

THE HANDS THAT SPEAK A THOUSAND WORDS

SPEAKING THROUGH ACTIONS

On campus there is a class where deaf and hard of hearing (DHH) students come to do their work. Because many are unable to hear the spoken word they use American Sign Language to go over the same material that all students at AHS do. "It is what the students primarily use in order to complete their academic lessons as well as to communicate with one another during regular conversation. Whether the students are profoundly deaf or hard of hearing, ASL is their primary language," said Debbie Castaneda, the teacher of the DHH class.

Seven years ago, the American Sign Language stopped being offered at Alhambra High School through the foreign language department. Currently, there are nine DHH students at Alhambra High.

"An ASL course could be an opportunity to educate hearing kids about deaf culture. There are students who are interested in becoming ASL teachers and interpreters and having a high school level class would help them toward a future career," said Stephanie Cohen, school guidance counselor.

ASL is considered a foreign language. A foreign language teaching credential for secondary level is required by the state of California for this course. The requirements for a teacher would be the same as any other teacher who works in the foreign language department here at AHS.

"The DHH students are pleased when other students attempt to learn ASL. The opportunity to learn ASL and practice it with students who prefer to use this language, develops an empathy for others in a way that truly increases communication capabilities and tolerance of differences," said Castaneda.

JOSEPH NEY-JUN
STAFF WRITER

Hugo Ball once said, "The symbolic view of things is a consequence of long absorption in images. Is sign language the real language of Paradise?" Whether it's with a nod with your head or a verbal greeting, a hello is a worldwide recognized symbol. Further along we will be able to explore the importance and history of American Sign Language (ASL) and how AHS is rooting for its comeback!

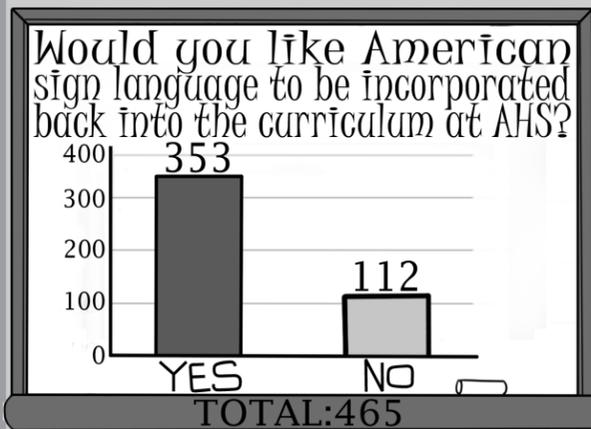
SYLVIA WINSTON
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"ASL seems like a language everyone should learn at some point of their lives." - Elisa Martinez, junior

THE START OF SOMETHING NEW

Like many other languages in the world, advancements and transformations were applied in American Sign Language (ASL) throughout history. ASL was created by Dr. Thomas Hopkins Gallaudet in 1814. According to Start American Sign Language, only a few thousand Americans were deaf during the early 1800s; hence, no standard signed language existed at this time, but various signing systems were created in the deaf communities. These sign systems are now known as Old American Sign Language. The ASL of today is actually related to this language. Gallaudet met and took care of his neighbor, Alice Cogswell, who was deaf and instantly became interested in helping the non-hearing. After constant research, he and Laurent Clerc, a deaf educator from Europe, established the American School for the Deaf in Hartford, Connecticut in 1817. The first college for the deaf, National Deaf-Mute College, opened in 1864. It is now known as Gallaudet University, the first and only deaf university in the world.

SHELLEY LIN
STAFF WRITER



MOOR graphics by LESLIE HWANG and SAMMIE CHEN

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