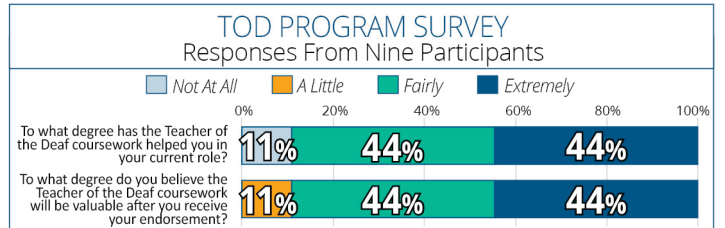


The Kansas State Department of Education (KSDE), through collaboration with the Kansas School for the Deaf and the TASN Coordination project, facilitates access to training to develop Teachers of the Deaf by offsetting tuition and books for a master's level teacher preparation program. Additionally, the Kansas School for the Deaf provides onsite student teaching and immersion experiences.

TEACHERS OF THE DEAF COURSEWORK

A high need for expertise in deaf or hard of hearing instructional practices has been identified, especially in rural and western Kansas. Through the Teachers of the Deaf project, the Kansas School for the Deaf Outreach department strives to ensure that all students throughout Kansas who are deaf or hard of hearing receive the specialized educational services needed to be successful. The Deaf Education coursework is available to licensed teachers to expand their repertoire of instructional techniques for this population of students. During each of the past three years, information on the Teachers of the Deaf program was disseminated to special education directors across the state through digital and print media, as well as at regional special education directors' meetings and statewide conferences.

The Deaf Education coursework is provided through partnerships with Valdosta State University in Georgia, Texas Woman's University, and the University of Nebraska-Lincoln, all of which provide candidates an



opportunity to earn a master's degree in Deaf Education. To support this partnership, KSDE and the two participating universities have developed criteria for license reciprocity. Six participants have thus far completed the program and are actively working as Teachers of the Deaf in Kansas. Nine individuals are currently participating in the program, and five of these candidates are expected to complete the program during the 2020-21 school year.

ONGOING PROFESSIONAL LEARNING

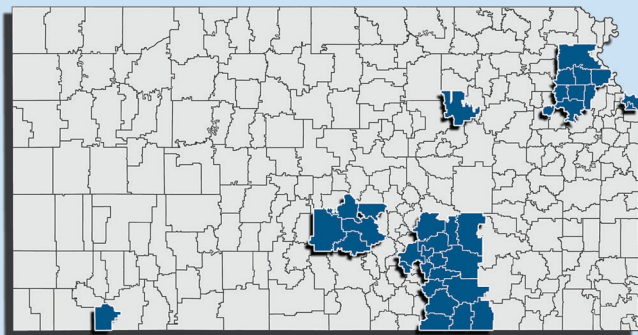
Participants in the Teachers of the Deaf program were provided the opportunity to attend a national or regional conference on Deaf Education. These conferences included the National Association of the Deaf—National Deaf Education Conference, the Midwest Conference on Deaf Education, and the Association of College Educators—Deaf and Hard of Hearing International Conference. These opportunities allowed the educators to learn best practices in Deaf Education from leaders in the field; interact with deaf professionals, utilizing both social and academic American Sign Language; and reflect on how this experience will better prepare them as Teachers of the Deaf in Kansas. Of the five participants who responded to a survey, all rated the content as beneficial.

100% of participants said that **conference content will benefit the students they serve**

DEVELOPING EXPERTISE TO SERVE STUDENTS ACROSS KANSAS

The Teachers of the Deaf Preparation and Mentorship Program has increased the expertise of educators to provide needed services to deaf and hard of hearing students throughout the state. The map illustrates the districts with access, either through the district or special education organization, to project participants who have completed or are in the process of attaining their endorsement.

DISTRICTS WITH ACCESS TO TOD PARTICIPANTS



"This has made me a more well-rounded TOD. It's given me new perspectives and resources to use with the students I currently serve."
— PROJECT PARTICIPANT

The overall goal of the Teachers of the Deaf program is to ensure that students who are deaf or hard of hearing are provided with the specialized instruction they need while also expanding the teachers' repertoires of instructional practices to support an array of students. As participants progress through the coursework, their preparation and confidence increase. Forty percent entered the TOD program proficient in American Sign Language, while the other participants are advancing through ASL 1 through ASL 4. Teachers can apply for the program by contacting Sarah Thompson at: sthompson@kssdb.org or TOD@kssdb.org.

