SSB DeafBlind Committee Minutes

Tuesday, March 11, 2025, 5:00 pm to 7:00 pm

Zoom Meeting

Present: Patrick Vellia, Hannah Harriman, Ann Mayes, Rocky Hart, Maya Larson, Lindsay Escalera

Not Present: Sara Kreiling, Hannah Edwards, Wendy DeVore, Kim Johnson

Agenda

Call to order: 5:12 pm – Patrick Vellia

* Welcome/Check-In with Members – Patrick Vellia
* Updates from Organizations
* Maya is no longer with MNCDHH but is with MDBA (Minnesota DeafBlind Association and will seek approval from their board to be their representative on this committee.
* Ann stated that the Minnesota DeafBlind Project will focus efforts on in-state programming such as Summer Transition Program (STP) and not out-of-state programs like the Midwest Transition Institute. The Midwest Transition Institute will take place in Indiana this year from July 10th through 13th.
* Rocky is on leave from Helen Keller National Center but indicated that there is a lot going on in Region 5.
* SSB Staff Report - Lindsay Escalera

Currently serving 85 customers

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Metro = 57

Greater MN = 28

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Adult = 67

Pre-ETS = 18

Successful and Unsuccessful outcomes

Last program year:

Successful outcomes: (6 total)

Greater MN = 2

Metro = 4

Unsuccessful outcomes: (2 total)

Greater MN = 1

Metro = 1

This program year (YTD, as of March 6):

Successful outcomes: (6 total)

Greater MN = 0

Metro = 6

Unsuccessful outcomes: (5 total)

Greater MN = 1

Metro = 4

Employment Stability

Employment not stable = 5

Greater MN = 2

Metro = 3

Employment stable = 1

Greater MN = 1

Metro = 0

SSB New Hires:

SSB O&M Instructor: Abdi Ali-Mumin

DIF Grant Program Manager: Dacia VanAlstine

Bonus VR Counselor: Catherine “Kate” Flick

* Ongoing Tasks for Committee Documents – SharePoint
  + Recommendations of written standards for individuals/community partners wanting to contract with SSB to provide Tactile ASL, Protactile, or Haptics instruction.

There is not currently certification for teaching these modes of communication. We could use our networks to make informed decisions rather than our specific committee. Networks would include Minnesota DeafBlind Association, Minnesota DeafBlind Project, DeafBlind Services Minnesota, and Helen Keller National Center. We can also provide virtual resources regarding these modes of communication.

The language in the Request for Proposal (RFP) refers to visual American Sign Language rather than Tactile American Sign Language (TASL) which means that under the current guidelines, an instructor must be sighted, which is something this committee seeks to change under any new potential guidance submitted.

ASLIS had a grant for ProTactile in the past; if they still have this program, that may be another potential resource to share.

* + Create a script or document explaining DeafBlindness

Hannah Harriman drafted a narrative of her experience as a DeafBlind individual and approached it both from the educational and vocational perspective and is willing to make any changes necessary. She sent her draft via email to Rocky, Patrick, and Maya.

Lindsay will ask Lisa Rogers about the possibility of SSB recording the video for our committee.

The DeafBlind committee members will continue this conversation and present more information at our May 13th meeting.

* + Documents Last Updated 2023 – Need revisions in 2025
    - DB Committee Goals & Priorities (Need Review)
    - Review current documents
    - Determine language regarding RFP
    - DeafBlind Video Project
    - SSB is asking that we review and update the Step by Step Metro and Grater Minnesota Guide (last revised by Ann and Sara Kreiling in 2022).
    - If there are no changes after reviewing the document, we can simply update it to reflect the 2025 date.

Goals and Priorities last revised October, 2022:

1. We should discuss the portion of this goal regarding barriers, and Lindsay will seek clarification on what we can, should, and cannot do with the employment and unemployment data she presents at these meetings. “Clients” will be changed to “customers” since that is the internal language SSB uses.
2. Lindsay will obtain the DeafBlind Manual from internal sources for this committee to review. The committee will also review the Step by Step Metro and Grater Minnesota Guides.
3. Goal 3 is adequate regarding the SRCB website review.
4. Lindsay will find and send document pertaining to DeafBlind resources. Deaf and Hard-of-hearing Division is now Deaf, DeafBlind, and Hard-of-hearing State Services Division. This will need to be updated in the Resources Document.

Priorities:

1. Change “clients” to “customers”.
2. Lindsay will seek clarification internally regarding the intent of Priority 2.
3. Keep language consistent by using the term “customers”.
4. No changes needed.
5. Lindsay will seek internal clarification on the intent of this priority. Based on the response she receives, this priority may be removed and be an internal responsibility of SSB.
6. Lindsay will seek clarification on the intent of this priority to determine if it is the committee’s responsibility or a responsibility of SSB internally.

Since there are so many goals and priorities that need clarification, this will be added as an agenda item for the next meeting.

* + - [https://mn365.sharepoint.com/:w:/r/sites/DEED/SRCB/dbcm/\_layouts/15/Doc.aspx?sourcedoc=%7B7D56AF18-9C31-4C68-B14E-C01AF61758E4%7D&file=SRCB%20DB%20Committee%20-%20Goals%20and%20Priorities.docx&action=default&mobileredirect=true](https://mn365.sharepoint.com/:w:/r/sites/DEED/SRCB/dbcm/_layouts/15/Doc.aspx?sourcedoc=%257B7D56AF18-9C31-4C68-B14E-C01AF61758E4%257D&file=SRCB%2520DB%2520Committee%2520-%2520Goals%2520and%2520Priorities.docx&action=default&mobileredirect=true)
* New Tasks
  + Step-By-Step Guide Metro & Greater MN Guides needs to be reviewed and updated
  + [Metro / State Services for the Blind](https://mn.gov/deed/ssb/jobseekers/overview/metro.jsp)
  + <https://mn.gov/deed/ssb/jobseekers/overview/greater-minnesota.jsp>
* Next Meeting: May 13, 2025 – 5 pm to 7 pm Zoom Meeting
* Adjournment at 7:10 PM – Patrick Vellia