

REALTIME FILE

DAIL - DHHDB School Age Subcommittee
April 4, 2022

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>> SHARON HENRY: So, I know we are at 3:00, and I know Jen Bostwick is going to be a few minutes late, because she has a staff member who's out, and Tracy Hinck is on the road, and Jacqui never responded to my email, so I don't know if she's coming or not for today's meeting. Am I missing anyone, Sherry?

>> SHERRY SOUSA: Amelia.

>> SHARON HENRY: Amelia. And this may be one of the Mondays where she has to join us at 3:45. So, I think we should probably start, to be respectful of everyone's time, and I know Sherry has a hard stop at 4:30.

>> SHERRY SOUSA: How about Tracy, did she email us and say she was --

>> SHARON HENRY: She is coming, but she's on the road. So, depending if -- which stop sign she's at. And if she's at a place in Vermont, where there's no Internet connection.

I first want to welcome Rebecca Lalanne, who's a full council member. Rebecca and I met earlier today, and she's very interested in joining our subcommittee, and we welcome her input, and she's excited to be with us. Rebecca, would you like to briefly introduce yourself, as well?

>> REBECCA LALANNE: I'm Rebecca, hello, everyone. I'm with DVAS. As Sharon said, we met earlier today to catch up a bit, and I'm very much looking forward to being an active member on this. And this meeting in particular. Thank you very much.

>> SHARON HENRY: Our second guest today is Michelle John, president of Vermont Hands & Voices, and she's also the chair of the NASDSE coalition, responsible for bringing the NASDSE guidelines to Vermont. And we have invited her here today as our first stakeholder in our series of stakeholders, and she's going to help us reflect on the quality standards and our possible direction that we want to take the NASDSE guidelines. So, welcome, Michelle, would you like to introduce yourself a little further, as well?

>> MICHELLE JOHN: I'm Michelle, as Sharon just said. I am the president of Vermont Hands & Voices. As a board, an executive board, we could see out in the world there were lots of different stakeholders who were hoping for the NASDSE guidelines to be implemented in our state, and a lot of upstarts and fails and so on. So, as a board, we decided to reach out to stakeholders, including Barbara and Cheryl, who helped co-author the NASDSE guidelines, and we started the Vermont Coalition for NASDSE Guidelines. And I think it's a passion of our board, as well as each individual, and we're hoping to see continuation and improvement in the quality and services of what is provided. It's been a roller coaster for the past ten years or so for our students, and we'd like to see a little more, you know, concrete things in place, versus staying on side.

>> SHARON HENRY: Sherry, do we have a minute for everyone to introduce themselves and say their role? I'm Sharon Henry, one of the co-chairs with Sherry. We have been working as co-chairs of the School-Age Subcommittee since 2015, I think, Sherry. The council was first formed. And I have many family members who are either Deaf and/or hard of hearing.

>> SHERRY SOUSA: I'll go next, I'm Sherry Sousa, I'm a daughter and a mother of two individuals who are hard of hearing. I also was a special education teacher and special ed director for many years, and I'm currently the superintendent of Winter Central Supervisory Union. I'm excited for this work, both as a parent, and mom, and also as an educator.

>> SHARON HENRY: Laura?

>> LAURA SIEGEL: Yes, hello, Rebecca knows me. No need for introductions there.

>> SHARON HENRY: Okay, thank you. Tracy?

>> TRACY: Hi, I'm Tracy Hinck, and I've been working with deaf and hard of hearing and DeafBlind children in Vermont, California, New Hampshire, and I started in the Advisory Council last spring. And I'm happy to be part of improving services for kids here part of the subcommittee.

>> SHARON HENRY: Thank you, Tracy. And Amelia, thank you for joining us.

>> AMELIA BRIGGS: Hello, I know both Rebecca, Laura, and Michelle. Hi, I'm Amelia Briggs, parent advisory for the council.

>> SHARON HENRY: Great, thank you. Okay, so, now we'll -- you all got a copy of the agenda, so I'll skip that slide. I'll turn it over to Sherry to begin our conversation about the NASDSE guidelines and the quality standards. So, let me just pull this part up.

>> SHERRY SOUSA: Should I make a motion to accept the minutes of the previous meeting?

>> SHARON HENRY: Yes. How about you do that while I struggle with the technology.

>> SHERRY SOUSA: I make a motion we accept the minutes from

March 7, 2022. Anyone not in favor? Looks like the motion passes. So, now, Laura, we have official minutes that can be posted.

>> LAURA SIEGEL: Great.

>> SHARON HENRY: Can everyone see the slide that says "our work to date has shown that"?

>> TRACY: Yes.

>> SHARON HENRY: Okay, great. Okay, Sherry, take it away.

>> SHERRY SOUSA: So, in reflecting on the work that we have done so far, what's been interesting for me is that we have not located an individual tool that will accomplish the goal that we set for us. So, I started thinking about what other opportunities do we have. I also read through Chapter 9 of the NASDSE and thought, wow, what exciting guidelines, really comprehensive, a structure that we could use to help us move forward in the work that we want to do.

So, at the same time as reflecting on this, as a superintendent, I was thinking about the education quality standards that are set by the Agency of Education for all public schools. And, so, this is a live link. So, when you get the presentation, if you want to look at them, please do. But what it talks about are all the pieces that need to be in place in a public school to determine it to be a high-quality education. And, so, it is the responsibility of any public school program to demonstrate that they meet these EQS, or Education Quality Standards.

And the way that is demonstrated is we are provided with a list of what the evidences could be in each of the standards, and we submit links to the Agency of Education and have a visit to demonstrate where we are in terms of meeting those expectations. If you currently have a child in public school, you can see this through the school report card. So, the state issues a report card on every public school in the state. They didn't during COVID, but they did pre-COVID. So, this a structure that's been in place for a period of time. And they then make sure that we have certain pieces of work that we need to do. And I'm in the process right now, provided the links, have to do a self-assessment, have identified the areas that my school district needs to work on. And I thought what an interesting way to think about the quality of our programming that we offer to a Deaf, DeafBlind, hard-of-hearing students, is put together our own quality standards for programming, and then the responsibility of assessment is that the program has to offer evidence that they are meeting those standards.

And, so, in thinking about that I thought, well, we could use that in my program that's currently receiving state funds for Deaf, hard-of-hearing, DeafBlind programming, as well as anyone that wants to be compared to these quality standards, and maybe we create a list of highly qualified programs for the state of Vermont. That way a special ed director such as I was,

who are looking for programs for their students, know which ones have met the Vermont state quality standards for programming, and the ones that haven't.

So, I wanted to share with the team what they thought about this as a way to pivot towards the assessment. So, what it does is puts the responsibility on the program. It also clearly articulates what we see as the important components of any program. In reviewing the RFP, the NASDSE is also referred to. So, it's kind of connecting the dots for me. What I've done, if you go to the link where it says "quality standards," I began to re-format, without permission, what that might look like if we created quality standards based on the NASDSE.

What you'll see is that the list is very -- is there a second slide, Sharon?

>> SHARON HENRY: Maybe.

>> SHERRY SOUSA: Oop. So, there's current document, it's just a draft. It's way too long. So, I put in everything that I thought might be specific to a program that's offering service to our student population. I think it would be helpful if we provide some examples of what evidence is. Again, if we choose to go in this direction. We would probably need to put in place an evaluation scale for a fully implemented to not at all. I think you were on the right slide, Sharon. We would probably want to list some clinical tools that service providers should be using. Again, what's the baseline that we expect programs in our state to offer. And then we would probably also include the any definitions that would be appropriate to the documents that we create.

So, I think it's -- I think is that the next place in our agenda, is to think about this plan. I really want this to be a process. Some people have looked at the tool and provided some suggestions, but I didn't want to go too far in an assumption that this meets the needs as directed by the legislation in terms of creating an assessment tool. That's my piece.

>> SHARON HENRY: First of all, has everyone on the subcommittee had a chance to look at the draft, the working draft, of the quality standards that Sherry started for us? I saw comments from Laura, and from Jen, but I didn't know if other people had a chance to get in there, poke around, and get a flavor of what Sherry is talking about. Let me just stop sharing my screen, so that we can all see each other.

>> SHERRY SOUSA: Hi, Jen.

>> SHARON HENRY: I think, in essence, what Sherry has done is taken each guideline and pulled apart what appears to be, or what we think is to be, the responsibility of the Deaf, Hard-of-Hearing, DeafBlind service provider and left out what's responsibility of the school district, the special ed teacher, the superintendent, the principal, the district, and all those people. Because we aren't legislatively mandated to assess that

side of the equation. So, go ahead, Tracy.

>> SHERRY SOUSA: Tracy and friend.

>> SHARON HENRY: Tracy and friend, yes.

>> TRACY: Sorry about that. Yeah, I wasn't quite sure about how to comment on that document. At first I thought it was okay to comment on it, and then there was an email that we weren't supposed to. So, I just abstained. I wondered if you could clarify that.

>> SHERRY SOUSA: Yeah, we didn't want to go too far down the path, because I don't want to assume this is what the whole team feels is the direction we should be going in. So, I thought it was great to look at -- and you can offer -- so, in terms of public meeting law, we can offer comments, we just can't make decisions until we're as a group.

As someone who lives in public meeting law, school board meetings, I just want to make sure, you know, we're following ethical behavior in terms of that. Before we went too far, I just want to make sure the team feels like this is one way of meeting that expectation in terms of assessing programming. So, I guess that was my caution, as well. I don't want to -- just because it's our idea doesn't mean it's the right idea.

>> SHARON HENRY: Other comments on the idea and the -- this possible direction? Jen?

>> JENNIFER BOSTWICK: Stop me, Sharon, if you already said this, but I think we did connect with a gentleman -- well, two people out in Washington state, and they were able to share a document that they were using as a -- for a very similar purpose. They were going to be reviewing a big school district services out near Seattle, in Tacoma, Washington. And their tool was very similar to what we -- to the one that you had already started. So, that, I think, kind of gave me -- made me feel like, okay, you know, other people have the same idea. So, just kind of throw that out there, that others have used something similar.

>> SHARON HENRY: If I could follow up on that, I looked at that same document from the University of Washington School of the Deaf -- I can't quite remember the name. And, you know, they basically copied verbatim each NASDSE guideline. But what I didn't see is what their plan was to assess and determine if the program was meeting that particular guideline. I think that's where this idea of having the provider supply the evidence allows us to take that step, so that we have -- we can evaluate the quality of the evidence, or the lack thereof, in order to make a determination as to whether or not the program is meeting the mark or not. Jen?

>> JENNIFER BOSTWICK: Sharon, I did not have a chance to delve too deep into the full program review from Colorado. Did you look at -- I don't know if you looked. It was like 135 pages. And I don't know if that looked any more -- that gave,

you know, what were they using as evidence for each of the -- and I don't know for sure if they were using the same program review tool. Again, I did not get as super deep into that one.

>> SHARON HENRY: I haven't had a chance to read --

>> JENNIFER BOSTWICK: It was 135 pages.

>> SHARON HENRY: I haven't had a chance to review the Colorado document yet, but I will. Amelia or Tracy, have you had a chance to at least look at the document, or have any thoughts on the direction?

>> AMELIA BRIGGS: I looked at it. I think it's a great direction we're headed in. I think it's a good, solid start and basis to what we're doing.

>> SHARON HENRY: And Tracy?

>> TRACY: Yeah, I agree. I think this is a good direction. I like how we're tying in the expectations of the legislator and what they are asking us to look at and tying in the NASDSE guidelines to that.

>> SHARON HENRY: Yeah, so, what Tracy is referring to, if you look at the document, next to each heading is VS something or other, it's the Vermont state statute. Tracy did the work of linking each of the NASDSE guidelines to our legislative mandate, the Vermont state statute. So, what's there in parentheses indicates which specific portion of the statute that NASDSE guideline addresses. So, that's very important that we make that link. So, thank you, Tracy, for doing that work.

>> TRACY: That must be why I liked it.

(Laughing).

>> SHARON HENRY: I guess I have -- Laura, did you have anything to add, any reflections on the direction that this could take us?

>> LAURA SIEGEL: To the document, the quality of the standards document, is that what you mean? I mean, yeah, I kind of gave my feedback, and then I think related to Jen's comment, I kind of would add on and follow along with that, but I don't know if I have anything else to add that hasn't already been said. Hold on, I'm also looking at my email at the same time.

>> SHARON HENRY: Okay, okay, thank you. I guess -- so, I think one of the -- to me this feels very much like an accreditation document. And I, for those of you who don't know, was on the physical therapy faculty at UVM for 30-plus years. So, I have sat through, I can't tell you how many accreditation studies and completed hundreds of pages of supplying evidence in order to meet the standards to obtain accreditation. And, so, I think it's a very worthwhile self-study. I have two concerns. One is making sure that the people at the Agency of Education who review the evidence are qualified. And, so, how can we ensure that. And how do we ensure that this is not so onerous for the Deaf, Hard-of-Hearing, DeafBlind service providers that it's taking time away from direct service provision, which as a

parent, I don't want to see that happen. So, Sherry?

>> SHERRY SOUSA: I have some thoughts about that. I think we can create a rubric that really will make it pretty clear about when someone meets the standard or doesn't, and I would say it's a three-step rubric, not too in-depth. And once you've met the -- once we describe the highest standard of meeting that standard, then it's easy to create a rubric backwards, you know, we've done that a lot.

>> SHARON HENRY: A three-point scale or something?

>> SHERRY SOUSA: Right, right. So, that also lends to we really have to be tight in terms of what are those standards, what are those pivotal standards that will articulate to anyone whether the program is quality. Because it's a long list, and I put everything that I could find, there may be some points that I missed, but in order for us -- and even if we do a pilot year, year one, where we focus on a small core standard group, and maybe we build from that. I know how important it is to get something done and out there and connected to the work. So, we may want to start small and say here's graph one, this is our phase-in one year, and then we build on that for phase two. But I think we can build a rubric, so it's really tight. You need to have this in place, that's meeting the standard, almost, not at all, something to that effect. I think we can do that.

>> SHARON HENRY: And Michelle, this is a good time to ask for your -- I did share the document with Michelle last week or the week before. I can't quite remember. And I sent an updated one this morning. What are your thoughts and your impressions based on your work with the NASDSE guidelines, Michelle? And if this is not a good time to respond, we can circle back.

>> MICHELLE JOHN: It's a great time. I moved spaces, we're good.

You know, I think -- I mean, mind you, I know you all are in the beginning of the process, and I think this is an excellent start. I certainly have, you know, I have my five primary questions written down, which are, you know, larger picture, like, okay, once this is done, what then, who, what, when, where. And to some degree, even why, you know, that is all going to have to be explained out, even amongst, you know, your work.

I think if you're to choose a few guidelines to start with, I would really implore you to start with 7, 8, 9, and 10, which are really kind of when you scan through Chapter 9, are the ones that, on my perspective, really hit on the main points you want from a service provider. I think explaining this out in a less bulky way, I think if you just handed Chapter 9 to any, you know, service provider, they are going to feel overwhelmed. So, I think this, you know, kind of deeper dive, along with a rubric, I think great. And a rubric actually would work nicely with Chapter 9 in the NASDSE guidelines. Could have, obviously, gap in the practice, you know, say, you know, partially meeting,

and then meeting the practice. So that's just very clear-cut.

I think one of the things I had written down, same concern, who is doing this assessing. We need to ensure they have a background in Deaf education, Deaf/Hard-of-Hearing education. You know, as kindly as I can say this, I don't want a repeat of what happened last summer, where individuals were assessing RFPs that had no experience in this particular field. It's just critical. There are so many nuances that can be missed by someone who is not used to it. I certainly can say, eight years into this, if you would asked me eight years ago to join this, I would have said, I don't know, sounds great, and you all would have looked at me, no, we took this out to see if you would pick it up, and I wouldn't have. Eight years in as a parent, I can say there are so many minor details that can be missed by someone who just isn't versed in this profession. And I also really want to encourage this information to become public. I don't know if that's the plan, but I know as a parent I would like to be able to see what the results are. I think Deaf/Hard-of-Hearing adults, same thing. We all want to be in the know at this point. If nothing else came from the last year, everyone now knows that we should all have access to the information, so those are some critical things that I kind of noted. And, last but not least, and this is something that I know would fall into the AOE, so I kind of wish Jacqui was here. How do we create some of the data that needs to be followed on IEPs, Deaf, Hard-of-Hearing, DeafBlind, are not options. That information is not aggregated. And that's also really critical. We can all take a stab at how many students are Deaf, Hard-of-Hearing, DeafBlind, but I would like to see actual numbers coming from 504 plans, IEPs, et cetera. Again, I know that's far down the road, so I'm sorry. I'm blowing out a lot of information out at you, but those are just some of the things to think about, as well as what can be used for evidence. So, to show that, you know, we've given opportunities to interact with, you know, Deaf/Hard-of-Hearing adults, what is the evidence? People saying yes we did, or that type of thing just to kind of be cognizant of as we go down this process. There's just a lot of bits and pieces that are going to need clear definitions attached to them, I think.

>> SHARON HENRY: Sherry?

>> SHERRY SOUSA: Just to answer real quickly, Michelle, to the last one on data collection. So, as a special ed director, I know that we submit data on primary disability category for all IEP students. So, that data exists for IEP students. 504 data, it is not collected as a whole. That's a challenge, and that's a much broader system.

In terms of student progress on an IEP, that's confidential. And as a special ed director, the Agency of Education tried to get ahold of my IEPs, and I refused access. Confidentiality on IEPs is sacred, and let's see who's sitting

here. I don't have confidence in AOE to manage that data. And I said it very clearly to that point. They can know how many students, and child count is required, but in terms of progress on an individual student's IEP, I will tell you the majority of special ed directors does not want Agency of Education to have access to those documents. But the rest of that, I love what you have to say, and I think absolutely we can do.

>> MICHELLE JOHN: Yeah, this is Michelle again. I think in the NASDSE coalition, Alex, who used to work for the AOE, shared that the AOE has absolutely no idea how many students are Deaf, Hard-of-Hearing, or DeafBlind. So, I think that's where, from Hands & Voices perspective, we were all saying, well, why don't we have a spot on the IEP? Doesn't even have to be the primary. Just give a spot to throw in, you know, if they are Deaf or Hard-of-Hearing, so somebody, somewhere, is following this. Because that's -- that was where I think that part of my spiel came from, because the AOE themselves are saying, you know, to us, no, we don't have a clue. We don't follow that, we have no way to.

>> SHERRY SOUSA: And I receive that data every year, every year. They have that data. It's on every IEP, what's the primary disability. Tracy, anyone else, Jen will tell you, on an IEP it says what is the primary disability. We have to record that. That has to be submitted to AOE.

>> AMELIA BRIGGS: This is Amelia. If that -- sorry. Deaf/Hard-of-Hearing might be what's not listed as a disability, if it's DeafBlind-plus. I pulled Natalie's up, because I had this conversation over and over again. They have her listed as multiple disabilities. They don't have Deaf/Hard-of-Hearing. So, you know, I think that's where the hiccup is, there really should be two lines if students really want to categorize, because they have her listed as multiple disabilities, and then there's nothing -- obviously, the IEP is all centered around Deaf/Hard-of-Hearing stuff, but for disability category, it's not DeafBlind. It says multiple disabilities.

>> JENNIFER BOSTWICK: This is Jen. That's very common, Sherry. At one point, the numbers -- don't quote me on these numbers, but I remember there was a huge discrepancy between the number of kids that, you know, the Vermont Center had that we were serving who were Deaf or Hard-of-Hearing, versus what the AOE said what they had for Deaf or Hard-of-Hearing kids. There was a huge discrepancy. So, I think that is not uncommon. You know, if a child has ADD or something, they are going to be listed as other health impairment, because they may see that as, you know, I don't know, whatever, higher priority, I don't even know what they would say. That's a bigger issue. The child is fine in terms of hearing, but it's a big, it's a big -- there's a big discrepancy.

>> SHERRY SOUSA: This is Sherry, I think this is our next body of work, Michelle. You got us excited. I think there's ways

to make this happen, and I think it's very simple, but it's a battle we have to face. Again, I know I'm being recorded, but, you know, multiple disabilities becomes the trash can disability when you can't make a decision. And how does that serve a student? You've got me triggered, Michelle, but I think that's another piece of work. You can see I'm a special educator by heart, but I think that's a piece of work that absolutely is valid, that I think would be another important piece of work this committee could take on, but good to know.

>> AMELIA BRIGGS: Sherry, you want to join me at my next IEP meeting?

>> SHERRY SOUSA: No, I'd lose my license, but I can give you information. How about that, I'll feed you with what you should say.

>> AMELIA BRIGGS: This goes back to my original comment. It's access to the services. We're evaluating the services, that's what we've been tasked with, but it's the access to the services and the schools, that's the barrier. That's where a lot of the hiccups and barriers and mishaps happen, is the access to the services. And, I mean, just by this conversation.

>> SHARON HENRY: Right, right. So, this is Sharon. So, I couldn't -- I'm a data nerd as a researcher, and, so, Michelle, I appreciate you triggering this hot button. It's a hot button for me, as well. And I can tell you in the health care world, where I lived and continue to live, the whole issue of if the clinician doesn't have a data field to record it in, the clinician doesn't record the data. So, when you go to extract the information, it's not there. So, this is a systems issue that can be fixed, pushing on the right levers. And, so, thank you for raising that. Would you like to stir us up in any other regard, Michelle? With any other comments?

>> MICHELLE JOHN: Surprised you guys haven't exit meeting.

>> SHARON HENRY: No.

>> MICHELLE JOHN: Oh, goodness. You know, I mean, just generally, I mean, long-term things to think about, who was going to be in charge of the standards. How will the standards be assessed, what are you going to use to assess them, and who is going to do the assessing. So, if you pick, say, one person from the AOE, when that person decides they no longer want to be employed, or are terminated from their employment, you know, gosh forbid, what then? Because you don't want then the next person to come in and say, well, I was not trained, what am I doing, and your information, again, roller coaster. And, you know, generally speaking, how often do we want them to be assessed. Again, you all are so more at the beginning, and I do understand that I'm talking more towards the end, but I'm hoping that these kind of questions, just letting them kind of simmer in the back, will help guide what direction you choose to go in. Because I think waiting -- having learned this from writing a manual in a different realm as Hands & Voices with the UVM MC

program, if you wait until the end to think about these things, it affects a lot of the work you did at the beginning.

>> SHARON HENRY: This is Sharon. I think Sherry can address some of the process issues of who's in charge of the data, because we actually have a template for this already at AOE, but before I let Sherry speak, I think Tracy had her hand raised.

>> TRACY: Yeah, I wanted to add something about, you know, the definitions on the IEP for disability category. And associated with that, one of the biggest challenges I think in Vermont is how the services are also recorded in the IEP. Ever since I moved back to Vermont, when I was at Nine East, you know, it's always very vague. It's hearing consultant, and it's not teacher of the Deaf and Hard-of-Hearing specialized service, or educational audiologist as a related service. And I've taken pictures just in a neutral way without names -- (announcement in the background) -- sorry, Sherry is not muted. I think that's confusing for parents, confusing for service providers, and from a data collection perspective, if we wanted to collect data on how many students were receiving teacher of the deaf services or educational audiology services, we really couldn't do that.

It also allows service providers to be really vague in the staff that they hire. They can hire people that really are not -- do not have licensure in one of those fields, and I think that affects the credibility of the services. It also creates a lot of confusion when people that are not licensed DODs or licensed audiologists are out there fitting equipment. And this has always been a concern of mine, and I think it affects student services. I think it affects the clarity to parents and other service providers. And I also think it affects the data collection. You're muted, Sharon.

>> SHARON HENRY: Sorry, there we go. I think, Tracy, one of the issues you've raised is this document would also include the national definitions for each of these professional tracks or service providers. As, you know, here's the recommended -- national recommendation for what a teacher of the deaf should have in terms of training and so forth. Because I've heard that complaint numerous times that someone who's not qualified is providing services to my child.

>> TRACY: And I think another component to this that I saw at Nine East, and I suspect was a problem when the Vermont Center and Austine School, the only funds provided, there's no cap or guideline on how much funds can be spent on administrative costs, and that just allows private practice vendors to pay themselves large salaries and use funds that really should be designed for providing services to kids. In my opinion, some kids need direct services. It shouldn't all be about technical assistance in Vermont. We have kids that need more sophisticated and specialized services, and those funds are going to pad the pocket of private practice vendors instead of going to the students. And I don't think there's ever been any

guidelines in those funds on how they can be spent.

>> SHARON HENRY: So, this is Sharon. Sherry, you're going to -- before you stepped away -- answer some of Michelle's longer range questions about the template that does exist at the AOE in terms of who collects the data, shepherds the data, stewards the data, how often are the assessments done, et cetera, et cetera.

>> SHERRY SOUSA: So, I'm thinking about process, and I wonder if we can expand upon the template that I started and include those questions, and each of us owns a different section. So, we create a kind of master draft. I'm just trying to think how we can move the work faster. There are some people who know much better than NASDSE guidelines on which ones are really appropriate. I think I can work on some of the language around the who, what, and how often. I think if we do some maybe teams of people, you know, make sure that we're including what Michelle and the other team members needs to be included. And then we can, in the time between meetings, draft language. And then when we come back, review language together. That might be a process that could be the most efficient, because as we're all saying, this needs to happen sooner rather than later. So, that's my thinking, if we could build out, expand upon what's there, and have those kinds of questions Michelle just outlined for us. And then everybody takes the piece they feel good about and works on that part. And we can divide up who does what. That might be a great process, because I think writing as a group is hard, but if we can have something to work on, and if we're drafting alone, with open meeting law, we can come back and comment on the drafts and give suggestions. But that might be a way of kind of making the process go a little faster.

>> SHARON HENRY: But I also think that, Michelle, as I understand, right now each school district has to complete these templates on a regular basis. I don't know if it's every year or every third year. And those data are sent back to the AOE and a report card is written on each district. So, if we were to adopt that sort of vision, then we would have a similar sort of thing, and then that report card would be out there for all of the vendors in the state of Vermont. And special ed teachers could say, okay, I have a kiddo who needs X, Y, Z, let me find the best vendor, or, you know, use the report card in that way, because what I've heard Sherry say as a special ed teacher is, you know, she has a kid with disability X, and has no guidance in terms of who to provide, and how would she know whether she's selecting the best provider, et cetera, et cetera. So, the council, because of the mandate, could ask for updates or reports from the AOE, and I think that our first iteration of this tool will not be the last. I've done a lot of tool development. You never get it right the first time. You're constantly improving it, and the research moves forward. Oh, we need to include this guideline, drop this one. Things evolve.

So, I would imagine, I would hope, that the Agency of Education would collate the data and maybe there's interagency collaboration, and they would ask for experts from other agencies at the state level who have the expertise to evaluate, or even on some period hire an outside program assessor to look at all of the program data, that's my vision. Michelle?

>> MICHELLE JOHN: Thank you. You know, going off what you just said, here's knee-jerk thought. Hospitals never judge themselves. They have an outside vendor collect, you know, you get the little surveys in the mail about how did your visit go, you know, the cleanliness of our practice, did we wash our hands, listen to you, know our medications, all those things. I get them all the time from multiple hospitals. I almost feel -- I mean, that is, obviously, too anonymous and too vague, but that type of outside vendor saying we collect the information, you don't be a part of it. And then we'll give you the report. In my mind, especially coming off the last year or so, I certainly don't want to take away from the AOE and their place in our state, but I have concerns about the longevity of this being in their hands, versus, say, an outside group. Though I do understand that requires money, you know, time, commitment, and more money. So, I don't know how to rectify that issue, but that is kind of where I went. Yes, an outside group would be much more reliable, and I think everyone would feel safer for the information given to them, because that person has no stake in this, just like outside vendors for hospital, they don't care if Michelle John says this was the worst visit I've ever had or best visit I've ever had. It does not matter. That, you know, having someone who really has no gumption in it, it may work out best for everyone's comfort.

>> SHARON HENRY: This is Sharon, and I'll let Sherry speak. From an accreditation point of view, the program had to self-reflect and do its own self-evaluation, give itself a score, and the three accreditors came from out of state. You want the providers to be having a stake in their professional growth and the services that they provide. So, I think this allows for the self-reflection, allows for the state to do its quality control, and some period we have an outside assessor, as well, and I think the funding is the barrier.

>> SHERRY SOUSA: Sorry about the phone call. When you get a call from the hospital, you think oh, my gosh, what happened to one of my kids. I thought I muted myself, but clearly I hadn't.

I think what we can do in our assessment is clearly define the skill set experience of the assessors, reviewer of data. And then AOE will have to say whether or not they have that. If they don't, we're giving the language for the RFP to get an outside consultant. So, I think we can, if we do it tight enough, AOE will not be able to meet the criteria, but the criteria then can be used for the RFP for consultation. And because we already have the legislation that requires

assessment, they have more levers to pull to get it funded by legislation. So, I think how we structure it will help that piece. And, again, in terms of the scope, right now there are 55 school districts, there are six people at AOE that assess all 55 school districts. So, again, our scale is much smaller, you know what I mean, in terms of the number of programs that are offered to our students who are Deaf, DeafBlind, and Hard-of-Hearing. So, I think if we write a tight document, we kind of set it up for success rather than failure, and I think the tighter we do, we have little ambivalence to AOE, or how about wiggle room, the tighter we make it, the higher the likelihood that the tool will be used with integrity.

>> SHARON HENRY: Other comments on the direction and the intent of where we could take things now? Is everyone clear on where we're trying to go? Is everyone in agreement? Can I have a thumbs up? Jen?

>> JENNIFER BOSTWICK: This is Jen. I'm not sure I'm -- I'm not -- the way that I'm thinking about it is the first thing we're really trying to come up with is the tool that just is sort of like the, I'm going to say, the bare minimum. These are the standards that we want providers to have, do they have it, yes or no, or are working on it, the rubric that we're talking about. And I sort of see it as the next step, is where -- I guess I'm not -- I'm thinking the next step is really where we're assessing that, and where we're really delving deeper into they have it, or they don't yet have it, but now the next step is how are they doing with everything that they have or don't have. Does that make sense? I'm sort of seeing it as this first document we're just trying to get, like, do they have it, do they not, or are they working on it. And the next thing is how do we get information to really assess how it's working or not working from a bigger subset of stakeholders and such. I don't know if I explained that very clearly.

>> SHARON HENRY: Sherry, you want to answer that?

>> SHERRY SOUSA: Yeah, it's really hard, Jen. If you look at the Educational Quality Standards, the expectations are very high. This is not a bare minimum. It's a high level of standard. It gets right down to the number of students in a classroom. You know, the maximum number of students that can be in a pre-K is 60. That is how we -- their criteria for high standard program. I think the challenge is collecting those other kinds of data. And maybe that's where we go eventually, but I think the goal is to really set very high expectations. It's not bare minimum. It's the level of standard of programming that we feel that needs to be in place to meet the needs of our students in this population.

So, I think that's why I love the NASDSE, because I think they are not bare minimum. That's a high level of expectation, and so I just don't want to put pressure on parents, asking them to -- I mean, their job -- look at Amelia,

your job is so hard, that I can't put any more responsibility on parents. I've tried that. You don't get information that's really, you know, comprehensive. So, how do we put the pressure on the programs to live up to what we think are the highest standard to meet the needs. And you can't have -- it can't be, you know, everyone gets, you know, red carpet, you know, because it has to be realistic. But what are those aspects that we can believe meet the quality standards for a student in this disability category.

And that way the responsibility is on the program. If you want to get on this list, this master list of programs that have been vetted to demonstrate meeting quality standards, you better be doing these things.

>> SHARON HENRY: Right. So, I think the other piece I would add, Jen, is that in the rubric, there will be samples of what the evidence might look like. And it's based on the quality of that evidence that you assess are they meeting it, you know, meeting it, exceeding it, is it part way, or not meeting it at all. So, the key piece in my mind is the qualifications of the reviewer who's making that judgment of whether or not this piece of evidence that you submitted to me is true evidence, or you're just blowing smoke in my face. Yeah, so, it's those three accrediters who would come to UVM to look at the 200-page document we created of our self-reflection, self-report, and they'd decide whether or not we were blowing smoke or if it was true evidence that demonstrated a quality program.

>> TRACY: This is Tracy. I just have a question about this. So, are we evaluating any vendor in the state, or only vendors that are receiving public funds?

>> SHARON HENRY: I'll answer that question, this is Sharon. So, the goal, the vision, is it would be all vendors, Tracy. And our traction is, of course, with any vendor who's funded by the state, right, because they have their funding through the AOE. So, to share news with you that we got on Tuesday or Wednesday of this week is that the RFP is going to be released for this -- July 1st. So, the RFP is going to go out again late April, May 1st, somewhere around that, and the whole review process is going to start over again. So, what I would like to propose is in that RFP, is language that says whoever gets this grant has to realize that they are going to be completing this tool. And maybe the tool is completed by them, or maybe it's forthcoming and we need another week or so or month or so to finish it up. And then the AOE grantee completes the tool, and we improve it, learn from that, and then we roll it out to the other vendors. But the Agency of Education says if you want funding from us, you must complete this tool, and we will give you a report card. Sherry?

>> SHERRY SOUSA: I think it also gives us some leverage that if you want to be on the state recommended list as meeting quality standards, then you have to do this assessment. So, I

think there's -- hopefully, special ed directors, I think they would, you know, Sharon and I talked about we could meet with directors and introduce them to this piece. Really becomes, and I think for those of us that have been on the committee for so long, we needed a clearinghouse. Where do special ed directors and teachers go to find these quality programs. This starts that clearinghouse model. If you want to be recommended by AOE as someone who's met the quality standards, then you have to do this assessment tool. So, I think it gives us some power there. Otherwise, you can put your single out anywhere, but who says you're good or not? Here are the quality standards in Vermont, you better comply, or you're not going to get on the list. Hopefully.

>> SHARON HENRY: This is Sharon. To answer Jen's question in the chat, it isn't just the grantee who receives the AOE funding. It's all service providers in the state, who provide services for Deaf, Hard-of-Hearing, DeafBlind, eventually. We have the most traction the first go around with the grantee who receives the AOE funding this July 1st or August 1st or whenever the money comes out. That make sense, that answer your question, Jen?

>> JENNIFER BOSTWICK: Yeah, I think so. But then is it only limited to kids who are on an -- I guess most service providers are probably serving kids on IEPs and 504s. I just didn't know if there were -- I don't know if there's a situation where there's a provider only serving kids on 504 plans. So, probably wouldn't matter.

>> SHARON HENRY: Yeah, I don't know. I don't know. So, I think if we're realistic, I think it's over the next couple of years where this tool would get rolled out, so that eventually the AOE would have data from all service providers, who are providing these services to kids in Vermont. And it gives us time to continually improve the tool by doing, you know, you do a chunk of providers first, you know, it's like a pilot. You know, the first year is a pilot year. See how it goes, improve the tool, make sure all the links are working, all those things, all the back end of it. And then the AOE says, okay, if you want to do business in Vermont, you want to provide these services, you need to do this assessment. We will evaluate the evidence that you submit, and we'll give you a score. And those scores are constantly fed out to special education directors. And parents. I mean, on the website, it's available to everybody. And we send it to Vermont Hands & Voices, and we send it to DVAS, and we send it to, you know, all the places we can send it, so it can be dispersed and disseminated.

>> TRACY: How do we address your recommendation -- this is Tracy. Sharon, about, you know, who looks at this information in terms of their competency. How does that play into the work that we're doing as part of the subcommittee?

>> SHARON HENRY: This is Sharon, I'll let Sherry answer

that. She answered that in terms of the language that we include in the assessment tool, and basically not giving the AOE any wiggle room, in terms of who is allowed to review the evidence and make those judgments, because they are judgment calls. I've reviewed thousands of NIH grants over the years, and it's a judgment call as to whether it's quality evidence and a quality grant, and so forth. Yeah, yeah.

>> SHERRY SOUSA: This is Sherry. I think we would look to Michelle and others. What would indicate the level of capacity that you believe needs to be in place. So, master's degree in a certain category, how many years experience, what kinds of experience. So, it would be just like a job posting or job description. Here are the minimum criteria for those in place. Again, that would be in the core assessment tool, because anyone completing it wants to know who's going to be looking at this. So, if AOE does not have someone meeting that capacity, now they have the language for an RFP to put out a proposal to see who would apply for that kind of piece. Again, I think we've got some leverage, because we do have in the legislation saying that an assessment tool will be in place. And, so, that would be my hope.

>> TRACY: The language in this document, this is Tracy again, is it's not really an RFP. It's like a grant application. Is there a difference?

>> SHARON HENRY: So, we have to make sure we're very clear. The RFP is a request for proposal that the Agency of Education is going to administer and say, hey, we want a vendor who will supply these services over the next year. That's an RFP. The assessment tool will outline what are the metrics and the standards by which quality is assessed. And in that document, what Sherry is suggesting, is that we specify who the reviewer can and can't be. Does that make sense, Tracy?

>> SHERRY SOUSA: This is Sherry. If AOE does not have a person on their employee that can meet that criterion, then they would have to send out a different RFP to find someone. So, that's how you contract people at Agency of Education.

>> TRACY: My understanding, though, is this particular process is not actually an RFP. It's like an application for a grant. That's kind of what it says. So, I remember there being some discussion about it not being really an RFP. I don't know. Maybe I'm making this up.

>> SHARON HENRY: You're talking about the funding from the AOE?

>> TRACY: Yeah, the actual application says "application for grant student support services." I'm looking at it right now from last year. It doesn't actually say that it's an RFP. And I don't know if there's certain criteria for administrating to an RFP versus an application for a grant that comes from the AOE. In other words, does an RFP have specific guidance in how that can be -- that process, versus an application for a grant?

>> SHARON HENRY: I don't know myself. I don't -- yeah, that's a question for AOE. I don't think, though, that it affects our ability to create an assessment tool with tight language that specifies who the reviewer of the evidence needs to be.

So, I just want to do a time check-in. We're at almost 4:00, we need to end at 4:30. We have other business to conduct. Other questions, comments, about the direction that we're thinking of heading, what we're proposing, we divide into work groups, different people take different tasks or part of the document. Everyone now has access to the Google doc. According to public meeting law, we can make our comments and do our work, but then the discussion occurs during our meeting time.

Thumbs up, thumbs down, other comments? Tracy and Laura, are you ready to move forward? I can't see your thumb, Tracy, there we go.

(Laughing)

Okay. So, I just want to change the order of our agenda here for a minute. And I just want to move ahead to a housekeeping item that was at the end. Our next meeting is already slated to be April 25th from 3:00 to 4:30. About six weeks ago, I sent out a Doodle poll asking for your availability for May and June. I got those dates all back, and you now have them. May 4th, May 9th, the 17th, May 25th, June 1st, and June 7th. Captioners and interpreters have been arranged for those meetings. And when I sent out the Doodle poll six weeks ago, I had to remind Jacqui twice to complete the Doodle poll, and she finally did. And she indicated that her only availability during that time was May 4th. And I emailed her back and just, you know, asked her is that really the only time you have available, and, you know, maybe she just didn't know -- I was concerned she didn't know how to complete the Doodle poll, because she was having a little trouble before, and she never responded to my email. And, of course, she's not here today. And I just got a note from Sabine Perry, our administrative support person, not Jacqui, but from Sabine, that Jacqui will not be in attendance on May 4th, May 17th, June 1st, or June 7th. So, that means she'll only be available May 9th and May 25th. So, I'm just informing you of that piece. I think the reason why I sent out the Doodle poll seven weeks ago is because I know as educators your -- the end of your year, school year, gets wild. And what's most important is direct service provision, and we have three or four -- three direct service providers here, or at least two that I can see. So, I'm reluctant to offer the option of -- the request was can we change the time for any of those days. And I guess from a due process perspective, I'm proposing that to the group, or should we stick with what we have, and Jacqui can participate by making edits to the Google doc and attending those two meetings, so that our work can continue to go forward. Thoughts?

>> JENNIFER BOSTWICK: This is Jen. Can we review the times, are they all at this time? I think that we had moved them earlier, right? I can't remember the exact times.

>> SHARON HENRY: Yeah, we had -- our next meeting is 3:00 to 4:30. The Wednesday May 4th was 12:00 to 1:30. May 17th was 12:00 to 1:30. And the other ones were 12:00 to 1:30, as well. And I think someone just said in the chat Tracy would prefer meeting after 3:15. Did Jacqui offer for someone to step in for her? No, she did not, Laura, but I could email her and ask her. That's probably a great idea. I guess I feel a little bit stuck from a process perspective, when someone is not responding to email and not responding to Doodle polls, and we're trying to get everyone's seven or eight very, very busy people together. I think maybe Laura's idea of asking Jacqui to send in a proxy might be the best choice. I don't think Sherry has much flexibility, given her -- other thoughts?

Tracy and Jen, is it possible for the two of you to switch off, so that at least you're both representing the same entity, and you're both direct service providers, and since we may not be able to get meetings after 3:00, is that a possibility to make the load a little easier?

>> JENNIFER BOSTWICK: I should have more flexibility. I am covering for my staff that's out until probably -- well, after the break. And then, hopefully, I won't be providing direct services every day. Obviously, I'll be more flexible. I think that I am going to become more flexible in the next few weeks. Tracy is likely less flexible. Do you have any days where you are flexible in the 12:00 to 1:30 time period, or not really?

>> TRACY: I'll just do my best to make it work. I see kids pretty much all day most days, but I'll try to rearrange some things on those days, so that I can be here, or I'll ask Jen if I have to come maybe a half hour late, will I get put on the naughty list.

>> SHARON HENRY: No.

>> TRACY: I'll try to be here for all of the meetings happening. And if for some reason there's a conflict, I will definitely let you know.

>> SHARON HENRY: That's great, that's great. I will bring this back to the group. In my summer email I'll ask Jacqui to send a proxy. At this late date, it's hard, if she had let us know four weeks ago that those dates hadn't worked, excuse me, maybe we could have pivoted, but at this point we're closing in on April. It's really hard, I think, for people to shift this late in the game. Appreciate your input on that. And while we're talking about stakeholders, I want to thank Amelia for inviting Tracy Luiselli-Evans to our April 25th meeting. Because I do want to emphasize that, you know, the NASDSE guidelines are financial, but they are Deaf/Hard-of-Hearing, and our legislative mandate is Deaf, Hard-of-Hearing, DeafBlind, and so we have to be mindful of that. And, so, we will send our

document, I think maybe a reasonable goal would be to try to have as many of our comments on our working document by, let's say, April 19th, and I can then share it with Tracy, or maybe Amelia, I can send it to you, and you can send it to Tracy. Similar to what I did with Michelle John. I said here's where we're going, here's where we're thinking, here's something for you to react to, and we could share that with Tracy. So, does that feel reasonable? Yeah, okay, okay.

All right. Back to our --

>> JENNIFER BOSTWICK: Sorry, I don't know if this is the time to ask us, but I did connect with John Pirone, as well, about possibly being involved in some capacity. He is extremely busy right now. He's got a few research projects of his own that he's, I think, trying to finish up. But he did say that he would review the document at a minimum, but I could also offer him if I could say one specific date, whether it's -- it doesn't matter what day, whatever we all think, that I can ask him, you know, or give him a couple. I could give him a few of these dates, except for the April 25th date, and say are you available for any of these, should I do that, offer that to him?

>> SHARON HENRY: Yeah. In fact, how about let's offer him the May 4th, and that way if he says no, then you can go to May 9th. I just don't want us to be offering the same date to the same -- let's do one at a time. So, maybe we'll pencil John in for May 9th.

>> JENNIFER BOSTWICK: And that's the 3:00 one, right?

>> SHARON HENRY: May 9th is 1:00 to 2:30.

>> JENNIFER BOSTWICK: Oh, okay.

>> SHARON HENRY: Yeah. Along the other stakeholders, I did connect with my college student, and I have three pages of feedback, so I guess I'm looking at Sherry. I guess I can't share the feedback by email. No, okay.

>> SHERRY SOUSA: No, you can share notes, we just can't comment on that.

We can't make any decisions unless we're in the group.

>> SHARON HENRY: Okay, for efficiency sake, I'll share comments by email, but don't respond, okay? I don't want to get my knuckles slapped.

>> JENNIFER BOSTWICK: Could you cut and paste it into a document, and we comment on the document, like we're doing with this quality document? Could we do it that way or not?

>> SHARON HENRY: I'll defer to Sherry.

>> SHERRY SOUSA: We can comment on it, but we can't then comment on your comment. If you have something to say, Jen, and then Michelle says, well, what about -- then we're entering a dialogue, and we're not having captions, it's not being captured. So, that whole open meeting law piece is really challenging.

>> SHARON HENRY: It's very gray to me, but thank you, Sherry, for your guidance. I'm always looking to bend the rules,

I guess. So, I will share my feedback by email. And I will log it on to our shared space, as well. I'll create a folder there for stakeholder feedback. And Tracy and Jen, you are connecting with students in junior high and high school. Any movement there?

>> TRACY: I have not had great success. I'm hoping it's a ways away, but we're holding Adventure Day in May, and, so, I may connect with a couple kids through Adventure Day. Between now and then.

>> SHARON HENRY: And Jen?

>> JENNIFER BOSTWICK: And we did -- Tracy and I did connect and talk about this a little bit and felt like if we could come up with some questions, some kind of, you know, some questions that would help elicit some feedback from especially middle schoolers or high school. If we tell them, tell us about your experience, they are going to be like, it's fine. Or it wasn't fine. I don't know. But I think -- so, we did start a document that had some questions. I don't know if we should share that with you all, and you all can add to it, or what do you think is the best way to go forward with that? Then we can probably get it out to a few students.

>> SHARON HENRY: Okay. I think you can post it to our Google share space. I'll create a folder called stakeholder feedback, and you can label it high school feedback or something. And then we all can comment on it. Just don't respond to each other's comments. And what I did for my college student, I had it easy, because I just sent her the infographic of the ten NASDSE guidelines. I said reflect back on your 20-some years. We had a very rich discussion. I had comments on each of the guidelines. So, anyway, that doesn't work with middle school and high school students, obviously. So, I had the easy job. Okay. And then the other category under stakeholders was Jacqui was supposed to send an email out to case managers and special ed directors and administrators in the weekly Field Notes. I wrote up the -- actually, Sherry wrote up the two or three sentences that she was to share in that email, but I have not heard anything back. I asked her to send it to me, so we could have it for our record, you know, when we compile the report, we can show the evidence of everything that we've done. And she didn't respond to that email, and I haven't heard back from her. So, I'll ask her once again.

>> JENNIFER BOSTWICK: Did you notice it in the weekly field memo, Sherry? I don't know that I did. I don't know if you still get them or look at them. I get them, but I don't remember seeing it. I could have missed it.

>> SHARON HENRY: If any of you see it, please forward it to me, just so that we have a colation of our efforts that we've made to reach out, okay. And then, of course, if you, as you reflect on our work, if there's other stakeholders who you think will be valuable, please let us, you know, let us know. In fact,

Michelle, while we have you here, given that you wear two different hats, and you've just heard some of the people that we're thinking of contacting, is there anyone else that you might recommend that we contact in our work to help guide our work?

>> MICHELLE JOHN: This is Michelle speaking. Yes. I mean, this is something that, you know, will correlate with the NASDSE coalition, the Vermont NASDSE coalition. I think, certainly, without them it would be fine. You guys are clearly making progress, but Cheryl Johnson and Barbara Ramundo would be just the bee's knees to have. They are really wonderful, they are very honest, they are thoughtful. And as an aside to that, the coalition is meeting for the first time since prior to the changes in service providers on Thursday. So, it's our, you know, reacquaintance and discussing, you know, there's been some changes within the coalition of membership, and some individuals have left, and some people are requesting to be added. So, we're kind of just doing a short hello, regroup, where are we going, how do we all feel about these other people coming on and kind of resituating ourselves. But prior to the changes where then we were unavailable to meet for a significant period of time, that was our plan, was to have Cheryl and Barbara rejoin for another meeting. So, it's possible that can be -- it won't be discussed this coming Thursday, but it is possible that we can discuss using our collective funds, and then kind of all coming together, maybe have a group discussion. So, keep that on the back burner. I make no promises, but it's definitely on my list of things to push.

>> SHARON HENRY: Okay. And I guess I'm speaking on behalf of the subcommittee, you know, please share our interest in collaborating. I would ask that you keep the Quality Standards document confidential and not share that with anyone, until we can release it publicly and then solicit feedback at that point in time. But if there is a opportunity, we'd look for more input from the NASDSE coalition once you regroup and re-establish, you know, what your goals are. Yeah, absolutely. Absolutely.

Okay, so, then the other quick updates were that some of you had reached out to other stakeholders and other resources. And, Jen, let's start with you. You contacted Rick from Washington Center for Deaf and Hard of Hearing.

>> JENNIFER BOSTWICK: Yes, and he did share a few documents that I talked about in the beginning. One of them was really very similar to what we were doing. He really, literally, took verbatim Chapter 9, the first principle, and -- I mean, it was just verbatim. And then I was trying -- I'm still trying to set up an actual meeting with him to talk a little bit more about his experience with Colorado and their program review at the Colorado School for the Deaf and Blind, which there was like that 135-page report that came out of that. So, that they did complete a full review. And I have not been able to set up a

time to connect with them yet. I emailed him probably a week ago, and I haven't heard back again. And he did miss our first meeting that we had. So, I guess I don't have a lot more to add.

>> SHARON HENRY: Okay, thank you, Jen.

>> JENNIFER BOSTWICK: I'll keep trying.

>> SHARON HENRY: This is Sharon. I will post those documents to our shared drive. I'll create a new folder, just so as we collect some of these resources, we can keep track of them.

Tracy, big score today in New Hampshire.

>> TRACY: It took a lot of schmoozing to finally get -- I guess I shouldn't say schmoozing. Trying to -- yeah, I feel really fortunate that I was able to get my hands on the All Together Now report in New Hampshire. They had a two-year initiative to look at services in New Hampshire, very similar to what we're doing now in Vermont. I, literally, got this midday today. So, I have only skimmed over it. And from one thing that I could tell, what stood out to me, the buy-in is for NASDSE guidelines to be implemented absolutely through parents and service providers, but where they found -- one of the gaps was in the special education administrators realm, that they didn't know a lot about the NASDSE guidelines, and that they seemed to have a difficult time participating in the All Together Now initiative. Again, I skimmed that, that jumped out to me as interesting, since they are the ones that are administering the services for kids on IEPs. In New Hampshire, at love them just really didn't participate in the process. I guess I thought that was interesting. There's more to learn from that document. It's long.

>> SHARON HENRY: So, 150-page document that you can take to bed and digest.

>> TRACY: Not that long. But for my brain today, I just -- yeah, I didn't want to pick out something negative, but there's a lot of positive things in there, too. I just thought that was interesting and wanted to learn more about it from that document. I was really excited to get it. As you mention, Cheryl Johnson was on this team, and, you know, all the really important people that wrote the NASDSE guidelines. So, I think it's important to read it more thoroughly.

>> SHARON HENRY: Right, right. And then the next one was Jacqui was going to send some achievement data disaggregated by disability, but that hasn't materialized yet either. And I had asked her to share with our group the request for application, you know, what is going to be sent out -- what was sent out in June of 2021, and she hasn't sent that out yet. I'll circle around to her one more time and ask her if she has that. So, we can share that with the group. Not that we're being asked for input on it, but just so you have context if you don't already have a copy of the document.

>> TRACY: Can you repeat that, Sharon, I'm sorry, I kind of

missed that. Which document?

>> SHARON HENRY: The document released by the Agency of Education saying we have a pot of money for someone who can provide services for Deaf and Hard-of-Hearing, DeafBlind, please apply.

>> TRACY: Okay. I have the one from 2021. It's online. I'll share that one. I don't know if that's what you're looking for.

>> SHARON HENRY: Why don't you send that to the group.

>> TRACY: Okay.

>> SHARON HENRY: That would be great. That would be great. I did connect with Allison Sedey from Colorado. She's in charge of Odyssey. She focuses more on birth to 3. She said contact Cheryl Johnson. And look at the NASDSE guidelines. And Sarah Honigfeld, who is an education policy person at the NAD, National Association of the Deaf, told me to contact different states that I had already contacted. So, those were sort of two dead ends, so to speak. And then Laura, I know you sent some resources, which were not so much about assessment tools, but more about service delivery models, is that right?

>> LAURA SIEGEL: Yeah, before the school committee was established, AOE had asked me to get ahold of different states and query them about their funding. And for supported services. And then when this committee formed, I did some follow-up again with those same contacts. Unfortunately, three of the states were like, oh, no, don't copy what we've been doing, it's not great. Oh, okay.

But two of them got into much more depth about their services, what the setup looks like, and all of that. And, so, I was hoping to email from Virginia state, as well. It looked very similar how Vermont is set up. But, really, unfortunately, some of the other contacts I would reach out multiple times and not get any kind of response.

>> SHARON HENRY: Okay, thank you, Laura, for trying and being so persistent. One of the things I think about is once we have this assessment tool, and it's been vetted, and we're happy with it, who's going to present the tool at a national conference, and what are the conferences that it would be appropriate to present at, and what journal do we publish it in? I'm all about dissemination. Can you tell I've lived in the grant world for years? Anyway, like Michelle, I like to think down the road, five years, but I know what I like to do today to get there. What I'm seeing, nothing out there nationally. Maybe Vermont can be a leader. So, I'm thrilled to be participating in some tiny way to help make that happen. So, anyway.

Rebecca, how was your first meeting, and are you going to stay with us, or are you going to resign today?

>> REBECCA LALANNE: No, I'll stick around. I'll definitely stay. I've gotten a lot of information today. And I was just looking at -- I've had a lot of thoughts about there was a point about the -- oh, that Michelle made about hospitals in terms of

evaluations. The state of Maryland has a hospital that any time they have someone present Deaf, Hard-of-Hearing, DeafBlind, they all the refer to the Maryland School for the Deaf. And I thought that's a really interesting thing, and I liked also in the chat, I saw talking about Hard-of-Hearing adults, Deaf adults, in terms of membership. And if you agree, I can think of a few more names to offer up to get a little variety of perspectives.

>> SHARON HENRY: That would be great.

>> AMELIA BRIGGS: I have a question -- sorry, background noises, this is Amelia. It would be great, I don't know if anybody knows of a Deaf individual who also has an education background. I think that would be like the perfect combo to add to the group.

>> REBECCA LALANNE: This is Rebecca. Someone who works under me at DVAS on a per diem basis. So, it's kind of a loose thing, but this is Stewart Soboleski. He's someone with that background.

>> SHARON HENRY: Great idea.

>> REBECCA LALANNE: He's one person that I would think of.

>> REBECCA LALANNE: Yep, he's a Deaf adult. For Hard-of-Hearing, I'm not sure, but I think Kevin Smith is Hard-of-Hearing, if I'm not mistaken, yep, he is. So, he also was foster father of a Deaf kid. And he's reached out to me. He's got a lot of free time at the moment, and as a Hard-of-Hearing person, that's another person I would throw out food for thought.

>> SHARON HENRY: Okay. Well, we'll record both of those names, Rebecca, thank you. And we'll see if we can get them scheduled. So, I'll be in touch with you separately about that. So, we are at the conclusion of our meeting. We have three minutes left. And Rebecca, given that you're new to our group, normally what we do at this point is go back and look at our group norms that I shared with you by email on Friday. And we take a minute to reflect on how we did as a group in terms of adhering to our group norms, and how did we function. And, privately, you send a rating to Sherry on a 0 to 5 scale. 5 we did great, functioning well, adhered to all group norms. And, 0, we bombed, and we need to revisit our process. So, I'll just give everyone a minute to shoot those over to Sherry, and we'll conclude our meeting at 4:30.

>> REBECCA LALANNE: Do you want that in chat?

>> SHARON HENRY: Sorry, in the chat, just privately to Sherry.

>> REBECCA LALANNE: Oh, okay.

>> REBECCA LALANNE: Sherry or Sharon, which one of you?

>> SHARON HENRY: Sherry.

>> JENNIFER BOSTWICK: She left.

>> SHARON HENRY: Did she leave? Send them for me privately. Yeah, please send them to me, I'm sorry. She did have to drive to Burlington to make it to a school board meeting or something,

so she's driving from Windsor up to Burlington, right. Yeah. Great. Okay.

>> LAURA SIEGEL: Jen, this is Laura. Were you saying something?

>> JENNIFER BOSTWICK: I have a question. I want to make sure I'm understanding. Do we have something that we're supposed to be doing before the next meeting? Are we supposed to be working in pairs or groups on something, or are you going to follow-up on that more? I wanted to make sure I didn't miss --

>> SHARON HENRY: Yes, I think we are going to break up and maybe -- let me give it some thought. You know, two people pair up and do guidelines number one and two, others do three and four, and Sherry has done quite a bit of work on one through five. So it's really six through ten that need to be looked at. Again, I'll just remind you that we are developing the Deaf/Hard-of-Hearing service provider, not the school district. So, guideline number six is a little bit tricky, because some of that really is not in the umbrella of the service provider. You know, funding transportation is not a teacher of the deaf's responsibility. Some of the other details in number six don't fit for a service provider. So, as you look at them, be sure that it's the responsibility of a service provider to be contributing to that particular standard.

(Dog barking in background).

>> JENNIFER BOSTWICK: That's one thing Michelle said, she thinks the priority should be one through ten, and a lot are pretty school district --

>> SHARON HENRY: Right, right.

>> JENNIFER BOSTWICK: I totally agree, Michelle, that they are important, but how do we tie that to the service providers, I think we have to think about that. Making sure I hadn't missed the direction, sorry.

>> SHARON HENRY: No, no, no. (Dog barking in background). I could let you all go in there and -- the outline is there, you could jump into whatever guideline you want to work on, or I can assign you, but I think I'll just let you find what you are drawn to and fill that in. And just say let's have everything done by April 15th or April 16th -- sorry about my dog -- and if there's any big holes, I'll be in touch, okay?

All right. Well, thank you, everyone. I don't want to hold us any longer. Thank you to the -- for being here and participating, and thank you for, Michelle, for your thoughtful input. We'll be in touch. Okay, take care. Bye-bye.

(Meeting adjourned)