Nebraska Commission for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing

**LEAD-K Advisory Committee meeting**

**Date:** June 11th, 2021

**Time:** 1-3 PM

**Location:** Lincoln Firefighter's Hall, 241 Victory Lane, Lincoln NE

**Interpreters:** Sharon Sinkler and Amber Tucker

**Cart:** CART by Inclusive Communication Access Nebraska

**Members Present: :** Ms. Jessica Anthony , Ms. Amy Bunnell, Ms. Amanda Mitchell, Ms. Margie Propp, Mr. Jonathan Scherling, Ms. Debra Smith, Ms. Anne Thomas, Ms. Amy Tyler-Krings, Ms. Cindy Koch

**Members Absent:** Mr. Todd Luther, Mr. Jonathan Arteaga, Ms. Susan Petersen, Ms. Vicki Steinhauer-Campbell

**NCDHH Staff Present:** Mr. John Wyvill,Ms. Jessica Larrison

**Technical Assistance Guides Present:** Ms. Amy Rhone, Director, Office of Special Education at NDE

**Technical Assistance Guides Absent:** Ms. Heather Pohl, Ms. Teresa Coonts, Mr. Cole Johnson

**Guest:**

**Meeting Called to order:** by Mr. Jonathan Scherling at 11:06 AM

Mr. Jonathan Scherling announced the notice of the meeting was duly given, posted, published, and tendered in compliance with the Open Meetings Act, and all board members received notice simultaneously by email. Materials used by the Commission and our meeting today is in a public folder in accordance with the Open Meeting Act Nebraska Revised Statute 84-1412.

**Review and Approval of Agenda:** Everyone agreed with Agenda.

**Assessment Instruments and Milestones Subcommittee Update:** Ms. Anne Thomas stated the committee has met every month so far and has been hard at work going over assessments. The group has come up with a list of assessments that are currently being used and other assessments other LEAD-K groups are using and are going through the process of finalizing those. When they discuss milestones timeline and frequency of reporting they decided to wait as it all will depend on the assessments that the team chooses and that will guide the milestones as most assessments have milestones in and of themselves.

**Qualification and Training Subcommittee Update:** Ms. Sue Petersen was absent and in her replacement, she has Ms. Jessica Larrison present for her. This group has had multiple discussion about having the assessment provider take and ASL qualification test like the SLPI (sign language proficiency Interview, from RIT) or ASLPI (American Sign Language Performance Interview, by Gallaudet). They are discussing if they will allow both assessments and just put down the level they should achieve for or if they will recommend one over the other. Along with the Provider meeting a certain level of ASL proficiency, they also are considering a Deaf neutral party to be present.

Ms. Amy Bunnel states that if the providers are going to be school district employees that are administering the assessments because they're part of the individual education plan team or the individualized family service plan team, they already have to meet certain credentials under our rules and regulations and certification procedures so asking them for additional requirements would be unfunded and it’s not a rule or law that requires this.

Ms. Amanda Mitchell states most colleges already require their Teacher of the Deaf to ask these test prior to graduating.

Ms. Anne Thomas asked for clarification on if they are asking all of the providers to get the test or just a few.

Ms. Jessica Larrison stated the group discussed having a few people per region to administer the assessments to help with the likelihood they will follow all of the recommendations and to help with cost but also to show they have the knowledge to assess this language.

Ms. Amy Bunnel asked if a team is working with a child and they do not have a person that is proficient in ASL where are they going to get the person or pay the training to be done.

Ms. Jonathan Scherling: what does the deaf neutral person need as a requirement?

Ms. Jessica Larrison stated to Amy b question that is the implementation committee and Jonathan we are still considering if they will take the certification or not.

Ms. Amy Rhone the team is determined by federal law and mirrored at the state level so unless we want to change the law we cannot determine who part of the team is. The MDT team determines who does the assessments but the team members for 0-3 are ultimately up to the parents.

Ms. Jessica Larrison, the point of the deaf neutral party is to bring an aspect to the families that they are not exposed to and to help give parents more option that are not typically presented to the families and to help the child if the family wants their involvement to help with language. Another issue is a lot of families who get assessments done by someone who isn’t familiar with Deafness labels the child as multiple disability (deaf plus) and then when they get assessed by a professional in the language they are determined to not have as many issues and more language than the original assessment. This can hurt families getting an incorrect label due to lack of knowledge.

**Reporting Results and Database Subcommittee Update:** Mr. Mike Brummer has resigned from LEAD-K and in results; this committee no longer has a Chair. This committee has only met one time and was going to wait until later to meet in order to get a more information from each subcommittee. In the meantime, they were working on drafting up a final report layout to make it easier to add information as new information comes along.

Ms. Jessica Larrison asked volunteers to become the chair of this committee.

Ms. Anne Thomas volunteered.

Mr. Jonathan Scherling said she could think on it and let us know if she changes her mind and thanked her for volunteering.

**Considerations Related to Implementation Update:** Ms. Amanda Mitchell stated the group has had a discussion on having NDE sent out information to families related to LEAD-K to schools and service providers. This means making sure the IFSP and IEP team know about LEAD-K and can inform the families if they have not already been exposed to this and clearly and effectively give the families the reason behind LEAD-K.

Mr. Scherling asked if anyone opposed and seeing no hands, this recommendation has passed.

Ms. Amanda Mitchell said the next thing her group discussed was having a deaf person involved or in charge of making sure, the families get information that works at NDE.

Ms. Anne Thomas stated she liked the idea of having one person in charge of dissemination the information compared to multiple people, as some people might not do it and other will.

Ms. Amy Bunnel stated that there is a hierarchy in NDE in charge of birth to five to come up with language like, the office of special education and the Nebraska Department of Education will be the lead contact and warehouse of this information and be the lead distributor.

Ms. Amy Rhone stated the fiscal note on the bill was dropped so there is no funding to hire a person for NDE to be the representative but would be given to someone already hired.

Ms. Amanda Mitchell said this is her dream and a recommendation committee so she is going to go big and recommend everything she feels would be best and NDE can do what they can and not do what they cannot.

Ms. Margie Propp said that there has been multiple discussions across all of the committees about lack of consistency in deaf education in Nebraska and it seems each region does their own thing and that is why this committee is asking one person to be in charge for the consistency aspect. I think there needs to be clarify on the job role and duty before we can vote.

Ms. Debbie Smith asked if NDE could give us information of the hierarchy at NDE and whom it works so this committee can figure out the roles and duties along with the verbiage to use when recommending this role again in September.

**Next Meeting Date:** September 18th, 2021 at 10 Am to 12 PM in Omaha.

**Public Comments:** New Mexico had a recommendation for this committee.

Ms. Jessica Larrison shared NM report stating their team meets once every quarter to discuss the pros and cons of what has been happening along with any unfinished business related to LEAD-K. They also recommended that the biggest thing they did was have a deaf early visual communication specialist work with the early interventionist and the SLP. NM also states they have on going training for the team that administers these assessments or is involved with the families. One of the assessment tools they use and said has been successful is the VCSL, which is the visual communication sign language assessment that is being discussed currently in the assessment committee and the McArthur test that they liked as well.

**Old Business:** none

**New Business:** Mr. Mike Brummer resigned from the committee and currently we do not have a replacement for him or a vice chair of the full committee. Mr. Jonathan Scherling said he would be find without a vice chair, as the committee is small and works well together.

**Adjourn** 2:12 PM the meeting was adjourned by Mr. Jonathan Scherling