

**Kentucky Commission on the Deaf and Hard of Hearing
122nd Quarterly Commission Meeting
July 17, 2009 – Frankfort, KY
Transportation Cabinet Office Building, Room C107**

- MEMBERS PRESENT:** Ms. Nina Coyer, Dr. Patricia Freeman, Ms. Melody Bock-Freeman, Mr. Roger Augè II, Ms. Susan Brown, Ms. Michelle Niehaus, Ms. Edie Ryan, Mr. Bob Stuckey, Ms. Betty Timon and Ms. Merle Williams
- MEMBERS ABSENT:** Ms. Cristal Collins, Ms. Dodie Karr, Mr. Kevin Martin and Ms. Laurent Rawlings
- STAFF PRESENT:** Ms. Virginia L. Moore, Ms. Rowena Holloway, Ms. Anita Dowd and Mr. Derek Drury
- COMMUNICATION FACILITATORS:** Ms. Rachel Payne, Ms. Rachel Morgan, Ms. Tammy Cantrell, Ms. Rita Zirnheld (Thomas) and Ms. Laura Kogut
- VISITORS:** Mr. Ron Haynes, Ms. Jean Haynes, Mr. Ed Schickel, Ms. Barb Kibler and Ms. Barbara Young

The meeting was called to order at 1:10 P.M. Commissioner Bock-Freeman, Secretary, called roll and as there was a quorum present the meeting continued. The Secretary asked for corrections to the 121st Quarterly Commission Meeting minutes from April 25, 2009, held in Newport, KY. No corrections were offered.

Commissioner Niehaus (Commissioner Brown) MOVED TO ACCEPT the minutes from the 121st Quarterly Commission Meeting as read. The motion carried.

The Secretary asked for corrections to the minutes from the Special Commission Meeting held on May 18, 2009. No corrections were offered.

Commissioner Brown (Commissioner Stuckey) MOVED TO ACCEPT the minutes from the Special Commission Meeting as read. The motion carried.

REPORTS

Executive Board Report:

During the June 24, 2009, Executive Board meeting, the following was discussed:

Telecommunications Access Program (TAP)

- The Executive Board discussed wireless distribution regulations, options for the vendor contract, and methods for successfully including wireless in the TAP.

Several plans were discussed and the Executive Board recommended a plan that would require consumers to pay a small portion of the monthly service charge.

- Details of the Request for Proposal (RFP) were discussed and approved by members for recommendation to the full Commission Board. Once approved, the RFP will be submitted to the Finance and Administration Cabinet for posting of the bid.
- Distribution of wireless devices is anticipated to begin this fall. Applications are being taken now and a waiting list compiled.

General Business:

- Per commissioner request, the history of Board members receiving a small payment for attending agency meetings, in addition to reimbursement for travel expenses, was revisited.
- The status of the implementation plan from the Department of Education following the 2005 American Institutes for Research (AIR) report was discussed.
- Options were reviewed for ensuring the KCDHH booth will be fully staffed during the Kentucky State Fair 2009.
- Further details of all discussions will be provided later in the meeting per the agenda.

THE EXECUTIVE BOARD REPORT WAS ACCEPTED WITHOUT CORRECTION.

Department of Education/American Institutes for Research Report:

The Acting Executive Director introduced Ms. Barb Kibler of the Kentucky Department of Education (KDE) Director of Services for Blind, Visually Impaired, Deaf and Hard of Hearing Students. Ms. Kibler provided a report of KDE's history, initiatives and activity regarding deaf and hard of hearing students, and emphasized that stakeholders from across the state participated in analyzing topics and determining regional service needs across the state. Mr. Terry Holliday, who has been successful with initiatives for closing the student achievement gaps in his previous employment in North Carolina, was recently appointed as Commissioner. Ms. Kibler also provided the following report in regards to the 2005 AIR report:

KDE Early Intervention Services

- Focuses on children from ages 0-5 and targets mainstream students; Kentucky School for the Deaf (KSD) students; services provided on campuses including technology advancements, transition services, communication needs, services for students with multi-disabilities; and working closely with parents of identified children to make educated decisions by using statewide outreach coordinators to provide support and information.
- KDE recently met with KCDHH, the KDE Part C (Early Intervention) Program Coordinator, and the Commission for Children with Special Health Care Needs (CCSHCN) on how to improve early identification and bolster intervention services.

KSD Facilities

- The KDE Board evaluated the best means of utilizing KSD campus facilities and assets to make it the most feasible and efficient environment for education. Language was incorporated into the law to ensure funds from any sale or lease of the land would go directly to KSD, not to the state general funds.

Statewide Resource Center

- KSD serves as the Statewide Resource Center for deaf and hard of hearing students. Outreach staff is housed at the Danville campus as well as other areas of the state where services are provided.
- Staff works with the schools, parents, and students to ensure needs are met, including attending Individualized Education Plan (IEP) meetings and working to empower parents regarding the child's rights within the school system.

KDE Outreach

- KSD, the Kentucky School for the Blind, and the Kentucky Deaf-Blind Project collaborate to better provide for the needs of students with multi-disabilities. This collaboration has developed screenings to properly identify children with multi-disabilities, and it can go in to districts to help staff and parents understand the unique and multiple needs of the student.
- KDE has provided training in school systems for employees to better identify hearing loss in students and provide the services needed after identification. The screening, assessment and evaluation of each individual student at KSD will greatly improve their ability to serve the needs of each student.

General Education

- KSD has improved its technology and equipment to better serve the students; a recent example being the MegaDEAFConference hosted by KSD.
- To address the low reading level of deaf and hard of hearing students, KSD is adding 30 minutes to each school day to focus on developing students' reading, writing, oral, America Sign Language (ASL), and English skills using a recently developed screening system. Six language arts stations, donated by Eastern Kentucky University, have been set up to achieve this goal. KSD will hire an ASL Coordinator to manage and facilitate this project which approaches the child's needs from a linguistics perspective.
- KDE is developing a transition curriculum for students to follow for all stages of transition (higher education, vocation, etc.) and to get students to be more goal-oriented and focus on adult-life goals. KDE will incorporate a curriculum utilized by Gallaudet University to develop self-advocacy skills. The curriculum outlines the progress students should be making at each age/grade level, giving teachers and parents a better idea on which areas require more focus and improvement. A Work Experience Coordinator will be hired to further this curriculum.
- Senate Bill 1 passed during the 2009 Legislative session and dissolved the Commonwealth Accountability Testing System (CATS). It provides for a two-year planning period for KDE to develop a new statewide assessment system that will be accessible for deaf and hard of hearing students. Accessibility issues will be

incorporated into the new plan, but consumers should watch to ensure our concerns are brought to the forefront of the planning committee.

- Copies of the KSD Outreach Services Technical Assistance Report for 2008-2009 were passed out to attendees.

The KCDHH Board inquired about KDE's involvement in improving modes of communication at KSD, its initiatives for mainstream students, and its authority to ensure students are receiving adequate services. KDE does have the authority to investigate all complaints and to require schools to follow the student's IEP and all applicable laws. Making sure the student's IEP establishes adequate services is essential in securing those services. In partnership with KCDHH, KDE will establish training sessions for school administrators to better educate them on the needs of deaf and hard of hearing students within their district.

Board members reiterated the importance of daily communication in the comprehensive development of all students. KDE encourages language development opportunities for the student and their family and emphasizes that this be included in the child's IEP. Parental involvement is critical to the students' success. KDE will also be working with KSD administrators to re-establish communication policies on campus to provide children with more access to language models.

The Board also expressed concerns about a lack of communication among teachers and administrators in mainstream settings regarding the needs of deaf and hard of hearing students. Solving this dilemma would alleviate common obstacles and facilitate a more fluid learning environment for students. Measures also need to be taken to make sure that professionals assessing students understand the potential of each student to ensure the students receive adequate services during their educational experience.

Commissioners stated that often a student's IEP will be modified, excluding accessibility elements previously utilized to meet a goal, because of their success in the classroom. If a student reaches grade-level performance, peer-level performance, or the measurable goal, the IEP is modified and the plan utilized for success is no longer effective. Then the child begins to fail and elements may have to be reinstated in the IEP before the child succeeds again. The IEP should allow for the child to be eligible for the assistive services that have ensured success so that at-level performance is maintained. KDE does investigate such complaints to ensure that school systems are adhering to state law. Complaints concerning a specific district should be referred to KDE for attention and resolution.

The KCDHH Board and KDE discussed the possibility of including Kentucky's Department of Protection and Advocacy (P&A) in the development of a training to encourage student-directed IEP's. Students would be trained on how to self advocate and carry those skills onto to their college, work and life experiences. KDE will contact P&A to explore available options. KDE is currently utilizing the Youth Leadership Training curriculum from Gallaudet University for student advocacy trainings.

