

The Teacher Shortage is Strangling Deaf Education: Creating Local Coalitions to Address the Pipeline in My State

2022 NTID Regional STEM Center and DeafTEC Math Conference

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"Deaf education has a PR (public relations) issue. No one knows it exists."



@KymPMeyer

ACTIONS:

ideas for your state

MASSACHUSETTS TEACHERS OF DEAF AND HARD OF HEARING STUDENTS: A MIXED METHODS WORKFORCE ANALYSIS

Kym Phelan Meyer
College of Education
Dissertation Defense

November 4, 2020

Link to my Twitter research summary:
(also on last slide)





Anne Lutz Fernandez ✓

@lutzfernandez



Working on a piece on the teacher shortage. What are some of the worst ideas you've heard about how to address it?

7:56 AM · 6/12/22 · [Twitter Web App](#)



TopsyTeacher @Topsy__Teacher · 19h ...

Replying to [@lutzfernandez](#)

Generally dismissing the problem at the local level by saying, "this is happening nationwide" and avoiding the problem altogether.



Who should work on the DeafEd Teacher Shortage?





Becky Pringle ✓

@BeckyPringle



Too often people want a silver bullet solution or will implement a Band-Aid approach to solve educator shortages.

But these shortages are severe. They are chronic.

And they will only be fixed with systematic, sustained solutions.

6:38 PM · 10/4/22 · [Sprout Social](#)

**When we work together
with other great minds,
we do better and
achieve more.**

-Ifeanyi Enoch Onuoha

What we know from national TOD shortage research (CEASD surveys conducted in 2008, 2012, 2018)

- not enough teachers in many geographical areas, including
 - rural locations,
 - areas with a small Deaf community, and was
 - “especially acute” in regions where there was no nearby TOD teacher preparation program (Tucker & Fischgrund, 2018).
- Another study of listening and spoken language (oral) schools found that 67% of teachers were prepared in the same state as the school they are working in (Fischgrund & Tucker, 2018)

What we know from national TOD shortage research (Meyer, 2020)

Table 1. *Decline of Deaf Education Graduates and Teacher Training Programs Since 1982*

Year	Deaf Education graduates	Deaf Education teacher training programs
1982	1,680 ^a	81 ^a
2009	737 ^b	62 ^b
2020	300 (expected) ^c	56 ^c

Note. ^aDolman, 2010. ^bLuft, 2019. ^c“Deaf Education Teacher Preparation Programs”

(n.d.) (Retrieved May 10, 2020).

No other research comprehensively looks at the teacher of the deaf shortage in one state



Summary of my research

Who participated?

Survey of every teacher of Massachusetts
DHH students (in every location):

- DHH school/programs
 - Mainstream

Nine in-depth teacher interviews

What I learned about the Massachusetts DeafEd pipeline:

Nearly 80% of TODs graduated from an in-person program in the Northeast or mid-Atlantic regions

Teachers graduated from 26 different DeafEd programs.
Seven teacher prep programs have closed, including four in the Northeast region

Closed teacher prep programs represent 32% of Massachusetts TODs surveyed

**95 survey respondents
identified when they would
leave DHH classrooms:**

Nearly 20% by 2024.

46% by 2030.



Responses collected BEFORE the pandemic

Average age when teachers realized they wanted to become a teacher (16 ½) v. entering deaf education (21)

High school: knew they wanted to teach



College: Knew they wanted to teach DHH kids



Comments from hearing teachers:

"Deaf education has a PR (public relations) issue. No one knows it exists."

Sue, hearing

"If I went to another school that didn't offer ASL, I still would have been a teacher but not of deaf students."

Eve, hearing

"The President (of my college) said, 'you should go and talk to the director (of the local deaf school) and see what you think.'"

[I asked: what If the university President hadn't mentioned a school for the deaf?]

"I would have never known deaf education existed"

Ann, hearing

Meyer, 2020

Comments from DHH teachers:

“I had my bachelor’s but couldn’t find a job and ended up as an aide in a deaf classroom. Some of my co-workers said ‘you should go back to school to be a teacher of the deaf.’”

Wendy, Hard of Hearing

“When I was in high school, I met a teacher who was hard of hearing herself and I thought – Wow, you can be a teacher and be successful and be hard of hearing? That was pretty amazing.”

Mary, Deaf

“You can’t be what you can’t see”

(Siebel Newsom, et al., 2011)

Meyer, 2020

What does this mean?



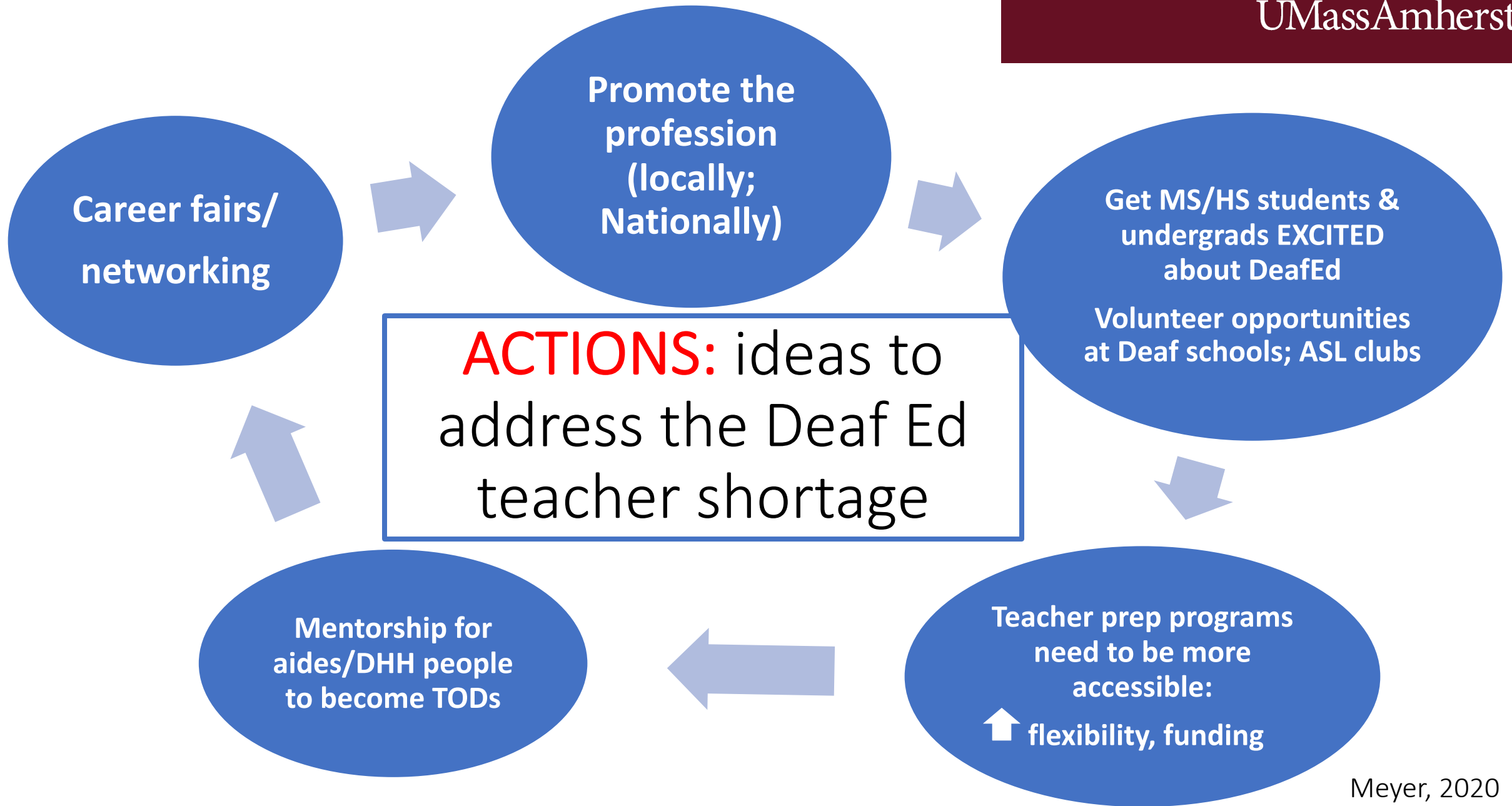
Most people “fell” into the profession



I asked Teachers of the Deaf:



- How did YOU find out about the profession?
- What are YOUR ideas for addressing the teacher shortage?



What can WE do?

ACTIONS!

“All politics is local” (Byron Price, 1932)

ACTIONS: Your state needs to create a coalition and collaborate



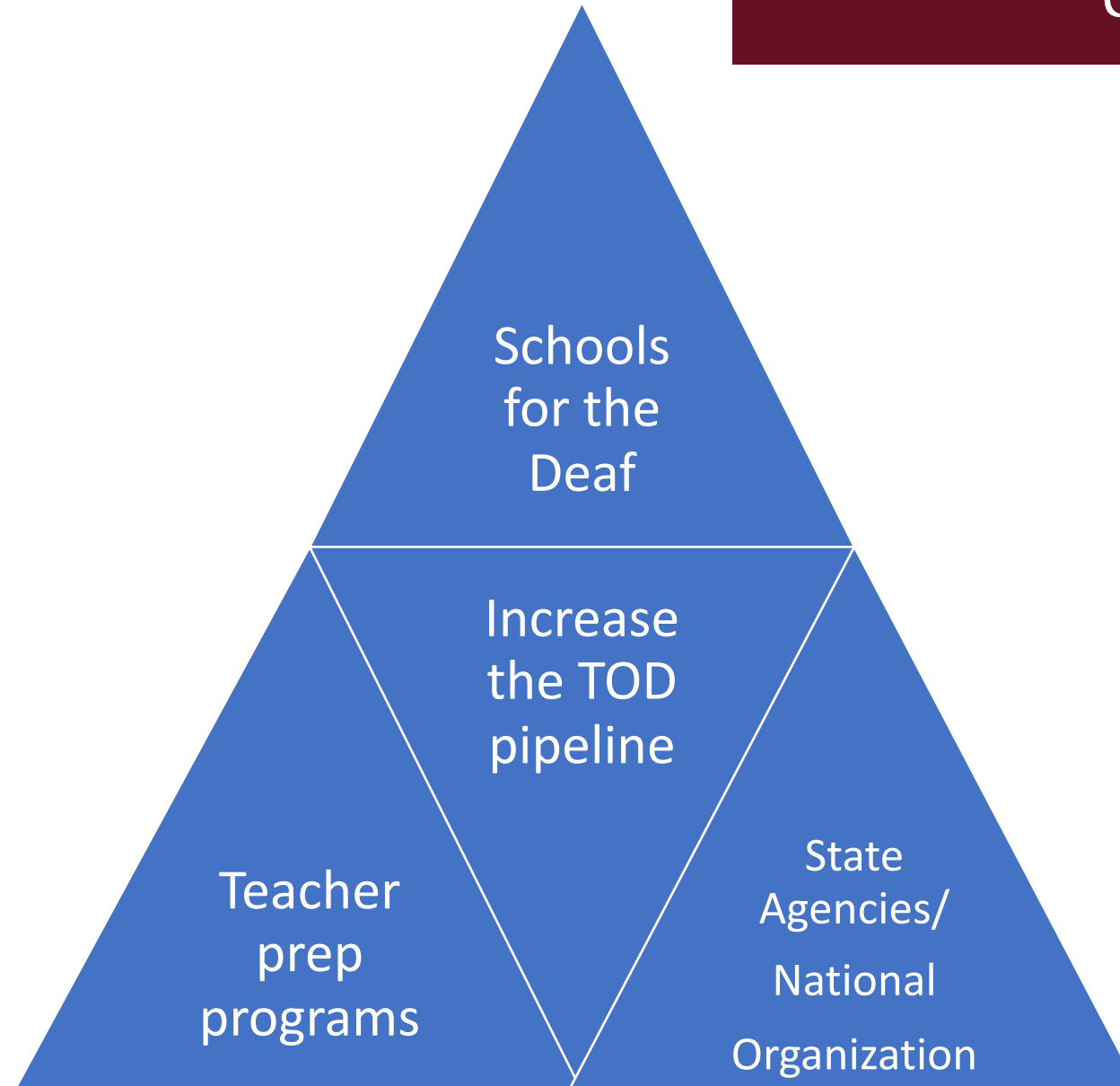
ACTIONS: What is a Coalition?

A group of individuals and/or organizations with a common interest who agree to work together toward a common goal.

Kansas State University Community Toolbox: Starting A Coalition

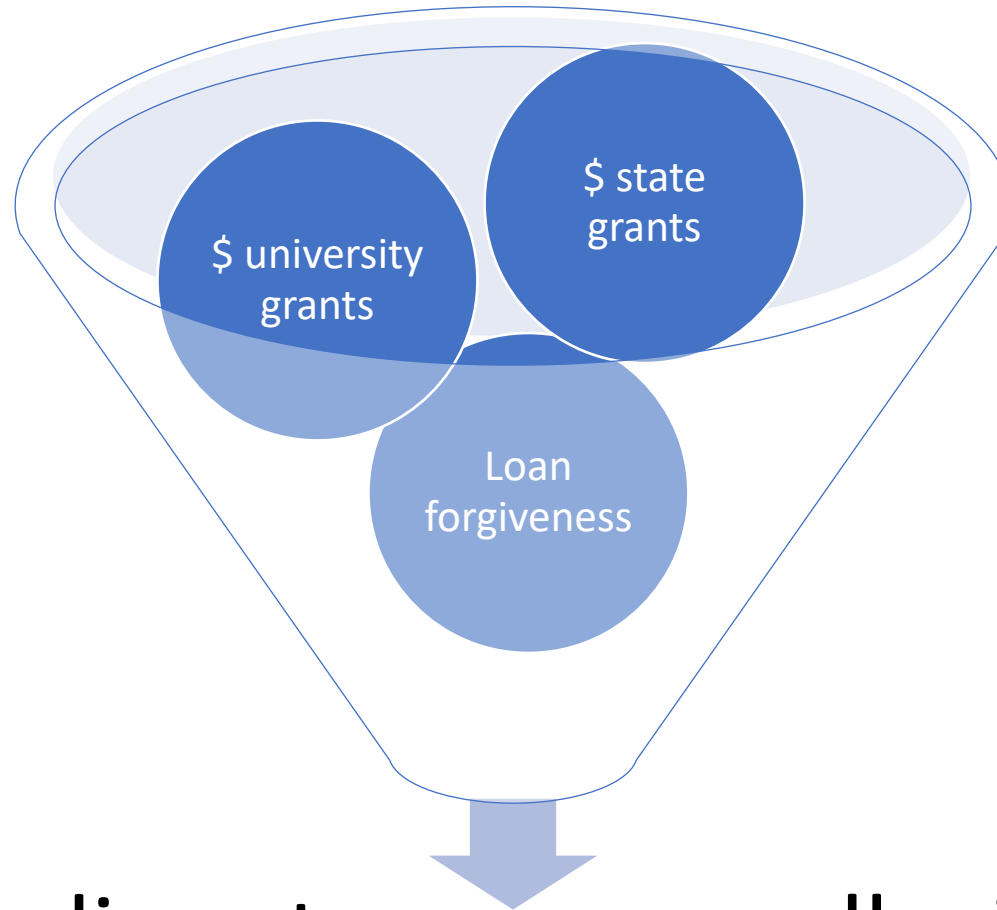
<https://ctb.ku.edu/en/table-of-contents/assessment/promotion-strategies/start-a-coalition/main>

ACTIONS: Local stakeholders need to collaborate, create coalitions to solve this problem **TOGETHER**



Meyer, 2020

ACTIONS: Advocating for Funding



Funding streams can alleviate
shortages & reduce student debt

The Massachusetts Coalition met on Zoom

You are invited:

Massachusetts Teacher of the Deaf Shortage Coalition

Thursday, September 15 @ 2 pm

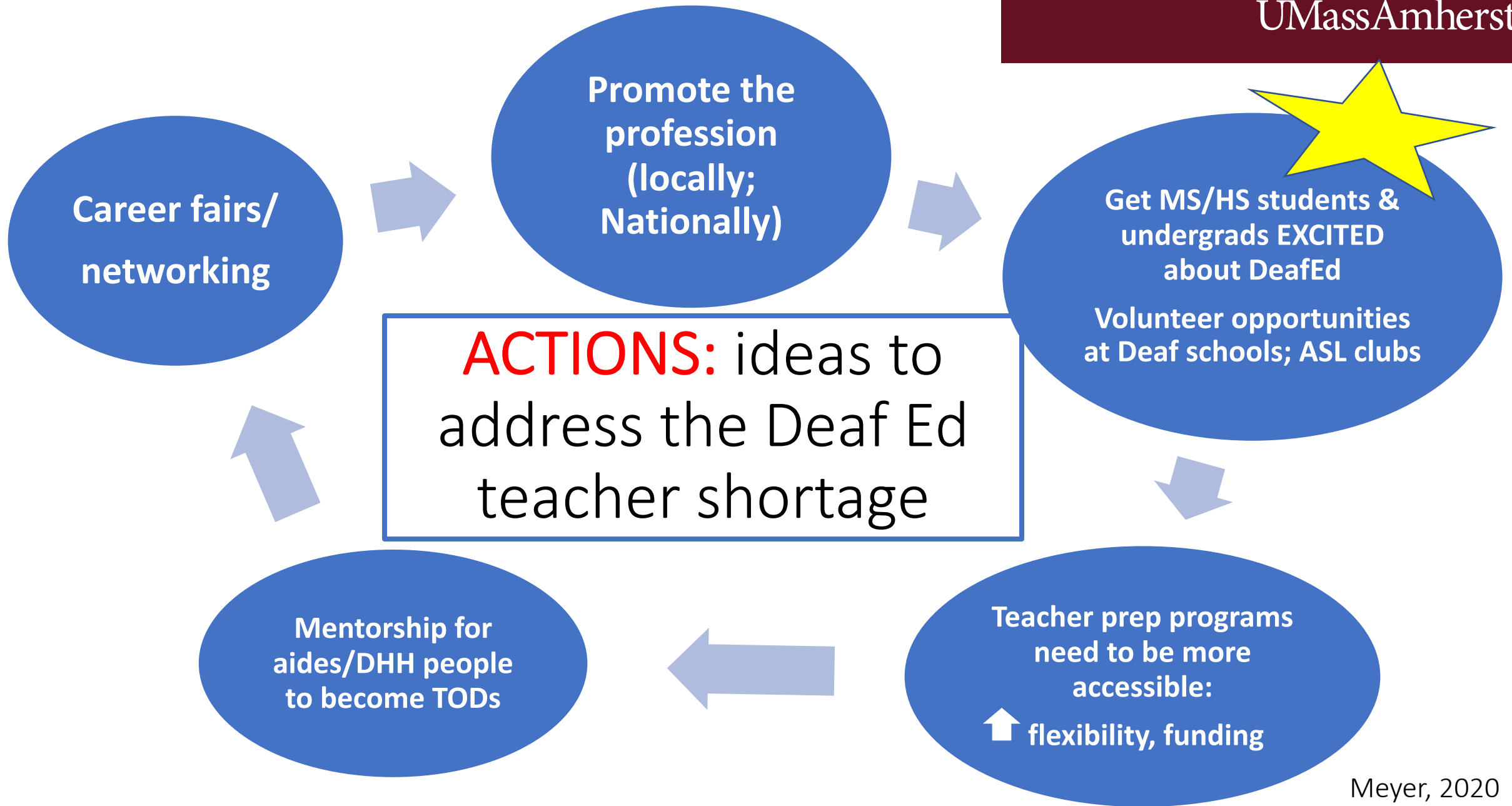
Interpreters are scheduled.

First meeting will be a presentation of current Massachusetts research and planning next steps.



Who was invited? (not all attended)

- Deaf school administrators
- Regional DHH program administrators
- Representatives from the MA Commission for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing
- Representatives from the MA Department of Elementary and Secondary Education
- Representatives from local DeafEd teacher preparation programs
- CEASD Executive Director



ACTIONS: How do we *intentionally* get middle/high school students interested in teaching DHH children?

Connect with local public schools and hook hearing students early with:

- ASL Clubs
- Volunteer opportunities in Deaf schools
- Pen pals with Deaf peers
- TOD shadowing opportunities

ACTIONS: How do we *intentionally* get middle/high school students interested in teaching DHH children?

DEAF SCHOOLS:

Start an Educator's Rising club.



Encourage your students to become teachers <https://educatorsrising.org/>

ACTIONS: How do we *intentionally* get university students interested in DHH people?

- Deaf education and DHH people should be intentionally discussed in every human services course at every university
 - General education classes
 - Special education classes
 - Communication Disorders
 - ASL classes
- A student should not be able to graduate in education without knowing that DHH people exist
 - one TOD in my study graduated with a teaching degree from a university that HAD a DeafEd program...and had no idea the program existed.



ACTIONS: How do we become more intentional about DHH careers?

Advertising! Marketing!

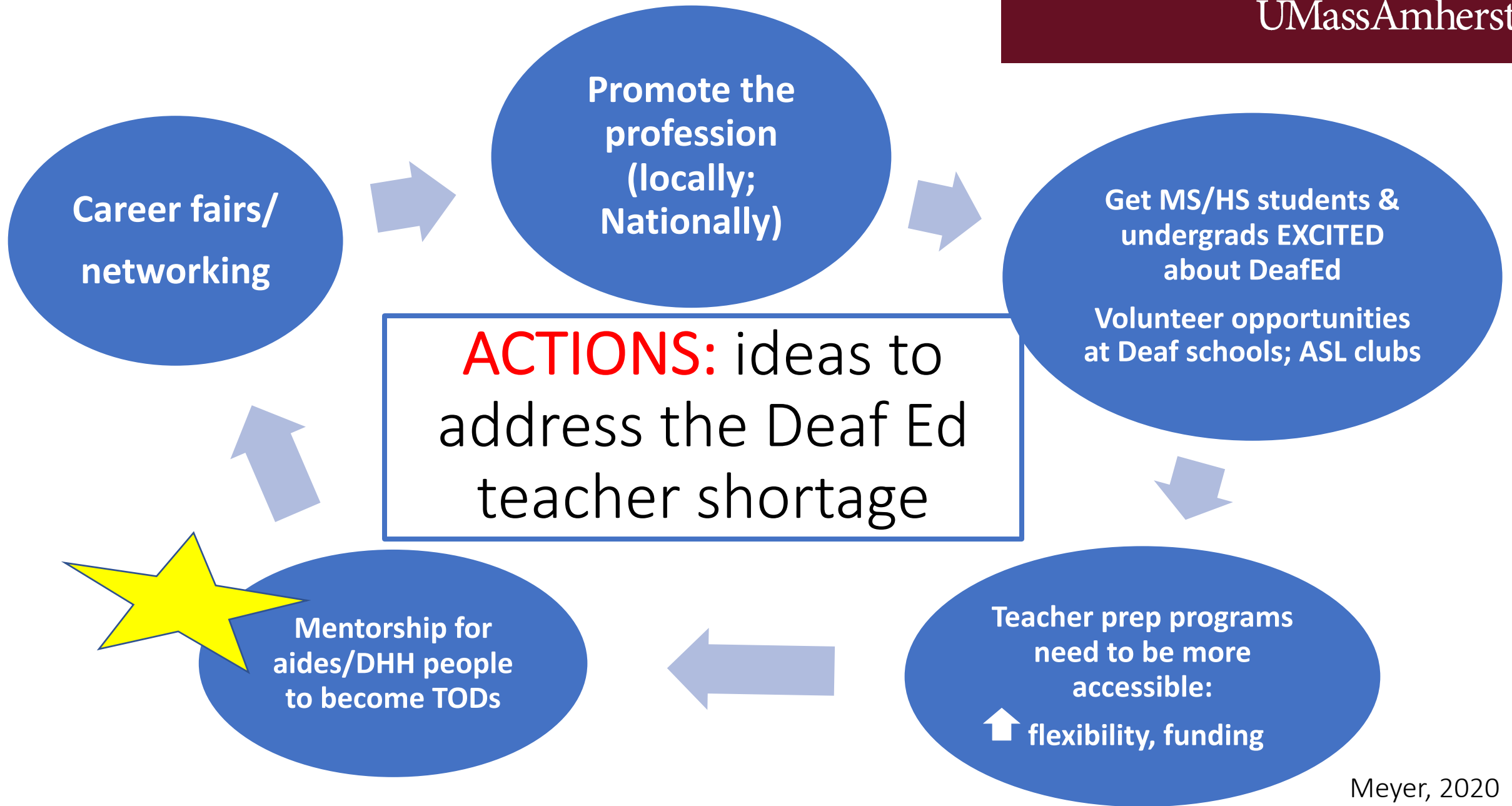
"Deaf education has a PR (public relations) issue. No one knows it exists."

RIT | Rochester Institute
of Technology

National Technical Institute
for the Deaf



Who should we contact?



ACTIONS:

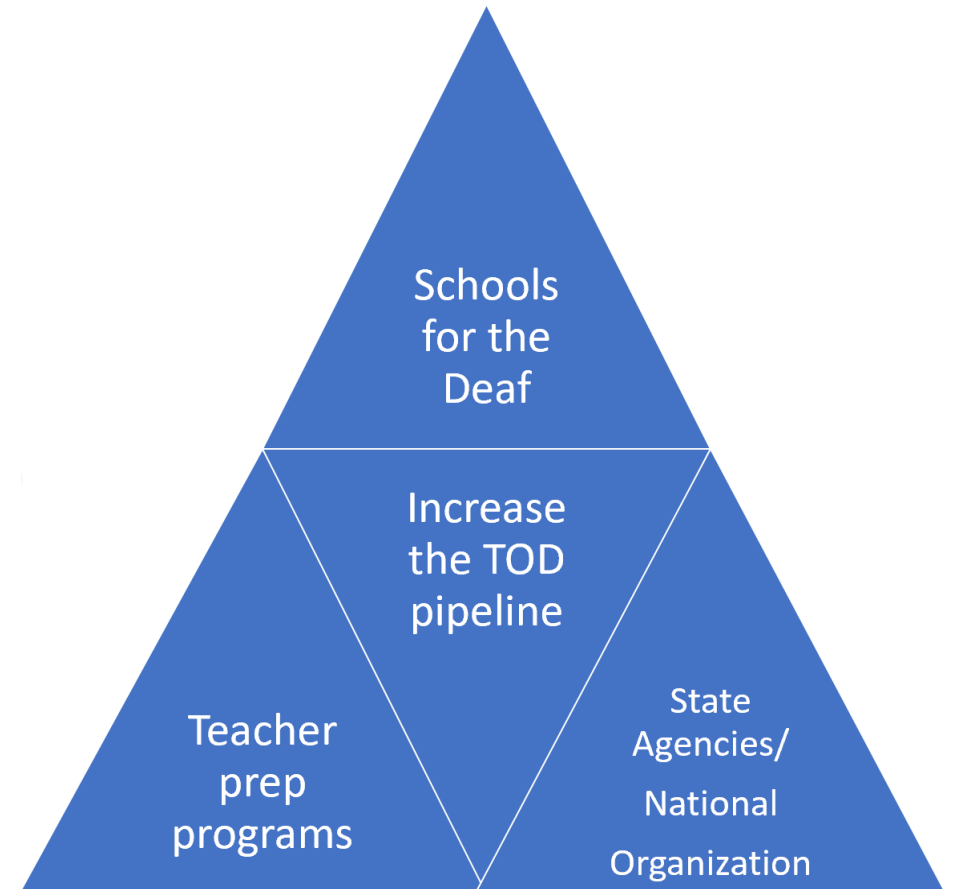
Identify aides
in your school
who would
make great
teachers...and
MENTOR
them!



Brainstorm: WHO should be involved in your state?



<https://www.lifeprint.com/asl101/gifs/w/who.gif>





Massachusetts identified two goals:

1. In 2020 a NEW DeafEd teacher preparation program was approved by our Department of Education. The program needs six students to start a cohort. In two years the program has not started because they cannot find six students to enroll.
 - Deaf schools agreed to identify aides (or other DHH/hearing people connected to the Deaf schools) that could be mentored to enroll
2. We discussed if it is possible for the Department of Education to centrally host information for public schools to learn how to set up ASL classes in their districts

Do you want to learn more?

Write your name and
email address to join a
group listserv.

Let's continue this
conversation so we can
learn from each other to
address this shortage!



In case you missed it:

Link to my Twitter research summary:

https://twitter.com/KymPMeyer/status/1333022940082937857?s=20&t=eb_iQhQdiZ2ey_KTRsJwqg



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