

DHHS-East Central Advisory Board Meeting

MINUTES

MAY 15, 2007

4:35 – 6:20 P.M

DHHS Conference Room, St. Cloud

MEETING CALLED BY	Ernie Watson
TYPE OF MEETING	Advisory Board's Meeting
FACILITATOR	Ernie Watson
NOTE TAKER	Deb Rasmussen
ATTENDEES	Ernie Watson, Linda Hendrickson, Deb Riehl, Brenda Hommerding, Beth Schultz, Rebecca Crowand, Laura Schmit, Guest Speaker, Jan Radatz (Planner) from DHHS Central Office
ABSENTEES	Jody Gertken-Teter
STAFF MEMBERS PRESENT	Rich Diedrichsen, Regional Manager; Diane Leonard, Consultant; Kris Haffley, Interpreter and Deb Rasmussen, Admin. Assistant
GUESTS	Jerry Pouliot from MN Relay Service and Jan Radatz, Planner for the DeafBlind Projects.

Agenda topics

CALL TO ORDER

ERNIE WATSON

DISCUSSION	Ernie introduced the new member, Rebecca Crowell –Dept. Comm. Science & Disorders at SCSU. He also introduced guests attending the meeting, Jerry Pouliot from MN Relay Service and guest speaker Jan Radatz, Planner/ DHHS who manages the DeafBlind contracts. The agenda was approved; no additions were made.
CONCLUSIONS	N/A

MCDHH UPDATE

BETH SCHULTZ

DISCUSSION	Beth shared that the work plan for MCDHH was large. Beth would like to be on the sub-committee. She will keep the members updated on the progress. Cynthia Weitzel has been hired as the new Public Policy Coordinator. The newborn screening was vetoed during the last session. There needs to be more voices heard at the next session. Question asked, "is testing being done, is it mandatory?" Yes, some hospital do test but unfortunately they are not mandated to report on the testing. The goal is to make it mandatory, your voices need to be heard.
CONCLUSIONS	N/A

DEAF AND HARD OF HEARING REGIONAL REPORT

DIANE LEONARD AND RICH DIEDRICHSEN

DISCUSSION	Rich stated that our office will be closed May 18 to the 23 rd during our move and relocation. Diane –there is a lot happening in our region. Social events for this year will be; January –roller skating, February – swimming, and for April –Spring Fling with a clown and magician who is deaf. There will be a picnic in Willmar July 21. In the fall a fall harvest fest and December a signing santa. The SNO group will start up again in October. The SNO (Silent Night Out) group and the parent group would like to combine on events. It was decided that it would be to everyone's advantage to exposed each group with another, like various community/parents, interpreters, deaf, hard of hearing, Cued, etc. Brenda Hommerding, Beth Schultz, teachers, Lisa Hennen and Diane will meet as a committee.
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Diane shared about the success of the Emergency Preparedness training on April 28, 2007. There were various emergency groups and the deaf and hard of hearing community. There was good information with a lot of donations made by the various businesses and agencies.

Diane along with Beth Schultz from CSD have been doing a lot of presentations to the hospitals and clinics in the East Central region. The focus being hospital staff and patients, how to best serve the patients and reduce complaints. Alinia has signed CSD on contract for sign language interpreters. Outreach specialist get DHHS involved when in-depth questions/situations arise. This collaboration makes for good team work.

Rich announced that Lisa Hennen has been hired as the consultant for the West central region. Jenny Robinson has been hired in the interpreter coordinator position and will begin on June 11, 2007. She will work 24 hours a week.

CONCLUSIONS DHHS –E/W Central, after a 5 year hiring freeze, finally has both consultants positions filled and all 22 counties in our East and West central regions are being served.

DEAFBLIND PROJECT

JAN RADATZ

DISCUSSION Jan Radatz shared with the committee what her role as the Program Planner for the Deaf/Blind Services grant. Jan explained that the grant doesn't just focus on a person who has a complete vision and hearing loss but on a more broad scale. Example, a person who is hard of hearing or deaf may not at this point have a vision loss but because of a medical condition loses their eye sight over time. Or a person who has a vision loss but at this point does not have a hearing loss but later loses their hearing. There are many variables that factor into this diverse group. The ages we serve are from 1 year to 100 years old.

Jan shared the goals of the grants, the first being *Deaf/Blind Consumer Directed Services Program*, the provider is **Lifeworks Services** who serve adults who are deaf/blind, children who are deaf/blind and their families. The second is *Community Integration and Educational Opportunities*, the provider is **Minnesota DeafBlind Assoc. (MDBA)** who provide opportunities for individuals to be a part of their community, offers education opportunities and to promote empowerment. The third being *Hearing and Vision Loss Outreach Program and Intervenor Services*, the provider is **Duluth Lighthouse for the Blind** who conducts outreach activities to identify Minnesotans with a combined hearing/vision loss, assist in getting needed resources to maintain their independence and provide assessment, intervenor and support services. The fourth being *Intervenor Services for Children who are DeafBlind and Their Families*, the provider is **DeafBlind Services Minnesota (DBSM) –Children, Youth & Families Services** who provide intervenor services for children who are deafblind, communication instructions for family members, support develop experiential knowledge of their environment/community. The fifth being *Adult Community Services for Adults*, the provider is **DeafBlind Services Minnesota –Adults Community Services** who provide SSP and other support services to achieve/maintain independence. The sixth being *Families with Children who are DeafBlind Spring Event –one time funding*, the provider is **Minnesota DeafBlind Technical Assistance Project** who sponsor family picnic to offer parents/siblings to network with other families for support and information. The seventh being a Project under review: www.deafblindinfo.org, this website was originally developed with DHHS grant funding. It has been without a webmaster for almost a year so it is in need of repair. DHHS is reviewing the future of this website.

In the DeafBlind Consumer Directed Services Program, the grant provider and consumer work together to design what is the best structure for their grant money. DHHS consultants work with the clients in their region. Part of the structure can be used towards hiring a driver, being a neighbor or family member, to drive them to appointments, shopping, etc. Each grant recipient receives \$5,100 for the year per family. The money can be used to purchase assistive equipment to increase the quality of life or to hire a teacher/mentor to teach sign language to family members.

Deaf/Blind Services Minnesota provide intervenors statewide. There are 30 families, half are in the metro area and the other half is statewide. Parents feel very isolated, so a one time grant was given to have an event, like a picnic for families to network with each other. The Department of Education has reported there are 200 deaf/blind children in all of Minnesota.

CONCLUSIONS Our website is www.dhhsd.org and you can scroll down to "Contracted services" to learn more. If you know of deafblind who would benefit from this service, please contact your regions consultant at DHHS.

The websites of our grantees are: DeafBlind Services Minnesota, www.dbsm.org; Duluth Lighthouse for the Blind, www.lighthousefortheblind-duluth.org; Minnesota DeafBlind Association, www.deafvision.net/mdba/; and Minnesota DeafBlind Technical Assistance Project, www.dbproject.mn.org.

OLD BUSINESS

MEMBERS

DISCUSSION Regions 5 & 7 track and field day will be in our region, May 22 at the Discovery school, 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. Last year the parents came and were amazed with the event. Deb Riehl pulled her students to come and help. Prior event was held in Blaine, now its here. The event has about 35 to 40 students participating.

Beth Schultz asked if they need help. The district brings their staff interpreters. Important to note that there is no back up plan if it rains, then the event is cancelled.

There will be senior rock climbing at St. John's. Students from St. John's teach the deaf/hh students who are interested in learning, the interpreters stay on the ground and interpret. This presents a hindrance especially for first time students. How do they know when they are finished? Or if the students have questions, how can they ask when their hands are busy holding onto the rope? The students need to come up with a process. There will also be canoeing and hiking, then lunch will be at the arboretum. The students need to have feedback forms they can fill out listing what interests them. That

would assist the teachers when planning events for their students.

Senior Deaf Citizen Day at the capitol -students from each district attends. They are taught how to lobby and contact their legislators, etc. From our district, there were only 3 students who attended. This was very disappointing, but even with the low turn out, the districts are committed to keep this field trip active.

CONCLUSIONS Teachers of the deaf/hh continue to look for creative ways to peak their student's curiosity in learning.

30 MINUTES NEW BUSINESS MEMBERS

DISCUSSION Next fiscal years funding has approved the continuing of rock climbing. A suggestion for a Saturday, in collaboration with SNO, have a roller-skating or ice skating party.

A grant was written to have Dr. Ron Lieberger come to Minnesota to conduct a psychology assessment twice a year, once in the fall and again in the spring. He will do a over all assessment not just localized. Every 3 years an IEP needs to be reviewed and change to meet the students needs. The cost is not increasing but the demand is.

There will be a two and a half day training and this will coincide with the new dad's retreat for dads with deaf or hard of hearing children. The process is still in the working stage, resources are needed. It was suggested to have Brenda Hommerding share her new role. It was suggested not to limit the focus but to include all modes of communication. Dad's can come with their fishing pole. The goal is to encourage the dad's to start communicating with their child. Camp Confidence director said that if he gets flyers in time that he will send them out when they do their mailing.

Brenda Hommerding shared the coming events for PACERS Parents Hands and Voices seminar in Minneapolis at the U of Minn. Professional meeting on May 30th at the PACER center, a panel in Nashville Oct. 8 & 9th. Funding ideas are needed.

DHHS will be revising their website. They are looking for feed-back.

A Drivers Training business in SW Minnesota called (who?) to ask about the process with interpreters, etc. MCDHH had a blurb about the St. Cloud group and how they fought to have equal access for their child in the training. It was estimated that it costs \$3,000 for students in the classroom, interpreters are needed for 12 hours of class time. (Discussion followed) One suggestion was to have MSAD in Faribault do a training via real-time video for students.

Jerry Pouliot from Minnesota Relay asked to have a few minutes. He explained that they have a new name, instead of Minnesota Relay Service (MRS) it has been shortened to Minnesota Relay (MR). At present when a person uses MR and the operator states that she is operator so and so with Minnesota Relay, they experience people hanging up because of all the scams. Jerry's goal is to do more outreach in the communities. Jerry has asked the community to keep a list of the businesses or agencies that hang up on them. This will help Jerry to know the business or agency who could use a training to understand about this service for those who have a hearing or speech loss.

July 14th is the Miss Deaf Minnesota Pageant, it will be at Thompson Hall. You can find out more information by logging onto the www.TCdeaf.com or at the MADC web-page www.minndeaf.org .

CONCLUSIONS

NEXT MEETING The next Advisory meeting will be on **September 25, 2007** from **4:30 to 6:00 PM** in the new conference room at DHHS.

AJOURNMENT A motion was made and seconded to adjourn the meeting at 6:18 PM.