

**Virginia EHDI Program Advisory Committee Meeting  
Minutes**

Friday, October 18, 2019

**The VA Network of Consultants (VNOC)/ Partnership for People w/ Disabilities:**

**Technical assistance and support:**

From **May 28, 2019 to August 30, 2019**: More than **29** calls/email requests for technical assistance were received and addressed/processed; **7** were directly from parents. Several requests become direct consultations through the Virginia Network of Consultants (VNOC) described under VNOC. In addition, TAC-DHH disseminated **26** announcements during this quarter; **21** of these announcements went to parents. (There are currently **205** parents on the TAC-DHH database.)

**VA Network of Consultants for Professionals Who Work with Children Who are D/HH (VNOC):**

VNOC service requests are reported following the school year calendar, August 1 to July 31. For the 2018-19 school year (beginning August 1), 21 VNOC consultation requests were completed.

**Regional Trainings:**

*See-the-Sound Visual Phonics* (Decoding strategy for early reading skill development)

For the 2018-19, school year through summer 2019, **5** STS-VP trainings were completed (**117** people). From 2006-present, more than **1,849** people have received training in STS Visual Phonics through TAC-DHH/VNOC sponsored trainings.

**Statewide Professional Development:**

**Opening Doors-Unlocking Potential 2019:** *Building Foundations for Literacy Success*, Richmond/Midlothian, June 26-28, 2019. This 13<sup>th</sup> annual event continued a strong focus on effective strategies to positively affect early literacy development, effective remediation and long term academic outcomes (91 registered participants). Featured presenters were arranged through the Center on Literacy and Deafness (CLAD) [www.clad.education.gsu.edu](http://www.clad.education.gsu.edu).

**D/HH Literacy Intervention Project Training:** June 26-28. A cohort of 23 (20 TODHH and 3 SLPs) received full training in two early literacy interventions to pilot during the 2019-20 school year. The DHH-LIP cohort will receive support through an online discussion forum, quarterly distance group meetings and individual consultation as needed. The TAC-DHH will submit a report in June 2020 to the VDOE Office of Special Education Instructional Services for further consideration of how to address the unique literacy intervention needs of young students who are DHH and future professional development needs of Virginia's TODHH.

**Best Practices in Educational Interpreting:** Waynesboro – August 1, 2019, Presenter: Rebecca Hilligass, VNOC; hosted by Shenandoah Valley Regional Program (12 participants).

**Program Support:**

Assistance to VA Hands & Voices, the Parent-Child-Advocate Program, Hearing Journey and Families to Families to disseminate specific d/hh related event announcements.

PCA-Family Fun Day, August 17: Presented TAC-DHH/VNOC information

**JCHC Stakeholders Meetings:** Participated in meetings and study of SB1741 during summer, 2019.

**National STS Visual Phonics Trainers Conference**, Duluth, MN July 17-18, 2019:  
Presentation: "STS-VP Professional Development Survey" on results from the online national survey designed to gather information to improve and extend current training methods.

**Upcoming:**

**Literacy DHH-101** (October-November 2019) – Registration is open for Session 2 of the two month online Community of Practice on evidence-based strategies for children who are d/hh. Contact [khstahr@vcu.edu](mailto:khstahr@vcu.edu) for registration link.

**See the Sound Visual Phonics Training:**

Oct. 2 - Arlington -- APS will open registration after Sept 13 to out of district attendees through contacting [christian.nelson@apsva.us](mailto:christian.nelson@apsva.us)

Oct. 26 - Richmond – Online registration available after Sept. 16. Contact [khstahr@vcu.edu](mailto:khstahr@vcu.edu) .

Nov TBD - Chesapeake

Additional Updates:

- VHH Literacy 101 started; 54 people signed up
- ODUP had its 13<sup>th</sup> year; focus on literacy; ODUP 2020 finger spelling, foundation for literacy, and vocabulary
- People in Richmond area; Negotiating a Cure at VCU 3:30-5PM
- [STS@vcu.edu](http://STS@vcu.edu) website focusing on disabilities (specifically deafness)
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**Early Intervention:**

Infant & Toddler Connection of Virginia state staff have participated in the Joint Commission on Health Care (JCHC) Study on Deaf/Hard of Hearing Children Birth-5 (Senate Bill 1741) through

a series of work group meetings that included relevant state agencies, providers of services to children who are deaf/hard of hearing, families of children who are deaf/hard of hearing and other stakeholders. ITCVA provided information about resources, supports and services already available through Part C early intervention in Virginia and collaborated with other stakeholders about how best to meet expressed needs for additional information, supports and services for this population.

ITCVA continues to pursue the possibility of telemedicine as an opportunity to expand the availability of early intervention services, including specialty services for children who are deaf/hard of hearing. The state office recently sent a memorandum to the Department of Medical Assistance Services (DMAS) requesting that early intervention services be added to the currently allowed telemedicine coverage codes.

ITCVS State Staff is working with the Deaf/Blind Project at the partnership to make connections from Part C EI to the Deaf Blind project. Certain local systems have been identified to participate. Deaf/Bland Project Staff is creating a Flyer for Part C localities outlining how the project can assist families and providers. Project staff has been invited to the Statewide LSM meeting to provide follow-up information.

#### **Newborn Screening (Dried Blood-Spot and CCHD):**

- We are on track with implementation of full infant population screening xlad sma go live June or July 2020
- Hosting student event at DCLS December 13, 2019; inviting 8<sup>th</sup> graders to have ½ day ; tour of lab, role play, DBS escape room
- Congenital cCMV September 2020 implementation; creation of timeline for next timeline activities, working with Office of Info Management VDH and DCLS to link VISITS system to configure reporting
- DCLS is in the process of getting materials to test and equipment and validation
- Just hired congenital heart disease coordinator

#### **Virginia Hearing Aid Loan Bank:**

- Coming out with a new brochure with events and meetings across the state.

#### **Children and Youth with Special Health Care Needs (CYSHCN):**

The CYSHCN program has been working on medical home and transition modules for close to two years and we have finally entered into demo phase! Demos of the trainings are now complete for providers and families. We hope to do an official launch within the next month. All four modules will be available online for free for those who are residents of Virginia or practice in the state.

Additional Updates:

- Final draft done with UVA end of month release

- Not just focused on providers, two tracks for parents as well that are interested in transitioning to pediatric care to adult care and medical home for all children

**Center For Family Involvement @ VCU-Family to Family**

- WE are having a face to face meeting tomorrow family educators are coming to discuss
  - o Working with EI providers to spread news about lowering loss to follow up
  - o Getting some updates regarding grant
  - o 4 learning community meetings, Abington, Roanoke, Blue Ridge, Hampton Roads and NOVA
  - o Getting more referrals due to switching around of systems

**VA School for the Deaf & Blind (VSDB):**

**Online Trainings**

**Outreach Services, VSDB has purchased short courses from Central Institute for the Deaf for state viewing as follows:**

<b>Name of Short Course:</b>	<b>Period for Registration:</b>	<b>Period for Completion:</b>	<b>Credits available:</b>
Beyond the Scores: Evaluating Speech and Language Skills of Children Who Are D/HH	tbd	tbd	ASHA and LSL certification credits, as well as continuing ed units for licensure, are available for completion of these courses, paid for by Outreach Services.

**Regional Activities for Students in all Virginia Schools and their Families**

**December 7, 2019 – “’Twas The Night Before Christmas”** The Barter Theatre, Abingdon, VA. Interpreted for students who are deaf/hard of hearing and described for students with blindness/visual impairment by \_\_\_\_\_; pre-session allowing students to become familiar with the set, props, and characters; and afternoon Career Awareness session on “It’s Not Just Acting - The Many Careers in Theater” in collaboration with the VA Dept. for the Blind and Vision Impaired.

**Other Services Provided by VSDB Outreach**

**Audiologic Evaluations** for children birth through 21 years – contact Dr. Daniel Shearer, [Daniel.shearer@vsdb.k12.va.us](mailto:Daniel.shearer@vsdb.k12.va.us)

**Family American Sign Language (ASL)** – short lessons on vocabulary and phrases, presented with ideas for use in normal daily routines of infants and toddlers, and associated cultural/language building lessons. See <https://www.vsdb.k12.va.us/vsdb/outreach/family-asl-lessons/>

In addition, VSDB has been an active participant in **workgroup activities this summer for SB 1741**.

VSDB Audiology Outreach:

*VSDB classes began again on August 5th, and the Audiology Outreach clinic returned to its full-time schedule on July 23rd. So far in 2019, the clinic has scheduled 48 new families. Referral rates continue to increase, with 16 new families scheduled since the end of the summer break, including 7 newborns. Referrals continue to come primarily from Early Intervention programs, birthing centers, and local school divisions. VSDB is in the process of purchasing a new portable combination audiometer/tympanometer, which will facilitate testing of older toddlers and preschoolers. The feasibility of providing travel services utilizing portable equipment (audiometer/tympanometer, ABR, OAE) will be determined after surveying statewide need.*

Additional Updates:

- As of now, we have scheduled 60 families- ahead of the schedule and got some portable equipment and mobile outreach around rural areas
- Julie Psam- VSDS Coordinator
- Family resource fair November to support families with workshops for parents and caregivers and information collections; flyers to distribute.

**Department of Education:**

- The 13<sup>th</sup> annual *Opening Doors-Unlocking Potential 2019* statewide professional development institute was held on June 26-28, 2019 in Richmond. Virginia teachers of students who are deaf and hard of hearing and related service providers attended sessions which focused on strategies to improve early literacy skills through effective remediation with young children who are deaf and hard of hearing.
- A team of three specialists from the Virginia School for the Deaf and the Blind, the Virginia Department for the Blind and Vision Impaired and the Virginia Project for Children and Young Adults with Deaf-Blindness received intensive VIISA/INSITE trainer training in Wisconsin in June. The VIISA/INSITE curricula focus on assessment and intervention for young children (birth-five years) with sensory disabilities and additional special needs. Planning is currently underway for future training in the VIISA/INSITE curricula for Virginia special educators.
- Virginia has earned the U.S. Department of Education's highest rating for improving outcomes for students with disabilities and for compliance with the federal Individuals with

Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) for a seventh consecutive year. The commonwealth received a “Meets Requirements” designation on the federal education department’s 2019 IDEA report card. Virginia’s overall score of 95.83 percent was the second highest of the 60 state, territorial and federal school systems evaluated.

For additional information, please contact:

Wanda Council, Education Specialist  
Virginia Department of Education  
[Wanda.Council@doe.virginia.gov](mailto:Wanda.Council@doe.virginia.gov)  
(804) 371-4059

Additional Updates:

- The new/updated guidelines for working w/ dhh schools will come out next week.

**Deaf-Blind Project:**

- Flyer created available and will be sent to the group; increase awareness if the child has vision loss, communication is available and accessible
- Close to release of module of Deaf Blindness and will be available in addition to EI Flyers

**VA Dept. for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing (VDDHH):**

**Executive Management**

Statewide Interagency Team (SIT) is comprised of four agencies, the VDDHH, the Department of Aging and Rehabilitative Services (DARS), the Department for the Blind and Vision Impaired (DBVI) and the Valley Community Services Board. The SIT hosted one town hall meeting in Richmond on Saturday June 29, held at the DARS central office with approximately 30 people in attendance. ADA presentation given by the disAbility Law Center of Virginia’s Zachary Devore. The town hall meetings are a part of SIT ongoing effort to develop a needs assessment and identify new priorities. There will be three (3) more town hall meetings scheduled for the rest of 2019:

August 10 - Abingdon

Oct 19 – Martinsville (tentative)

Nov 2 - Staunton (tentative)

Support Service Provider (SSP) Workgroup – SSP is a service to DeafBlind people providing visual information either through tactile sign language or spoken language (blind people who are hard of hearing) empowering them to live independently since they often face communication barriers and cannot communicate effectively with other people. VDDHH had convened a SSP workgroup to discuss the problem and identify solutions. The workgroup is comprised of representatives from Department for the Blind and Vision Impaired (DBVI), Virginia Commonwealth University (VCU) Deaf Blind Youth Project, Department of Aging and

Rehabilitative Services (DARS), Virginia Association of the Deafblind (VADB), Virginia School for the Deaf and Blind (VSDB) Intervenor Program, Reynolds Community College (RCC) Interpreter Training Program, and the Department of Education. The workgroup met on May 30 discussing various models of delivery systems, funding and legislation.

### **VDDHH Advisory Board**

On Wednesday May 1, VDDHH hosted its' quarterly meeting of the 9-member advisory board. The agenda included board and agency reports. The board also focused on reviewing and discussing the strategic plan.

### **Virginia Relay**

Virginia Relay Advisory Council (VRAC)- The VRAC hosted its semi-annual meeting on Thursday April 11 at Longwood University located in Farmville. Hamilton presented on its' activities including marketing. There were several presentations including a demonstration of real-time text technology, viewing of 'Text to 9-1-1 videos' and a special guest speaker, Claude Stout, Executive Director of the Telecommunication for the Deaf, Incorporated. He is a nationally known expert and advocate for accessible technology benefiting deaf and hard of hearing people. The next VRAC meeting will be at DARS central office on October 22.

Virginia Relay Program Manager - VDDHH has 11 full-time equivalent (FTE) positions and for years, only 10 FTEs has been budgeted/filled. The Director has been performing relay manager duties in addition to his Director duties. A new position was created to take on the responsibility of Virginia Relay and oversight of the Technology Assistance Program. VDDHH posted a job bulletin and initiated a recruitment campaign for a new Virginia Relay Manager. After conducting interviews, David Bahar was appointed and started working on June 27. He brings extensive experience with the telecommunication relay industry.

Relay Calls Trends- During Fiscal Year 2019, Virginia Relay provided 330,697 minutes of relay services including traditional relay services and captioned telephone service, along with other relay features such as HCO, VCO and STS. FY19 saw a moderate 11% decrease in overall relay traffic compared to a 15% decrease during FY18. Virginia Relay call volume traffic using analog is projected to decline through the end of Fiscal Year 2022 as growth in Internet based relay services continues.

### **Telecommunication Assistance Program (TAP)**

Request for Proposal (RFP) - Developed draft RFP to award new contracts for TAP and Community (formerly known aka "Outreach") Services. The RFP was released and currently active. Officially closed the TAP Distribution site in Danville, VA due to retirement. All remaining TAP equipment stock and TAP documents returned to VDDHH.

Department of Veteran Services - A special presentation was given to the Department of Veteran Services (DVS) Executive Leadership Team in Richmond. This was a follow-up TAP/VA Relay presentation from the April 25th presentation to staff members at the DVS. Eighteen Leadership Team members including the Deputy Commissioner were in attendance.

### **Interpreter Services Program (ISP)**

Department of Professional and Occupational Regulation (DPOR) - The Advisory Board had previously petitioned DPOR to study on whether to regulate sign language interpreters. On March 4, there was no quorum to take official action. However, on June 24 DPOR had a quorum and voted to implement the study. The ISP Manager and the Community Services Manager participated in a telephone conference call with staff at DPOR to prepare for the study on licensure of sign language interpreters and provide technical assistance with the public hearing logistics and interpret any ASL video comments received during the public comment period.

Supreme Court Memorandum of Understanding - The Interpreter Programs Manager met with staff from the Office of the Executive Secretary of the Supreme Court of Virginia and representatives from the Office of the Attorney General on June 11 to discuss ongoing efforts to improve communication in Virginia Courts. Several topics were discussed including: updating the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) as related to the use of private interpreter referral agencies, billing for late cancellations, and pre-authorizations for lodging and other exemptions. The Interpreter Programs Manager will also present at the Judicial Conference in August and the Clerks' conference in September.

### **Virginia Quality Assurance Screening (VQAS)**

The Educational Interpreter Performance Assessments (EIPA) and candidate paperwork are being uploaded directly to Boy's Town for evaluation within 24 to 48 hours of completion of assessment. This process has gone seamlessly and has resulted in candidates receiving results in a timelier manner from Boy's Town.

### **Community Services**

#### I-CAN! Accessibility Project (VCU)

"Ensuring Accessibility to All Survivors" Abuse prevention project: VCU was awarded a grant by the Virginia Board for People with Disabilities (VBPD) to create signed videos of the "Understanding Protective Orders" brochure, and to train VDDHH staff and contractors on recognizing indications of abuse when working with the community. The I-CAN Accessibility project will also produce "Agency Spotlight" videos for relevant agencies. VDDHH is collaborating with I-CAN! Accessibility Project to complete the project. Community Integration Implementation Team (CIIT) Quarterly meeting held at DBVI; member agencies reviewed Olmstead Strategic Plan for updating which is overdue due to multiple changes in personnel at contributing agencies SB 1741 Stakeholder Workgroup (JCHC) Regarding the proposed legislation addressing "Language Development for Children who are Deaf or Hard of Hearing," sessions conducted by the Joint Commission on Healthcare. VDDHH attended workgroup meetings and participated in interagency subgroups to discuss systematic approaches to satisfying some aspects of the bill.

#### Emergency Management

Participated in the School and Campus Safety Advisory Committee (Virginia Center for School and Campus Safety at the Virginia Department of Criminal Justice Services) and the purpose is to review and edit the current draft of the "School Crisis Response Plan" to make it accessible to people with disabilities. The State Shelter Stakeholders (VDEM, DSS) Group is revising the State Coordinated Regional Shelter Plan and related operational documents and related to that topic, VDDHH reviewed and submitted revisions for the draft Statewide Emergency Operations

Plan issued by the Governor. The Access and Functional Needs Advisory Committee (AFNAC; VDEM) established a Language Access workgroup to develop a future Language Policy for all State Coordinated Regional Shelters to follow and reviewed the AFN Annex plan to ensure needs for sign language interpreters is addressed appropriately.

Additional Updates:

- Take a look at whether or not interpreters should be licensed in VA
- Oct 28 to go over recommendations and regulations for DoE to go forward to legislature if needed and board has recommendations
- VDDHH involved with SIT team to reach out to dhh community; town halls Martinsville 10/19/2019
- Working with stakeholders and community members to have support service providers for dhh community in school systems

### **VA Hands & Voices:**

The last few months for Virginia Hands & Voices have been quiet as we usually take a break from social events over the summer. However, in July, we were an exhibitor at the Creating Connections to Shining Stars conference in Roanoke. There was a lot of interest in our organization and we enjoyed meeting new parents and professionals around the state. We also welcomed Dessie Berry, parent of a deaf child, who relocated to Fairfax as our new Regional Contact for NOVA. Dessie was involved with the CO flagship chapter before moving to CA and is eager to establish a strong community in NOVA.

Things have been very busy behind the scenes as we move closer to the National Hands & Voices Leadership Conference September 20-22 at the Kellogg Conference Center in Washington D.C. As of a few weeks ago, we have over 10 parents/professionals and 2 exhibitors from Virginia who will be attending the conference! As a host chapter, we are responsible for the Friday Night Opening Reception and the 'up-time' activities Saturday evening once the conference ends for the day. Hands & Voices is expecting a record number of attendees (almost 300 are currently registered) and is very excited to host the conference on the campus of Gallaudet University. Teri Urban (Chair) and Gianina Thornton (Treasurer) will be co-presenting Saturday afternoon on 'Together We Are Stronger: How Collaboration with Other Agencies Strengthens Everyone Involved'. We are very excited to highlight our efforts in Virginia over the past few years and share with other states how partnering with existing agencies and organizations has led to our chapter's success.

Looking forward, on October 19, we will be participating in the Walk4Hearing sponsored by the Hearing Loss Association of America (HLAA) at the National Harbor in Washington, D.C. Virginia Hands & Voices has formed an alliance which means we are accepting pledges for the 5k walk that will begin at 10 am. Everyone is welcome to join our team and walk with us!

In December, we are planning a social event in Alexandria at Arts on the Horizon to see an interpreted children's play. We also are discussing our next virtual learning opportunity, which include ideas such as safety plans in place at schools for deaf and hard of hearing children and the Theory of Mind and how it impacts social development.

Additional Updates:

- New parent Dessy Barry regional contact in NOVA area
- 350 people attended Hands and Voices conferences
- Team for walk for hearing event in Washington DC
- November Chesterfield Launch to focus event on teens; Zyan he wants to host an event for teens who are dhh
- December Children Museum in RVA Special Night for Special Needs

### **Telehealth**

With respect to audiology, DMAS currently enrolls audiologists as providers and pays for audiology services, including hearing tests. At this point we do not cover telemedicine for audiology services, but we are looking into it as well. VCU has done remote communication with providers on either end- it can be done (Christine Eubanks). VA Board- in prep for telehealth; workgroup together for telehealth available on the website. Stateboard website; Catherin Hancock

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### **Johnnie Sexton**

- Raffle for Chevy Tahoe can be found here:  
<https://tahoeforacottage.com/>
  - The CARE Project has a number of components designed to bring families and professionals together for sharing and processing emotions, with the ultimate goal being acceptance and advocating for the best life possible.
  - Proceeds from our Tahoe for a Cottage Raffle will benefit The CARE Project's vision of building a permanent family retreat and conference center in southeastern North Carolina.
  - The CARE Project provides professional counseling services to children, teens, and adults facing the challenge of hearing loss, and building strong support systems within their family and community that advocate for their best life possible.
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### **Deaf Plus- D. Morris**

- D. Morris parent professional taught parenting classes, cultural dynamics, President of the Board of Directos of Hands and Voices HQ and Faculty Advisor for the UNC-Chapel Hill LEND Program

- Deaf plus children presentation; service to deaf plus families all over the nation
  - 40% of children who are deaf have additional disabilities
  - Sympathizing with children, understanding children and family perspective for deaf plus children
  - PowerPoint will be shared to AC Committee
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### **Parent/Professional Workgroups**

- VA EHDI has implemented changes to current hospital brochures that ensure information is portrayed to explain specific circumstances for each initial hearing outcome. Brochures were created for children who pass, pass with risk, miss/fail and fail with risk at their initial hearing screening. Parents and professionals provided feedback regarding updated “Your Baby’s Hearing Results,” in terms of coloring of brochures as well as content of the brochures.