

Kentucky School for the Deaf Advisory Board Meeting

November 4, 2015 Meeting Minutes

Members Present: Walter "T" Hulett, Jennifer Harris, Clyde Mohan, Michelle Gadberry, Bryan Bowen, Tina Yance, Sharon White, Mike Lafavers, and Anita Dowd

Members Absent: Debbie Haydon

The meeting began at approximately 6:03 pm with a review of the previous minutes. Minutes were approved with no changes.

Clyde Mohan reported that Advisory Board Minutes from previous meetings are now available on the KSD website. Click on "About" then on "Advisory Board" to access.

Discussion regarding Communication Policy:

T. Hulett passed out a handout that was an old school "policy" from KSD staff on ASL Communication. He noted that since all KSD policy must be approved by KDE, he took the "policy" to Todd Allen (KDE legal counsel) for review. He stated that there are legal concerns with the document but also wanted feedback from the Board. Next steps would be a recommendation from the Board to send to KDE for consideration of approval.

A. Dowd then shared an old policy book she found which included a policy on "Communication Etiquette Guidelines" adopted 10/15/97 and a Policy #3101 adopted 11-16-94 on Use of Sign Language on Campus. Lots of discussion ensued regarding this 20 year old policy and whether current administration was aware of these documents. T. Hulett noted again that Todd Allen from KDE would need to review these documents.

Discussion of the development of Policy and Procedures ensued. T. Hulett reported that administration is working on a manual but again noted that all KSD policy and procedure must be reviewed by KDE staff and approved by the KY Board of Education. It was also noted that KDE serves as the "Central Office" for KSD and KSB. Other members expressed frustration with the time it takes and stated that gaining approval of policy and procedures should be a priority. A. Dowd asked if we could just use the previous policy as a "guideline" effective immediately. T. Hulett noted that we can have these expectations but approving actual policy does take longer.

M. Gadberry recommended that the board develop a letter of recommendation to send to the KY Board of Education outlining our priorities. After some discussion we agreed that a letter outlining our priorities for policy development to including communication and hiring practices should be developed. Several board members shared personal stories regarding why it is so important to sign at all times in front of our students and we agreed that all staff should do their best to sign at all times.

Human Resources Procedures:

Tiffany Yeast, Human Resources Officer, presented to the Board on hiring rules and procedures. She began with a review of posting procedures for open positions. Classified (18A) positions that are “merit” must post for 10 days with a maximum of 20 days. At the end of the posting she is notified of applicants that meet minimum requirements (which is determined by the Kentucky Personnel Cabinet.) In regards to making changes to a class specification, the Kentucky Personnel Cabinet will allow agencies to work with them on specific jobs that are unique to that agency (KSD has some classifications that are only used by KSD so working with the Personnel Cabinet on those would be an option). The process would include, working with KSD administration and HR regarding pay grade, job requirements and job responsibilities. Ultimately, however, the Personnel Cabinet makes the determination of who meets minimum requirements in accordance with the minimum requirements as listed on the class specification.

With regard to certified positions, they are posted for a minimum of 30 days (this is the same as for all teacher positions in the state of KY.) These positions are posted on the KY Educator Placement Service (KEPS) site and on the Kentucky Department of Education’s website.

S. White asked if we could add ASL as a job requirement. T. Yeast noted that we cannot “exclude” anyone due to Equal Employment Opportunity and that since we use some standard state government class specifications, we cannot change the minimum requirements for these class specifications, but we can (and do) say “ASL preferred.” T. Yeast stated that this preference is always stated and that in interviews it is stated that if hired you will be required to learn ASL for KSD employees. Tiffany Yeast also noted that there were some current class specifications used at KSD that have an ASL requirement. Tiffany Yeast specifically mentioned the Student Development Specialist class specification as an example. A. Dowd reported that other states do require ASL and T. Yeast noted that we would need to check with the Personnel Cabinet and the state EEO office. She also suggested to check on other state statutes for guidance on this.

J. Harris asked who screens the applicants. T. Yeast noted that she gets a list of those who express interest and meet minimum requirements. She sends that information to the supervisor of the position, Will Begley and Mr. Hulett and they decide who they want to interview. They are required to offer interviews to at least 5 veterans and at least two ethnic minority candidates if eligible. A committee of at least three members with one ethnic minority (by KDE regulation). Typically the supervisor puts the interview committee together, however KSD Principal or the superintendent can put the interview committee together. Upon discussion it was clarified that it is an ethnic minority that must be included as a member of the committee. Although including a deaf person is not “required” T. Yeast noted that it is usually the practice of KSD to include a deaf person on the interview committee. It was also stated that if no preferred candidate is identified they can send back the list of applicants and a position can be re-posted.

Open Chair:**Audience Members were allowed to make brief statements to the board:**

- Mr. Archie Harris reported on a recent volleyball tournament and also asked about Junior NAD. He expressed disappointment that no one was going to this.
- Another audience member stated that they felt that KSD should go back to being run by a board of trustees and get away from state control. This person also stated that we should use the ASLPI instead of the SLPI because KSD is an ASL school.
- An audience member asked if the minutes could be archived in ASL (video). C. Mohan and A. Dowd noted that this would not be possible because of meeting laws about written minutes.
- Another audience member discussed her feelings as a wife. She stated that her husband was deaf and that she was saddened that not everyone at KSD is required to learn ASL.
- J. Harris, Board member, asked if someone deaf can attend when T. Hulett meets with the new Education Commissioner.

Agenda for next meeting:

Next meeting we will review the draft recommendations for policy and hear an update on the Birth-Three program.

Meeting adjourned at 7:57. Respectfully submitted by Michelle Gadberry.