

Deaf & Hard of Hearing Stakeholder Committee Meeting

Wednesday, October 20, 2021

Virtual via Zoom

9:00 am - 12:00 pm

Attendance: Jonathan Arteaga, Tami Clay, Teresa Coonts, Brenda Coufal, Sue Czaplewski, Julie Delkamiller, Joe Haney, Wendy Herrold, Lindsey Hinzmann, Jill Hoffart, Shelli Janning, Kristin Jolkowski, Mary Luhr, Sarah McClure, Diane Meyer, Lona Nelson, Jessica Nickels, Sara Peterson, Melissa Prante, Michele Rayburn, Vicki Steinhauer-Campbell, Deborah Teller, Anne Thomas, Melissa Weber-Arnold, Heather Witte, John Wyvill

Interpreters: Kelly Brakenhoff and Jamy Elker

Public Posting Information (Sue Czaplewski)

- 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 Nebraska Regional Program website.

UNO (Julie Delkamiller)

- UNO is in the beginning stages of putting together a Deaf Studies or ASL minor (not sure on the title yet). They have been given the go-ahead and classes are in place, but now they must wait for final approval. This minor will be geared for students who are majoring in other areas and it will officially show up on their transcript. It will require 15-18 additional credit hours in classes revolving around the history/psychology of deafness as well as ASL classes.
- The ACEDHH National Conference (for college administrators of D/HH programs) is scheduled for February 10-12, 2022, at the Embassy Suites in downtown Omaha. Julie noted there is a \$50 registration rate reduction to try to encourage deaf educators or anyone in the deaf education field to attend. The focus will be on current research in the field of deaf education.

UNL (Anne Thomas)

- UNL is currently recruiting students for the 3rd and final cohort of the MPUP-IP grant which will begin in the summer of 2022. This is for students who already have a bachelor's degree as a SLP or in special education and are interested in pursuing an endorsement in deaf education. At minimum, they would like to recruit 5 SLP students and 5 deaf ed students but these numbers might increase if funding increases. Anne mentioned it has not been hard to recruit SLP students but that it has been harder to recruit students in the deaf ed program and she said that one reason for this is because those students must meet a proficiency level in ASL. Anne shared the updated [MPUP-IP recruitment flyer](#) and asked committee members to post and share wherever possible. It is open to anyone in the nation to apply.
- The Barkley Clinic needs to recruit more students who are D/HH to receive services so that MPUP students can gain valuable experience working with these students. Anne shared a [Barkley recruitment flyer and personal letter](#) and also asked for assistance in sharing these materials.

Vocational Rehabilitation (Vicki Steinhauer-Campbell & Jessica Nickels)

- Nebraska VR's Priority Group 1 is now completely open and they are currently taking clients off the waiting list who are in Priority Group 2. It is uncertain as to when they will be able to start taking clients off the Priority Group 3 waiting list. The Nebraska VR website (vr.nebraska.gov) updates how many people come off the waiting list every Wednesday.
- Three new Nebraska VR staff have been hired in Lincoln as well as more counselors across the state. Lupa Stevens in the Grand Island area has taken over Brigid Griffin's role as VR's director of transition services for the entire state of Nebraska.
- Nebraska VR was awarded the Career Pathways Advancement Program (CPAP) grant. This grant is for clients who have a case that is successfully closed but who still need additional skill development. There were 25 states that put in proposals for this grant so it is pretty exciting that Nebraska was the state selected. It is a five-year grant which just started in October 2021.
- John Wyvill asked how many high school students in Nebraska are working with VR for transition services. Vicki looked up the number and noted 24 students statewide.
- Jessica mentioned she has 19 students in the Deaf/HH Pre-ETS (Pre Employment Transition Services) program in the Omaha area which includes 5 students attending ISD.
- A committee member asked if there is a student who uses sign language to communicate, does the student have to work with their local VR counselor through an interpreter or can they work directly with Vicki or someone who uses sign language? Jessica replied that, yes, they should get referred to their local office first and can then be transferred if needed.
- Jessica noted it is encouraging that Nebraska VR is getting invited to attend a few more younger students' IEP meetings (ages 14-15) to plan earlier for transition. Teresa Coonts reminded committee members that some parents have not given consent for their child to work with VR so to remember to obtain parental permission first.

Transition Summit Team (Vicki Steinhauer-Campbell, Sue Czaplweski, Lindsey Hinzmann)

- The Nebraska Transition Summit was held June 24-26, 2021, at UNL. Six students participated. The summit focused on both career-related and college-related learning activities. Students completed a career inventory survey that helped identify their top three career field choices based on their interests. Mentors who are D/HH led many of the sessions. Students learned about budgeting by planning for food, groceries, and restaurant meal purchases. They talked about self-determination and what skills are involved in self-determination. One session focused on conflicts and relationships and students had the opportunity to practice scenarios. Community agencies also submitted videos to explain more about their programs and services. Students were able to take a tour of UNL and visit with Barb Woodhead about requesting accommodations. Mike Ellis presented a session titled, "Transition to Empowerment" and DeMoine Adams, CEO of Teammates, presented a session titled, "Finding the Cheerleaders in Your Life." Students concluded the summit by creating a vision board that included their plans/goals for the future, finances/budgeting items, and the cheerleaders in their lives. It was a wonderful educational experience.

neRID (Deborah Teller)

- neRID is not planning a conference at this time. They are working to set up a business meeting to elect officers and are currently busy supporting local agencies.

Regional Program Updates

- **CWNP** (Sara Peterson and Heather Witte):
 - CWNP has several family sign language classes taking place both remotely and in person (however it best meets the needs of families). Most classes are led by Deaf adults or recently graduated D/HH high school students who use sign language. They have several families who are bilingual so they have bilingual interpreters also helping in these classes. They are also offering a community sign language class, held on Tuesday evenings, that is open to anyone interested in learning sign language.
 - The Storytelling Festival will focus around the theme of The Polar Express this year. CWNP is hosting it on November 19th for students statewide in grades K-4. Activities will include crafts, train exploration with the story, and hopefully ice skating.
 - Camp Anderson was held this past July at Fort Robinson and it was the first in-person event the Regional Programs were able to hold. Over 50 students attended. Activities included a rodeo, cookouts, jeep rides, team-building, crafts, skits, etc. and it was a great experience.
 - Space Camp was held in October at the Cosmosphere Center in Hutchinson, Kansas. Nebraska sponsored 18 students in grades 8-10 to attend. Students learned how to make space food, experienced weightlessness by scuba diving, built rockets and so much more. There were group activities where students had to problem solve and learn how to overcome communication barriers with being Deaf or hard of hearing. Jonathan Arteaga attended with the students and shared that it was wonderful to see the students grow over this experience.
 - CWNP is hosting the 2021-2022 Language Mentoring Workshops presented by Linsay Darnall, Jr. These are held one night each month, entirely in sign language, so they serve as great receptive sign language practice. Participants can attend live via Zoom or they are also recorded and can be watched for up to six months after the workshop. Carol Helleberg also leads a talk after each workshop to further discuss the information presented each month.
- **NERP** (Jill Hoffart):
 - The NERP Fall Family Picnic had 99 people in attendance which was amazing! Linsay Darnall, Jr. came to talk about NeAD and to tell families that communication mode doesn't matter, all are welcome. H&V was also present and they explained their organization and services and provided books to students.
 - Family sign language classes in the NERP area are generally taught by the child's deaf educator. Some classes are held in person and some are held via Zoom. A six-week sign language course will also begin in November that will be taught by Hannah Springer who is a former NERP student.
 - Jill is coordinating the statewide Battle of the Books (BOTB) teams this year. This is for students in grades 5-8. Nebraska has 11 students interested in participating which

makes 3 teams. All 11 students are in the highest reading group which is the buff level so they will be competing against each other as well as other teams from across the nation. Last year, two NRP teams made it into the finals and one team made it to the championship match so it was wonderful to see Nebraska represented nationally.

- The statewide Fall Outing event for students in grades 7-12 will be hosted by NERP November 12-13th. It will be held at YMCA Camp Kitaki. There will be five D/HH adults coming to lead activities such as transition skills, social skills, cooking, crafts, etc.
- NERP is hosting a virtual Teen Night once per month. This is led by former NERP student Abbey Andress who is also a TOD. She picks a different theme each month and focuses on building self-esteem. There have been around 12 students in grades 7-12 from across the state who regularly participate.

- **SNRP** (Lindsey Hinzmann):

- The Statewide Sign Language Skill Development Workshop was held virtually in July. There were two different workshops presented by Wink: “How to Show & Tell: Parsing, A New Practice Model” (had 72 participants) and “Mix-A-Stone and Other Tips to Catch the Elusive Fingerspelled Word” (had 68 participants). Great feedback was received from both workshops.
- NDE has once again contracted with Boys Town to offer Nebraska professionals the opportunity to attend the EIPA Video Conferences. The first conference was held October 9th and the Regional Programs had 35 staff members attend statewide.
- SNRP is hosting the 2021-2022 Gab & Grow monthly virtual sessions. These are similar to Teen Night but for students in grades 5-8. They are being led by a D/HH college student who is also a former NRP student. Sessions focus on problem-solving and self-advocacy. They also allow time to play games and talk about student-led topics. Usually there are between 5-10 students who attend.
- Lindsey, along with former NRP student Elizabeth Trausch, is coaching the Nebraska Academic Bowl team this year. This competition is sponsored by Gallaudet University. Nebraska has five students on the team. The majority of the competitions are held virtually. This is a great opportunity for students to practice social/emotional skills.
- SNRP recently redesigned its website and has included more information about support the program provides to students, families, and educational staff. Other information such as roles and responsibilities, best practices, audiology information, Rule 51 and guidelines is also included. Additionally, a section has been added to help recruit students to the field and there is an area for listing current job openings.
- To promote more peer-to-peer communication, SNRP has started a Pen Pal Program for students of all ages from across the state. This might also increase participation in NRP events if peers encourage each other to attend. A pen pal partnership between LPS and OPS center-based sites has also begun.
- SNRP currently has a sign language class taking place every other week. There are around 50 people participating in this class. This class is co-taught by a Deaf mentor, TOD, and SNRP Coordinator. On the off weeks, SNRP is providing additional resources and videos to help participants practice what they were taught that week of class and to help grow their skills and confidence.

- **MRP** (Diane Meyer):
 - On September 17-18th, MRP hosted the statewide “Exploring the Museums” extravaganza event for students in grades 3-6. Activities took place at the Omaha Children’s Museum and the Nebraska Deaf History and Heritage Center. Students toured the former Nebraska School for the Deaf campus and participated in a Deaf trivia game which they seemed to enjoy.
 - MRP is currently offering two different levels of community sign language classes with primarily parents and professionals participating.
 - MRP provided activities and games for children to do at the H&V Fall Bash.
 - Diane is working on reconnecting students within the MRP area in an effort to increase MRP student involvement. She is personally visiting schools to talk to students and explain more about MPR and NRP events.
 - Carol Fleming, a Deaf artist in St. Louis who specializes in pottery, is going to lead the statewide Arts Festival event in January that MRP is hosting for students in grades 3-6.

NE-EDHI (Brenda Coufal)

- [Please click here to read Brenda's NE-EHDI updates.](#)
- Brenda also mentioned that NE-EHDI will be providing parent scholarships that will cover travel costs and registration to attend the March 13-15, 2022, National EHDI Conference in Cincinnati, Ohio. Brenda will share information in November/December once it becomes available and she would appreciate committee members sharing that information with families.

NDE Update/Low Incidence Team (Teresa Coonts)

- For 2021, NDE is back to full monitoring. Thus, Teresa has been working all summer to gather data and is now having summary meetings.
- Teresa noted that she oversees 28 projects/grants and that it takes all summer to get everything approved through the state board to get all the projects funded.
- Upcoming Nebraska conferences include:
 - November 4-5: Tri State Law Conference
 - November 9: Paraprofessional Conference
 - February 22-23: Statewide Transition Conference. Accepting calls for papers for anyone interested in presenting.
 - April 7-8: Autism State Conference (hoping to have it in-person but more likely it will be a hybrid model)
- The American Rescue Plan provided school districts with additional funding. Thus, districts have to amend their IDEA budgets and NDE has been busy reviewing these amendments.
- NDE has recently updated their policies and procedures that districts are required to follow. Teresa mentioned committee members might be asked to be part of a stakeholder group to provide input.
- NDE is continuing to provide a lot of technical assistance documents. There is a new one specific to math and students with disabilities. This is a great resource and can be found on the NDE special education website. Training specific to this TA doc should be offered soon.

- Teresa gave kudos to the Nebraska Regional Programs for following the transition of students after graduation and for bringing them back to be Deaf/HH role models for NRP events.

NCDHH (John Wyvill)

- John mentioned a situation that occurred in eastern Nebraska that involved an interpreter who is not qualified who was asked to interpret for child abuse situation. John discussed how this is not okay as the situation occurred off campus so it required a community licensed interpreter. Thus, he asked committee members to work with their administrators to educate them about necessary qualifications for interpreters (see page 13 in guidelines for educational interpreters: https://cdn.education.ne.gov/wp-content/uploads/2017/07/Guidelines_for_Educational_Interpreters.pdf). Teresa Coonts said she can put a reminder on the November monthly call for special education administrators to be able to review.
- John has asked for additional American Rescue Funds to be used to help support more technology purchases and provide more educational interpreter training opportunities.
- The LEAD-K Advisory Committee meeting notes are posted on the NCDHH website. NCDHH events are now being posted on social media sites.
- John mentioned that NCDHH staff members, Cody and Ashley who are young D/HH adults, are happy to present at any events or serve as D/HH role models.

NeAD (Jonathan Arteaga)

- Jonathan introduced himself and said he was elected NeAD president in August.
- The NeAD State Convention held at the end of August went very well. Noah Buccholz presented two great workshops, one on ASL Benefits and the other on Educational Access. Richard McCown and his wife and cousin talked about their experiences of being part of the black community and racism and how to approach the system and collaborate so that it will become better in the future. The next NeAD State Convention will be held in August 2023 since it is held every two years, or perhaps August 2022 since the 2020 convention was canceled due to COVID-19. The NeAD Board will decide and get that information out soon.
- Linsay Darnall Jr. recently provided some training for NeAD members focusing on intellectual and emotional topics. NeAD is collaborating with local agencies to present more training topics in the near future.

ATP

- No report provided.

NAIE (Sarah McClure)

- NAIE held a virtual conference this past summer. This was a seven-part series that ran throughout the entire summer. Participant feedback was positive and several liked this format. Thus, NAIE will most likely hold a similar format for the summer 2022 conference.
- NAIE has a workshop coming up in November. NAIE members can join for free.
- Last time the NAIE membership statistics per state were released, Nebraska had 68 members. There are 2000 members in the organization altogether so Sarah noted that Nebraska having

68 members is a great start. Sarah will continue outreach efforts to discuss the benefits of membership and to help recruit more members.

- One of NAIE's big initiatives this summer was completing the educational interpreter code of ethics (<https://naiedu.org/codeofethics/>). It has been released in two formats, one in ASL presentation with English captioning and the other in a spoken format with an interpreter on a split screen.
- NAIE has created a nationwide workplace survey to ask interpreters who have worked in the K-12 setting for the past two years to provide feedback on what their workplaces are like and how their districts are structured. NAIE will use this data to review current trends in the educational interpreting field and to help support educational interpreters.

Hands & Voices and Guide By Your Side (Shelli Janning)

- H&V is going through a transitional period and currently looking for a new president and treasurer. Teresa Coonts asked Shelli if there is an application for the H&V president and other board member positions? Shelli said she anticipates posting the vacancies on the H&V Facebook page but there is no formal application process at this time. Shelli noted the board has to be at least 51% parent representation. In the past, someone that is currently on the board has been interested in filling vacant positions. However, they do not have a very large board at this time so they are working with the National H&V to work through this process. Shelli has a meeting with the National H&V Committee tomorrow and will know more information then. Teresa asked Shelli to keep her informed on the process since it also affects the GBYS program.
- GBYS has parents guides throughout the state (Scottsbluff, Atkinson, Kearney, David City, Omaha, and Lincoln). Sometimes families are connected based on where the child resides or they may be connected based on the child's and family's needs.
- Shelli distributes a newsletter to all the GBYS families and she has also started hosting "Topic Tuesday" discussions. Some of these discussions are more formal and some are more informal. Teresa Coonts discussed 504 plans, IEPs, and understanding Rule 51 and Rule 52 in a way that is easier for parents to understand. There have also been discussions with PTI, NCDHH, and the Nebraska Regional Programs to highlight their programs and what they do for families.
- H&V and GBYS have collaborated with several different agencies for recent events. They had a great turnout at the D/HH Awareness Day at the Scottsbluff Zoo. Around 60-70 people came to the September Fall Bash event. There was also a H&V event held in conjunction with D/HH Awareness Day at the Omaha Zoo and 16-19 families (about 60 people) attended.
- Upcoming, there is a Moms Night Inn weekend in Scottsbluff in November. There are 8-10 moms registered. Topics include executive functioning, self-advocacy, a parent cafe, and networking time to just talk together. Another Moms Night Inn weekend will be held in Lincoln in February.

Deaf-Blind Project (Teresa Coonts)

- The Deaf-Blind Summer Institute was held virtually in July. It had about 50 participants and focused on literacy and technology.

- The Midwest Transition Institute was also held virtually. There were 10 states involved in this training. About 13 young adults who are Deaf/Blind and 7 role models who are Deaf/Blind participated in this institute. Teresa noted it was an amazing experience, everyone learned a lot, and there was a lot of access support. Topics focused on vision building and self-advocacy, and there were also breakout rooms to work with a Deaf-Blind mentor. Teresa was asked to write an article about this experience and the article has been recognized by OSERS (<https://sites.ed.gov/osers/2021/10/deaf-blind-projects-support-accessible-virtual-connections-t-o-transition/>). Sue Czaplewski told committee members to be sure to watch the amazing videos on Facebook that include student talent shows. The next Midwest Training Institute will be hosted by Illinois and they are just in their beginning planning stages.
- The Deaf-Blind Project grant has been moved from NCECBVI to UNL. The transition started in October and Teresa has begun meeting with Mackenzie Savaiano to go over goals and processes.
- The Deaf-Blind Project is still working on its app development and are hoping to have it finished by December.

Boys Town

- No report provided.

Amplify

- No report provided.

Additional Topics

- No further topics or comments were shared.

Public Comments

- Jill Hoffart shared that two former Nebraska Regional Program students, Will Parker and Skyler Gubbels, were part of the UNL homecoming court this fall. It is great to see students excelling in college!

Future Agenda Items

- Please email Sue Czaplewski (sue.czaplewski@esu9.us) if you have any future agenda items you would like to discuss.

Next Meeting Date

- Wednesday, April 13, 2022, Virtual via Zoom or In-Person at ESU 3 in Omaha