



**AMERICAN
SCHOOL FOR
THE
DEAF**

ALL ways able.

Jeffrey S. Bravin,
Executive Director

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**State of Connecticut Appropriations Committee
February 12, 2020
Testimony by Jeffrey S. Bravin, Executive Director
American School for the Deaf**

Good Afternoon. I stand before you today with an urgent plea to continue your financial support of the American School for the Deaf, especially not supporting the \$200,000 cut that the Governor's budget is proposing, and explain the critical impact that potential reductions in funding would have on our students.

In last year's budget, the Legislature approved a \$500,000 increase in our budget before we were hit with \$425,000 in holdbacks. This substantial cut heavily impacts our budget and makes it difficult for ASD to maintain our operations to ensure that our students receive the appropriate education and support they need.


The American School for the Deaf is the Least Restrictive Environment (LRE) for deaf and hard of hearing students. Regardless of a child's preferred communication approach (spoken language or American Sign Language), ASD is equipped to meeting the diverse learning needs of all students. We have developed a unique program based on our students' Individualized Education Plans (IEPs) to allow children of all abilities and diverse communication needs to reach their full potential. Cuts in funding would have an adverse domino effect on our entire program, directly impacting the future success of each one of our students.

Deaf children learn differently. Literacy and language acquisition are the greatest challenges in the field of Deaf Education. ASD understands that in order to thrive, students **must** have a strong language foundation. The funding received from the State of Connecticut ensures that we have the appropriate personnel to provide our students with the literacy and communication supports that they need to continue to learn. We are equipped with the advanced technology to provide students with total access to language.

ASD's appropriation from the State of Connecticut supports the operation of our Core academic program, especially ASD's teaching, professional, and support staff. As a result of several critical cuts from the State in recent years, ASD has adjusted our operations and planned for our future, despite the reduction in funding. The cuts to ASD's appropriation are in excess of \$2.7 million, which is a direct correlation to the deficit in ASD's Core academic program. Additional reductions would have a devastating impact on our students.

Since 1817, our state's leaders have answered the call to support ASD and our mission. I sincerely hope you will continue this tradition by fighting for level funding of our appropriation. Thank you.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Jeffrey S. Bravin", is centered below the word "Sincerely,".

Jeffrey S. Bravin
Executive Director

American School for the Deaf
Appropriation Trend FY 2012-2020

Fiscal Year	Appropriation in State	Holdbacks / Recissions	Net Appropriation	Cumulative Increase /	Core CT	Appropriation /
	Budget	Issued	Received	(Decrease)	Students	Student
2012-13	\$ 10,264,242	\$ (17,212)	\$ 10,247,030	\$ -	113	\$90,682
2013-14	\$ 10,659,030	\$ -	\$ 10,659,030	\$ 412,000	111	\$96,027
2014-15	\$ 10,659,030	\$ -	\$ 10,659,030	\$ 412,000	104	\$102,491
2015-16	\$ 9,992,840	\$ (103,428)	\$ 9,889,412	\$ (357,618)	104	\$95,091
2016-17	\$ 9,543,829	\$ (286,315)	\$ 9,257,514	\$ (989,516)	108	\$85,718
2017-18	\$ 8,300,000	\$ (867,486)	\$ 7,432,514	\$ (2,814,516)	90	\$82,583
2018-19	\$ 7,432,514	\$ -	\$ 7,432,514	\$ (2,814,516)	91	\$81,676
2019-20	\$ 8,357,514	\$ (425,000)	\$ 7,932,514	\$ (2,314,516)	96	\$82,630

Change in Appropriation and Core Enrollment 2012 - 2020

