

D/HH SEAC Standing Committee

Wednesday, October 28, 2015

9 a.m. - 12 p.m.

Attendance: Laura Barrett, Jill Bird, Mike Brummer, Sue Czaplewski, Malinda Eccarius, Rhonda Fleischer, Cara Frost, Greg Gaden, Sheri Harrington, Wendy Herrold, Tanya Hilligoss, Jill Hoffart, Shelli Janning, Kristin Jolkowski, Mary Luhr, Diane Meyer, Jessica Nickels, Sara Peterson, Kaylene Randall, Jonathan Scherling, Lindsey Schubert, Pete Seiler, Vicki Steinhauer-Campbell, Jenise Straight, Deb Vapenik, John Wyvill
Interpreters: Kelly Brakenhoff and Jamy Elker

Welcome & Introductions

- Introductions were made by every member of the committee. A sign-in sheet was available to mark attendance and to update committee members' contact information.

Public Posting Information Rhonda Fleischer

- A reminder was given that this is an open meeting and there is a time allowed for public comments. The meeting and agenda were posted more than seven days prior to this meeting on the NDE website.

Nebraska Commission for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing (NCDHH)John Wyvill

- The NCDHH office in Scottsbluff is now open and Brittney Graham is the new field representative there.
- John mentioned the NCDHH board is very pleased with the progress in revising Rule 51 for educational interpreters and board members will be at the Public Hearing in support of the changes.
- There is a NCDHH board meeting on October 30th to discuss changes in the Community Interpreter Licensure Bill (LB 287). This bill will require any interpreter who provides interpreting services in Nebraska to be licensed which also includes VRI interpreters. The only exceptions are religion and educational interpreters.
- NCDHH has helped coordinate a couple of outreach activities recently. A Deaf Awareness Day at the Lincoln Saltdogs baseball game was held on July 1st and John mentioned he saw a lot of new faces of parents and family members. NCDHH also collaborated with NeAD to offer a family event at the Omaha Henry Doorly Zoo on September 28th. It was very successful with approximately 450 people in attendance.
- NCDHH is working on a web cast (taped event) to talk about the NCDHH Advocacy Handbook led by Kim Davis.
- Peggy Williams will be recognized by the Governor and receive an award as the NCDHH state employee of the year on October 29th. She has over 34 years of experience and is planning to retire in July 2016.

Deaf-Blind Project/Low Incidence Tanya Hilligoss

- The Deaf-Blind Summer Institute will be held July 18-21, 2016. They are working on confirming presenters and more information will be available soon.
- David Wiley, one of last year's Summer Institute presenters who presented about embedding calendars into effective routines for children, is providing four follow-up webinars during the school year. Two webinars will be held in the fall and two will be held in the spring.
- The Project has continued the Open Hands: Open Access (OHOA) online training for interveners (the support staff working directly with students with deaf blindness). Tanya mentioned it is also great training for any staff who work with students with multiple disabilities (not just deaf blindness) and it is free training. The training has expanded outside of the Lincoln area now and

can be started anytime. Part of the team that completed the training program last year are now helping to train/mentor new trainees as well. Interested staff can register online at <https://nationaldb.org/>.

UNO.....Jonathan Scherling for Julie Delkamiller

- UNO currently has six undergraduates enrolled in D/HH Education. Beginning in the fall 2016, students will be able to complete their clinical practice (student teaching) in one semester with 9 weeks being in general education and 9 weeks in D/HH. There will be one student completing clinical practice this spring.
- There are 23 students identified as majoring in Sign Language Interpreting and will graduate with a Bachelor of Science degree in Education. Students are encouraged to take the written portions of NIC and/or EIPA but are not required to take either as a condition of graduation.
- UNO met with Metro Community College to create a plan for seamless transfer of ASL I, ASL II, ASL III and the History, Psychology & Sociology of Deafness classes.
- UNO has been approved as a RID testing site to take the NIC test. Dr. Julie Delkamiller is the only approved Test Administrator and people need to contact her directly for scheduling. Between September and December 2015, there are currently 8 Interview/Performance tests and 3 CDI written knowledge exams scheduled. Only those individuals who applied to take the test before October 1, 2015 are eligible to take the performance exam before the moratorium goes into place beginning January 1, 2016.
- The UNO Sign Language student group called “Allies for ASL” has been active in many opportunities. They have been volunteer interpreting or volunteer teaching at Deaf Awareness Day at the Zoo, monthly CONNECT events, signing the national anthem, providing workshops at schools and at UNO, and volunteering for both the Iowa and Nebraska RID fall conferences.
- The UNO interpreting students are also looking for “ghost interpreting” opportunities. They go to class or events and interpret in the back of the room with either another student or they video themselves for practice and feedback without any individuals who are D/HH present. They would also welcome any opportunity to work with individuals who are D/HH. Diane Meyer said they would be welcome at MRP activities and Pete Seiler has already been working with the UNO students and UNMC in training medical professionals how to work with D/HH.

UNL.....Malinda Eccarius

- The Sensory Disabilities Graduate Certificate has been approved and applications can be submitted online (21 students applied last semester). Applications are reviewed as they come in so people can start taking classes the semester after they apply. Applicants do not need to take the GRE to be accepted and those who already have a master’s degree can apply for the certificate and will not need to get another master’s degree while finishing their teaching endorsement. This graduate certificate is not a teaching certificate, but rather an academic certificate that does go on the transcript as proof of professional development for classroom and general special education teachers. The certificate includes basic foundation courses in both hearing and vision loss as well as a family-collaboration course. Contact Malinda for more information (meccarius2@unl.edu) or Mackenzie Saviano, UNL vision program coordinator.
- The UNL deaf education and vision programs have been collaborating a lot more and together Malinda and Mackenzie Saviano will be submitting a grant application in December and Malinda said they will be asking for letters of support.

NeRID.....Sheri Harrington

- The NeRID Fall Conference will be held in Lincoln November 6-7th at Capitol City Christian Church. Presenters will be Amy Meckler from New York and William F. Ross III from Minnesota. The workshop will focus on receptive skill development. More information and registration is on the website (nebraskarid.org).

- NeRID continues to look for opportunities to encourage, train, support, and represent interpreters in the educational setting. NeRID sent representation to the Rule 51 meetings, is involved with the Interpreter in Educational and Instructional Settings (IEIS) Member Section of RID, and also has interpreters in educational settings involved on the NeRID Board.
- NeRID is collaborating with NeAD to offer a joint workshop in 2016. More details to come.

Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) Vicki Steinhauer-Campbell & Jessica Nickels

- The VR Act was revised as part of WIOA (Work Innovation and Opportunity Act). Pat Bracken met with the stakeholders last July and found they are still finalizing the proposed regulations so it has not been approved to date. Revisions include:
 - a. Increase VR’s role in transition services. 15% of the program budget must be spent in pre-employment transitions services. These are services that focus on work-based learning, counseling on post-secondary opportunities, workplace readiness training, and training on self-advocacy.
 - b. Requirement for formal cooperative agreements between VR and state Medicaid and Intellectual Developmental Disabilities as it relates to supported employment.
 - i. Calls for VR to play a role in assisting a person under the age of 24 to go through a series of steps before being placed in a job at subminimum wage (essentially sheltered workshops or enclaves). The goal is to increase placements in competitive employment.
 - c. Increased focus of supported employment services with youth.
 - d. Alignment of performance measures with Workforce programs.
 - e. Increased emphasis on services to employers.
- Pat Bracken has asked Vicki to take his place on the Nebraska Transition Summit Team and both Pat and Vicki have been attending team meetings regularly for a smooth transition. Vicki has also started attending the Transition Focus Club meetings at Southeast High School in Lincoln to help increase VR involvement at the high school level.
- Vicki and Jessica recently presented to parents about how VR can partner with the Assistive Technology Project.
- The number of individuals with disabilities placed in jobs has increased from 2,014 last year to 2,169 this year. Jessica said she is hoping to break this down further into categories so they can figure out how many individuals with hearing loss are finding employment.
- John Wyvill asked how many deaf individuals work with Nebraska VR and Jessica said she has 50 deaf clients in the Omaha area.
- Mark Schultz, the Nebraska VR Director, was appointed president of the Council of State Administrators Vocational Rehabilitation (CSAVR) which is a high honor leading 50 states and 84 territories!

Nebraska Association of the Deaf (NeAD)..... Pete Seiler

- NeAD is considering giving \$1,500 to help start a new youth summer camp which will include families and leadership opportunities.
- Kim Bianco Majeri, a deaf presenter, has been invited to present a full-day workshop on April 9, 2016, focusing on the topic of how to impact our legislature.
- Debie Seiler is organizing an Open Round Table Discussion (ORTD) with various organizations such as NCDHH, Hands & Voices, and NeAD to talk about current issues they all are experiencing and to discuss how better collaboration can occur among the different organizations.
- March 13-April 15, 2016 is Deaf Awareness Month and NeAD has given Amy Williams \$1,000 to organize deaf/hard of hearing awareness activities.

- Pete was excited to announce they received an authentic Governor Ricketts proclamation signature recognizing Deaf Awareness Week. Governor Ricketts signed it right there in front of the group (which is a first as it has been pre-hand-stamped in the past).
- The June NeAD parent workshop with presenter Susan Elliott had 12 parents in attendance.
- NeAD would like to start a parent support group to discuss common issues such as skills needed to be successful, coping mechanisms, finding a good job, etc.
- There will be an early childhood education workshop to help train staff on bilingual methods and early childhood education March 17-19, 2016.
- Jonathan Scherling mentioned he could develop new workshops through NeAD and would also be glad to recruit deaf adults to help at events. Pete Seiler also mentioned he'd be happy to present workshops for staff, parents, and students as well.

Rule 51 Educational Interpreter Qualifications Update Rhonda Fleischer

- LR 517 directed NCDHH to conduct an Interpreter Shortage Interim Study. NCDHH then established four workgroups in the areas of interpreting, licensure, educational interpreting, and medical/community interpreting. The purpose of these workgroups was to research, discuss, and provide recommendations regarding the proficiency/competency of current interpreters and address the shortage of interpreters in Nebraska – both community and educational. They reported to a steering committee. John Wyvill brought the findings of that committee to the State Board and encouraged them to increase the requirements for educational interpreters. The State Board directed NDE to establish a writing committee to discuss possible revisions in Rule 51 regarding qualifications of educational interpreters. This committee came to a consensus in May on draft language for revisions and the State Board approved that draft this summer. It was presented to the Special Education Advisory Committee (SEAC) in September and received approval to move forward. A Public Hearing will be held November 18th at 2 pm. If there are concerns, it will have to go back to the writing committee. If it moves forward, it will go back to the State Board, then on to the Attorney General and then the Governor for their approval. If the draft revisions are approved, the biggest change is that the required EIPA score will increase from a minimum of a 3.5 to a 4.0. There is a “grandfather” clause for interpreters who currently have a score of 3.5 or above, have been working as an educational interpreter for the last two years and have maintained the required clock hours. Additional changes include a high school diploma requirement and the number of clock hours of professional development will increase from 20 hours to 24 hours every 2 years (of which 18 hours must be in sign language interpreting and the other 6 can be in related areas). After the revised Rule 51 is approved, the next step will be to write a TA (technical assistance) document to encourage improvements that wouldn't necessarily be included in a Rule change. It will outline best practices.

Transition Summit Team Rhonda Fleischer

- The Nebraska Transition Summit Team comprised of Jill Bird (representing the Regional Programs and parents of children who are D/HH), Rhonda Fleischer (representing NDE), Donna Moss (representing special ed administrators), Jonathan Scherling (representing post-secondary education) and Pat Bracken/Vicki Steinhauer-Campbell (representing Nebraska VR) will attend the 4th Annual PepNet Transition Summit Team Meeting February 8-10th in Atlanta, Georgia. The majority of the Summit Team expenses are covered by PepNet, and NDE funds the remainder. All 50 states will be represented. This year each state has been asked to put together a poster to highlight their transition activities. Some of the Nebraska transition activities include Person Centered Planning meetings and a “campus connection” planned activity for next summer that will allow students who are post-secondary bound to sample college life and discuss accommodations they may need. Transition has become a focus for many regional activities. Additionally, Rhonda and Jill have compiled a list of transition resources, which will be made

into a Google Doc for teachers to review during “Transition Resource Exploration Days” and add comments. The Regional Programs and the Deaf-Blind Project are also in the beginning stages of planning a transition conference for low incidence groups that will be held in York September 24, 2016.

Early Hearing Detection & Intervention in Nebraska (NE-EHDI)..... Kathy Northrop (via email afterwards)

- The 2014 Annual Report is now available on the NE-EHDI website (www.dhhs.ne.gov/publichealth/EHDI).
- Both the CDC and HRSA grants have been funded for another year.
- Kathy has made site visits to 14 hospitals across the state to meet the people who are responsible for hearing screenings, talk about their process, and make suggestions for improvements.
- A new Community Outreach Coordinator was hired earlier this year, who is an audiology student. She is doing her Capstone Project with the NE-EHDI Program. A task force has been created to examine how hospitals share the hearing screening results with parents. She will be conducting a survey to collect data on parents’ perceptions of that experience. The survey will be disseminated after the first of the year.
- NCHAM is once again offering stipends for a parent to attend the EHDI Annual Meeting in San Diego, March 13-15, 2016. The application is due November 30th.
- The NE-EHDI Program Advisory Committee has elected a new Chair and Vice-Chair for the 2016-2018 term. Chair will be Linsay Darnall, Jr. and the Vice-Chair will be Kim Jae Kang.

Hands & Voices..... Shelli Janning

- The annual Fall Blast Picnic activity for adults and children was very well received.
- In collaboration with NeAD and MRP, Connect Saturday reading activities have continued to take place this year in the Omaha area. At these activities, a deaf or hard of hearing adult reads (sign, voice, or both) books to children (an interpreter is also present to sign or voice as needed).
- Hands & Voices has continued to host a Saturday morning coffee club that meets the 3rd Saturday of every month in Omaha at Panera Bread (78th & Dodge). This is an inexpensive and informal way for families to come and visit with each other.
- Hands & Voices activities mainly take place in the Metro area (they have tried to branch out but have not had as good of attendance in rural areas). They are trying to collaborate more with Amplify, a parent group established in Lincoln.

Guide By Your Side (GBYS)..... Shelli Janning

- GBYS has been approved for a 3rd year. Shelli Janning is the new GBYS program coordinator. There are currently 5 parent guides (1 parent who lives in Aurora and the other 4 parents live in the Omaha area).
- A Spanish-speaking bilingual guide was hired this summer. She has been a wonderful addition since there are 12 Spanish-speaking families currently participating in GBYS.
- Over the last 2 years, GBYS has served 66 families. The program is currently serving 54 families and has been receiving referrals quicker after forming a better collaboration with EHDI.
- GBYS is working on offering more family and parent events. One planned activity called “Mom’s Day In” will be held in February at a hotel. There will be scheduled panel discussions and Moms will be able to spend the night visiting with one another. The activity will conclude around noon the next day with a possible family lunch. More information will be available soon.

Boys Town.....Frances Beurivage

- No report provided.

Regional Program Updates

- **CWNP (Sue Czaplewski and Sara Peterson)** – CWNP hosted the Young Americans 3-day statewide activity with 63 students in attendance. The theme for the activity was "turn up the awareness" as it took place during Deaf Awareness Week in September. They also hosted the statewide Pony Express Storytelling Festival event held at the Raising Nebraska Building on the Nebraska State Fairgrounds with 81 students. In December, students on the Nebraska Regional Program's Academic Bowl Team will be traveling to Ohio to compete in the Midwest Regional Academic Bowl Competition. A weekly Sign & Dine group has been started in Hastings. There are also 6 family sign language classes occurring throughout various parts of their region. Linsay Darnall, Jr. presented a workshop focusing on receptive sign skills. A Visual Phonics workshop was also held recently. CWNP staff attended the Supporting Success for Children with Hearing Loss Conference, LENA Conference, NeRID Fall Conference, and the Law Conference. EIPA testing will be held at ESU 9 in December. Sara is working on updating the Nebraska Regional Program's website, the Funding Toolkit, and the Family Resource Guide.
- **NERP (Jill Hoffart)** – NERP recently held a Visual Phonics workshop with 22 teachers (mostly regular educators who have students with hearing loss in their classroom). Linsay Darnall, Jr. will be presenting workshops on October 31st and November 14th focusing on voicing strategies. Sign language interpreters have been working individually with mentors. Jill will have a booth at the November 10th "Holy Cow - What Now Transition Conference" for students who are multi-handicapped that is taking place at Northeast Community College in Norfolk. NERP is hosting the statewide Fall Outing Survivor activity November 20-21st for students in grades 7-12. NERP had 4 families attend the interpreted "Ivy and Bean" theater event at the Rose Theater this fall. Jill mentioned one of her goals is to increase family involvement in the NERP area. Two kudos for NERP students include a D/HH sophomore at Norfolk High who landed the lead role in the school play and a freshman at Stanton finished 10th at the state cross country meet.
- **SNRP (Jill Bird)** – SNRP held a 3-day training called "Listen Up: It's 2015" in June and had 33 professionals attend. The training was presented by two national presenters and the topic was listening and spoken language. There were 42 participants at the July Statewide Skill Development Workshop with presenter Dennis Davino. Jill, Sue Czaplewski, and Rhonda Fleischer presented information about Person Centered Planning at the Eastern Nebraska Transition Conference in September to around 150 students. SNRP had 28 participants at their September Advisory Board meeting and a couple of new parents have joined the board this year. SNRP supported staff and a family to attend the Listening and Spoken Language Conference at the Atlanta Speech School and staff members also attended the Supporting Success Conference this fall. A Fall Family Festival was held in September at Roca Berry Farm in collaboration with 2 local Sertoma Clubs and the UNL SLP student group for students ages birth-10 and family members and had 215 people in attendance. Barb Woodhead presented a workshop for SNRP on September 3rd focusing on ethical principles for educational interpreters. There were 22 participants including teachers, administrators, and interpreters. SNRP paid for 4 interpreters to take the Written EIPA on October 9th so all SNRP interpreters have now taken the exam. Jill worked with LPS to revise the pay rubric for interpreters to now offer more incentive to improve their EIPA score beyond a 4.0. SNRP has had a couple of students leave ISD and return to their home school district, so there are 2 interpreter positions available. LPS has hired 2 new itinerant deaf educators and there is also a new deaf educator in Beatrice. A Theater Night for SNRP students in grades 7-12 was held at TADA Theater on October 23rd. SNRP is sponsoring a Visual Phonics workshop to be held at ESU 4 in December and a sign language class in Pawnee City. The statewide Extravaganza activity for students in grades 3-6 will be held in February in Lincoln and will focus on entomology.

- **MRP (Diane Meyer & Mike Brummer)** – The statewide S.E.E. Skillsshop will be held in Omaha November 13-15th and there are 30 participants currently registered. Additionally, there are 7 families registered for the Spanish-speaking portion of the workshop. A Visual Phonics workshop will be held in Omaha December 4-5th. MRP had professionals attend both the Listen Up and Ethical Principles workshops in Lincoln. The MRP activities in collaboration with Bellevue Public Schools have continued. An activity with a book reading, scavenger hunt, and making of Irish soda bread was held last March and in April a family pizza and swimming party was held. This year’s summer enrichment program for preschool-2nd grade focused on animals. MRP held a Soap Box Derby activity for students in grades 3-8. Students learned about tools, physics vocabulary, and had to plan out how to build their car. Then they got to race their cars at the Fall Family Picnic. MRP held an Advisory Board meeting in September and has another one scheduled in December. In collaboration with NCDHH and Nebraska VR, MRP held a presentation for students about “technology for independence.” A fall sign language class is now in session. In November, MRP will hold an activity for students to cook pumpkins and on December 12th the annual Holiday Party will be held in collaboration with Boys Town. MRP will be hosting the statewide dance and transition activity in January. Four students from Ralston are competing in the Battle of the Books national competition.

Additional Topics

- The Nebraska Regional Programs will sponsor a workshop for parents in Gretna on January 9th and in Kearney on January 10th and in Scottsbluff (date yet TBD). The presenter, Mark Keith, is a father of child with hearing loss who also works at the Outreach Services for the Blind and the Deaf and for the Resource Materials Technology Center for the Deaf/HH in Florida.
- Diane Meyer reported that the decision to close Iowa Western’s Interpreter Training Program has not been finalized. The initial announcement came as a shock to staff and some of the information reported in the reasoning was not accurate (such as costs inaccurately reported, the number of students reported did not take into account dual enrollment, the confusion about it being an associate’s degree when it is a 3-year program, etc.). This information will be presented to their advisory board and then a final decision will be made.
- Kaylene Randall suggested a Google Doc be set up that could be shared statewide with information related to any sign language classes currently being offered. This would allow for a quick and easy check when needed.

Public Comments

- TPA (Travelers Protective Association) offers scholarships nationally for any costs a child or adult incurs related to hearing loss. Annual scholarship applications must be submitted by March 1st. More information about TPA can be found on their website at: <http://www.tpahq.org/>. Committee members may also contact Sue Czaplewski (sue.czaplewski@esu9.us) if interested in making a \$5 TPA donation to receive the Younkers/Herbergers Community Day coupons that can be used in November.

Future Agenda Items

- If you have agenda items you would like to add to the next meeting, please email Diane Meyer at Diane_Meyer@ralstonschools.org or Wendy Herrold at wherrol@lps.org.

Next Meeting

- The next meeting will be held Wednesday, March 2, 2016, at ESU 6 in Milford from 9 am-noon.