

REALTIME FILE

D/HH/DB Council
 The School Age Subcommittee
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>> SHERRY SOUSA: So I think we will begin the meeting. And I would like to begin with Rebecca introducing our guest today Kevin Smith.

>> REBECCA LALANNE: Yeah, hi, everyone. So I want to introduce -- we invited Kevin Smith today to join our meeting. And he's a Hard of Hearing individual and also a foster of children. So I thought that he would have great benefit to be here today, because we like to see his perspective on the process. So I'm super happy that you came, Kevin. Thank you so much.

>> KEVIN SMITH: Welcome. Really glad to be here.

>> SHERRY SOUSA: Welcome, Kevin. Thank you so much. We have been really lucky to have a variety of stakeholders participate in our meeting. And each time they bring such an important perspective as we do this work. So thank you for giving us your time and being here today. Much appreciated.

>> KEVIN SMITH: Absolutely.

>> SHERRY SOUSA: Great. So I'm going to open the meeting at 12:05. Our first piece of work is reviewing and accepting the meeting summary from May 9th. Can I have a motion from someone to accept the minutes from May 9th?

>> REBECCA LALANNE: I put forth a motion, yes.

>> SHERRY SOUSA: Jacqui, can you second?

>> JACQUI KELLEHER: Second.

>> SHERRY SOUSA: Thank you. Anyone not in favor of approving the minutes? Great. So the minutes for May 9th are accepted and approved and can now be posted. So our next piece of work and my understanding is Sharon will be joining us. She's remote and trying to find a good connection.

So we are to look at our final indicators, and I can share that screen. Are there

any adjustments to the agenda before I move forward? It's a small group, so we should be able to be pretty efficient. So I'm going to share my screen. And I'm going to turn off my video. Great. Perfect.

So our last piece of work is to look at the last two indicators in terms of a review. And I'm just going to scroll up a little bit. This is the work that Sharon and Jen did. So neither are here, so be kind. The first piece -- so just for Kevin to know, we've looked at all of the NASDSE indicators for quality programming, and we have kind of converted them into evidences so that we can then have program self-assess their capacities and meet the needs of those students that are deaf, Hard of Hearing, DeafBlind. We reviewed seven elements. We're now on indicator number nine.

This one focuses on qualified providers. So providers of Deaf, Hard of Hearing, DeafBlind services must meet professional standards that include minimal qualifications and ongoing performance evaluations and be provided relevant, professional development opportunities. So the program staff needs to advocate for and document that. All service providers are appropriately licensed, certified, and trained and meet minimum qualifications.

So there are some questions regarding licensure. I know Tracy put on the side note. I'm just going to try and pull this up a little bit. I know how I can get over there. She was concerned that this was too vague. That this was too vague. The minimal requirement for providers delivering the direct and consultation needs to be state licensed educators with a TOD endorsement and licensed SLPs with ASHA certification or AAA or PACT certification.

So all service delivery providers are appropriately licensed/certified and trained and qualified. So having that as an addendum. And the evidence is licensure training, qualifications of service delivery providers are collected and maintained by program. Any feedback on that part of the indicator?

>> KEVIN SMITH: This is Kevin. Do you mind if I speak?

>> SHERRY SOUSA: Oh, please.

>> KEVIN SMITH: It seems -- so I'm not sure what kind of discussions there were before about this topic. Myself, my own personal opinion is that, you know, pieces of paper that certify things are valueless. When it comes to educational interpreters, I am -- no offense to anyone, but I am -- the skill is not there. And English language speaking children have access to native masters of their language.

So I'm not sure if that's addressed somewhere else in the document. I can see someone being fluent signer, you know, one of the best interpreters out there. And I know that there's a shortage of these in the state. And what I know is that most of these positions are being filled by people who recently graduated and are not very competent. Even though they have a piece of paper, a license or a certificate.

>> SHERRY SOUSA: Thank you, Kevin. I think that's really important to talk

about the experience. The dilemma we were trying to figure out was beyond these licenses, what other tool could a program provide that it would indicate they have an individual with competency. And the challenge is exactly what you're saying, Kevin. I'm hiring special ed teachers right now. I can't find competent individuals.

In fact, the Agency of Education is now allowed certain level of paraeducators to operate as special education case managers with expectations. We are so challenged by finding people who have the skill set. However, on the other hand I think having that expectation out there is really important. Any thoughts in terms of what would be additional documentation that would demonstrate that level of competency? Is there another assessment or tool that could be used that you could think of, Kevin, or others?

>> KEVIN SMITH: Yeah, I mean, nothing specific that is coming to mind. I'm just thinking, though, of screening; right? So some way a -- of assessing mastery of the language. And then conditional. Like we expect to see incredible improvement. You know what I mean?

>> SHERRY SOUSA: I forgot to start the recording. Because I want to capture that. So lit me type into this. And maybe Tracy -- I mean Jacqui, do you have any ideas?

>> JACQUI KELLEHER: Not on a particular assessment. Oh, my video. Sorry. Yeah, not on a particular assessment offhand. But I think that's good to highlight so that maybe we can do some further look.

>> SHERRY SOUSA: I'm sorry. Kevin, does this capture that other assessments that would indicate a higher level of fluency with ASL? Is that the best way to describe what you're concerned about?

>> KEVIN SMITH: Yes. It -- it does -- yeah. I think it does. I wonder if Rebecca has any thought.

>> REBECCA LALANNE: Yeah, sorry. Yes. I agree, Kevin, with what you're saying. And again, the program. Who is the program that we're referring to? You know? Is it who's assessing that person's qualifications? You know, who would be doing those assessments for that particular program to assess quality of the skill?

I mean, that's really the point. We need to make sure it's a high level of proficiency with language use. I mean, do novice interpreters start with that level of knowledge? Some do, maybe. Some are great fits for educational interpreting right after graduation. But still, some are not. So really having the ability to assess and screen interpreters for particular situations, I think, is essential.

>> SHERRY SOUSA: Yes, that's helpful there. Because that's an often a comment from families and those receiving services around the level of competency of the individual who's providing those services. And I think Tracy and Jen had some ideas and we just need to capture those. Knowing perfectly well the other part of it is the challenge we're finding with staffing and Kevin you noted it. It's incredibly difficult to get

people with that level of skill set.

The next indicator is --

>> AMELIA BRIGGS: This is Amelia. Can I jump in quickly?

>> SHERRY SOUSA: Please.

>> AMELIA BRIGGS: Sorry I'm a little bit late. Zoom wasn't working. But I think there's National Association of the Deaf does use the ASL proficiency interview process to give all of the ASL interpreters -- give your ASL language a level. So I don't know if that's something we want to put in there as a basis or standard.

>> SHERRY SOUSA: Use of the ASL -- one more time?

>> AMELIA BRIGGS: I believe it's the -- thank you, Rebecca. ASLP. It's the American Sign Language Proficiency Interview.

>> INTERPRETER: Going to switch interpreters for a moment. If you'll give us a moment.

>> AMELIA BRIGGS: I think that's a national standard, Rebecca, I think correct me if I'm wrong that's being used a lot to try to get more of a standard for the interpreters.

>> SHERRY SOUSA: Great. I will add that in there. We'll see if there's anything else. Do you think that's the standard? For assessing the fluency and proficiency?

>> AMELIA BRIGGS: You know, from -- I don't know everything, but from what I've researched and read about, that's one of the main standards. I guess there's not that many out there. Again, John or Rebecca might have a better answer.

>> SHERRY SOUSA: Okay, great. So let's include that. I'm going to I think change my notes then.

>> REBECCA LALANNE: Yes, I think they do tend to use that proficiency exam. And then it would be exactly the skills that they may be looking for. And equivalency screening proficiency tests. It runs the gamut to different levels, basic levels to level four, something like that. So they use those screenings as well. So it may be appropriate for us to -- they check to see if the person is a signer and do a written assessment as well for their qualifications.

>> SHERRY SOUSA: Great.

>> KEVIN SMITH: And this is Kevin. Could I add I've noticed a tendency on the ground in real life for the age of the child to be considered. Well, so-and-so is not very old, don't really need the interpreter with the great fluency. That is so backwards. All minds need the best language all the time.

>> SHERRY SOUSA: Oh, I'm messing with things. Hang on. Wait a second. I am making them worse. Okay. So evidence: Licensure, training, results of the ASLP Interview and qualifications of service delivery providers are collected and maintained by program. Kevin, it's a great point. I think we've got that caught somewhere else. Do you have access to this document to look and review it in more detail?

>> KEVIN SMITH: I do have a copy of this, yes.

>> SHERRY SOUSA: Okay. So if you can see and just so we can -- if there's somewhere else that's not being captured, please email myself or Sharon and we'll make sure we embed it somewhere.

>> KEVIN SMITH: You know, I'm not sure I have a list of the stakeholders or the --

>> SHERRY SOUSA: I think Rebecca could also -- if you share with Rebecca, she could get it to us. Just in case.

>> KEVIN SMITH: Okay.

>> SHERRY SOUSA: Great. So Amelia has joined us. Sharon is on with her phone. I appreciate that. I know she's traveling. Good to have you. So we have relevant professional development is available on a regular basis. So yearly calendar for all staff provided. I think we have something similar to that previously, but that's okay.

All providers are appropriately evaluated by a professional from their respective fields. I think we had this before, but let's keep it here. Any thoughts on those two? Oops. Efforts are being made to recruit and maintain providers. Teachers of the Deaf, Hard of Hearing students, and special instructional support personnel. And the documentation of the evidence is documentation of recruitment. And then provided to staff in rural areas to address their travel, working in isolation, and other conditions unique to rural settings.

And the question is there do we want to include this one. So I -- the question is I've begun to format the document. We are going to need to cut. So is this something we can live without as we think about kind of tightening up the document?

>> KEVIN SMITH: Which part?

>> SHERRY SOUSA: Just the additional supports are provided to staff who serve students in rural areas. That point there. I'm not sure what the evidence would be.

>> AMELIA BRIGGS: This is Amelia. I think we can live without it, because there's other parts of the document that talks about training for the service providers. And so I think -- I'd like to think that those would support the staff no matter where they're working.

>> SHARON HENRY: Hi, this is Sharon. Most of Vermont is rural. So by definition, we have to be doing that.

>> SHERRY SOUSA: Makes sense to me too. Unless there's some complaint, I'm going to take that one out. So the last indicator was state leadership and collaboration --

>> JACQUI KELLEHER: Sherry, I'm sorry. My hand was up. This is Jacqui.

>> SHERRY SOUSA: Sorry I can only see part of the screen so just jump in.

>> JACQUI KELLEHER: On the recruitment and retention piece, does anyone have recruitment steps instead of practices? I'm asking that because that's actually

written into Vermont rules that the LEAs take measurable steps to recruit, hire, train, and retain highly qualified personnel. Again, that's specific to special ed. But I think that's an important point. It's also the state role.

>> SHERRY SOUSA: I think that's great. And I think that documentation of recruitment and retention -- I think that's really an important piece.

>> JACQUI KELLEHER: Yes. Thank you.

>> SHERRY SOUSA: Great. Thank you. So number ten is the state piece. I'm going to go over like this a little bit. So state leadership and collaboration, strong state and local leadership with effective collaboration among key stakeholders, parents, Deaf and Hard of Hearing consumers, DeafBlind consumers, state and local educators and programs and advocacy organizations is key to successful systems of delivery of programs and services. So to provide a perspective on how students who are Deaf or Hard of Hearing or DeafBlind are performing from year to year, the Agency of Education should report annual student assessment results for language and literacy. Jacqui, is that even an option?

>> JACQUI KELLEHER: Yeah, thank you. That's a great question. And I know this is frustrating for everybody including myself. But the fact that in disaggregating our data around statewide assessments and some of the indicator measures, because the size of the student population is so small, it's -- we can't -- legally the agency can only give us data with asterisks when the population is under ten. And especially when you get into grade level.

You know, data information everything. So what are folks' thoughts on if we were able to get an aggregate. Like three years combined together? Or where we're still seeing by grade or by age, by the breakdown of the disability category. How can we get what we need given that dilemma? I believe it's a federal mandate in terms of reporting that we can't -- it has to be suppressed. That's the language. It must be suppressed if it's under an N of ten.

>> SHERRY SOUSA: This is Sherry. I understand it is the law. Even if we compress from grades pre-k to 12 or post, we are still -- and is that small or is that by year? It's under ten?

>> JACQUI KELLEHER: Well, I believe that when we report out on the proficiency on those statewide tests, it's reported out by grade level and then that's when you disaggregate that by category, that's when the numbers get smaller and smaller. So it's easy to report. Students with disabilities compared to students without disabilities. You know, that's a big size.

I'm not here pushing back at all. I'm actually looking for problem solving, giving here we are. What would be useful to us annually that we could expect a report out on performance?

>> SHERRY SOUSA: And here's the question. I think this is a really good

statement. But we're remembering our task. Quality indicators is this something that should be as part of it? Because programs will not have that data opposed to the statewide collection of data.

So the indicators do the various state agencies programs and schools for the Deaf collaborate to provide a continuous placement. Is that relevant? Is there a -- I mean, these are important things, but are these indicators of an individual program's success? So that's my pushback. Is this something that should be included when we do self-assessment for programs?

>> AMELIA BRIGGS: This is Amelia. I think that's crucial. I think it's a key part to a Deaf student's education. So yeah. I think that is an indicator of a successful program. Whether or not parents, you know, all of those things. There's collaboration. Gosh. Year to year it's so important. One month of education for a Deaf child is -- you know? You need that documentation so you can make changes quickly if need be.

You know, as far as reporting out, it's so hard because as we've discussed previously, a lot of schools don't document their kiddos as Deaf or Hard of Hearing. They just put other disabilities or multiple disabilities. And so I don't think that the count is really all that accurate for Deaf/Hard of Hearing students and DeafBlind students. Even on statewide testing. They're just being listed as other disabilities. And so I think that's -- that's something down the road we need to work on changing so that all of the students can be properly documented. But I think the collaboration is huge. It needs to be there.

>> SHARON HENRY: Hi, this is Sharon. Can I jump in here? I can't turn my video on, but can you hear me okay?

>> SHERRY SOUSA: Yes.

>> SHARON HENRY: Great. So I think that having academic proficiency -- proficiency of academic performance and logical progression data is critical. Because how will the providers know if they need to change course and alter their intervention plan? So maybe we can turn to the elementary educators and say, does it make sense to group K, 1, 2 together and 3, 4, 5 or 6, 7, 8 and get around -- not get around but respect the federal law that Jacqui's speaking about. But also access data so that we know are the interventions that the Deaf/Hard of Hearing/DeafBlind providers are making a difference in terms of academic progression.

>> SHERRY SOUSA: So the aspect data is not for every grade. It starts in third grade. So collapsing the data is -- it's more -- it's not given at every year. Jacqui, what do you think in terms of capacity to collapse -- I mean, we could do elementary and then middle school, high school. It's 3, 5, 8, 11. Is that right?

>> JACQUI KELLEHER: Yeah. We can certainly put in a data request and learn if we can have more of an -- not a cohort, but some type of aggregate grouped by grades.

>> INTERPRETER: We're going to switch the interpreter now. So if you'll give us one second. Thank you so much. We can go on.

>> JACQUI KELLEHER: The question I had, too, is it specifically talks about statewide assessment results. Can we leave it at that instead of just language and literacy and look at the performance across the area as language impacts science and the language of math. I just don't know if there was particular language and literacy was the primary focus.

>> SHARON HENRY: Hi, this is Sharon. I don't know, Jacqui, and I'm no expert. I would defer to Jen and Tracy, both of whom couldn't be here today. But I think the spirit and the intent is that we would assess all academic areas that are pertinent for progression to the next academic level and then from high school to graduation to college, blah, blah, blah, or wherever the student is heading.

So if that change in language satisfies this spirit of that, then I'm fine with that change. Again, I'm not an expert in the education arena.

>> SHERRY SOUSA: Right. So the state only collects data on English language arts, mathematics, and science. And they only do it on grades 3, 5, 8, and 11. So it's not that there's progressive data on -- and again, I'm trying to think this through. So we could get -- we can't get individual student data. The N will be too small on a specific program. Again, we're reviewing a program, not evaluating the district's capacity or the state's capacity to meet the student needs of students who are Deaf/DeafBlind/Hard of Hearing.

And the N is absolutely -- I know there are whole schools I can't report on because the schools are so small. And we don't have ten kids per grade.

>> KEVIN SMITH: Can I ask a question about that word "program" in this context? We may be talking about one student going through each grade at the school. When we say the program and services that we're trying to -- the systems of delivery, that could be as small as one kid. Correct?

>> SHERRY SOUSA: No, we're talking about a whole program that's providing services. So the purpose of this tool is when an outside program comes in and provides services for a student, they have to demonstrate that they are meeting these indicators of a quality program. So this is not the school self-evaluating. This is not the state self-evaluating. This is an independent program. It used to be, for example, nine east. They would have to present the indicators for all these pieces.

So they may not even receive the data. Because that's between the school and the parent. And the parent would have to provide the data. And again, the N is so small, is that an indicator of an individual program meeting the quality needs of a student?

>> KEVIN SMITH: Thank you.

>> SHERRY SOUSA: That's the dilemma, Kevin. So that's where I'm stuck.

>> SHARON HENRY: Hi, this is Sharon. I guess one of the things -- again, I have to fall back on my medical health care analogy here. If I'm trying to pick which center to go to or which program to use for my medical care, I look at the aggregate patient outcome data. That's the analogy I'm striving for.

So which Deaf/Hard of Hearing/DeafBlind providers are providing fabulous interventions that lead to great student outcomes? One of which is measured by their progress of their academic progression.

>> SHERRY SOUSA: We don't have access to that. And the parent would have to provide or release that information on an individual program. The program would not have access to that. The SBAC data, for example. And there's no other statewide assessment stool that is given.

>> SHARON HENRY: Okay. I guess in the spirit of the NASDSE guidelines and the AOERFP talked about using the guidelines, Jacqui, how do you see the way forward? Because the AOE has this data and can do this work not part of the evaluation of the program per se, but as part of guideline number ten where the agencies at the state level are being asked to collaborate in order to be part of the bigger picture.

>> JACQUI KELLEHER: I mean, it's not an ideal situation, but maybe the recommendation here is that the Agency of Ed reviewing the student assessment results annually for this population. You know, for the Agency of Ed could not share that publicly.

So for example, if I was -- you know, I would be able to have access to those pieces that I -- and I could report out -- I mean, I could look out -- I could do match and match personally. Or I could report out to groups found patterns and trends that were seen for participation and proficiency. I'm struggling with this one too. This data are crucial.

But it's something that the agency at least is reviewing annually and reporting out on patterns and trends. I don't know.

>> SHARON HENRY: This is Sharon. I think that's heading in the right direction, Jacqui. I think that would have to have evidence that the program is collaborating with the AOE to attend those meetings where you are reporting out those kind of data.

>> JACQUI KELLEHER: We're getting somewhere. It's there.

>> SHARON HENRY: Right. Because again, I think if we look at the spirit of the guideline, it's to have the state participate in ensuring the programming.

>> SHERRY SOUSA: So the program schedules annual meetings with AOE to review student outcomes on statewide assessment?

>> SHARON HENRY: And maybe throw the word aggregated in there so no one is confused.

>> SHERRY SOUSA: At least we know that's happening. Does that hit the essence of what we're looking for?

>> SHARON HENRY: I think it's a whole lot closer.

>> SHERRY SOUSA: It's just really challenging in this disability category -- which the team noting progress on the identified goals and objectives, that's how we do it on a student-to-student basis. However, where is the program -- and my hope is that if the other indicators are present in terms of the quality of the program and things they have to do, if we're -- and I think that's where my belief is NASDSE's orientation. The belief is that student outcomes have a higher probability of being positive.

>> SHARON HENRY: Yeah. This is Sharon. I completely agree. I think that's the intent. But then you also need the proof in the actual data. So I think -- the other thing that pops up on my screen here is does at AOE have a way to have tracking -- the IEP is very inadequate in terms of capturing the students who are Deaf, Hard of Hearing, DeafBlind because other co-occurring disabilities sort of get -- are labeled at the top level and then these other co-occurring disabilities do not get captured.

So I think Jacqui would -- to make this system really work, we would need a commitment from the AOE to change the IEP that Vermont schools are using. Same thing goes for the 504 plan to make sure the disabilities are reflected there and not just the primary one or the one that was first identified. What are your thoughts on that?

>> JACQUI KELLEHER: That serves as a good recommendation. I mean, we are currently revising our IEP forms at this moment. You know, we have the primary disability categories that reflect the federal language Deaf, DeafBlind, and hearing impairment are -- you know on districts it would be to select the disability category that best reflects the needs of the student that's being supported by that program.

>> SHERRY SOUSA: Right. This is Sherry. It should be the IEP team making the decision of what's primary, secondary, or tertiary. It's not coming from AOE in terms of how that decision is made. It's made at the IEP team level.

>> REBECCA LALANNE: Can I just jump in real quick? This is Rebecca talking. I wanted to clarify as well again, I am -- as far as background in school and education, that's not my background. But the IEP team itself selecting that -- is the IEP team selected --

>> INTERPRETER: The interpreter is going to clarify. Selected by the district or the state?

>> REBECCA LALANNE: Yes. That's my question. Who sets up that IEP team? Is it the district or the state level?

>> SHERRY SOUSA: So it's federal and state law in terms of who is on the IEP team. Has to be a parent. Has to be a teacher. Has to be someone with knowledge of the resources of the district. Any other specialists involved. So the IEP team is determined at the student level, should be their classroom teacher, specialist. So it -- who is the composition of the team comes both at the federal and state level. Right, Jacqui?

>> JACQUI KELLEHER: That is correct. The LEA form this IEP team of which our equitable members of that IEP team.

>> KEVIN SMITH: Can I add that educational surrogates for foster children or foster parents are not necessarily well informed. And so, you know, a child can go until fifth grade before getting a true advocate on their team. So I would love to see that the state is aware of this weakness and has another mechanism to balance or check.

>> SHARON HENRY: This is Sharon. Thank you for that point, Kevin. That is excellent. What I see, Jacqui, as the problem is even though the IEP determines the plan based on most needs, secondary need, tertiary need, that is not documented in the heading where disability is recorded in a way that the data are then mineable. So if the primary diagnosis is X, what the student also happens to have hearing impairment or hearing loss, that does not get documented. And Tracy and Jen were so clear on that at whatever meeting the data question got triggered -- oh, it was when Michelle John was with us.

So I think that's the problem that needs to be addressed. It's quite clear that the data that the Nine East used to give the council was disparate from what we would get from AOE in terms of numbers of children being served. So clearly the AOE is undercapturing the number of students being served for Deaf, Hard of Hearing, DeafBlind.

>> JACQUI KELLEHER: Or we're capturing what schools are reporting.

>> SHERRY SOUSA: This is Sherry. I would concur with Jacqui. On our paperwork, when a student is identified and found eligible, there is required field for primary, secondary, and tertiary. So those are documented and available. So it's not a -- it's in the software. It's an expectation. So I'm not clear where the obstacle is there from -- I know for years I had to list what was primary and secondary. So that was available.

>> SHARON HENRY: Yeah. This is Sharon. I just -- I don't know, because I'm not in the field, but I remember very explicitly that Jen and Tracy say that's not how it's working on the ground. And they sit in on way more I E P meetings than I ever have. So we can circle back to what they said when they join us next.

>> AMELIA BRIGGS: This is Amelia. That's 100% true. I heard it from other parents and I know it's true for my daughter Natalie. She's not reported to the state even though she is DeafBlind and all of her services are provided by a teacher of the Deaf. But she's not captured as that. She's captured as multiple disabilities on her IEP and that's what they report to the state.

>> SHARON HENRY: Jacqui, we've identified a key systems issue the AOE could address. So we have accurate data capture.

>> SHERRY SOUSA: So we're getting lots of good information. I'm going to bring us back to our indicators. So we have does the various agencies for the schools of the

Deaf provide a continuum, placements, services and supports for children and their families through age 21? And so -- so that -- I see the disconnect. Maybe Sharon, you guys worked on this part. Maybe it would be better to narrate. Anyway, we came up with this other tool, but maybe that evidence doesn't fit that indicator there.

>> SHARON HENRY: Yeah. This is Sharon. I'm having a hard time seeing the text on my phone. So you're going to have to continue to narrate here. Maybe because we changed the bullet above, this one doesn't make sense. But it's hard for me to read actually. I'm sorry.

>> SHERRY SOUSA: So the original text for this -- hang on one second. I'm getting weird things here. Stakeholders, parents -- is key to successful systems of delivery of programs and services. So provide a perspective on how students who are Deaf or Hard of Hearing or DeafBlind are performing from year to year. The agency should report annual student assessment results for language and literacy. I'm not sure why that's there. To me it doesn't fit in.

We did add an evidence statement. I'm not sure where it goes. I could put that after that statement. Maybe that's what makes sense. And then we do a different one -- if I paste it here for that piece. Then it seems to me that this other statement needs a different evidence. So do the various state agencies, programs, and schools for the Deaf collaborate to provide a seamless continuum of placements, services, and supports for children and their families through age 21?

>> SHARON HENRY: Hi, this is Sherry -- Sharon. I think that was the evidence there would be evidence that those various state agencies and programs actually met at different points during the year to talk about some of the various systems issues that we're talking about right now.

>> SHERRY SOUSA: Okay. So maybe I'm going to copy and paste what was below. And so it would be meeting notes with dates where Deaf educators, leaders, and parents convene to determine educational services. Is that --

>> SHARON HENRY: I'm sorry. To discuss educational services and systems issues or something like that.

>> SHERRY SOUSA: And discussion educational services and --

>> KEVIN SMITH: Systems issues.

>> SHERRY SOUSA: Thank you. All right.

>> KEVIN SMITH: Can I -- this is Kevin. Can I ask about the highlighted language right now? Language and literacy. Is there an understanding of why math and science is not also involved there? I feel like this was mentioned earlier, but I think I missed it.

>> SHERRY SOUSA: This is Sherry. This is the language that's in NASDSE.

>> KEVIN SMITH: Oh, okay.

>> SHERRY SOUSA: But if you're meeting with AOE around aggregated student

outcomes, we could put on all state assessments. You're covering not only LEA but also mathematics and science.

>> KEVIN SMITH: That would be great. I think mathematics and science are just as important.

>> SHERRY SOUSA: Yes. I agree.

>> SHARON HENRY: Hear, hear. I agree, too, Kevin.

>> SHERRY SOUSA: All right. We're still having fun. Is there a core group of strong Deaf education leaders and parents in the state to promote high quality educational services? My question is how does that refer to the program that's self-assessing? Do we need that one? I mean, I know it's important, but again, we're back on program self-assessment.

>> KEVIN SMITH: Well, wouldn't such a group like that collaborate with the program or give guidance and feedback?

>> SHARON HENRY: This is Sharon. I agree, Kevin. I think the intent here of NASDSE and what Jen and I was thinking was the program would be intersecting with organizations like Vermont Hands and Voices. Or DVOS or other state agencies. Again, to address things at a higher level -- at a systems level and ensure and brainstorm ways to solve them.

>> SHERRY SOUSA: All right. So program provides meeting notes. How about program -- just trying to kind of -- provides. How about that? So we can, again, make a correlation between the program provides --

>> JACQUI KELLEHER: And then Sherry, for the end part of that evidence, I think it's important to state educational services and systems reflect the needs of the student. Or as appropriate to concerns -- you know? We're given three different categories. Could be very different needs. I think we're trying to get rid of that one size fits all model of how we approach things.

>> SHERRY SOUSA: All right. If we're good, I'm going down to the last three bullets. We're almost at 1:00. I have to end at 1:30. I don't know about others. The next one is does this group of leaders consider the state's unique context, student assessment performance, and other key indicators when addressing issues and providing guidance to the state and local -- so is that where we have -- maybe that's where this piece where we talked about programs schedules to review aggregated student outcomes, maybe that's where it fits?

>> SHARON HENRY: This is Sharon. I think that would be a good place to put it as well.

>> SHERRY SOUSA: Okay. Let's move that down there. Okay. Next is the school district maintained connections with the state department of ed -- so this is the school district. This is not the program.

>> SHARON HENRY: This is Sharon. I think that's why the comment on the side

says I don't -- Jen and I didn't think this was part of the program's responsibility, but we left those last two bullets there so the group could discuss whether or not there was a way to pull the program in to make I want part of the program's responsibility too.

It feels to me like it's very much a responsibility of the state the way I read it. And school districts. Any other thoughts?

>> AMELIA BRIGGS: This is Amelia. I agree with Sharon.

>> SHERRY SOUSA: Rebecca or Kevin? Jacqui?

>> JACQUI KELLEHER: Can you ask -- can you reframe the question again? For these two bullets?

>> SHERRY SOUSA: So again, remembering that this are program indicators for quality programming, are these two bullets in line with what program does or is this specific to the school relationship to the department of ed?

>> JACQUI KELLEHER: Sure. If we can even do a space and do "for school districts." Have two items specific. Because I think that was part of the discussion. This tool potentially could be an important guidance document for LEAs. So I don't want to discount them at all.

>> SHERRY SOUSA: So what we've done is gone through the NASDSE chapter nine and pulled out -- there were sections specific to school districts. The ones we've incorporated are the ones specific to programs. If a school district wants to self-assess, the NASDSE has sections for that specific to districts.

>> JACQUI KELLEHER: So I guess that next bullet for me I would -- like, if we were thinking about a program that's supposed to be providing technical assistance in consultation with our districts, it would be the documentation of those consultatives and professional development offerings provided to the LEAs. Sorry, Kevin. Go ahead.

>> KEVIN SMITH: This is Kevin. I was going to add that it seems like it should be kind of the program's responsibility to facilitate the school districts getting professional development. You know, like they're kind of -- I wouldn't know if this dilutes their purpose, but they hold all this other extremely important information around Deaf, Hard of Hearing, DeafBlind kids. Why wouldn't they make it easy for each school district or school building to reach out to one place where they're always getting the best information? Hopefully.

>> SHERRY SOUSA: Kevin, I like that take on it. I think that makes sense, because districts don't know what they don't know. Hopefully a program is bringing out a level of expertise so they can bring to districts' attention that these are -- this is work they should take advantage of or opportunities. So program facilitates that the school district maintain connections with the State Department of Education that provide professional development in Deaf education in associated areas.

So that would give the program a role. How does that sound?

>> JACQUI KELLEHER: Yeah. I think the evidence we would ask for would be

the documentation of the number and nature of consultation they did with school districts. On professional development.

>> SHARON HENRY: This is Sharon. Would that be consultation for the individual student you're talking about? Or going into provide education and professional development to, let's say, ten teachers who may or may not have students who are Deaf in their classroom?

>> JACQUI KELLEHER: Yes. So it's either the delivery of that service, that consultation to those professionals. Or I would also -- there were documentation of the resources they were providing families as well.

>> SHARON HENRY: Thank you.

>> SHERRY SOUSA: Thank you. That was very helpful, Kevin. So program facilitates that capacity in the evidence, I like that. Number and nature of consultation. Number and nature could be responsive to the students they are supporting within the district. I've seen both very specific supportive programs and I've seen larger groups, teams of teachers being trained. And so I think it is really specific to the nature of the students they're supporting. Or it would be just an overview of the impact with certain classrooms.

The last one the program facilitates the school district collaborate with advocacy and other family support organizations for information that can lead to successful administrative, procedural, and legislative changes to improve outcomes for students who are Deaf or Hard of Hearing? And can we use this same kind of evidence?

>> SHARON HENRY: This is Sharon. I like we're trying to keep the two bullets in here by changing some language. I think it's critical there is collaboration and action with the AOE and other state agencies around this.

>> SHERRY SOUSA: Okay. How's that look? We did it. Can we cheer for a minute at our desks? All right. So I'm going to stop sharing. If I can. Let's see. So we have completed the review of the NASDSE chapter nine and how they are against individual programs. We have identified indicators and evidences for all those we feel that are relevant to the program.

The next steps are discussing how do we disperse the other work that needs to be in the document. And so Sharon's done a beautiful job of highlighting the pieces that are still missing. So I think if it's okay, I'll share with you what I've done thus far in terms of changing the format. Let me see if I can do this. It's not going to do it my way. So give me just a second.

Okay. So what I've done -- let me bring it up to the top. I've put the indicators in a table. The beginning of a document will include our statements, introductions, and definitions. Those are pieces that Sharon said we needed in the writing. I took each one of the essential elements, its descriptor, what the program advocates for and

documents that. What is the evidence? And then the final column is where a program would paste their links. So I'll just slowly scroll down. It is now seven pages. And that is without the work we did today. I have condensed -- I haven't changed any of the language, but I tried to condense it to a format that I think makes it easier to read and see how the information flows.

So I think it's beautiful. I would love feedback on it. Any thoughts?

>> KEVIN SMITH: Will we be able to print a copy of this to review it? I like what I see, but it's hard to judge right now.

>> SHERRY SOUSA: Sure. I think we can -- I think, Kevin, that we can download it or Rebecca can download it as give it to you as a PDF so it's not editable.

>> SHARON HENRY: This is Sharon. I like the fact that programs can just plop their links in. Again, our goal has always been to try and leverage and use existing data so that programs aren't creating unnecessary paperwork. And so that last column is all the links that they need. It'll make it easier for them as well as for the qualified reviewer who actually reviews this evidence once it's submitted to the AOE or wherever it's going to end up. So I think it's beautiful, too, Sherry. Thank you.

>> SHERRY SOUSA: I'm having troubles. I closed something and I can't -- oh. Here we go. I can't see you all, but I know you're there. How about that? Other feedback on this? So the content has not changed at all, it's just the structure. The piece that I need help with is that it is now seven pages. It will probably be eight pages by the time that I add what we accomplished today. What would be helpful for me is for each of us to review the document and put your initials in the submitted column of points you think we could live without.

And I think Sharon, you're going to have to give us a very specific email. This is too long and expecting that an individual program will be able to hit all of these indicators I think is a piece that will be incredibly challenging. So it would be -- I'm sorry. I'm going to stop share.

>> SHARON HENRY: Hi, this is Sharon. So Sherry, what if rather than eliminating pieces of evidence, what if we said submit one of these pieces of evidence? My fear is that if we eliminate something that a program actually had, and then the one that we as a small subgroup of eight decide, oh, I'm going to keep this one piece. That might be the one piece they don't have. I'm thinking of a way to offer as much flexibility as possible to programs.

>> SHERRY SOUSA: The challenge is that most of the elements have only one indicator. So it's not that -- I think it's very rare that there's more than one piece of evidence per indicator. So here is number four. Each of these in column three are the indicators. Each in column four are evidences. Now, this first one has two pieces, but none of the others have.

So it's going to be -- and as you can see, number four has about five different

indicators just for number four. So that's the challenge. And I think there's some duplication in terms of professional development. But I don't feel comfortable eliminating anything without people's permission.

>> AMELIA BRIGGS: This is Amelia. I definitely think we should go through it and read it and edit some, but I think it's a very Deaf, Hard of Hearing, DeafBlind kids are very, very complex situation. Education for these kiddos. It is -- you know, it is what it is. And if that's what the consultation or whoever program, if those are the things they need to provide, those are the things they need to provide. Step up the game. Hold people accountable. This is what our kids need. So I think we can go through and edit it, but this is what our kids need. And programs can step up to the plate and do this long evaluation of their service.

>> KEVIN SMITH: I'd like to just say I totally agree with Amelia. You know, this may not be the right time or place for this, but the school was shut down because of how expensive it was to spread out that service all over the state and make it the best that it can possibly be, it's probably going to be ten times more expensive than Austeen was. So there's no reason to shy away from this. People are leaving the state because of how bad the problem is.

>> AMELIA BRIGGS: Exactly. And these programs need to be able to provide full services. We can read through it and edit it and see if there's duplications like you said throughout it, but we need to hold people accountable.

>> REBECCA LALANNE: Yeah. And I totally agree with Kevin and Amelia. I think let's all go through and read it. We can take notes on it if we want. We can collaborate about things we find when we read it. Collaborating would be great. But all students who need services in this population are not like cookie cutter students. One size doesn't fit all. They all have their own background. They all have their own gaps in education. So we really need to have as much coverage as possible to encompass all students' needs.

Yeah. Let's read through it. We'll kind of collaborate, but yeah. I agree.

>> SHARON HENRY: Hi, this is Sharon. Okay. I'll send out an email asking everyone to read through it and please put your initial in any one of the pieces of evidence or indicators that we could consider living without. So that will be the ask. And the homework before our next meeting.

>> SHERRY SOUSA: Thank you. That was a great conversation. If we need evidence of the norms being followed in this group, you just saw that. That was a respectful conversation. I appreciate that feedback. I want to make a tool that absolutely addresses the need for high quality program. And then as a high probability. Because part of the process is now once we -- and we haven't had that conversation. We draft this assessment tool, it will move to the Agency of Education for consideration. And so we're trying to create a tool that absolutely will assess and demonstrate the program

qualities we're expecting. And that the Agency of Education could consider and amend to use as their tools. So thank you for that. And I appreciate any feedback and I know that that was -- I appreciate that you want to make sure we have as much of the quality pieces as possible. So that's great.

Some of the other pieces that we need assistance with -- so that's what I've been working on in terms of what our next steps are. In the email that Sharon sent with us, she also noted that we need documents in our appendices including the communication language plan. We need the AAA guidelines. That addresses implementation and validation procedures. We need the template for a classroom observation, a template for educational session of gen ed teachers. A template for functional evaluation in the classroom or other environments. Assessment tools for regular supervision and evaluation of service providers. And recommended list of reliable, valid tools for assessing children. There's some definitions we need. Testing available. Qualifications of reviewers and evaluation scale to judge the quality and merit of evidence. All that list -- and Sharon correct me if I'm wrong, are there pieces there that people feel they could own so we could continue to move forward in this work.

>> SHARON HENRY: Hi, this is Sharon. One thing before we try to divvy up the work. To be helpful to the AOE, do you see any other items that would be needed in the appendices?

>> JACQUI KELLEHER: It would be helpful to have the list in writing. I was trying --

>> SHARON HENRY: It's in the email that I sent out where it was listed. So if you check your email, the list is there.

>> SHERRY SOUSA: May 9th email, yeah.

>> SHARON HENRY: The reason I'm asking, Jacqui, I want to make sure we have all the documents that would be helpful to the AOE. And I believe Sherry just listed them off as well.

>> SHERRY SOUSA: So for time understanding, I have to sign off in five or ten minutes. Sharon, I don't know if you can continue on your phone. Maybe we have some tasks that need to be completed by the time we meet next week. One is reviewing the document that I shared. And two is identifying -- because not all of our team is here today -- what aspect of this list you could own. Does that make sense, Sharon?

>> SHARON HENRY: I think it does. Because I think some of the items -- Jacqui, if you could provide before next meeting what other appendices items would be needed, we need Jen and Tracy here. It really requires a professional in the field. And that's not me. They may have resources at their fingertips we're not aware of.

So I think our homework would be reviewing Sherry's document. Jacqui, you adding to the list of appendices that would be helpful to the AOE. And we'll have the list of tasks, if you will. Does that make sense?

>> JACQUI KELLEHER: Yes. I have to find the list.

>> INTERPRETER: We're going to switch the interpreter now.

>> SHERRY SOUSA: All right. For purposes of the meeting and moving us forward, so next week people -- by next week's meeting, you will review the formatted document identifying any areas you feel like we could reduce. If not, that's fine. As well as finding pieces that you could own in terms of completing that document.

The next thing on our agenda is talking about additional resources. Jen was going to talk about the Colorado School for the Deaf. Sharon, should we skip that until Jen is present?

>> SHARON HENRY: I think we should. I think there are some pieces of evidence in there she wanted our group to consider. I think we should put that off until next week.

>> SHERRY SOUSA: All right. That gets us to update on meetings with AOE. Sharon, you've done most of them. Do you want to talk about the conversations you had?

>> SHARON HENRY: Yeah. Jacqui, Chris Case, Sherry, Spencer, and I met Monday, May 9th maybe a week ago. And then on the Wednesday morning following, Chris, Spencer, and I met to follow-up to talk about timeline and logistics. And there's an email train that followed which I can share with the group. But in essence, and Jacqui chime in here, the AOE is interested to see the document and they're very much interested to collaborate. The document will be considered and Jacqui had outlined their process for reviewing and considering new documents. I'll share that with the group.

Given that the AOE had released an RFP that had the NASDSE guidelines in it, that this is a bulk of the work. That certainly was acknowledged repeatedly both in the Monday and Wednesday meeting. That said, the AOE does have its own process. And so the tool that is used may look something like this. It might not look anything like this. It could be a hybrid. When the AOE assesses a program or a vendor, I should say, it doesn't only use one tool. So this could be a tool in their evaluation tool kit.

So I think we're looking forward to collaborating with them. Again, we all have the same goal. We have two same goals. One is ensuring high-quality services for our Deaf/Hard of Hearing/DeafBlind children. We also have the same goal of the use of the NASDSE guidelines which is in the draft. So we have two common points of interest from which we can plan our collaboration and our efforts and be neutrally helpful to one another. Jacqui, I'll let you add to that.

>> JACQUI KELLEHER: No, I think that sums it up. Sharon and Sherry were able to see that there is a pretty intense internal and external process. For any of the new documents, any of the new guidance, any of the things we are putting in place, it involves a lot of different players. Yeah. So appreciate everybody's patience. This is something when we receive the finalized version of something I'm able to share out with

all those people that we listed. And they're going to -- they'll weigh in. They'll have input. Have you considered this? Have you considered that? And so it will be the base for some robust discussions about what can be utilized from this important work that the subcommittee is doing.

>> SHARON HENRY: And Jacqui, can you share with the subcommittee what your intent was including in a couple different spots in the 2022 RFP dimensions of the NASDSE guidelines.

>> JACQUI KELLEHER: Sure. With the evaluation RFP, to be coming out just for the school year. The counsel and collaboration with AOE, we've had conversations about what this grant allocations look like. It does not have to be this. We have flexibility. That said, for this year there are -- I received 11 emails of comments. We were able to review through those and for this one year grant application, we were able to take and apply it. And certainly highlighting the NASDSE has standards that strongly recommend seeing. Including standards to base measurable goals, objectives, and evaluation plan. This is a new addition to the RFP. The emphasis was standards based and we're strongly recommending the NASDSE piece.

Yeah. It was at least three areas where we featured it. You know, we put a link into the NASDSE guidelines themselves within that RFP to further drive it home. So yeah. Definitely see the potential in utilizing this tool and perhaps piloting aspects of this tool sooner rather than later. But without getting too far in the weeds, again, I'm looking forward to school year '22-'23 where we talk about really what we want to do with this grant allocation. But for now I wanted to say it is a more rigorous application with the expectations and requirements and NASDSE has highlighted as a key component.

>> SHARON HENRY: So you're expecting the successful vendor to submit some of the evidence outlined in the ten principles. Is that what you mean?

>> JACQUI KELLEHER: Well, I mean, they're -- with the emphasis this year is to have an evaluation plan to be able to report on outcomes, to report data, also show there's the technical skills to be engaged in data collection and evidence base collection.

That part was largely informed by the many people that provided comments, the work that we've been doing over the past few months. That's pretty much the update at this point for school year '22-'23. Again, this tool is something that we need to route through several different people that we can -- there are we can begin piloting as part of the review process.

>> SHARON HENRY: Super thankful. Thank you. And the last question Jen had wanted me to ask you was what is the status of the communication plan with the AOE right now? We discussed whether or not we should include a sample of it in our appendices of this document that we put forth?

>> JACQUI KELLEHER: I think it's important to include in the appendices. The

plan has not made it in terms of it has not made it to IMP.

>> SHARON HENRY: Oh. Maybe Jen didn't have the right information. She told me it was to the AOE. We'll have to get you and her together to maybe sort that out. She thought it was with the AOE. Thank you.

>> SHERRY SOUSA: All right. I have two minutes. Anything else for the good of the order or the group wanted to share before we sign off?

>> SHARON HENRY: So this is Sharon. Jacqui, who is coming next time? I'm confused by your email.

>> JACQUI KELLEHER: Thanks, everyone. We did hear from Dawn and Lisa. And I also shared with you Dan's feedback just before this meeting started. I was able to talk to him by phone and he gave me those bullets. And then Cassie is supposed to send her feedback this afternoon. The next two meetings, we have Lisa Johnson and Dawn Campbell as LEA directors. Lisa's elementary. Dawn is secondary. Both have experience in this area and working and collaborating with teams and students who experience hearing impairment, deaf, deafblindness. Dawn is also newly elected to the special ed advisory panel that is federally required and advises the AOE on unmet needs of students with disabilities. So that's another nice collaborative link to have. So they'll be with us for the 25th and they can make the June meeting too.

>> SHARON HENRY: Super. Thanks for helping to set that up, Jacqui.

>> JACQUI KELLEHER: Sure.

>> SHERRY SOUSA: All right. Thank you, all. This is a great weekly meeting. Each time we're incredibly productive. Thank you, Kevin, for joining our group today and adding your perspective. I really appreciate that. And I think in terms of our norms, I think we are really demonstrating that in the conversations, the quality and the content. So thank you, all. Until next week.

>> SHARON HENRY: Thanks so much. Have a great week, everyone.

>> KEVIN SMITH: Thank you, bye.