

DHHS-East Central Advisory Board Meeting

MINUTES

SEPT.13, 2005

4:30 – 6:00 P.M

DHHS Conference Room, St. Cloud

MEETING CALLED BY	Laura Schmit
TYPE OF MEETING	Advisory Board's Meeting
FACILITATOR	Laura Schmit
NOTE TAKER	Deb Rasmussen
ATTENDEES	Ernie Watson, Beth Schultz, Laura Schmit, Linda Hendrickson and Deb Riehl
ABSENTEES	
STAFF MEMBERS PRESENT	Rich Diedrichsen, Regional Manager; Diane Leonard, Consultant; Lisa Hennen, Staff Interpreter Coordinator who interpreted the meeting; Kay Schroder, volunteer interpreter; and Deb Rasmussen, Administrative assistant who will be recording minutes of all meetings.

ALLOTTED TIME: 15 MIN. MCDHH UPDATE BETH SCHULTZ

MCDHH UPDATE	Meeting dates have changed to Fridays. Still in the learning stage regarding this committee, Beth will learn more about the committee at her next meeting.
	Hearing Aid bill went through, Blue Cross/Blue Shield have not been following the program. Handouts were given of the successful year at the Legislature. Six out of seven MCDHH approved legislative initiatives passed in the 2005 legislative session. 1. Captioning bill that gives \$6000,000/2 years for Real-Time Captioning for live news programming in Duluth, Mankato, Rochester, Alexandria and Public TV. 2. Hearing Aid consumer protection bill. 3. All new construction of MN schools required to follow new classroom acoustic standards. 4. Interpreter shortage study. 5. Minn employment center for deaf and hard of hearing people (MEC). 6. Collaboration with the Minnesota Association of Deaf Citizens (MADC), Tuition assistance for deaf students. Handout will be attached to the minutes.

ALLOTTED TIME: 15 MIN. LEGISLATION DISCUSSION GROUP

DISCUSSION	Diane shared about the new MEC bill and the tuition for deaf students and the controversy regarding the bill. Not all are happy that this passed, some deaf are offended by this new bill. Rich shared that those not eligible for a Pell grant will have to pay. DRS will help, in some options, those who do not pass. Beth Schultz shared that MCDHH did an Interpreter study regarding a shortage in the community. MRS and video relay on site as an option if no interpreter is available. Beth also talked about trying to have the NIC testing done here in out-state but was not able to find funding. Testing for the new NIC will be done in the Metro area. A brief discussion followed.
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ALLOTTED TIME: 20 MIN DHHS UPDATE RICH DIEDRICHSEN
DIANE LEONARD

DHHS UPDATE	Rich shared that our office prepared, along with Camp Ripley and the Red Cross, to provide services to those who were victims of hurricane Katrina. Beth Schultz and Kris Haffley worked with Red Cross to develop an interpreter roster. Equipment was made ready to hand out as needed. Diane and Lisa were preparing to go when needed to Camp Ripley. Unfortunately it was canceled because no one transferred to our state. We proved, as a staff, if this would have happened, we would have been ready for the drill. Diane and Lisa are working with all regions to be prepared for a disaster and how to smoothly provide accessibility.
	Our region is up to date on all of our presentations. The library has been updated with partial funds provided by the Downtown St. Cloud Sertoma Club.
	Diane reported on Camp Knutson. Previously Diane had shared with the committee that Camp Knutson had been canceled and that she would share with them what the future would be regarding this. A committee was developed from staff of Deaf and Hard of Hearing Services Division, Family Support Connection of Lifetrack Resources, Cued Speech Association of MN, and Minnesota Chapter of the AG Bell Association for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing. This committee has created a parents survey, asking parents of children with a hearing loss what they are seeking in a workshop. Once the surveys have been completed, it will be determined how and where to send the surveys. This will be a statewide survey. Question asked, will there be a stipend for those who can not afford to pay for the workshop? Rich explained that it is too soon to know what the outcome will be. Ernie asked which list will be used, schools? He suggested that the schools are given a heads up and that the only thing required of them is to send to parents of the students who are deaf or hard of hearing. Discussion followed.

ALLOTTED TIME: 15 MIN

OLD AND NEW BUSINESS

GROUP

OLD BUSINESS	Driver's Ed....Update on the collaboration of families and attorney? Ernie stated that he is distancing himself from the process so that there will be no conflict of interest. Question asked, do we know if there is a plan on having a Drivers Ed. for current students? None at this time. Problems being that Drivers Ed. are privately owned and they can claim hardship. Question was asked of Lisa, but she can not make any comments because of negotiations are happening at this time. Discussion followed.
OLD BUSINESS	Idea of the track and field date. What roles do we as a committee play? This will need to be tabled at this time. This is a large endeavor, many staff will need to be involved. Deb Reihl stated that her students would be more than willing to help with the event. Discussion followed on ideas who can help with this event. Deaf Fun events...maybe getting the deaf community involved. Beth suggested announcing it and asking those interested in setting up fun events to come to the meeting. Example: Mix blood theater. Have an annual event for the deaf. VSA -ask them to help with funding. Discussion followed.
OLD BUSINESS	After school interpreters for events, equipment accessibility for after school events. Discussion followed. Best way for needs to be met is to have parents doing advocate work for their children. Parents have more clout then they know they do. Rich suggested getting PACER involved.
NEW BUSINESS	MEC (Minnesota Employment Center) has 2 positions vacant. They received money from the legislators, almost doubled. Diane explained more in depth about this. Diane also explained that her and Rich will be attending a training about Medicare Part D. For those who would like more information can contact Diane and she will get updated information to them. We will need an additional 2 more members for the Advisory Board...any suggestions? Please give them to Diane. Some ideas were shared. New chairperson will be needed. The position is for one year. Please give ideas to Diane.

NEXT MEETING	January 17, 2006, 4:30 – 6:00 p.m. in the DHHS Conference Room, St. Cloud