

# Principles & Practices in Action

The American School for the Deaf (ASD) serves the deaf and hard of hearing community as a multifaceted innovative institution dedicated to the development of intellect and the enhancement of quality of life, producing educated and self-directed citizens.



*Every day, CT Nonprofits promotes the good work of its members and the fundamental values of quality, responsibility and accountability that govern the nonprofit community. Each issue of the Nonprofit Advantage highlights one organization that has improved their infrastructure and operations through the use of our Principles and Practices for Nonprofit Excellence in Connecticut (Principles & Practices). Through this series, we aim to showcase our members' great work and underscore the importance of knowing how to form, govern and manage a nonprofit in a manner that will earn the support and confidence of stakeholders, consumers, and the public. This month we examine the work of the American School for the Deaf (ASD).*



Founded in 1817, the American School for the Deaf was the first permanent school for the deaf in the United States and a nationally renowned leader in providing comprehensive educational, programs and services for deaf and hard-of-hearing students.

The School's total communication philosophy embraces English, American Sign Language, the integration of speech, auditory training, reading, writing, and use of assistive devices as essential parts of total education that enables students to achieve true language and communication literacy.

As ASD looked to update their strategic plan, they needed a roadmap to help guide the way. "We wanted to update the plan to address the current and future needs and goals of the organization," explained Edward F. Peltier, Executive Director. "We serve a diverse population and a number of different constituencies. Our challenge was to develop a plan that would speak to all of the people we serve. *Principles & Practices* helped us to keep our focus and develop strategies for most effectively communicating with these diverse constituencies."

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In order to determine the most effective means of communication with a variety of groups, ASD identified constituencies and conducted extensive surveying to communicate their ideas for the plan and gather input. The result was a truly strategic plan that was approved unanimously by their Board and accepted by the constituencies they serve.

*"This plan will provide us with clear direction as we tackle a number of significant issues facing our school," continued Peltier. "This year portends to be an active planning year for ASD, and with the guidance provided by Principles and Practices, we are well-equipped to make thoughtful, considered choices."*

*Has your nonprofit implemented our Principles & Practices in an effort to improve the quality, responsibility and accountability of the organization? If so, please let us know! Contact Melissa Harris at CT Nonprofits at 860-525-5080 or [mharris@ctnonprofits.org](mailto:mharris@ctnonprofits.org).*



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