



ASTra Webinar Series # Three - 2026 – 2027

Webinar # 1

Date/Time: September 29th 2026 – 11:00 am MT

Title: The Role of the Educational Audiologist

Presenter: Rachel Parkington, AuD

Bio: Dr. Rachel Parkington holds a Doctorate in Audiology (Au.D) from The University of Northern Colorado and a Bachelor of Science (B.Sc) in Communication Disorders from The University of Massachusetts. Dr. Parkington is actively engaged in various national and state organizations. She has served as President of the New Hampshire Academy of Audiology and is currently the Past President of the Educational Audiology Association. Her contributions extend to the New Hampshire Commission for Deafness and Hearing Loss, the New Hampshire Deaf Child's Bill of Rights Committee, and the Educational Audiology Association Advocacy Committee. In 2015, Dr. Parkington founded Hear to Learn, a venture dedicated to providing Educational Audiology Services to students across New Hampshire. She remains committed to advocating for and expanding these essential services throughout the state and beyond. In her free time, Dr. Parkington enjoys spending quality moments with her family and exploring new hiking trails, paddle-boarding spots, and adventurous destinations across New England.

Description: If your child is deaf or hard of hearing, you've likely heard the term "educational audiologist," but what does this person actually do, and how is their role different from your child's clinical audiologist, Teacher of the Deaf (TOD), or speech-language pathologist (SLP)? This session breaks down the educational audiologist's role, so families and advocates know what to ask for and expect from their child's school team. We'll cover the educational audiologist's key responsibilities in the school setting, from evaluations to recommending and monitoring hearing assistive technology, all aimed at ensuring your child can access instruction throughout the day. We'll also clarify how this role differs from other familiar team members — the TOD, the SLP, and your child's clinical audiologist. The educational audiologist serves as the bridge, translating your child's hearing needs into what actually happens in the classroom, with assessment that goes well beyond the audiogram. We'll also discuss how educational audiologists are meant to collaborate with your child's outside clinical audiologist and the rest of the educational team, and how you can help ensure that communication actually happens. Since some districts don't have an educational audiologist on staff, we'll offer practical guidance for that situation, including who else might help and how to advocate for bringing this expertise to your child's team.

Learning Objectives:

1. Describe the educational audiologist's role and how it differs from the TOD, SLP, and clinical audiologist.
2. Identify key areas of assessment beyond the audiogram.
3. Identify strategies and resources for advocating for educational audiology support, even when a district doesn't have one on staff.



ASTra Webinar Series # Three - 2026 – 2027

Webinar # 2

Date/Time: November 17th, 2026 – 11:00 am MT

Title: From Parent Records to Student Voice: The Power of Documentation

Presenter: Janel Frost, B.A.

Bio: **Janel Frost** graduated from Lake Superior State University with a Bachelor of Arts in Human Services, with minors in Child Development, Counseling, and Psychology, as well as an Associate Degree in Early Childhood Education. She serves as the Executive Director and ASTra Coordinator for Michigan Hands & Voices and is a member of the organization's Board of Directors. Janel is also a National Hands & Voices ASTra Trainer, where she is passionate about empowering families with unbiased information, meaningful resources, and strong support networks to improve communication access and educational outcomes for children who are deaf or hard of hearing.

Janel's dedication to advocacy is both professional and personal. Her son, Mason, was born prematurely at just 1 pound, 12 ounces and has hearing loss, peripheral blindness, and a sensory memory processing disorder. Today, Mason is a thriving 24-year-old who works full-time and enjoys living an independent life. His journey fuels Janel's commitment to ensuring every family in Michigan has access to the resources, support, and opportunities they need to help their children succeed. Janel lives in Northern Michigan with her husband and two of their four children and remains committed to strengthening family support and advocacy across the state.

Description: This presentation highlights the critical role of clear, consistent documentation as the foundation of effective support and advocacy. Attendees will learn practical strategies for writing basic emails, tracking notes, and documenting medical and educational interactions, while also supporting parents in building strong documentation habits. The session explores how these skills can be transferred to students, empowering them to become confident self-advocates in school, post-secondary settings, and the workplace. Participants will leave with actionable tools to strengthen advocacy efforts and improve outcomes for students and families.

Learning Objectives:

1. Identify and implement effective documentation strategies for tracking medical and educational interactions, including meetings, communications, and service delivery.
2. Understand how to support and coach parents in developing strong documentation practices that strengthen advocacy and collaboration with schools and service providers.
3. Describe how to transition documentation and advocacy skills to students, preparing them for self-advocacy in K–12 settings, postsecondary education, and the workplace.



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Webinar # 3

Date/Time: January 19th, 2027 – 11:00 am MT

Title: Tricks, Tips and Tools for Helping You Learn with Your Child at Home

Presenter: Cheri Kay Sessions, PT, DPT

Bio: Cheri Kay Sessions has 19+ years of experience as a pediatric physical therapist, special needs advocate, educational consultant, and homeschooling mom. She has experience of navigating the school system, community mental health system, and health care systems as both a parent and a professional. This dual perspective gives a unique understanding of the needs of families. Along with her training as a Physical Therapist, she is fluent in American Sign Language and has been trauma trained. Cheri Kay's four amazing children were all adopted and have a variety of unique needs, including Deafness and language deprivation.

Description: Many parents feel lost when it comes to language enhancement and learning at home with their child, let alone the thought of officially homeschooling their Deaf/HH child. Cheri Kay is here to tell you that YOU can teach your child at home. Whether you want to fully homeschool, enhance what is happening at school, or work on a few specific skills, YOU can do this. This workshop will share the steps to take if you choose to formally homeschool as well as resources, ideas, and fun ways to make learning at home successful for you and your child.

Learning Objectives:

1. Identify where to find rules and regulations for formal homeschooling and what is required.
2. Learn about curriculum and resources that may work well for their child as they learn at home.
3. Describe 3 different ideas to incorporate learning language and academic subjects into their days.



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Webinar # 4

Date/Time: April 27th, 2027 – 11:00 am MT

Title: Seeing the Whole Child: Comprehensive Assessment for Deaf and Hard of Hearing Students

Presenters:

Caitlin Stueve, M.A., CCC-SLP, DHHS-P

Leslie Manjarrez, M.A., CCLS

Bios:

Caitlin Stueve, M.A., CCC-SLP, DHHS-P, is a bilingual hearing speech-language pathologist and the founder of The Signing SLP: Deaf Positive Language Therapist Inc in California. A fluent American Sign Language (ASL) user, Caitlin specializes in assessment and intervention for Deaf and hard of hearing children, with a focus on bilingual language development, complex communication needs, and educational advocacy. Her clinical approach emphasizes language access, culturally responsive care, and collaboration with families and educational teams to support meaningful communication outcomes. In addition to her private practice, Caitlin serves on the boards of the Center for ASL Acquisition & Access and Language First Foundation and collaborates with Montana Family ASL to support families of Deaf and hard of hearing children in rural and underserved communities.

Leslie Manjarrez, M.A., CCLS is a trilingual hearing professional using English, Spanish and ASL from California. Leslie has experience in Deaf Ed spanning infant to adult within a variety of environments including home, school and online. She has worked as a Teacher of the Deaf, Early Interventionist, Child Life Specialist, Interpreter and Co-Director of a Camp for Deaf Children. Leslie believes that children are as diverse as the cities we each live in and strives to continue to learn skills with a lens on equity and justice. Her practice approach is inclusive to all modalities emphasizing language access, family support and team collaboration. Leslie serves on the boards of Hands & Voices (California and HQ), Lion's Wilderness Camp for Deaf Children, and Instituto Familiar de la Raza to serve DHH children at all levels as well as the Latino Community in mental health settings.

Description:

Evaluating Deaf and Hard of Hearing students often requires looking beyond standardized assessments to understand how a student truly communicates, learns and accesses their educational environment. This session explores practical approaches to conducting comprehensive evaluations that capture a student's strengths, needs, and functional abilities. Through real case examples, topics include assessment considerations for students with diverse communication profiles, the role of language access and educational/home environment context in interpreting assessment results, and strategies for collaborating with multidisciplinary teams when DHH expertise is limited. The session focuses on developing meaningful evaluations and recommendations that better support educational planning and outcomes for deaf and hard of hearing students.



ASTra Webinar Series # Three - 2026 – 2027

Learning Objectives:

1. Identify assessment approaches beyond standardized testing to develop a more comprehensive understanding of Deaf and hard of hearing students' communication and learning.
2. Analyze how contextual factors influence assessment results and educational decision making.
3. Apply strategies for collaborating with multidisciplinary teams and determine when specialized consultation or training is needed to improve services.

Webinar # 5

Date/Time: June 15th, 2027 11:00 am MT

Title: Essential Strategies for Post-Secondary Education Preparation

Presenter: Theresa Johnson, M.Ed.

Bio: Theresa Johnson, M.Ed., works for the Rochester Institute of Technology/National Technical Institute for the Deaf. With 45 years of experience in the field, Theresa has spent time as the Director of Disability Services for multiple college campuses in Atlanta, served as the Texas Statewide Transition Lead and is currently the Associate Director of DeafTEC, a National Science Foundation funded grant which enables outreach to Community College Faculty and Staff addressing STEM preparation for students who are Deaf/Hard of Hearing (D/HH) and their transition to a STEM career. Theresa also works closely with parents/families of D/HH children to address transition preparation and is the parent of a Deaf daughter who has successfully completed her graduate studies and is now teaching D/HH students.

Description: This webinar will cover a lot of ground as the Presenter discusses the process of transition from high school to college and strategies for preparing children for transition to early adulthood. Emphasis will be placed on the actual search for a college or university of choice and considerations during this most important endeavor. For students who require support services, it is even more important to understand from a very early phase of exploring college options, what each school offers and how to access it in order to find the school that meets the students' needs.

Learning Objectives:

1. Understand of the distinctions between Public School Law and the ADA and its' application to post-secondary education.
2. Identify difference between the college/university application process and the access services office application process.
3. Describe the essential components of college services beyond academics and athletics and why they should be considered when making college choices.