SCHOOL CLIMATE

CLERC CENTER
AT GALLAUDET

Deaf Experience Checklist for Leaders

Leadership Checklist: *When to Involve & Why It Matters*
Purpose: To help leaders intentionally embed Deaf experience—not as an add-on, but as a core driver of school climate, equity, and quality.

1. Instruction & Learning Environments

When to Involve Deaf Experience

- ◯ When reviewing instructional practices or lesson design
- ◯ When observing classrooms for access, engagement, and rigor
- ◯ When selecting curriculum, materials, or assessments
- ◯ When addressing inconsistencies in student access across classrooms

2. Professional Development (PD)

When to Involve Deaf Experience

- ◯ When planning PD related to ASL/English bilingual practices
- ◯ When addressing school climate, identity, or equity topics
- ◯ When onboarding new staff
- ◯ When staff are struggling with mindset shifts or implementation

3. Student Experience & Belonging

When to Involve Deaf Experience

- ◯ When reviewing student feedback or survey data
- ◯ When designing leadership, advocacy, or extracurricular opportunities
- ◯ When addressing issues of belonging, isolation, or identity
- ◯ When amplifying student voice and agency

4. Schoolwide Climate & Culture

When to Involve Deaf Experience

- ◯ When shaping school norms, values, and routines
- ◯ When planning assemblies, celebrations, or schoolwide events
- ◯ When reviewing visual spaces, messaging, and symbols
- ◯ When addressing climate concerns or inconsistencies

5. Leadership & Decision-Making

When to Involve Deaf Experience

- ◯ When making decisions that affect language use or access
- ◯ When setting priorities or allocating resources
- ◯ When responding to policy or external pressures (e.g., inclusion mandates)
- ◯ When evaluating program effectiveness

6. Family & Community Engagement

When to Involve Deaf Experience

- ◯ When engaging Deaf families or community partners
- ◯ When planning outreach, communication, or events
- ◯ When supporting families new to ASL or Deaf culture

7. Hiring, Staffing, & Talent Development

When to Involve Deaf Experience

- ◯ When hiring for positions that impact language access, Deaf identity, instruction, or school climate
- ◯ When developing interview questions related to ASL/English bilingual practices, Deaf culture, or student access
- ◯ When serving on interview committees for instructional, leadership, or student-facing roles
- ◯ When evaluating candidates' readiness to work in Deaf-centered, ASL-rich environments