

F. Agency Workforce Plan



Overview

Functions

SD provides a continuum of direct educational services to students, birth through twenty-two, who are deaf or hard of hearing; some of these students may have multiple disabilities. TSD is also directed to serve as a statewide educational resource. Through the Statewide Outreach Center (SOC), TSD provides a variety of educational services to programs and professionals throughout the state working with and for persons who are deaf or hard of hearing. (Texas Education Code, §30.051.)



Anticipated Changes to the Mission, Strategies, and Goals Over the Next Five Years

TSD's two primary functions--serving students on the Austin campus and providing statewide outreach services—are expected to continue without change over the next five years.

TSD will continue to provide educational, residential support and related services to TSD's on-site population of deaf and hard of hearing students. TSD is experiencing, and expects to continue experiencing, a change in the nature of the population of students TSD serves. If current trends continue, we will serve an increasing number of students with complex additional disabilities. TSD will likely also serve students who have a history of abuse, neglect and serious behavior issues. At the same time, TSD's population of "traditional" deaf children will grow as a result of the quality of the School's reputation nationwide, the attraction of TSD as an employer for persons who are deaf and hard of hearing, and the general strength of the Austin area economy.

The same is true for TSD's outreach and resource mission. Although the mission will remain the same, the need for services continues to expand year over year. As a "center" school for students who are deaf and hard of hearing, TSD has the centralized resources and expertise to share with school districts, families, and professionals involved in the education of deaf and hard of hearing students. As a leader in deaf and hard of hearing education, TSD continues to build staff and resources in the Statewide Outreach Center to meet the growing need for TSD's outreach activities. TSD works collaboratively with Texas Education Agency's statewide deaf services and statewide partners in the Education Service Centers charged with providing technical assistance in specified areas to professionals in deaf education. In addition, TSD has established a Family Resource Center on our Austin campus and continues to build the services we provide to our TSD families, including such areas as American Sign Language education for parents and siblings to facilitate familial communication. TSD expects to see growth in this role over the next five years.

Additional Considerations

Key Economic and Environmental Factors

Shortage of Deaf Education Training Programs. Teachers of children who are deaf or hard of hearing require specialized training to obtain the skills to meet the complex needs of the students, including competency in American Sign Language. At present, there are 56 colleges and universities that offer deaf education teacher training programs in the United States, down from 63 in 2018, seven of which are offered in Texas. This shortage of programs further impacts TSD's ability to hire the deaf educators needed for our students.

Current Customer Demands. TSD's customers include students, parents, and professionals throughout the state. TSD's student population requires a level of services that the current number of professional and para- professional employees are unable to provide. Adding to this problem, the student population has continued to become increasingly complex and diverse with increased numbers of students with additional disabilities requiring many more related and support services.

Parents of TSD Students as Well as Parents of Deaf Children Throughout the State Require Intensive Training in Sign Language and Parenting Skills Necessary for Effective Parenting of Deaf Children. They require information about all services to which their child is legally entitled or otherwise needs including educational services (e.g. —the Individual Educational Plan and Admission, Review and Dismissal Process) and health services. Additionally, as the population of TSD students living in Austin increases, their parents require increased levels of daily transportation.

Long Range Plans. TSD's long-range plan includes a variety of restructuring efforts to maintain a quality continuum of educational services for TSD students. We need to continue to represent innovative strategies and proven methods for learning for deaf and hard of hearing students. We need a comprehensive design for effective school functioning that aligns the School's curriculum, technology and professional development into a coordinated plan to improve achievement. We must develop and maintain a continuous professional staff development and training program to meet the current workforce demands.

Current Workforce Profile

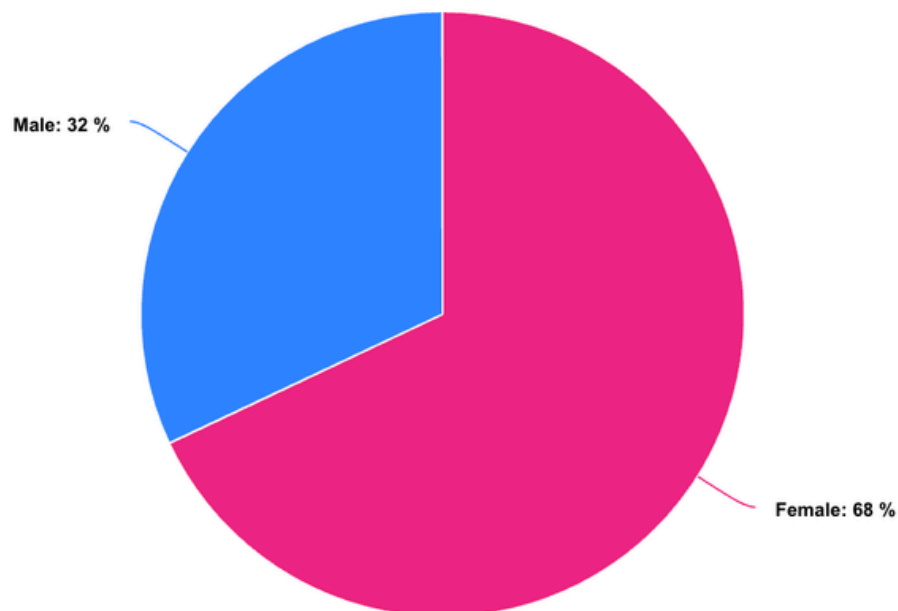
TSD's ability to provide services, resources and expertise to its students, the Texas deaf community and those who serve them as well as remain a leader in deaf education services at the national level is a direct result of our talented workforce of teachers, staff, and administrators.

As a school for the deaf, TSD competes with deaf schools across the nation for a highly specialized workforce. TSD's professional faculty members are dedicated, effective, and committed to student success. While faculty are paid on the same scale as Austin Independent School District teachers, recruiting teachers of the deaf remains challenging because of the limited pool of qualified professionals in this specialized field.

Similarly, TSD's classified staff play an essential role in supporting students across the school day and residential programs. Because these positions require specialized skills and responsibilities, continued attention to compensation is important to support recruitment and retention, particularly for teacher assistants and residential staff.

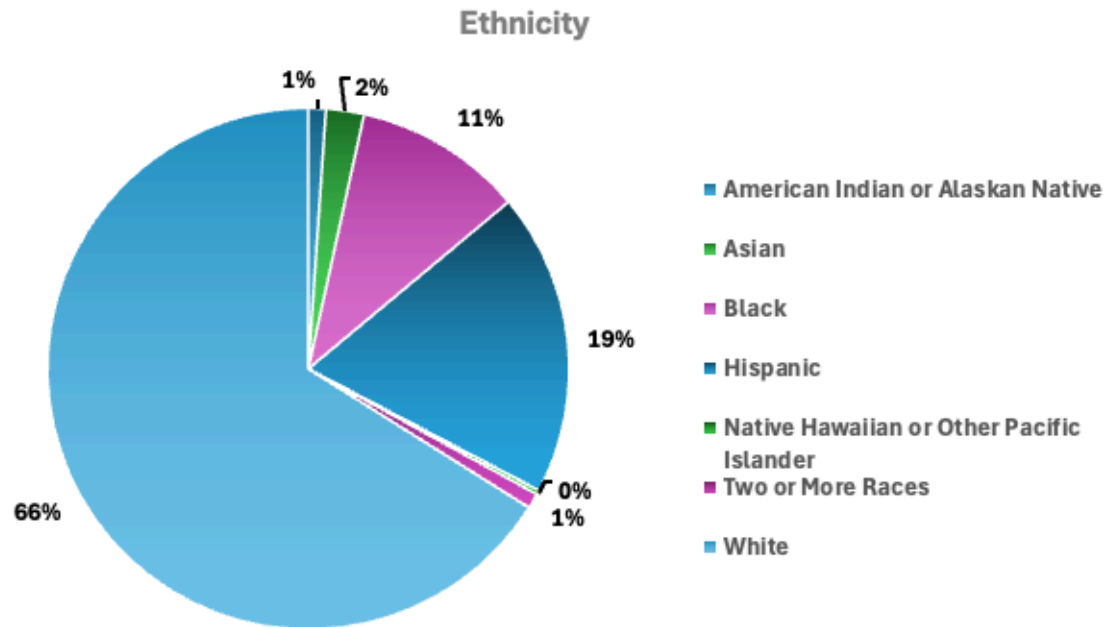
Demographics: Gender, Ethnicity, Age, and Tenure

Approximately 67% of TSD's workforce is deaf or hard of hearing. There is a higher percentage of deaf or hard of hearing staff in departments that provide direct care to TSD's students. Support functions generally have a lower percentage of deaf or hard of hearing staff. The workforce data presented does not include substitute employee information. Approximately 68% of TSD's workforce is female and 32% is male. This is a higher percentage of female employees than the overall Texas State Government workforce in which 57.6% is female. The breakdown of employees by gender at TSD has remained relatively constant over the last five years.

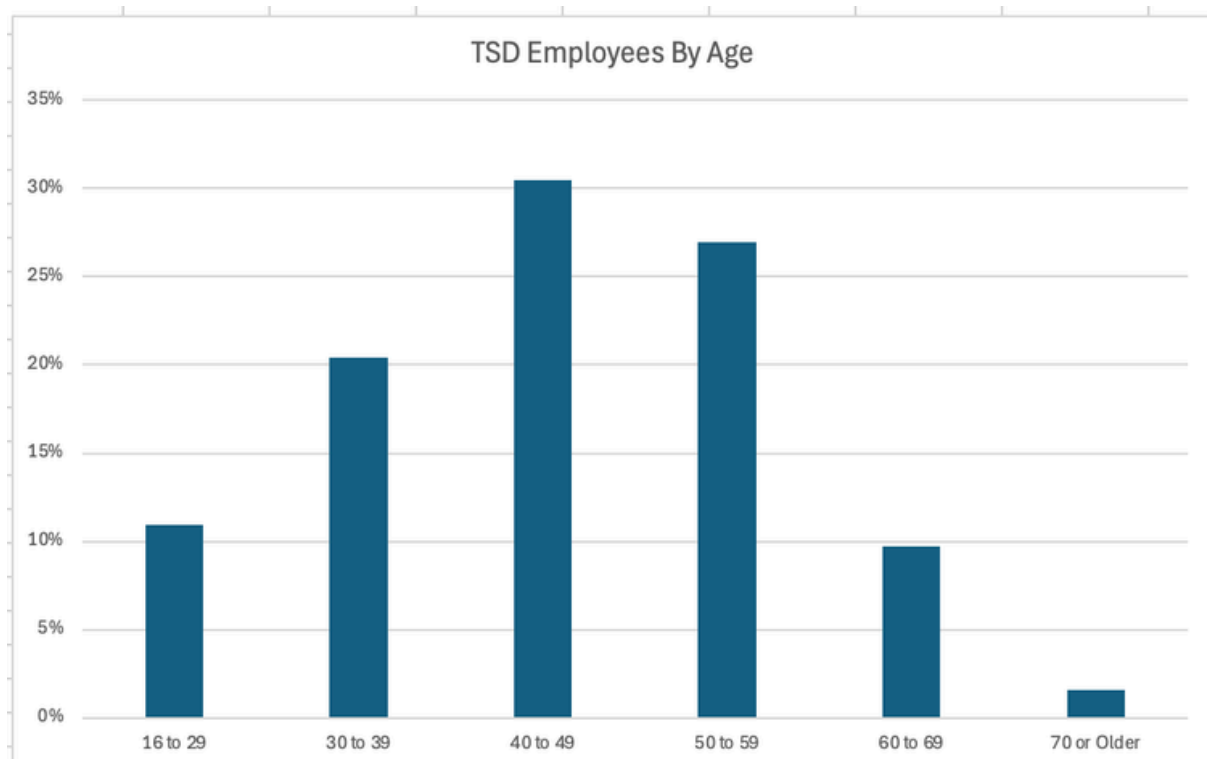


TSD Employees by Ethnicity

71% of TSD employees are White, 16% are Hispanic, 8% of employees are Black, 0% of employees are Native Hawaiian or other Pacific Islander, 2% are Asian, 2% of employees are two or more races and 1% are American Indian or Alaskan Native.



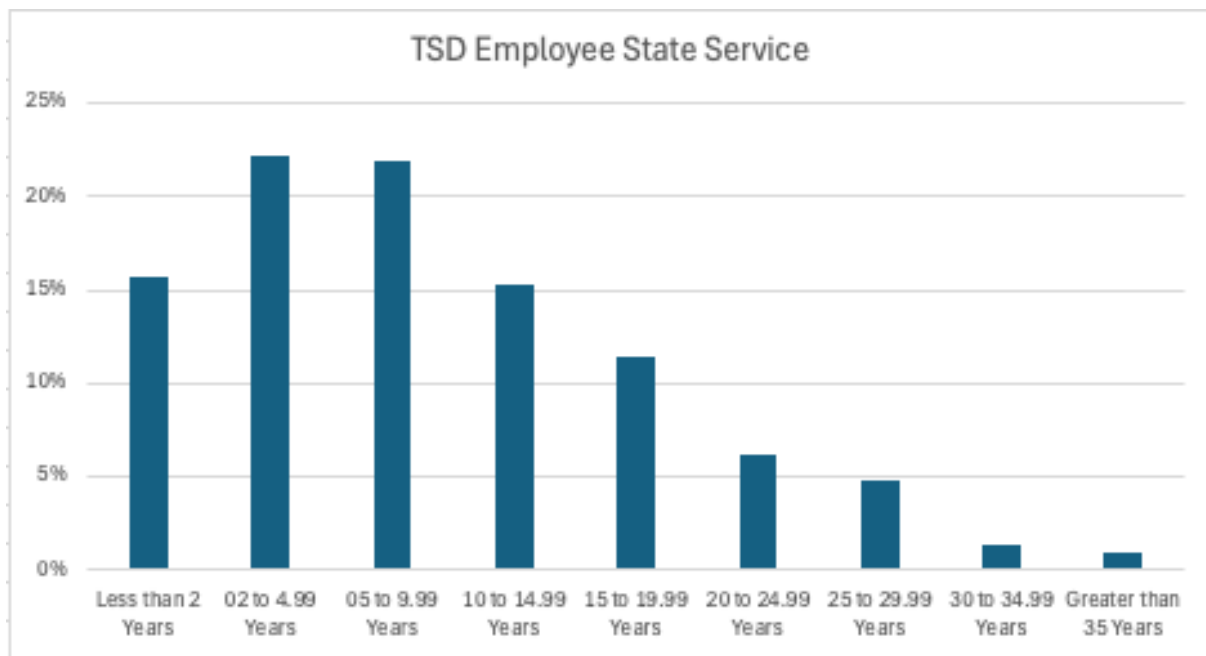
The age of TSD's workforce has remained consistent with that of the overall State of Texas workforce with the majority of our workforce between the ages of thirty and fifty nine.





TSD Employees by Length of Service

The length of State service for TSD employees is similar to that of the State's overall workforce. Thirty eight percent of TSD employees have fewer than five years of state service while 13% have at least twenty years.



Employee Turnover

The TSD turnover rate for 2025 without including substitute employees is 14.8% which is lower than the overall State turnover rate of 16.3%. However, TSD continues to struggle with turnover rates within specific job classifications. Exit interviews indicate that the higher turnover rates is due to low salaries.

Workforce Skills Critical to the Mission and Goals

As a deaf education entity whose mission is to provide an environment where individuals who are deaf or hard of hearing, including those with additional disabilities, have the opportunity to learn, grow and belong in a culture that optimizes individual potential and provides accessible language and communication across the curriculum, our workforce must possess many specialized skills. These skills include Sign Language, cultural competence in deaf culture, and education, experience, and qualifications in the areas of deaf education and child development. Our workforce must also possess the skills necessary to support early language acquisition for both students and families.

Technological skills for employees are also necessary as TSD continues to develop technology education programs, advance the technological base of the agency, and to explore the best uses of technology to support the deaf culture in Texas.

Other critical skills include interpretation skills, interpersonal skills, management skills, and skills in working collaboratively to resolve workplace problems and issues.



Future Workforce Profile

Expected Workforce Changes

Our workforce is dedicated to providing a high-quality educational environment for every student. TSD continues to align its staffing, services, and resources to meet the evolving needs of students, including those with complex medical, behavioral, and educational needs. As these needs grow and change, the school remains focused on maintaining strong related and support services that help students access the general curriculum and succeed academically and socially. TSD also continues to explore opportunities to strengthen programs and attract specialized professionals, including competitive compensation strategies for certain hard-to-fill positions.

Future Workforce Skills Needed

TSD's dual mission is expected to remain stable for the foreseeable future. TSD provides comprehensive educational and residential services to school-age students throughout Texas at the School during the regular school year; and serves as a primary statewide resource center promoting excellence in education for students who are deaf or hard of hearing through research, training, and demonstration projects.

To achieve the goals supporting this mission, TSD will need teachers and other staff members with training from universities, colleges, Educational Services Centers or other training sources in:

- Deaf and Hard of Hearing
- Early childhood, handicapped
- Generic special education
- Seriously emotionally disturbed and autistic
- Severely and profoundly handicapped
- Math
- Science
- English as a Second Language
- Cochlear Implants
- Management of students with behavior problems and disorders
- Management with students with complex health needs
- Instructional and Administrative Technology

Anticipated Changes in the Number of Employees Needed

Because TSD students often benefit from smaller class sizes and individualized services, the school continues to align staffing with the needs of the students it serves. While enrollment is not currently increasing, student needs continue to vary in complexity and require thoughtful planning, specialized expertise, and coordinated support. Many students referred to TSD by their school districts have complex learning, medical, behavioral, or multiple-disability needs, and TSD remains focused on providing effective, safe, and appropriate services that support their success.



Workforce Gap Analysis

Anticipated Surplus or Shortage of Employees

We anticipate shortages of employees in the following areas:

- Teaching and related services.
- Wrap around services such as occupational and physical therapy, audiology, speech and language support.

Anticipated Surplus or Shortage of Skills

We anticipate a shortage of skills in the following areas:

- An insufficient supply of teachers certified to teach deaf students, educational administrators, and related and support service professionals. This insufficient supply is largely due to increased demand, retirement, attrition, and the closing of university training programs for teachers of the deaf and hard of hearing.
- The lack of staff knowledge and skills in behavior management required for working with students who are presenting increasingly challenging disabilities.
- A gap between the technological skills necessary to support innovation and integrate technology into the curriculum and the current staff skill set.

Strategy Development

Through its Strategic Five-Year plan, TSD has set the following objectives to be completed in the next five years.

- Continue to refine TSD's plan to recruit a well-qualified staff that includes focus on skills, and potential.
- Increase employee satisfaction by establishing programs and services that support short- and long-term personal and professional goals.
- Continue to develop and refine strategies to maximize employee compensation.
- Continue to develop and refine strategies to help the school maximize skill acquisition for both hearing and deaf staff to improve communication, competency, and expand skill acquisition in areas of deficiencies.

Survey of Employee Engagement

TSD utilized the Survey of Employee Engagement (SEE) in 2025 as a means of assessing employee perceptions of the School as an employer, an educator, its strengths and weaknesses and areas needing improvement.

Response Rate

51.7% of agency employees responded to the survey. This is above the acceptable response level of 30%.

Benchmark Groups

TSD's SEE results were compared with Size Category 4 organizations (301-1000 employees) within the Education mission which includes Universities, Colleges, Institutes and other agencies involved with students, teachers, administrators and families throughout many areas of learning.

Scores

The School's overall survey score of 367, is the same as our 2024 overall survey score. Overall scores typically range from 325 to 375.

Construct Analysis scores were provided. As noted in the report, scores above 350 suggest that employees perceive the issue more positively than negatively, while scores of 375 or higher indicate areas of substantial strength. Conversely, scores below 350 indicate that employees perceive the issue less positively and scores below 325 indicate a significant source of concern for the School.



In the Construct Analysis, the School received the following:



Additionally, the survey completed a Climate Analysis of the survey data. The climate in which employee's work does, to a large extent, determine the efficiency and effectiveness of the School. A workplace that is a combination of a safe, non-harassing environment with ethical abiding employees who treat each other with fairness and respect with pro-active management and thoughtful decision-making capabilities that produces the most efficient and effective organization.

The Climate Analysis revealed:

- 25.1% of respondents feel there aren't enough opportunities to give supervisor feedback
- 18.8% of respondents feel that upper management should communicate better.
- 12.6% of respondents feel there are issues with ethics in the workplace.
- 12.2% of respondents feel they are not treated fairly in the workplace.
- 8.5% of respondents feel workplace harassment is not adequately addressed.

Plan for Continued Improvement

TSD's Executive Leadership Team uses the result of the survey to inform decision making regarding areas of concern identified within the survey. In addition, the results are incorporated into the School's Strategic Goal Five Year Plan.

Conclusion

TSD management considers the School's participation in the survey as a valuable tool for improving School operations. TSD will participate in future surveys with a goal to increase participation and improve key indicators. Comparison of current and future results will enable TSD to further define methods for addressing the needs of the School and its employees.

