

## Advisory Committee notes of the October 18, 2008 meeting

### Present:

*Southeast*

*Northeast*  
Carol Black

*Northwest*

*Central*  
Sarah McKinney  
Julie Loedding

*Southwest*  
Sherry Miller

*At Large*  
Pat Maille

*ISLR/Outreach staff*  
Jean Parmir

### *ISLR/Outreach updates*

*Changes in staff:* Mike Halischak and Debbie Brewer have resigned. Mike is attending graduate school at Gallaudet and Debbie is working in a State Support Team closer to her home. We are using current staff to cover their duties. Kelly Huff has been hired as a staff interpreter. We expect this to help reduce our cost for hiring contractors.

*EIPA test site:* We are on the waiting list for November and December, but the EIPA Diagnostic Center has informed us that we will probably not receive any of those slots. We have slots starting in January, and we have one person scheduled to take the test that month. Sara Paullin Casto has put together information about the EIPA which is available on our website.

*ASL Exhaustively:* We had 33 participants for this event.

*Deaf-Blind online self-study:* We are working with the Ohio Center for Deaf-Blind Education (OCDBE) to make their self-study modules available through our MOODLE online learning platform. There is also a video component, and we are working on how to provide that portion.

*November workshop:* An email was sent informing people that the registration flyers were available online. Flyers are also being mailed, along with notification that our newsletter and future flyers will be provided online only.

*March regional workshop:* Gerald Eichler, an instructor at Columbus State Community College, will provide a workshop on classifiers. The location is Kent State University Stark campus. They are excited to be hosting us.

*Summer Institute:* RID President Cheryl Moose has agreed to be our keynote presenter. We will also have opportunities for groups to meet with her to discuss how RID can better serve educational interpreters. Doug Bowen-Bailey has agreed to present both days. Other presenters will be from within the state. For our two-session time slot, the approach will be information sharing. Proposed topics are best practices with students using cochlear implants and working with low functioning deaf students.

*Mentoring:* We will be mentoring our staff interpreters to work as mentors, probably in winter. We apply mentoring techniques to our work with interpreting students who do their practicum experiences with us. We recently did a ShareShop with people from a mentoring program in the Western U.S. using an online meeting program called Adobe Connect.

### *Regional reports*

*Tammy Dearth, Southeast:* No report.

*Lisa Petrucci, Northeast:* Lisa sent a report via email. Kent State University is hosting what a "North Coast Coalition" for those who serve Deaf and Hard of hearing individuals in Northeastern Ohio to share information, develop networking, and collaborate. The first meeting will be November 19, 2008, 9:00am-12:00pm, at the Governance Chambers on the second floor of the Kent State Student Center. The keynote speaker will be OSD Superintendent Dr. Corbett. The theme is "Tapping the Potential for Progress." Beachwood hired 2 new interpreters for the 08-09 school year and may need a couple more for the next school year as well.

*Carol Black, Northeast:* The two deaf Canton students who have been attending the Early College Program will be completing that program in May. Students receive both high school and college credit for these classes, with high school and college teachers working together. There are no deaf students in the first year of this two-year program or entering the program next year. One interpreter left the district this year. There is currently not enough work to support replacing that interpreter, but there are times when there are not enough interpreters to provide services. The high school has 6 or 7 deaf/hard of hearing students using interpretation. Three of them will graduate this year, and there are no students with interpreters at the middle school. Carol is considering options for herself, including college level interpreting because she enjoys the educational setting.

*Sarah McKinney, Central:* Only one of the Franklin County interpreters is continuing employment this year. Five interpreters, one of whom was halftime, have left, and one teacher will be leaving. The ESC has been working on finding replacements for four fulltime interpreters and hopes to complete that process by the end of October. The students are again participating in for the Academic Bowl, which will be held in Wisconsin this year. They will be fundraising to cover the cost of attending. There will be a mock academic bowl at OSD. In addition to the Upper Arlington and OSD teams, Northland High School in Columbus may participate. Any school can register, and students who are local to that area can join the team. Each team must have three students, and there are up to 16 teams nationally.

*Julie Loedding, Central:* The Columbus interpreters get together every morning and when they are on call during parent teacher conference times for informal discussion groups. One topic of great interest is the EIPA. Two of the 14 interpreters have passed the written test, and one took the performance test and received a 4.5 score. Others plan to take the tests.

*Mary Roark, Southwest:* No report.

*Sherry Miller, Southwest:* The Dayton program will be moving to a new building on November 3. They have had technical training in the building. There is a new principal who is very supportive. She knows all the deaf students' name signs, attended the Deaf Festival in September and picked up information at the booths, and has set a goal of learning a new sign each day. There is a new deaf class which will have 2-3 students, and there are 3 students in the cross-categorical preschool.

*Pat Maille, At Large:* The Youngstown area is experiencing a shortage of interpreters for local jobs with many interpreters doing VRI through Sorenson.

## *Discussion*

*State agency budget cuts:* Midway through Fiscal Year 2008, the governor ordered a cut in state operating funds of 5% for all state agencies. OSD successfully negotiated for a smaller cut of 2.5%. In FY 2009, the governor ordered additional cuts of 4.75%, and OSD was required to absorb the reduction. In FY 2008, federal funds for the Center for Outreach Services (COS) were reduced by 20%; we expect flat funding for FY 2009.

COS is committed to the level of service it has provided. We hope that changes in staffing and different approaches to service delivery will allow us to work within our current budget and meet the needs of educators across the state. One example is our decision to provide the newsletter, flyers, and other information by sending email with a link to the documents on our website. We will be mailing out a letter to make sure we have correct email addresses.

Cost-saving actions we have already implemented include not filling vacant positions (Interpreter Educator, K-12 Consultant, MFE Secretary, MFE Psychologist, and ASL Instructor). Those duties have been absorbed by other staff. At the same time, hiring an additional fulltime interpreter will allow us to reduce use of contract interpreters. No new equipment will be purchased, and purchase of supplies is restricted to essential items. Staff travel is limited to essential travel.

Additional cuts may involve programs. Feedback from the ISLR and COS advisory committees will be important in making these difficult decisions. OSD summer enrichment programs for deaf and hard of hearing students may be reduced, or collaboration with another entity may allow us to provide them. Family Learning Experience may be changed to a one-day conference. We will attempt to increase our

use of online learning and video/web conference for professional development, consultation, technical support and meetings. Larger conferences may become biennial events, or we may need to partner with other entities to provide them. These include Summer Institute, the annual ASL event, the Early Childhood Conference, and Family Learning Experience.

We are also reviewing fees for programs. These include the Sign Language Proficiency Interview (SLPI) fee of \$100.00 which currently does not apply to licensed interpreters and the EIPA test site fee of \$75.00 for out-of-state applicants. Also Parent ASL classes and mentoring currently are offered at no charge. Committee reimbursements currently include mileage and other expenses, so we may need to consider fewer meetings or virtual meetings.

The Advisory Committee provided input and suggested surveying educational interpreters about what they would accept and prefer regarding events and charges.

The committee feels that Summer Institute serves to disseminate information and to bring many interpreters together and should be held annually. They would prefer to have one day each summer rather than two days every two years. Other proposed cost-saving measures include finding a free location and using more in-state presenters. Suggested no cost sites include COSERRC and an Interpreter Training Program. However, since the event is held during the week it might be difficult to hold it at an ITP. Columbus is the location which is most accessible to all areas of the state. In the future, we may be able to hold this event at OSD, but with the new school construction (which is funded separately) that will not be possible for some time.

The committee feels that the ASL immersion event is less critical. There are other places that offer ASL workshops, such as the interpreter training programs and OCRID, and ASL immersion, such as Silent Weekends. Also, this event typically has had one-third to less than one-half the attendance of Summer Institute. Suggestions for parent ASL classes include checking on other programs that might offer free classes for parents, charging for materials, and collaborating with an organization like DEAF Initiatives.

The committee does not support charging Ohio interpreters a test site fee for the EIPA, since the EIPA Diagnostic Center charges for it and we want to encourage interpreters to take that test. They do not support charging educational interpreters for mentoring but would support charging other interpreters who request mentors. They feel that it would be appropriate to charge educational interpreters the same as others to take the SLPI and to consider increasing the current fee for that assessment.

The committee will try a virtual meeting using webcams and Adobe Connect at our April meeting. We will not do this for our January meeting when ITP representatives will join us.

*Working conditions task force:* The task force report has been edited and the report and appendices are on our website. Our newsletter will highlight items from the report to encourage people to access the report. The ITPs have been informed that it is available and encouraged to share it with their students. Additional ideas for dissemination include providing the information to our Deaf Educators Network via email and informing Special Education directors. We would also like to have a sample and information about where to access it when we set up the COS booth. Other ideas include announcing it at our workshops, in the OCRID online newsletter, and through the RID Interpreters in Educational and Instructional Settings (IEIS) member section and/or RID website link.

*Online learning ideas:* Half the participants for the current seminar, "Fostering a Positive Deaf Identity," are interpreters and half are others, including parents. It is going well, and we have had many requests for more online activities. Suggestions from the Advisory Committee include working with children with cochlear implants, strategies and information for the EIPA Written Test, and resources to benefit children who are deaf/hard of hearing.

*Website and newsletter:* The committee gave positive feedback on the changes that have been made. They appreciate having the newsletter archives online and believe that interpreters will be able to access new issues online. The archives currently begin with the Summer 2002 issue, and the committee would like older issues to continue to be available. Suggestions on the newsletter and website and problems in using the website can be communicated to ISLR at any time.

*Joint meeting with ITP faculty:* During the joint portion of our January meeting, we would like to discuss changes in standards and licensure requirements and the potential of collaborating for professional development.

#### *Goals for 2008-2009*

*Fill open positions:* We now have 4 of 12 positions open. This includes no representation from the Northwest Region. Ideas to publicize these positions include using information cards from the working conditions survey to identify locations, sending information through the OCRID email list, and using Sorenson's "job postings." If our online meetings are successful, we may attract members who have a long way to travel for meetings.

*Publicize EIPA:* Information about the EIPA is now accessible to interpreters through our website, but we also want to let parents know about the EIPA. Ideas include having a session or print information at an OSD Family Learning Event, statewide Parent Mentor meeting, Hands and Voices meeting, and DEAF Initiatives "Navigating Your Child's Future" conference. A suggested title for a workshop/handout is "How Do I Know My Child's Interpreter Is Qualified?"

*Revise Guidelines:* We need a way to approach this task in sections. Jean will develop an outline of the current document and questions related to each section and send this to the committee members for comments.

#### *Next meetings:*

January 24 (ITP representatives invited from 10:00 to 12:00)

April 25 (virtual meeting via Adobe Connect)