



LOUISIANA COMMISSION FOR THE DEAF

Board of Commissioners

January 16, 2026 9:00am-1:00pm

Claiborne Building

1201 N 3rd Street, Baton Rouge, LA 70802

Meeting Minutes

I. Call to Order

II. Roll Call & Introductions

- a. The meeting was called to order by Chair Sherry Crosby at 9:00 a.m.
- b. **Members Present:** Dr. Ashley Argrave; Aaron McGee (Department of Children and Family Services, proxy); Leslie Knowles (proxy for Denise Crochet); Dr. Shirley Lewis; Dr. Megan Wimberly; Cammy Gaspar; Melissa Bayham; Marissa Ramos; Brad Wellons; Dr. Lauren Wells; Sherry Crosby; Bethany Blackson; Dr. Hope Hickerson (Office of Behavioral Health, proxy); Senator Caleb Kleinpeter, Brandy Bordelon, Jerrod Wingate Sixteen (16) members were present. One position vacant (HH). A quorum was established.
- c. **Members Absent:** Hearing Office Representative (vacant); Liam Doyle (Governor's Office).
- d. Louisiana Commission for the Deaf (LCD) staff: Jana Broussard, Jazmyne Lemar, Brittany Welch, Dr. Shanna Williams
- e. Ancillary support: Interpreters- Sylvie Sullivan, Jennifer Kerkyndal, Annette Pourciau, Jennifer Guerrieri, Live Captioning provided by CaptionThat! Lynsey Hebert.

III. Mandate Review: Chair Crosby reviewed the Commission's mandate.

IV. Public Comment

- a. Gary Morgan, Certified Interpreter
 1. Mr. Morgan stated that a previous LCD meeting referenced the formation of an interpreter adhoc committee. He indicated interest in participating and reported that he did not receive follow-up communication. He expressed concern regarding the selection process and shared his interest and availability to interpret LCD meetings.
 - i. Director Jana Broussard apologized for the oversight and clarified that an email solicitation was sent to recruit ad hoc committee members and that selections were made from respondents. She further noted LCD's interest in developing trainings specific for sign language interpreting for the Board of Commissioner future public meetings.

V: Approval of Agenda

Motion 1 to accept: (Argrave/Wingate) None opposed, agenda approved

VI. Approval of Minutes

- a. Meeting July 11, 2025

Motion 2 to accept: (Wellons/Blackson) None opposed, minutes approved.

- b. Meeting October 17, 2025

Motion 3 to accept: (Wimberly/Wingate) None opposed, minutes approved.

VII. Old Business

a. Notices of Intent

- i. Proposed rules for minimum qualification standards for sign language interpreters in educational and community settings.
 1. Status update on rulemaking and registration timeline
 - a. Director Broussard reported the standards are under review by the Occupational Licensing Review Program. An update is expected within one week, after which the proposal will be sent to the Second Oversight Committee of the Louisiana Legislature. Upon Second oversight approval, the standards will be published in the Louisiana Register.

b. Community Based Services- Requests for Information - Update:

- i. Interpreter Mentorship Program- Director Broussard reported receipt of four (4) applications for the Interpreter Mentorship Program.
- ii. Regional Support Centers for the Deaf: Director Broussard reported receipt of eight (8) applications for Regional Support Centers.
- iii. Communication Access Services: Director Broussard reported receipt of (5) applications for Communication Access Services.

An internal evaluation committee has been formed and application scoring is underway.

- c. **Commission Subcommittee Update-** deferred to after New Business A due to external presentation by Innivee Strategies
- d. **DeafBlind Advisory Committee Update-** deferred to after New Business A due to external presentation by Innivee Strategies
- e. **Executive Committee Update-** deferred to after New Business A due to external presentation by Innivee Strategies
- f. **Mental Health Workgroup Update-** deferred to after New Business A due to external presentation by Innivee Strategies

VIII: New Business

a. Strategic Plan Report (FY2027-2029) 10:00am

- i. Innivee Strategies presentation delivered by Davin Searls via Zoom.

1. Proposed Statements Reviewed:

- a. **Vision:** A Louisiana where d/Deaf, Deafblind, and hard of hearing people thrive and contribute fully.
- b. **Mission:** To engage, empower, and enrich the lives and opportunities of Louisiana's Deaf, Deafblind, and hard of hearing people.

c. Purpose:

- i. Engage: change occurs through collective action. All Louisianans must engage, learn, and advocate together to build a better Louisiana for Deaf people.
- ii. Empower: Empowerment is shared. We strengthen deaf self-advocacy and provide allies with the knowledge to champion change.
- iii. Enrich: When deaf Louisianans thrive, all of Louisiana thrives. Enriching the deaf community benefits the entire state through their leadership, experiences, and culture.

d. Values:

- i. Advocacy: We use our authorities to challenge barriers, influence policy, and hold systems accountable when deaf, DeafBlind, and hard of hearing needs are not met.
- ii. Accountability: We hold ourselves and others accountable to meeting the needs of deaf, Deafblind, and hard of hearing people and addressing misconceptions and systematic barriers.
- iii. Accessibility: True accessibility benefits everyone. We lead by example by designing for accessibility first, not as an afterthought.
- iv. Equality: We serve all constituents with integrity and fairness, addressing disparities, and challenging injustice.
- v. Sustainability: We build lasting change through strategic partnerships and sustainable infrastructure that extends beyond any single initiative.

e. 5 Strategic Priorities:

- i. Community Communication and Reach
- ii. Community Leadership and Governance
- iii. Inclusive Service Delivery
- iv. Older Adults and Disability Care Standards
- v. Early Intervention, Educational Excellence, and Leadership

2. **Discussion:** Upon approval of the Mission, Vision, Purpose, Values, and Priorities, Dr. Wimberly asked whether timelines were associated with the strategic priorities. Mr. Searls explained the plan emphasizes “what” the Commission will pursue, with implementation details to be determined by the Director. Recommendations from the ad hoc group will be shared with Director Broussard.

Motion 4 to approve Strategic Plan: (Wimberly/Gaspar) None opposed; Motion passed

IX. Old Business (Continued)

b. Organizational Requests for Information

- i. Commissioner Wellons asked whether contractors would serve statewide or regionally. Director Broussard confirmed services are statewide but may be provided by different organizations serving multiple regions. No further action was taken on this item.

c. Commission Sub Committees

- i. Executive Committee Update

1. **Executive Director Search:** Vice chair Crosby shared proposal from Innivee Strategies to facilitate the search for Executive Director. Commissioner Ramos inquired about expediting the executive search process. Director Broussard noted state contracting procedures require extended timelines, with posting anticipated in July.

Motion 5 to accept proposal as written: (Wellons/ Wingate) none opposed; motion passed.

- ii. **Mental Health Workgroup:** Commissioner Ramos reported delays in the workgroup meeting due to staffing changes at Louisiana Department of Health and Office of Behavioral Health and requested assistance with contacts. Dr. Hickerson, Mr. Wellons, Mr. Wingate, and Ms. Bordelon volunteered to assist.
- iii. **DeafBlind Advisory Committee:** Dr. Wimberly requested an update regarding collaboration with Louisiana Rehabilitation Services. Director Broussard reported ongoing coordination efforts without a formal contract. DeafBlind Community Survey Update: Innivee Strategies has provided a proposal to facilitate this survey. Board reviewed proposal.

Motion 6 to accept proposal as written: (Wingate/Bordelon) none opposed; motion passed.

X. New Business (Continued)

- b. **Sign Language Interpreter Ad hoc Committee- Advisory Committee Proposal**
- c. Recommendations for the Creation of an Advisory Committee to Support and Inform the Board of Commissioners. Vice Chair Crosby read the recommendations from the Adhoc Committee which included: Official Name of Advisory Group; Committee's Purpose; Membership Criteria; Appointments; Terms of Membership; Officers; and Duties and Powers.
 - i. Commissioner Knowles requested additional review time due to the document's recent distribution.
 - ii. Commissioner Dr. Wimberly raised questions regarding the inclusion of educational interpreters and what the Louisiana Department of Education (LDOE) oversight, if any, would entail.
 1. Commissioner Dr. Wells (LDOE) reported on the coordination efforts with LCD and anticipated alignment of administrative processes by summer.

Motion 7 to revise Criteria section "Committee members should be familiar with their specialty fields' administrative processes." (Wimberly/Wingate) None opposed. Motion passes.

Motion 8 to accept recommendations (Wingate) No second. Motion dies.

Motion 9 to change the name of the committee to the Louisiana Sign Language Interpreter Registration Oversight Committee: (Knowles/Gaspar) none opposed, Motion passes.

Motion 10 to accept the recommendations as amended. (Wingate, Wellons) None opposed. Motion passes.

- d. **Deaf Interpreter Workgroup:** preliminary review of proposed minimum qualification standards for Deaf Sign Language Interpreters.

- i. Vice Chair Crosby presented draft minimum qualification standards for Deaf Interpreters. A public town hall will be scheduled for further input.
- e. **Court Interpreter Workgroup:** Preliminary review of proposed minimum qualification standards for Deaf Sign Language Interpreters.
 - i. Director Broussard reported collaboration with Louisiana Supreme Court Office of Language Access. Draft of standards were reviewed.
 - 1. Commissioner Knowles requested a list of people in the court interpreter adhoc group
 - 2. Vice Chair Crosby confirmed that would be shared.

XI. Reports from LCD Director

- a. Budget review/update

XII. Reports from LCD Board Members

- a. Vice Chair Crosby acknowledged Mr. Kenny David in tribute to his sister, Connie David Holton, for her exceptional work and service to the community. (Early Report at 10:45 am during old business)
- b. Vice Chair Crosby provided an update on board membership: Dr. Natalie Delgado no longer serves as Commissioner; Sherry Powell with Department of Family and Children Services has retired; Rosalind Datson has resigned from Office of Behavioral Health; Jamar Ennis is no longer with the Governor's Office of Disability Affairs. Appreciation was expressed for their service.
- c. Vice Chair Crosby shared that the State Capital will have renovations ongoing through 2030. Maps and instructions on how to arrive at meetings were provided.

XIII. Announcements- N/A

XV. Adjourn:

Request for motion to adjourn at 12:58 pm by Vice Chair Sherry Crosby
Motion to Adjourn (Ramos/Wingate); None opposed, motion approved.