



LOUISIANA COMMISSION FOR THE DEAF

Board of Commissioners

April 12, 2024 9:00am-1:00pm

Minutes

I. Roll Call & Introductions

- A. Meeting called to order by Dr. Natalie Delgado 9:09 (delay due to technical difficulties)
- B. Members Present: Dr. Natalie Delgado, Dr. Ashley Argrave; Sajata Varner; Sherry Crosby; Sherry Powell; Denise Crochet proxy Leslie Knowles; Marissa Ramos; Dr. David Martin; Meredith Jordan, Senator Caleb Kleinpeter, Jamar Ennis, Brad Wellons, Dr. Megan Wimberly, Cammy Gaspar, LDH Melissa Garcia
-Jamar left at 11, Garcia joined after break
- C. Members Absent: House Representative (vacant), Deaf Representative (vacant), LDH Representative (vacant), Melissa Bayhem LRS representative
- D. LCD Staff: Jana Broussard, Jazmyne Lemar, Victoria Regueira, Brittany Welch, Charlotte Parker, Vanessa Magnon
- E. Ancillary support: Interpreters- Sylvie Sullivan, Malachi Mooney, Annette Pourciau, Lissa Gill, Walker Estes, Vanessa Magnon; Live Captioning provided by CaptionThat! Lynsey Hebert.

II. Approval of Agenda (Crosby, Argrave)

III. Approval of Minutes (Crosby, Wellons)

III. Public Comment:

- A. Dan Arabie: 1. Co-navigator- same services as Support Service Provider but a new term for this service. 2. I want to recommend that LCD collaborates with an agency in Austin, Texas that supports and has expertise in Deaf Blind services.
 - 1. Dr. Wimberly: Roles of Co-Navigator vs SSP, the DB advisory board is currently doing research and guidance to make decisions on the names of these providers
- B. Brandi Bordelon: I have been collaborating and having meetings with agencies of emergency preparedness out of state. Some states have their own agencies for Emergency preparedness for Deaf and hard of hearing. Donna Platt is from North Carolina and is a consultant that could help support us. The Red Cross has had some delays with fire alarms.

IV. Old Business

- A. Proposed rules for LCD Administrative Code for American Sign Language Interpreters working in education settings- update on progress
 - 1. Jana Broussard: We have proposed a set of rules, but we had to take out the advisory committee. We still plan to have this committee but we had to remove this from the proposal. The draft does include waivers for special circumstances and we encourage people to consider each person and situation.
 - i. New standards will become effective July 2025 for new interpreters. Current interpreters will have until July 2026 to meet the new qualifications. We are still waiting for the Occupational Licensing committee.

2. Public Comments:
 - i. Email: Letter from an interpreter
 - ii. Lainey Trahan: ASL educational interpreter lead at a Louisiana Public School System. She describes that the 4.0 qualification will further harm Deaf education because it will eliminate many interpreters who may not meet the degree requirement or the 4.0 EIPA minimum. The “case by case” basis seems vague and may put many jobs in jeopardy. This will also limit the pool of all interpreters available. Further, another degree whether associates or bachelors would not give a salary incentive and in fact would put a financial burden on interpreters. As an educational interpreter, we feel we have not been included in the process and decisions.
 - iii. Christa Folkes: Calcasieu parish and related services director which includes interpreters. My priority is I want what's best for our students. With the new standards, we would have 1 interpreter who meets these standards because we don't have the personnel. Another example is that we have interpreters that have the EIPA requirements, they may not have the degree requirements.
3. Reply to these public comments
 - i. Dr. Wimberly: I have went through the mainstream public school system. So I am a product of it. At one time, we did discuss a grandfather clause. I like that idea. Also, Can we consider stipends to meet certain standards?
 - ii. Cammy Gaspar: parent of a Deaf child as well as a Deaf adult in mainstream programs, the lack of quality language access in education is sad. Communication is just NOT happening with interpreters. My child's interpreter is causing language deprivation to my child. Its not enough.
 - iii. Senator Kleinpeter: I have several questions. I may have some hesitations on mandating a degree requirement. What decision was made in regards with a grandfather clause?
 1. Jana Broussard: The grandfather clause mentioned is not a complete waiver, but contingent upon certain criteria. We also discussed temporary certifications as well as they transition to meet the new requirements. The board has not voted on any changes from the draft approved last October.
 2. Senator Kleinpeter: I don't agree that someone needs to have a college degree if they meet interpreter requirements.
 - iv. Dr. David Martin: SSD Director, specifically we are discussing educational interpreting, currently there is also a teacher shortage. I did mention a temporary certification as someone is in the process of working towards those requirements. This falls on the district to make sure there are supports in place and incentives are in place.
 - v. Marissa Ramos: SLP working with children, 3.5 on EIPA means that 60% of the educational information is being relayed to that child. Children are being deprived of educational information. Currency, the standards are not an acceptable measure.
 - vi. Leslie Knowles: LRID rep, educational interpreter pay is very low but that doesn't mean we need to lower the standards. We want to provide free trainings and support for educational interpreters and also partner with Delgado, LDOE, and future programs to support these new standards.
 - vii. Meredith Jordan: LDOE Sped Director, I hear a lot that we don't have enough interpreters. What I hear is not that current interpreters disagree with raising standards but that there are not enough incentives such as for training, funding for recruiting, supports for rural areas, and critical

shortage areas. We are also looking again at the ASL and interpreting Jumpstart pathways in high schools.

- viii. Senator Kleinpeter: Interpreters have a special calling. I don't want to limit people or force out interpreters who don't have these credentials yet. Our Deaf students should deserve the best but I don't want to limit the interpreters either.
 - ix. **MOTION: Dr. Wimberly: Add a transition plan of support of the standards. Motion withdrawn as this will be addressed in the fall**
 - x. Dr. Martin: recommends we go back to the committee to discuss a process that fully supports the interpreters.
 - xi. **MOTION: (Ramos, Crosby) to accept the standards as they are written, remove the transition notes and refer further questions to the advisory adhoc committee in the fall**
 - 1. Dr. David Martin: Is there an opportunity to make revisions or substitutions?
 - 2. Jana Broussard: Yes, although would propose removing the notes section for some flexibility
 - xii. **MOTION: (Martin, Argrave) send standards back to Ad Hoc committee and with specific guidance to address a substitute for the educational require (years of experience) and creating a timeline specific to achieving a 4.0 proficiency test**
 - 1. Jana Broussard: clarification: Ad Hoc Committee may or may not want to reconvene, is there alternative motion we may need to reconsider
 - 2. Dr. David Martin: The education requirement seems to be the biggest issue here. If we can't bring these new issues to the Ad Hoc since it is complete and technically no longer exists, I feel that we need to supplement the degree requirement with years of experience.
 - 3. **Amend MOTION: (Martin, Argrave) send standards back to LCD Board and with specific guidance to address a substitute for the educational require (years of experience) and creating a timeline specific to achieving a 4.0 proficiency test. 8 No, 4 yes. Motion denied.**
 - 4. **Amend MOTION: (Martin, Ramos) the board assembles a work group to review the education requirement standards that includes experience substitutions and examine the time requirement to achieve a 4.0 to vote on at the next meeting. None opposed. Motion carries.**
 - a. Commissioners volunteered for the work group: Cammy Gaspar, Meredith Jordan, Sherry Crosby, Senator Kleinpeter, Ashley Argrave, Natalie Delgado, Megan Wimberly, Marissa Ramos, David Martin
- B. Impact of SB98: Decisions regarding Act 128 on the LCD program and board structure-update on progress
- 1. Brad Wellons: Proposes that we continue to study this issue involving new administration about where should LCD exist and how much autonomy and authority do we have
 - i. Senator Kleinpeter: We will have someone from the Representatives seat here at the next meeting. Also, I did present our proposal to the new administration and they wanted us to wait. However, I will further be the liaison and your voice to the governor's office and departments so that LCD is in the best place.

- ii. Jana Broussard: There is a meeting set for next week to discuss this.

VI. New Business

- A. American Sign Language Interpreter Mentor Program- 3 year plan
1. Jazmyne Lemar: LCD to develop a mentorship program to retain and support. This will create pathways for interpreters in Louisiana which includes job shadowing internship, pre-certification, coaching, and professional development. The plan also includes details on implementation and the cost projections.
 - a. **MOTION:** (Martin, Ramos) to accept to fund this program. Leslie Knowles opposed due to line items but approved the budget. **None opposed, motion carries.**
- B. LCD FY25 Budget Proposal- postponed
- C. Vote for Vice Chair- postponed
- D. Request to change next meeting date to July 12, 2024
1. **MOTION** (Crosby,Ramos) none opposed, **motion carries**
 2. MOTION (Wimberly, no second) to extend next meeting time 9:00-3:00pm with lunch break.
 3. **MOTION:** (Ramos, Wellons) postpone Item B and Item C. **none opposed, motion carries.**

VII. Adjournment – 1:00 pm by Chair Dr.Natalie Delgado