

Vocational Higher Education and Employment Support for Deaf and Hard-of-Hearing Learners in China

A Case Study of Changchun University for the 2026 China-Russia Year of Education

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ABSTRACT

Against the background of the 2026 China-Russia Year of Education, this study adopts a single-case study method to explore vocational higher education (VHE) and employment support systems for deaf and hard-of-hearing (DHH) learners in China, taking Changchun University as the research object. Based on a revised interdisciplinary theoretical framework, this research integrates national policy documents, institutional statistical data, and field survey evidence to systematically analyze localized inclusive education practices for DHH groups. The results demonstrate that China has established a sound legal and policy system for DHH education and employment, with standardized national sign language and formalized disability employment guarantee mechanisms laying a solid institutional foundation for equal educational and occupational opportunities. As a benchmark special education institution, Changchun University's innovative bachelor-master through-type talent cultivation model and AI accessibility technologies effectively break DHH students' learning and communication barriers, significantly improving their academic competence and employability. A systematic four-in-one support system covering policy incentives, inclusive education, technological empowerment and targeted employment services has been formed to diversify DHH graduates' career pathways. Nevertheless, regional policy implementation gaps, social employment prejudice, and curriculum-industry skill mismatches remain key obstacles restricting the high-quality employment of DHH talents. This study summarizes China's practical experience in inclusive vocational education, providing empirical references and feasible cooperative directions for Sino-Russian special education exchanges, technological collaboration and inclusive talent cultivation.

Keywords: Vocational higher education, Inclusive education, Deaf and hard-of-hearing learners, Employment support.

1. INTRODUCTION: A TIME OF DIALOGUE

1.1 The Significance of the China-Russia Year of Education

2026 officially marks the launch of the China-Russia Year of Education, a landmark national-level cooperative event that comprehensively promotes in-depth docking, resource sharing and

experience interoperability between Chinese and Russian educational systems at all levels. As an indispensable core field of people-to-people and cultural exchanges, special education inherently embodies the universal social values of equality, tolerance, respect and social inclusion, and has become a key breakthrough field for deepening Sino-Russian educational cooperation in the new era. Russia boasts world-class defectology research systems and top-tier special education institutions

represented by the Moscow Institute of Defectology and Herzen University. Russian special education research has long focused on basic theoretical research, disability psychological counseling and special pedagogy innovation, forming a complete theoretical system and disciplinary paradigm in deaf education and hearing rehabilitation education. In contrast, China's special education development in the past four decades has adhered to a state-led development model, focusing on practical inclusive education promotion, vocational talent training and social employment security for disabled groups. With the rapid development of digital economy and artificial intelligence technology, China has gradually formed a distinctive technology-empowered inclusive special education development path, accumulating rich practical experience in high-quality vocational talent cultivation and whole-life employment support for DHH groups.

Against this bilateral educational cooperation context in 2026, this study takes Changchun University's inclusive education and employment support practices for DHH students as the core research carrier. Different from traditional superficial cross-national comparative research, this paper focuses on systematic sorting, empirical analysis and practical summary of China's localized vocational higher education and school-to-work support mechanisms for DHH groups. By comprehensively presenting the institutional construction, institutional practice, technological innovation and practical achievements of China's higher special education for hearing-impaired students, this study aims to provide authentic, systematic and referable Chinese practical cases for Russian special education academia, make up for the lack of practical empirical research in Sino-Russian special education exchange research, and lay a solid foundation for subsequent bilateral in-depth collaborative research, disciplinary co-construction and inclusive talent joint exchange programs.

1.2 The Core Challenge: From “Education” to “Employment”

With the continuous improvement of China's special education security system and the comprehensive popularization of inclusive education concepts in recent years, DHH youth in China have achieved universal access to compulsory education and gradual popularization of higher vocational education, effectively solving

the historical problem of difficult educational access for hearing-impaired groups. However, the effective transformation from educational attainment and academic certification to sustainable, stable and high-quality employment has always been the core bottleneck restricting the long-term development of DHH groups, involving multi-dimensional and multi-level practical dilemmas in policy implementation, school education, technological application and social cognition. In terms of policy implementation, although the national top-level design of disability support policies is complete, the uneven implementation intensity and efficiency of grassroots policies cause obvious regional educational resource gaps and employment security differences. In terms of school education, the vocational curriculum design of many special education institutions fails to dynamically adjust and match the actual development needs of market industries, resulting in disconnection between talent training specifications and enterprise post requirements. In terms of technological application, intelligent assistive teaching and employment support tools lack systematic popularization and scenario-based application, failing to completely break the cross-modal information communication barriers of DHH groups. In terms of social cognition and enterprise employment, most enterprises regard the recruitment of disabled talents as a passive administrative quota obligation rather than active high-quality talent recruitment, resulting in narrow career development space and limited promotion channels for DHH graduates.

Against such a backdrop, this study selects Changchun University, a benchmark institution of China's higher special education founded in 1987, as a typical case to explore optimized paths for VHE and employment support for DHH students.

1.3 Research Questions and Methodology

Based on the above practical dilemmas and research gaps, this paper puts forward four core research questions that run through the whole research process: First, what is the systematic institutional framework and operational logic of China's national policies and legal systems that support DHH students' vocational higher education acquisition and fair employment development? Second, what are the core characteristics, institutional advantages and innovative mechanisms of Changchun University's whole-process talent cultivation model for DHH students? Third, how do

artificial intelligence and digital accessibility technologies empower DHH students' classroom learning, skill training and long-term employment development in inclusive scenarios? Fourth, what multi-stakeholder collaborative mechanisms between government, university and enterprise can effectively smooth the school-to-work transition of DHH graduates and improve employment quality and stability?

This research adopts an embedded single-case study methodology, which is highly suitable for in-depth exploration of localized educational practice mechanisms and practical innovation models. The research data sources are comprehensive and multi-dimensional, including official national disability laws and medium- and long-term planning documents, Changchun University's official institutional enrollment data, graduate employment statistical materials and school-running achievement reports, as well as first-hand field interview data and questionnaire survey data obtained from the provincial teaching reform project on disabled employment support systems. The research theoretical framework is optimized and revised on the basis of the author's previous "rights-profession-global contribution" theoretical model applied in sign language interpreting industry research, which is fully adapted to the research scenario of vocational higher education and whole-chain employment support for DHH groups, ensuring the theoretical pertinence and research systematicness of the whole paper.

2. THE NATIONAL POLICY FRAMEWORK

2.1 Constitutional and Legal Foundations

China's Constitution clearly stipulates that all citizens enjoy equal rights to education and labor without discrimination based on physical conditions, laying the most fundamental legal foundation for the standardized development of national disability education and disability employment security undertakings. Among them, the *Law on the Protection of Persons with Disabilities* (1990, revised in 2008 and 2018) is the core special law in the field of disability undertakings, constructing the basic institutional framework for the protection of the legitimate rights and interests of disabled groups. Its core key provisions clearly define the development orientation and institutional priorities of special vocational education and employment security mechanisms. Articles 21 and 22 clearly

stipulate that the state fully guarantees the equal educational rights of all disabled citizens and prioritizes the high-quality development of vocational higher education for young disabled groups including DHH students, providing institutional support for disabled students to receive high-level professional education. Articles 30 and 33 of the law establish a nationwide universal proportional employment quota system, which stipulates that all types of employers in society shall arrange disabled employees to scale of the total number of on-the-job employees according to regional actual conditions. Employers who fail to meet the statutory employment proportion shall pay special disability employment security funds in full, and all funds are specially used for disabled vocational skill training, employment guidance and targeted employment support services for disabled graduates.

2.2 Key Policy Developments (2017-2025)

From 2017 to 2025, China's disability education and employment support policies have undergone continuous optimization, revision and iterative upgrading, forming a more refined, professional and targeted policy system. The revised *Regulations on Education for Persons with Disabilities* issued in 2017 officially abolished the old version issued in 1994, further standardizing the development standards, educational specifications and inclusive requirements of vocational inclusive education nationwide, and effectively regulating the irregular development of special vocational education in various regions. The 14th Five-Year Plan for the Protection and Development of Persons with Disabilities issued in 2021 takes high-quality employment of disabled people as a core development goal, clearly proposing to build and improve the whole-chain employment support system covering vocational training, job matching, employment placement and post-employment tracking services for disabled people. Relevant national statistical data shows that during the period of the plan, 9.01 million disabled people were newly employed nationwide, driving a 6.9 % year-on-year increase in the national disabled population employment rate, achieving remarkable policy implementation effects (Ministry of Education of China, 2021). The 2023 *Law on the Construction of Barrier-Free Environment* made a historic institutional breakthrough, officially recognizing national common sign language as a standardized and legal public communication medium, and mandating the full coverage of professional sign

language interpretation services in public education, employment and social service scenarios, effectively guaranteeing the information access rights of DHH groups (Standing Committee of the National People's Congress, 2023). In 2025, the official release of the *National Occupational Standard for Sign Language Interpreters* further standardized the professional certification system, vocational ability evaluation standards and industry service norms of the sign language interpreting industry, effectively promoting the professionalization and standardization of the industry and further safeguarding DHH groups' basic right to barrier-free information communication and equal social participation (Zhang, 2024).

2.3 Language Rights and Sign Language Recognition

The formal legal recognition of national standardized sign language marks a milestone progress in the protection of linguistic rights and legitimate social rights of China's DHH groups. Before the unified standardization of national sign language, there were obvious regional differences and dialect barriers in domestic sign language use, which led to communication obstacles for DHH students and workers in cross-regional study, employment and social interaction, seriously restricting their cross-regional flow and equal development opportunities. The unified national standard sign language completely eliminates regional sign language dialect barriers, realizing standardized and efficient cross-regional barrier-free communication for DHH individuals. At the same time, legally standardized sign language clearly guarantees DHH students' legitimate right to receive professional sign language teaching and full-process interpretation services in campus inclusive education scenarios, effectively making up for the information acquisition defects caused by hearing impairment. In addition, the legal status of sign language also promotes the rapid professionalization and industrialization of the sign language interpreting occupation, providing professional language service support for DHH groups' full social participation and fair employment competition in the workplace.

2.4 Summary: A Rights-based Framework

On the whole, China has built a systematic, complete and rights-based policy and legal system covering educational guarantee, vocational training,

social employment and linguistic rights protection for DHH groups, forming a multi-level whole-chain guarantee mechanism from national top-level strategic design to provincial and municipal grassroots specific implementation. However, long-term field research and practical investigation based on provincial vocational education reform projects fully verify that there are prominent policy implementation gaps and regional development imbalances in the actual promotion process of national disability support policies (Jilin Provincial Disabled Persons' Federation, 2025). Economically developed eastern regions represented by Zhejiang Province have formed mature school-enterprise cooperative training and employment linkage mechanisms. In sharp contrast, central and western regions with relatively backward economic development rely heavily on national fiscal transfer payments and special disability subsidies, lacking sustainable market-oriented service operation mechanisms and long-term industry-education integration systems. The long-term on-site research and actual investigation of the provincial vocational education reform project have fully confirmed that there are obvious policy implementation gaps and regional development imbalances in the actual implementation of the national disability support policies. It is mainly attributed to the delayed implementation of grassroots supporting policies, insufficient targeted special subsidies for vocational special education institutions, and uneven distribution of high-quality inclusive education resources.

3. EDUCATIONAL PRACTICE: THE CASE OF CHANGCHUN UNIVERSITY

3.1 Historical Significance: Pioneer of China's Higher Special Education

Founded in 1987 through the joint construction and promotion of the China Disabled Persons' Federation and Jilin Provincial People's Government, Changchun University's College of Special Education is the first comprehensive tertiary special education institution in Asia that provides systematic higher education and vocational training for hearing-impaired, visually impaired and physically impaired students. Before the establishment of the college, China's disabled youth, especially hearing-impaired students, were basically excluded from the higher education system, with almost no access to formal university

education and high-level vocational training resources, resulting in a serious shortage of high-quality disabled professional talents in the society. As China's earliest established, largest in scale and most comprehensive in discipline setting higher special education institution, the college completely fills the historical gap of higher education access for Chinese disabled youth and marks a historic leap in the standardized development of China's disability education undertakings.

3.2 Institutional Scale and Scope

After 38 years of steady development and iterative innovation in inclusive education, the college has formed a large-scale, standardized and systematic talent cultivation system. As of the end of 2025, the college has successfully cultivated 5,002 outstanding disabled graduates for all walks of life in society, with 1,007 disabled undergraduate students currently receiving systematic academic

training on campus. In 2025, the college officially launched the enrollment of disabled students from Hong Kong, Macao and Taiwan regions, taking the lead in realizing cross-regional inclusive education talent exchange in China. At present, the college has set up 12 undergraduate majors and 5 master's majors, covering multiple advantageous fields such as special education, visual communication design, animation creation, computer science and business administration, all of which are closely connected with social market demand and emerging industrial development directions, providing diversified professional choices for DHH students.

3.3 Academic Programs for Students with Hearing Impairments

The following "Table 1" and "Table 2" summarize the undergraduate and graduate programs available to students with hearing impairments at Changchun University:

Table 1. Undergraduate programs for students with hearing impairments

No.	Program Name	Duration	Student Type
1	Special Education	4 years	Integrated (Hearing Impairment)
2	Visual Communication Design	4 years	Hearing Impairment
3	Painting	4 years	Hearing Impairment
4	Animation	4 years	Hearing Impairment
5	Dance Performance	4 years	Integrated (Hearing Impairment)
6	Computer Science and Technology	4 years	Integrated (Hearing/Vision Impairment)
7	Business Administration	4 years	Integrated (Hearing Impairment)

Table 2. Master's programs for students with hearing impairments

No.	Program Name	Duration	Student Type
1	Fine Arts and Calligraphy	3 years	Hearing Impairment
2	Design	3 years	Hearing Impairment

a Source: Changchun University official brochure

3.4 The "Through-Type" Cultivation Model

The college's innovative bachelor-master through-type continuous cultivation model effectively solves the prominent practical problem of interrupted advanced education pathways and

disjointed academic progression for outstanding DHH students in traditional special education systems. Excellent undergraduate DHH students with excellent academic performance and comprehensive quality can be recommended for exemption from examination and admitted to matching master's programs in design, fine arts and

special education, enjoying uninterrupted systematic academic guidance, personalized learning tutoring and whole-process psychological support services throughout their postgraduate study stage. This innovative training model fundamentally avoids the common dilemma of “graduation equals unemployment” for outstanding disabled students, effectively supplements the training gap of high-level special education professional talents in China’s talent system, and provides a mature, replicable and promotable high-level talent training paradigm for peer special education institutions across the country.

3.5 Enrollment and Admissions

Changchun University conducts separate admissions examinations for students with disabilities, a practice authorized by the Ministry of Education to ensure equitable access. The 2026 admissions plan provides detailed insights into the scale and scope of enrollment:

Total planned enrollment for 2026: 202 students with disabilities (“Table 3”)

Table 3. Program-specific enrollment for students with hearing impairments

Program	Planned Enrollment	Notes
Visual Communication Design	50	Hearing impairment
Painting	25	Hearing impairment
Animation	26	Hearing impairment
Dance Performance	6	Hearing impairment (integrated)
Computer Science and Technology	2	Hearing impairment
Business Administration	2	Hearing impairment (integrated)
Special Education	2	Hearing impairment (integrated)
Electrical Engineering and Automation	2	Hearing impairment
Total	115	

a Source: Changchun University 2026 Separate Admissions Brochure for Students with Disabilities

The examination process is carefully designed to accommodate different types of disabilities. For hearing-impaired applicants, the “Ability Test” includes:

- Dictation: A passage of approximately 200 characters is read aloud by examiners (standard Mandarin, 160-180 characters/minute, three repetitions), and candidates write what they hear.
- Reading aloud: Candidates read aloud a 200-character passage within 5 minutes, with text provided in SimSun font, size 4.

These accommodations ensure that applicants’ abilities are assessed fairly, without the barrier of standard examination formats that might disadvantage students with hearing impairments.

3.6 Student Achievements and Recognition

The college’s long-term adherence to inclusive education and personalized talent cultivation has achieved remarkable educational achievements and social influence. DHH students of the college have won six consecutive national first prizes in the National College Student Art Festival, the highest-level art competition for college students in China, and have been invited to participate in important public cultural performances such as the CCTV Spring Festival Gala and the Beijing Winter Paralympics for many times, fully demonstrating the excellent spiritual outlook and professional quality of Chinese hearing-impaired college students. At present, twelve outstanding alumni have served in the China Association of the Deaf and relevant national disability organizations, and many graduates have won national-level honorary titles including National Self-Reliance Model and

National May First Labor Medal. The college has successively obtained important honors such as National Pilot Unit for Higher Inclusive Education (2019), National Advanced Collective for Textbook Development (2021) and National Advanced Collective for Disabled Persons' Work (2025), establishing a leading exemplary brand and benchmark status in the field of domestic higher special education.

4. TECHNOLOGICAL EMPOWERMENT: AI AND ACCESSIBILITY

4.1 The Digital Opportunity

Digital transformation and artificial intelligence technology innovation have become the core driving force and important enabling conditions to break the learning barriers and employment limitations of DHH groups in the new era. China's national digital inclusive development strategy and intelligent disability assistance policy strongly support the basic research, technological R&D and scenario-based popularization of disability assistive technologies nationwide. In combination with regional development characteristics, Jilin Province has launched a series of localized special supporting initiatives covering intelligent blind text recognition, virtual rehabilitation training, digital skill improvement and disabled e-commerce live streaming vocational training, providing strong policy support and resource guarantee for the intelligent development of local special education (Jilin Provincial Disabled Persons' Federation, 2025). According to the survey, from the perspective of national popularization effect, the overall coverage rate of intelligent special education resources in China is less than 15%, with prominent problems such as fragmented technological application scenarios, single service function and insufficient practical teaching popularization effect, which restrict the in-depth development of technology-empowered inclusive education.

4.2 AI Applications in Educational Settings

Relying on the MOE Key Laboratory of Intelligent Rehabilitation and Accessibility for Persons with Disabilities, Changchun University has built a closed-loop whole-process system integrating intelligent assistive technology R&D, classroom scenario application and teaching effect

iteration. The self-developed real-time speech-to-text instant transcription system can realize full-text real-time conversion and presentation of classroom teachers' oral lectures, effectively making up for the insufficient coverage of full-time professional sign language interpreters in inclusive classrooms and solving the problem of information loss in DHH students' classroom learning. The independently researched and developed AI intelligent sign language recognition and generation technology realizes accurate bidirectional automatic conversion among sign language gesture actions, text information and voice speech, thoroughly breaking the cross-group information communication barriers between DHH students and hearing teachers and peers. At the same time, the VR virtual simulation teaching system replaces traditional audio-based teaching modes with visualized, operable and immersive practical training scenarios, fully adapting to the visual learning advantages and cognitive characteristics of DHH students and significantly improving the efficiency and quality of professional practical teaching.

4.3 Research Platforms and Institutional Support

The university's Key Laboratory of Intelligent Rehabilitation and Accessibility for Persons with Disabilities is the first national-level university professional research platform in China focusing on intelligent rehabilitation technology and barrier-free accessibility technology for disabled people. The laboratory has long taken the actual learning needs of disabled students and the practical service needs of disabled groups in society as the core orientation, focusing on the R&D and iterative upgrading of disability adaptive teaching equipment, intelligent human-computer interaction systems and barrier-free assistive communication technologies. It adheres to the research concept of integrating scientific research with teaching practice, realizing the rapid transformation, trial application and popularization of scientific research achievements in inclusive teaching scenarios, and forming a distinctive benign interactive development mechanism of "scientific research feeding teaching innovation, teaching practice promoting scientific research iteration".

4.4 Technology in Employment Contexts

The rapid development of digital economy and artificial intelligence technology has completely

broken the traditional industrial employment limitations of disabled groups, expanding a wealth of emerging high-quality employment pathways for DHH graduates. In the field of digital creative industries, animation creation, graphic design, poster production and short video editing give full play to the unique visual perception advantages and creative talent characteristics of DHH students, which are highly compatible with the college's core art and design majors, forming a stable employment advantage. In the technical service field, emerging posts such as software functional testing, web front-end simple programming and digital data sorting completely eliminate the limitation of auditory communication ability, providing high-quality, high-matching and barrier-free occupational choices for DHH graduates. In the field of digital entrepreneurship, e-commerce live streaming operation, new media account operation and short video creation entrepreneurship, supported by free digital vocational training policies in Jilin Province, have gradually become new mainstream self-employment paths for disabled graduates, effectively broadening their career development boundaries.

4.5 Provincial Initiatives: Jilin's AI-Assisted Disability Services

In order to cooperate with the high-quality development of local special education and disabled employment security, Jilin Province has systematically constructed a comprehensive technology-assisted disability public service system covering intelligent rehabilitation training, information accessibility identification, digital vocational skill training and intelligent psychological screening. A series of localized policy initiatives and public service resources have formed a good synergistic interaction with Changchun University's talent training and employment support system, providing continuous policy support, technical resources and service guarantee for DHH students' smooth school-to-work transition and long-term technological empowerment development.

4.6 Challenges and Future Directions

Despite the remarkable achievements of accessibility technology empowerment in inclusive education and employment assistance, the large-scale popularization and in-depth scenario application of intelligent assistive technology still face prominent practical dilemmas. At present, there are widespread problems such as uneven regional resource distribution of intelligent barrier-free equipment, insufficient high-quality annotated sign language datasets for AI model training, disconnection between technological product functional design and the actual end-user needs of DHH groups, and the lack of systematic application effect evaluation and feedback optimization mechanisms (Zhang, 2024). Facing the rare bilateral cooperative opportunity of the 2026 China-Russia Year of Education, the future development of intelligent accessibility technology will focus on 5G low-latency remote real-time sign language interpretation technology, brain-computer interface intelligent assistive communication systems, open shared barrier-free data resource platforms, and Sino-Russian joint R&D of cross-linguistic sign language intelligent translation technology, which will effectively make up for the technical bottlenecks and resource deficiencies of single-country independent research and promote the innovative development of global inclusive assistive technology.

5. THE EMPLOYMENT SUPPORT SYSTEM

5.1 The "Four-in-One" Support Model

This study constructs a four-in-one employment support model for DHH students, consisting of policy support, inclusive education provision, targeted employment services and legal rights protection. The four interrelated dimensions jointly guarantee DHH graduates' smooth career development. ("Figure 1")

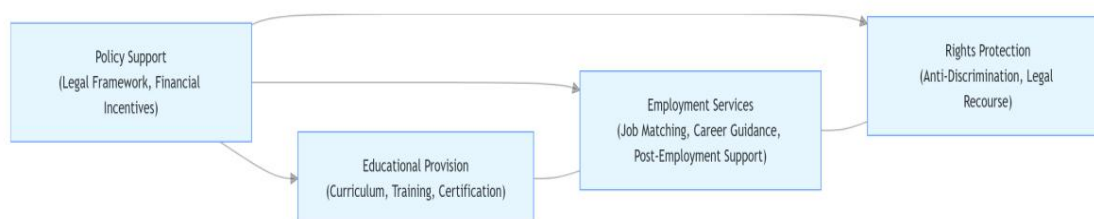


Figure 1 The “Four-in-One” employment support model.

The four dimensions of the support model present an interrelated, mutually supportive and mutually reinforcing systematic relationship. Policy support, as the top-level institutional guarantee, relies on national special education laws and disability employment quota systems to fully guarantee the basic educational rights and employment rights of DHH students, forming effective enterprise recruitment incentive and restraint mechanisms through tax preferences and financial subsidies. Educational provision, as the core talent cultivation link, focuses on market-oriented dynamic curriculum optimization, professional practical skill training and vocational qualification certification, comprehensively improving DHH students’ professional literacy and workplace competitive ability. Employment services, as the key connection link between talent training and social employment, cover precise post matching according to students’ professional characteristics, personalized whole-process career planning guidance and full-cycle post-employment adaptive follow-up support. Rights protection, as the bottom-line guarantee of career development, focuses on eliminating workplace employment discrimination, protecting the legitimate labor rights and interests of DHH employees, and providing professional legal aid and rights protection channels to ensure equal and sustainable occupational development of DHH groups in the workplace.

5.2 The Proportional Employment System

The statutory proportional employment quota system is the most core and effective institutional guarantee for promoting stable employment of DHH graduates and other disabled groups in China’s current social employment system. The system clearly stipulates that all types of social employers, including enterprises, public institutions

and social organizations, shall employ disabled employees in accordance with the statutory proportion of 1.5% to 2% of the total on-the-job staff. Employers who fail to meet the statutory employment proportion shall pay special disability employment security funds in accordance with national regulations, which are specially used for disabled vocational training and employment support. At the same time, inclusive enterprises that actively recruit disabled talents in excess of the quota can enjoy preferential policies such as national tax reduction and exemption and special financial subsidies, forming a scientific dual mechanism of institutional constraint and policy incentive. This system effectively stimulates the subjective willingness of social enterprises to recruit DHH professional talents and provides stable and sustainable institutional employment channels for DHH graduates.

5.3 Diversified Employment Pathways

After years of practice and summary, the employment development of DHH graduates from Changchun University has gradually formed three mature and diversified career development pathways, covering traditional industries, emerging digital industries and supportive adaptive employment fields. Traditional employment pathways mainly include cultural and creative design posts in enterprises, professional special education teachers in schools and public institution posts that fulfill statutory quota obligations, which are stable and highly compatible with students’ professional training directions. Emerging digital employment pathways cover emerging occupational fields such as e-commerce platform operation, short video creative production and IT functional technical testing, which are highly adapted to the rapid development trend of the digital economy and have broad development

prospects. Supported adaptive employment is oriented to DHH students with relatively complex communication adaptation needs, providing long-term professional job coach guidance and one-on-one workplace adaptive training support to ensure their stable integration into the workplace and sustainable career development.

5.4 Employer Engagement and Partnerships

In order to solve the problem of disconnection between talent training and enterprise employment, Changchun University has built a multi-dimensional and full-coverage school-enterprise cooperative employment promotion system to realize precise employment docking for DHH graduates. In 2026, the university specially held a special offline job fair for disabled graduates, attracting 22 high-quality cooperative enterprises from multiple provinces across the country, releasing a total of 139 exclusive special employment posts specially tailored for DHH students, effectively expanding graduate employment channels (Changchun University, 2026). The university has established a standardized one-person-one-file personalized career tracking mechanism for all DHH students, arranging special career counselors to provide targeted professional guidance, post recommendation and career planning services throughout the academic period. In January 2026, the university took the lead in initiating the establishment of the National Vocational Education Industry-Education Integration Community for Disabled People, realizing in-depth resource sharing, joint curriculum development, co-construction of practical training bases and integration of internship and employment with peer colleges and industrial enterprises nationwide.

5.5 Challenges and Ongoing Efforts

Long-term field interviews with cooperative enterprises and continuous follow-up surveys of graduate employment status fully confirm that DHH graduates still face prominent practical constraints and development bottlenecks in the actual employment process. The most prominent problem is the serious skill mismatch between school vocational training content and actual industrial post demands. Among them, design majors with strong practicality and high industrial matching degree maintain a high employment rate, while pure art majors with weak industrial

pertinence face narrow market demands and difficult employment transformation. At the same time, most social enterprises still regard the recruitment of DHH talents as a passive statutory quota compliance task rather than active high-quality talent introduction and reserve, resulting in most DHH graduates being arranged in low-wage entry-level auxiliary posts after employment, with extremely limited job promotion space and career development potential (Chinese People's Political Consultative Conference, 2026). In addition, the current employment service chain for DHH graduates is incomplete and imperfect, focusing too much on one-time job placement services while lacking continuous post-employment adaptive guidance, psychological counseling and skill upgrading support. The lack of dynamic talent-market demand matching big data system also reduces the accuracy and pertinence of graduate employment docking. In response to the above employment dilemmas, Changchun University actively deepens industry-education integration reform, dynamically optimizes professional curriculum setting according to industrial development changes, builds a full-cycle whole-process employment support service system, carries out inclusive enterprise publicity and social popularization, and promotes the construction of big data intelligent employment matching platforms to improve employment quality (Changchun University, 2026). International practical research experience shows that standardized national vocational skill certification systems can effectively improve the professional competency and employment competitiveness of disabled groups, significantly alleviate the industry-wide employment mismatch dilemma of disabled talents (European Commission, 2023). Meanwhile, scientific and optimized social enterprise operation and management models can effectively improve the workplace adaptation level and long-term employment stability of disabled employees (Tanaka, 2024).

6. VISION FOR THE FUTURE: TOWARDS A WORLD-CLASS INSTITUTION

6.1 National Goals and Institutional Ambition

Aligning with the overall deployment of China's 2035 education modernization strategic plan and the high-quality development

requirements of national special education undertakings, Changchun University's College of Special Education has formulated clear phased high-quality development strategic goals, taking the construction of a world-class inclusive special education institution with Chinese characteristics as the core orientation, committed to leading the high-quality development of domestic higher special education and building an international influential inclusive education research and practice base.

6.2 Phased Development Plan

The university has formulated a clear phased high-quality development plan centering on the goal of building a world-class inclusive special education institution. By 2027, the university will complete the construction of a national leading integrated "College + Residential College" inclusive education model, strengthen daily interactive communication and academic exchange between disabled and non-disabled students in campus life, completely eliminate various hidden barriers in campus inclusive education and realize comprehensive campus integration. By 2034, the university will take the lead in building a complete bachelor-master-doctor continuous talent cultivation pipeline for sensory-impaired students in China, filling the long-term gap of high-level advanced special education talent training in China's education system and forming a distinctive, replicable and world-influential inclusive education system with Chinese characteristics.

6.3 Strategic Implications

The implementation of the phased high-quality development plan will further expand the high-level academic development pathways and high-quality career development space for DHH students, further consolidate the university's leading benchmark position in the field of domestic higher special education. At the same time, it provides a mature and operable development model and practical experience for peer special education institutions at home and abroad, and helps reshape and optimize social public cognition of the occupational value, professional ability and development potential of disabled people, promoting the whole society to form an inclusive atmosphere of respecting differences and equal employment.

7. CONCLUSION: SHARING CHINA'S EXPERIENCE IN THE CHINA-RUSSIA YEAR OF EDUCATION

7.1 Summary of Key Findings

Through in-depth empirical analysis and case discussion, this study systematically combs and summarizes the construction status, practical characteristics and existing deficiencies of China's vocational higher education and whole-chain employment support system for DHH students based on the typical case of Changchun University. First, China has constructed a complete rights-based legal and policy guarantee system covering the whole process of DHH education and employment, forming institutional advantages such as standardized national sign language popularization and mandatory employment quota mechanism, but there are obvious regional development imbalances and policy implementation gaps in the actual promotion process. Second, Changchun University's innovative bachelor-master through-type continuous cultivation model and inclusive personalized teaching mode effectively improve DHH students' comprehensive literacy, professional practical ability and workplace core competitiveness. Third, AI intelligent accessibility technologies thoroughly break the cross-modal information communication barriers of DHH groups, create a wealth of diversified digital employment pathways for DHH graduates, and realize technological empowerment of inclusive education and employment support. Fourth, the four-in-one collaborative support system integrating policy guarantee, educational cultivation, precise service and rights protection effectively guarantees the school-to-work transition of DHH graduates, but the high-quality development of employment is still restricted by talent-industry skill mismatch, social enterprise employment prejudice and incomplete service chain construction. Fifth, the university's phased construction of a full-level bachelor-master-doctor continuous talent cultivation system provides a long-term development paradigm and practical reference for the high-quality development of China's inclusive special education.

7.2 The Essence of China's Experience

On the whole, China's localized inclusive vocational education and employment support

model for DHH groups presents distinctive developmental characteristics adapted to national conditions, including state-led top-level policy overall design, multi-level systematic special education infrastructure construction, artificial intelligence technological innovation as the core empowerment driving force, and government-university-enterprise multi-stakeholder collaborative governance mechanism. This exploratory, continuously optimized and dynamically improved inclusive education development pathway fully adapts to China's social development reality and educational system characteristics, accumulating rich and valuable practical experience for the innovative development of global inclusive special education and disability employment security undertakings.

7.3 An Invitation to Dialogue

Taking the 2026 China-Russia Year of Education as a rare strategic opportunity for bilateral educational cooperation, this study systematically shares China's localized inclusive vocational education practices and DHH employment support experience, aiming to promote in-depth academic dialogue, practical experience exchange and mutual learning between Chinese and Russian special education fields. Russian special education has profound theoretical accumulation and disciplinary advantages in defectology, deaf education psychology and special pedagogy basic research, which can make up for the relative deficiency of basic theoretical research in China's practical special education development. In contrast, China has prominent practical advantages in intelligent technological empowerment, vocational talent training and whole-chain employment support system construction. The two countries have strong complementary advantages in special education research and practice, and can carry out in-depth docking cooperation in inclusive curriculum co-construction, cross-linguistic AI sign language intelligent technology R&D, bilateral faculty and student exchange programs and joint academic research projects, so as to jointly promote the high-quality innovative development of special education in both countries.

7.4 Looking Ahead: From Sharing to Partnership

Under the institutional framework of the 2026 China-Russia Year of Education, bilateral special education cooperative exchanges can be further

expanded and deepened in multiple dimensions, including academic achievement exchange, intelligent assistive technology joint research, inclusive talent collaborative cultivation and professional curriculum co-development. This multi-dimensional bilateral collaborative innovation mechanism will help both China and Russia absorb advanced international inclusive education experience, break through regional special education development bottlenecks, make up for their respective disciplinary and practical deficiencies, and jointly enrich and improve the theoretical system and practical achievements of global inclusive special education research.

7.5 Final Reflection

Special education inherently embodies the universal human values of equality, respect, tolerance and social inclusion, and has become an important spiritual bridge and people-to-people link for Sino-Russian bilateral cultural exchanges and friendly cooperation. In the context of the 2026 China-Russia Year of Education, systematically sharing China's mature practical experience in vocational higher education and whole-chain employment support for DHH groups will effectively promote bilateral collaborative innovation in inclusive education theory and barrier-free accessibility technology research. Through bilateral mutual learning and cooperative innovation, every hearing-impaired disabled individual can better obtain equal high-quality educational resources and stable career development opportunities, fully realize personal life value and career potential, and continuously promote the progress of global inclusive education and social equity undertakings.

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