

Joe Lombardo  
Governor

Richard  
Whitley, MS  
Director



DEPARTMENT OF  
HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES  
AGING AND DISABILITY SERVICES DIVISION  
*Helping people. It's who we are and what we do.*



Rique Robb  
Administrator

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## Nevada Commission for Persons Who are Deaf and Hard of Hearing: Education Subcommittee

### MEETING NOTICE

**Date and Time of Meeting:** Tuesday, August 12, 2025  
4:00 PM

### DRAFT MINUTES

1. **Roll Call and Opening Statement:**

Eric Wilcox, Chair

Members: Eric Wilcox, Ph.D., Chair; David Kelsey, Ph.D.; Kimberly Bauer-Schaub, Ph.D.; Felicia Rutledge, Ph.D.

Guests:

CART Provider: Becky Van Auken

Interpreters: Jamie Jaramillo & Sonya Stark

Staff: Obioma Officer, Executive Director; Autumn Blattman, Wendy Thornley, Administrative Assistant III

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. To provide public comment telephonically, dial +1 775-321-6111. When prompted to provide the meeting ID, 446 471 965# Comments will be limited to five minutes per person. Persons making comments will be asked to begin by stating their name for the record and to spell their last name and provide the secretary with written comments.)

No public comment.

3. **For Possible Action:** Discussion and possible vote to approve draft Minutes of May 6, 2025, meeting.

Eric Wilcox, Chair

David Kelsey motioned to approve the draft minutes. Felicia Rutledge seconded. The members voted and the motion carried.

4. **For Possible Action:** Discussion and possible vote to approve the draft of the education survey for Deaf and Hard of Hearing in the State of Nevada, to include partnership with Nevada State University (NSU) students to interpret survey questions.  
Eric Wilcox, Chair

- **Survey Status:**

The survey has already been created and approved by the full Commission. The platform to host it is available through ADSD (Aging and Disability Services Division).

- **University Partnership:**

There is a plan to partner with Nevada State University (NSU) students to:

- Interpret survey questions into American Sign Language (ASL).
- Possibly assist with interpreting results later.
- Dr. Kelsey from NSU is willing to help coordinate this.

- **ASL Interpretation Details:**

- Each question will be signed in ASL without including question numbers (to allow flexibility in reordering).
- Captions are not required since the English text will be visible.
- Responses will be selected in English after the ASL interpretation.
- Optional: Participants can record comments, but the survey will primarily use multiple-choice questions.
- Deaf professionals will monitor the accuracy of the ASL videos.

- **Technical Setup:**

- The survey will be hosted using ADSD's platform.
- Videos will be uploaded to the form.
- Once content is ready, there should be no delay in launching, as all approvals are already in place.

- **Next Steps:**

- A concrete action plan is needed within the next 2–3 weeks to launch the survey during the fall semester while students are still in school.
- Dissemination will include:

- Posting on the Commission's website.
  - Creating a QR code and flyers.
  - Sharing through existing listservs and at the upcoming conference (focused on K-12 education accessibility).
- **Timeline Consideration:**
    - The survey could remain open through December, but this depends on the workload of those reviewing and processing the data.
5. **For Possible Action:** Discussion of Outcomes of bill AB247 section on the deaf school study and possibly vote on next steps, recommendations, and/or actions taking place to address this gap/need in our state.
- a. [AB247 Overview](#) – **Died.** (No further action taken.)
- i. Discuss next steps, recommendations, and/or actions taking place to address this gap/need in our state

Eric Wilcox, Chair

## **Deaf School Study – Legislative and Strategic Update**

### **Background:**

- A proposal to conduct a legislative study on establishing a deaf school in Nevada was included in a broader omnibus bill introduced by Assemblywoman Tracy Brown-May.
- This idea had previously been introduced by Senator Spearman in an earlier session but did not pass.
- The recent bill also failed, largely due to:
  - Being bundled with multiple unrelated priorities.
  - A growing fiscal note (cost estimate) tied to hiring a panel and conducting formal studies.

### **Current Status:**

- The idea of a deaf school study is not currently moving forward legislatively.
- The subcommittee is now considering alternative, community-driven approaches to keep the idea alive for the next legislative session.

### **Proposed Path Forward:**

- Return to the original plan: Partner with community allies or organizations (e.g., DD Council) to conduct an independent study.

- Use the upcoming survey as a first step to gather relevant data.
- Consider hosting town halls, community panels, and focus groups to collect both quantitative and qualitative data.
- Compile findings into a report that outlines:
  - Community needs.
  - Implications of the data.
  - Recommendations for legislative action.

### **Key Points from Dr. Felicia Rutledge:**

- Emphasized the importance of community voices, especially those closest to the challenges (e.g., families, teachers of the deaf).
- Suggested including teachers of the deaf, even from out of state, due to Nevada's shortage.
- Recommended combining survey data, town hall feedback, and panel discussions to create a comprehensive, human-centered report.
- This report could then be used to reignite legislative interest with stronger, community-backed evidence.

6. **For Discussion and Possible Action:** Discussion and possible vote to approve a Follow up Letter and/or Requested Discussion with Department of Education on the perceived non-existent elements of the Lead-K law and practices in Nevada. Action to be presented to the General Commission for final approvals following this meeting.

Eric Wilcox, Chair

### **Lead-K Law Compliance & Department of Education Outreach – Summary**

Background:

- The subcommittee noted a lack of recent engagement from the Nevada Department of Education (NDE) regarding their obligations under the Lead-K law, which was passed several years ago.
- The law required NDE to:
  - Convene a committee (which they did).
  - Develop guidelines for educators and resources for parents on language acquisition benchmarks for children up to age 6.
  - Assess and report on children's language development using those benchmarks.

- While a committee was formed and a report was created, no further action (e.g., guideline creation, assessments, or public reporting) has been taken by NDE.
- Currently, only Nevada Early Intervention Services (NEIS) collects limited intake data for children aged 0–3, which is not comprehensive or ongoing.

National Context:

- The national Lead-K organization has reached out to Nevada, encouraging participation in their efforts and offering to present or engage with the state.
- This presents an opportunity to reignite the conversation and push for compliance and collaboration.

Eric Wilcox motioned to draft a letter to the Nevada Department of Education requesting an update on their obligations under the Lead-K law and to inform them of national interest in Nevada's participation. David Kelsey seconded. Members voted and the motion carried.

7. **For Possible Action:** Discussion and Possible Vote to Approve Tentative Agenda Items for the Next meeting, November 4, 2025.

Obioma Officer, Executive Director

The survey

The engagement with the Department of Education

National level of Lead K presentation or report

Educators applying for a deaf and hard of hearing position.

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No public comment.

9. **Adjournment:**

Meeting adjourned at 5:10pm

## **AGENDA POSTED AT THE FOLLOWING LOCATIONS:**

Notice of this meeting was posted at the following Aging and Disability Services Office at 1550 E College Parkway, Carson City, NV. 89706. Notice of this meeting was posted on the Internet through the Nevada Aging and Disability Services Division website at [ADSD \(nv.gov\)](https://adsd.nv.gov) and Nevada Public Notices website at <https://notice.nv.gov>