to specialized equipment, material resources, and professional services to support teaching and learning for DHH students?
4. What factors do classroom teachers and TDHHS indicate contribute to or would improve the quality of educational programming for DHH students?



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### Preliminary Findings

1. Teachers report awareness of literacy learning needs and DHH students' performance in reading relative to same age peers. Accessible Language needs were reported by teachers in congregated settings and TDHHS.
2. Teachers emphasize accommodations that provide auditory and visual access to the classroom. TDHHS discuss the instructional language access and learning needs of DHH students. As one TDHH reported, DHH students bump up against vocabulary and missed words in classrooms.
3. Both TDHHS and classroom teachers report very little professional learning in Deaf Education. Some classroom teachers report consultation with TDHHS. On site teams at school are helpful.
4. Classroom teachers and TDHHS report services would improve with more time in classrooms and increased opportunities to address DHH students' language learning needs. The greatest barrier for classroom teachers was classroom complexity. All participants reported challenges with serving students who are DHH with additional disabilities or English Language Learners.



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### Knowledge Mobilization

Provide professional learning and graduate education programs in Deaf Education that reflect current research and service models: Specifically address:

- the impacts of language deprivation and how to avoid it.
- research confirming there is no privileged language source.
- how to effect change in classrooms using the current consultative model of service delivery.
- how to leverage technology to facilitate collaborations among TDHHS, audiologists, speech language pathologists and classroom teachers.

### Summary

- Teachers are providing sensory **access** accommodations. Accessible language needs are acknowledged by TDHHS and teachers in congregated programs.
- Ensuring **equitable** access to learning is an ongoing challenge as teachers grapple with classroom complexity, hearing equipment breakdowns and inadequate time for small group instruction. TDHH services are limited by high caseloads and a consultative rather than an itinerant model.
- Teachers aiming to deliver high **quality** educational programs benefit from professional support with identifying and addressing the specialized instructional needs of a vastly diverse DHH student population.