

**LOUISIANA COMMISSION FOR THE DEAF**

**Board of Commissioners**

February 21, 2025 9:00am-12:00pm

Minutes

**I. Roll Call & Introductions**

1. Meeting called to order by Dr. Natalie Delgado 9:15am
2. Members Present: Dr. Natalie Delgado, Dr. Ashley Argrave; Sherry Powell proxy Aaron McGee; Denise Crochet proxy Leslie Knowles; Dr. David Martin proxy Lynne Gomez; Meredith Jordan, Senator Caleb Kleinpeter, Jamar Ennis, Dr. Megan Wimberly, Cammy Gaspar, Melissa Bayham, Bethany Blackston, Marissa Ramos, Brad Wellons,

14 present, quorum is established

1. Members Absent: HOH Representative (vacant), Deaf Representative (vacant), LAD representative, Office of Behavioral Health (vacant)
2. LCD Staff: Jana Broussard, Jazmyne Lemar, Brittany Welch, Charlotte Parker, Vanessa Magnon, Victoria Regueira
3. Ancillary support: Interpreters- Sylvie Sullivan, Malachi Mooney, Annette Pourciau, Jennifer Guerrieri, Live Captioning provided by CaptionThat! Lynsey Hebert.

**II. Approval of Agenda (Argrave, Ramos)**

**III. Approval of Minutes**

1. Defer to April Meeting

**III. Public Comment:**

1. Darlene Austin: related to interpreting standards, Feels there has been a lack of transparency for community standards. I had some questions regarding the standards and I see there are updates posted without input from community interpreters similar to educational interpreters.
2. Gary Morgan: representing LRID, standards and other information is not available on the website.
3. Chelsea Richard: sent via email, educational interpreter, concerned with the access for Deaf children that will be impacted. LRE handout is included in out packets.
4. Natosha Istre: educational interpreter, disappointed on the current biased against the current LDOE requirements. I feel that educational interpreters are getting inequitable treatment. There is hypocrisy within the standards and “grandfathering in” for educational and community interpreters. Strongly urge the board to reconsider the grandfather clause. Asking the LRID person to abstain.
5. Anonymous comment: We do not need to choose between raising standards for educational interpreters and not providing services for DHH children. How many children will suffer while we are trying to improve interpreting standards? I believe we can do both at the same time and focus on how to meet both needs at the same time. Many educational interpreters cannot afford to go back to school to earn required degree for interpreting, and should be “grandfathered in”.

**IV. Mandate Review:**

1. LCD Director Jana Broussard- lead background and update on information on the process of interpreting progress. (insert letter?). LCD has hosted town halls, posted information, conferences, and presented information at LCD meeting.
   1. Marissa Ramos- with all the focus groups and surveys was this specifically for interpreting standards or more general?
      1. Jana replies- the purpose of the needs assessment was to identify what to move forward with. Interpreting standards was at the top of this list and this is why we have been focused on this. Last town hall was in October 2024 related to educational interpreters and community interpreters but a lot of focus was on educational interpreters. Want to continue to stay transparent but this has been public for 5 years. We are working on the notice of intent.
   2. Dr. Ashley Argrave- Just clarification, the board did receive an original draft.
   3. Bethany Blackson- Today is the day that we discuss all edits and changes and allow for edits and then re-release to allow for feedback and changes.
   4. Shane Bates- legal support LDH, this process will take a few weeks for the Letter of Intent and then moved to the legislative fiscal office, then to the office of State Register (around May), then a public comment will be allowed for about 20 days, then another Legislative Review, them hopefully a rule can be published by August 20, 2025, but if there are any changes or edits, it may halt the process. There are more times for public comment as well.
   5. **MOTION** to move to committee of Whole (Knowles, Gaspar). We will discuss each slide with no Motions. None opposed. Motion carries.

**VI. New Business**

1. **Proposed Rules for American Sign Language Interpreters Working in K-12 Education Settings- receive recommendations from board adhoc group regarding transition and timeline for existing Louisiana Department of Education interpreters**
   1. **Public Comment:**
      1. Anonymous: I thought the Board was against the “grandfathering” for the education interpreting standards, but they are conserving a “grandfathering” under community standards.
      2. Anonymous: Under the proposed new standards, can a Deaf person request an uncertified interpreter? Will consumers lose their preferred interpreters?
   2. **Review of Slides** 
      1. **Board comments:** 
         1. Dr. Wimberly: Are CDI included?
            1. Jana- CDI standards are included but we did take out CDI provisional, not because it is not important. However, there is not a lot of data and NO data on the demand in Louisiana. We have been working with some CDI to gather some info on the provisional. Court interpreters and CDI are next.
         2. Leslie Knowles-add supervised generalist as well to the slides.
            1. Jana- yes, we want to include all.
         3. Lynne Gomez- comment about the degree requirements say “high school or equivalent” however; the certification agencies themselves LRID and BEI both require degree requirements. RID has an alternative pathway and BEI requires 30 hours of college credit hours.
         4. Dr. Megan Wimberly: Is the BEI knowledge requirement and RID knowledge requirement equivalent? It is my understanding that BEI doesn’t include Deaf culture and other aspects.
            1. Jana- Many other states recognize and accept BEI with no issues.
         5. Brad Wellons: I don’t want to give more barriers to certification. I think that maybe we can accept CEU’s or maybe require part of the CEU’s be specifically related to Deaf Culture.
         6. Jana Broussard- If we add the RID written to any BEI interpreter, then BEI candidates will be required to take 4 tests to become certified. There is only 2 for RID. It will look biased if we require another test for BEI candidates. Is this a position we want to take as a government agency?
         7. Lynne Gomez: LRID looks at 3 components to become a certified interpreter. We don’t know what BEI requires because their website doesn’t outline what they look like. I do think there needs to be an RID written test added to the BEI requirement. SSD also agrees with this statement.
         8. Dr. Ashley Argrave: I agree there needs to be some level of Deaf Cultural component.
         9. Jana: There are requirements also outlined to maintain the BEI certification as well as RID. These certifications are still required by their own governing bodies.
         10. Dr. Megan Wimberly: what is considered a formal organization or program? How does one receive formal mentoring hours?
             1. Jana- The program or organization need to be BEI or RID certified. Also the mentoring hours will need to sign off by the program and can be verified. A certified interpreter could also be the mentor.
         11. Leslie Knowles: Is there a criminal background check?
             1. BEI and RID do not require that. However, other agencies that hire or interpreting agencies do require background checks.
         12. **MOTION: to move out of Committee of a Whole (Blackson, Gaspar) motion passed.**
         13. **MOTION: to extend meeting to 1:00 pm (Gomez, Knowles) Roll Call vote: 11 yes, 2 stay for 30 minutes (Argrave, Ramos) - motions carries.**
         14. **MOTION (Gaspar, Knowles) back to committee as a whole. Motion passed.**
         15. Ramos: suggesting revision to unsupervised: maybe having a check in or keep a log.
         16. **MOTION to move out of Committee of a Whole (Ramos, Wimberly) motion passed.**
         17. **MOTION: to extend meeting to 1:40pm (Ramos, Gomez) motion carries.**
         18. **MOTION: change the education requirement language on slide seven to what is recommended by the test instead of high school diploma (Ramos, Gaspar) motion carries.**
         19. **MOTION: add temporary permits to second slide (Ramos, Gomez) motion carries.**
         20. **MOTION: approve slide six as is (Ramos, Wellons) motion carries.**
         21. **MOTION: to keep slide eight, proof of good standing, as is (Ramos, Gomez) motion carries.**
         22. **MOTION: approve slide nine, requirements for provisional generalist registration, as is (Ramos, Gomez) motion carries.**
         23. **MOTION: approve slides ten, eleven, and twelve, with the edit already approved to change education language requirements (Ramos, Wellons) motion carries.**
         24. **MOTION: amend motion above to also omit high school diploma on slide ten as discussed; add education K-12 registry of interpreters of the deaf certification (Ramos, Gomez) motion carries.**
         25. **MOTION: amend motion above; list BEI basic and advanced or higher. Remove or higher verbiage. (Ramos, Wellons) motion carries.**
         26. **MOTION: approve slide fourteen as is (Ramos, Wellons) motion carries.**
         27. **MOTION: add a bullet point on slide seventeen to have regular interval check-ins with supervisor. (Ramos, Gaspar) motion carries.**
         28. **MOTION: approve slides sixteen and eighteen as is (Ramos, Wellons) motion carries.**

X. **Adjourn** – 1:42 pm by Chair Dr. Natalie Delgado (Knowles, second?)