



GRETCHEN WHITMER
GOVERNOR

STATE OF MICHIGAN
DEPARTMENT OF LICENSING AND REGULATORY AFFAIRS
LANSING

MARLON I. BROWN, DPA
ACTING DIRECTOR

MICHIGAN BOARD OF INTERPRETERS FOR THE DEAF, DEAFBLIND AND HARD OF HEARING

August 9, 2023

APPROVED MINUTES

In accordance with the Open Meetings Act, 1976 PA 267, as amended, the Michigan Board of Interpreters for the Deaf, Deafblind and Hard of Hearing met on August 9, 2023, at the Lansing Community College (LCC) West Campus, Cadillac Room (M-121 to 122), 5708 Cornerstone Drive, Lansing, Michigan, 48917.

CALL TO ORDER

Mitch Holaly called the meeting to order at 10:02 a.m.

ROLL CALL

Members Present: Mitch Holaly, Chairperson
Sarah Houston, Vice-Chairperson
April Davidson
Diana McKittrick
James Cech
Rowan O'Dougherty
Linda Sykora

Members Absent: Miriam Andrade Cuevas
Leslie Pertz

Staff Present:

Larry Horvath, Bureau Director, Bureau of Community and Health Systems (BCHS)
Heather Hosey, Division Director, Health Facility Licensing, Permits and Support, BCHS
Colleen Curtis, Qualified Interpreter Program, BCHS
Heather Keel, Analyst, Qualified Interpreter Program, BCHS
Katrina Johnson, Human Resources Developer, Qualified Interpreter Program, BCHS

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

MOTION by Davidson, seconded by McKittrick to approve the agenda as presented.

A voice vote followed.

MOTION PREVAILED

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

MOTION by Houston, seconded by McKittrick, to approve the meeting minutes from the meeting on April 18, 2023.

A voice vote followed. Cech abstained.

MOTION PREVAILED

NEW BUSINESS

A. Department Report

Hosey welcomed the group and introduced new LARA staff. Details were provided on exam scheduling and statistics. Discussion on the upcoming renewal season and highlights on the renewal application requirements. Updates and information on board inquiries was provided. The public can participate with board meetings by providing public comment and contacting the program area for information. Implicit bias training is not currently required to be completed by interpreters for certification. The complaint process was reviewed.

Horvath discussed rewriting the rules to align them with the act and provided current bureau information.

Discussion

McKittrick had a question about communication access at the meeting. They inquired if the slides can be available somewhere else in the room for the next meeting. They stated a problem with Michigan rating their own exams is potential conflict of interest. If raters can review independently and remotely, there isn't the same impact or influence. They inquired about the Texas BEI III pass rates.

Cech inquired the departments slides on renewals and asked for numbers on how many interpreters work in Michigan. Expressed concern about the BEI III passing numbers. They mentioned that a graphic of the renewal calendar would be useful. They asked when the board will have the opportunity to review the rules. They also inquired about the budget for the program and the fees causing an imbalance and its impact in the future.

Holaly stated Texas has their pass and fail rates posted online. The numbers are similar, as of 2019. There does not appear to be feedback on their website. Maybe they can provide more information or tips. They host workshops for the BEI I and explain the steps, so the interpreter has an idea of how the process works. Holaly inquired if there is any historical data from when Michigan rated tests, knowing we only rated the BEI I and BEI II.

Discussion occurred about the number of waivers or underqualified interpreters being used in public schools and the impact that it can have on deaf children.

McKittrick mentioned that deaf interpreters and certified deaf interpreters (CDI) should be a priority.

Discussion and inquiry if data could be provided on Texas BEI pass and fail rates occurred and how it compares with Michigan rates.

Houston stated more information is needed from MIRID and to know how they plan to lift up the community and wants to see data reports. They inquired about complaints and if the Department has received any.

Davidson inquired about the complaint process. There are underqualified interpreters out there working in the schools that haven't filed the paperwork. Is there a complaint process to file against people working in situations that they shouldn't be.

McKittrick stated that many in the public know how to file a complaint, but deaf people don't have access to the information. They suggested there should be a town hall where the deaf are prioritized.

Sykora stated that without deaf people, interpreters would not have a job. They suggested working with the core interpreting program for collaboration or mentoring with the program.

Holaly stated there should be a graphic and video explaining the process. There should be an alternative for deaf individuals to submit a complaint via video. The rules process should also be explained in ASL with graphics. They understand the rules process is long and we want to get it right. Lastly, they want an upgraded database. They requested additional information on the build or how to get something sooner.

Houston inquired how many interpreters have the BEI, RID and EIPA credentials.

O'Dougherty stated they would like to see the numbers and where they reside regionally.

Davidson stated that many of our state certified interpreters are from out of state, using VRI.

Discussion occurred regarding the types of data to include in a report or data graphic showing how many interpreters there are and what their certification level is. The board determined they would like to receive reported data at every meeting, including the total certified interpreters

registered in Michigan (as of date), how many of each certification, the number of interpreters by county, the number of certification type by county, the number of registered interpreters with out of state addresses, the number of underqualified interpreters by county, the QI program budget, the number of complaints filed against interpreters and the number of endorsements by county.

REQUEST FOR DATA AND REPORTS

MOTION by Cech, seconded by O'Dougherty, to request data on certified interpreters.

A voice vote followed.

MOTION PREVAILED

PUBLIC COMMENT

Public comment was provided in-person:

Theresa Miracle from the Communication Access Center provided comment to the Board. They stated there is a public health emergency with using VRI. They stated the most concern is with seniors and the hospital having a VRI setup. This is not ideal, and they are worried about these people.

Deb Atwood with Deaf and Hard of Hearing Services provided comment to the Board. Michigan interpreters do not necessarily live here, and they would like to see that data. They worry about outside agencies and if they are using certified interpreters. They inquired whose responsibility is it to train the deaf and hard of hearing community. Younger deaf people can utilize VRI, but the elder population cannot understand the small screen. They want to see data on endorsements. They inquired what someone is supposed to do if they cannot find an interpreter.

Comments provided via Zoom:

Amy Linscott provided comment to the board. They thanked the Program for the renewal tips sheet and appreciate the support.

David Stuckless provided comment to the board. They stated they hope the PowerPoint can be shared online.

Alayna Lail provided comment to the board. Stated they think changing the structure of the BEI test is a slippery slope.

Sonja Harrison provided comment to the Board. Stated the renewal process taking until August is a long time. Inquired if the window of when to submit needs to be changed. They stated it is not appropriate to have the certificate be expired for so long. They stated the DI needs to be a

priority. There was once an ITP program with a mock exam for deaf students or people in the community. They stated deaf people have said they cannot send a complaint in using ASL and there should be a process. There should be a deaf town hall and allow for questions and feedback. They stated they are willing to be part of the rules rewriting process and would like to be part of the discussion.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

The next regularly scheduled meeting will be held October 25, 2023, at 10:00 a.m.

Holaly announced that Cech is the newly appointed MIRID President.

Cech stated MIRID wants to elevate their support and involvement with the community. MIRID will attend two events in September and will have a table to welcome people. They encouraged BCHS to attend and let the community see faces, build a bridge and association. MIRID plans to make the rounds all over the state. The goal is more one to one interaction and involvement.

ADJOURNMENT

MOTION by McKittrick, seconded by O'Dougherty, to adjourn the meeting at 12:26 p.m.

A voice vote was held.

MOTION PREVAILED

Minutes approved by the Board on October 25, 2023

Prepared by:
Heather Keel
Bureau of Community and Health Systems

August 11, 2023