



Nevada Commission for Persons Who are Deaf and Hard of Hearing Legislative Subcommittee

Date and Time of Meeting: **June 15, 2020 9:00am**

This meeting will be held via videoconference only:

In accordance with Governor Sisolak's Declaration of Emergency Directive 006; Subsection 1; The requirement contained in NRS 241.023 (1) (b) that there be a physical location designated for meetings of public bodies where members of the public are permitted to attend and participate is suspended.

The public may observe this meeting and provide public comment on Zoom.

According to NRS 241.020, Meeting Materials are Available at: [ADSD Link](#)

Minutes

1. **Welcome**, Roll Call and Introductions:

Eli Schwartz, Committee Chair

Subcommittee members Present:

Eli Schwartz
Eric Wilcox
Maureen Fradianni
Jack Mayes
Obioma Officer
Tim Smalley
Cheyenne Pasquale

Guest:

Candace Emerson

Staff:

Carole Hanley
Deanna Gay

CART & Interpreters:

Becky- Caption
Jamie Jarmillo
Tory Jarmillo

2. **Public Comment** (No action may be taken upon a matter raised under public comment period unless the matter itself has been specifically included on an agenda as an action item. Please state and spell your name for the record. Public comment may be limited to five minutes per person at the discretion of the chair.)

Eli Schwartz, Committee Chair

- No public comments made

3. **Presentation/Update on Language Equality and Acquisition for Deaf Kids (LEAD-K)**

Candace Emerson, Chairperson SB203 Subcommittee of the Special Education Advisory Committee

- SB 203 has been codified into an NRS.
- The SB 203 Subcommittee is tasked with creating a guide for parents with children under the age of six who are deaf, hard of hearing, blind or visually impaired.
- LEAD-K in Nevada differentiates from other states in that the language in the title includes Deaf, Hard of Hearing, Blind, or Visually Impaired.
- Need to determine and research other states criteria for LEAD-K if the law will include children under six, or six and under (five years old being the usual age that children begin Kindergarten).
- The goal is to have their language ability be comparable to a typical child entering kindergarten.
- Language acquisition milestones include spoken language, American Sign Language, Braille.
- There have been no more meetings due to Covid-19, and the request has been made to have the meetings resume virtually, but there has been no response.
- No amendments are suggested to be made, provided there are no roadblocks in favor of having the law implemented more quickly by the Department of Education. Suggestion was made to contact the Department of Education to move forward with meetings despite Covid-19.

4. **Review/Discussion and Approve Items to be presented to the Nevada Commission for Persons Who are Deaf and Hard of Hearing on NRS statues for LEAD-K and Hearing Aids issues** (for possible Action)

Eli Schwartz, Committee Chair

- Need to determine what age group is served by Lead-K, under six or six and under.
- Hearing Aid program: the law is written so that it restricts those that can successfully make it through the application process, and the funds allotted to be used.
- Issues with Hearing Aid program: If applicant has private insurance and/or the insurance pays for a small portion, the program cannot currently cover. If they have no private insurance, they must apply Nevada Health Exchange or Medicaid. If applicant does not qualify for insurance or meet 400% poverty threshold, they will not qualify (gap in coverage in program). If the private insurance covers only a portion of the cost of the hearing aid(s), there is no provision within the law/program to cover the remaining cost.
- Program only covers cost of hearing aid mechanics, not the mold or batteries. Program does contract with a group of audiologists that will provide the whole package with contract: hearing aid mechanics, mold, initial and subsequent booth assessments.
- These limit parental choice of providers. However, going with grantors' recommendation of contracting with manufacturer, would exclude cost of mold. Program does not currently include cost of hearing aid batteries, nor provisions if a hearing aid is lost or broken within a three-year period. Some children might need more than basic hearing aid(s) than the \$2,000.00 each would cover, may cost more. Need for language to

include frequency adjustments, refitting and maintenance as the child grows older. Program does not have clear language to include warranty to cover hearing aid(s). Debate as to whether parents would cover cost of warranty, usually several hundred dollars or if the warranty is already included in package with purchase of hearing aids. The \$50,000 in the law/program was to cover hearing aids, but did not factor for payment of staff time or overhead costs, such as paper, printer ink, etc. Important for program to document everything from expenses to testimonials to be presented later to the Deaf Commission to consider expansions to the hearing aid program.

- The main concern is insurance, the language and program should include mold and batteries.

5. Discussion of Legislative Issues and Process

Eli Schwartz, Committee Chair

- Concepts of amendments for language acquisition benchmarks for LEAD-K/SB03 and hearing aid programs must be submitted to Senator Spearman/LCB by August 1, 2020 to obtain a Bill Draft Request (BDR).

6. Discussion and Approval of Agenda Items to be considered at the next meeting: (for possible Action)

Eli Schwartz, Committee Chair

- Continue discussion of hearing aid program and suggested amendments to the wording of the law.

7. Public Comment (No action may be taken upon a matter raised under public comment period unless the matter itself has been specifically included on an agenda as an action item. Please state and spell your name for the record. Public comment may be limited to five minutes per person at the discretion of the chair.)

- No Public Comment was made.

8. Adjournment

Eli Schwartz, Committee Chair

- 10:51am

NOTE: Items may be considered out of order. The public body may combine two or more agenda items for consideration. The public body may remove an item from the agenda or delay discussion relating to an item on the agenda at any time. The public body may place reasonable restrictions on the time, place, and manner of public comments but may not restrict comments based upon viewpoint.

NOTE: We are pleased to make reasonable accommodations for members of the public who have disabilities and wish to attend the meeting. ASL Interpreters will be available at the meeting Via ZOOM. If special arrangements for the meeting are necessary, please notify Carole Hanley at (702) 486-9765 as soon as possible and at least **ten business** days in advance of the meeting. If you wish, you may e-mail her at clhanley@adsd.nv.gov. Supporting materials for this meeting are available at 1860 E. Sahara, Las Vegas, NV 89104, or by contacting Carole Hanley at (702)-486-9765, or by email clhanley@adsd.nv.gov