

MICHIGAN

LEAD-K's response
Committee Hearing March 15, 2022

REGARDING :

Michigan Department of Education, Low Incidence Outreach's
Michigan Early Childhood Planning Guide for Children Who Are Deaf or Hard of Hearing.

This handout was being passed out and shared by a representative from The Michigan Audiological Coalition (Casey Stach).

The paper was being handed out with her opposition letter saying that "there is already an assessment".

- We have STRONG concerns regarding this "checklist" that it is indeed NOT an assessment.
- This is NOT an assessment it is purely a checklist that does not have any standards, including a requirement of qualified people to administer it.
- A checklist is merely a tool to gauge basic skill development or progress.
- Checklists are used to help organize your plan of action.
- The checklist
 - * is very vague
 - * is based primarily on hearing and speech
 - * is not American Sign Language (ASL) friendly
 - * does not require knowledge or an understanding of ASL
 - * is unclear as to who evaluates the checklist
 - * specifically lists Listening and Spoken Language (LSL). But LSL is not a language per se. LSL is AG Bell Academy's proprietary certification. Also requires "a team of qualified and collaborative professionals who are trained and experienced in LSL strategies and techniques." The AG Bell Academy does all of the certification and training.
 - * does not have a true parallel to ASL.
 - * is void on mentioning and ASL certification or ASL specialists/experts.
 - * is to be used as a starting block, an initial tool or resource.... a simple "checklist" for basic information, not an assessment of language.

The checklist was:

- * developed by hearing people that may or may not have had any knowledge, much less fluency in ASL.

Deaf Education has been controlled by hearing people for centuries. The deaf community, deaf professionals and deaf individuals relentlessly to have a say in improving Deaf Education. Repeatedly they are being ignored. Repeatedly they are chanting "NOTHING ABOUT US WITHOUT US".

LEAD-K supports assessments in English (already established) and American Sign Language (ASL) that are accurately and professional administered to document receptive and expressive language development.

REGARDING:

Jerome Reide, Legislative Liaison, Department of Civil Rights.

Annie Urasky, Director of DODBHH (Department of Deaf, DeafBlind and Hard of Hearing).

Mr. Reide supported HB# 5777 but suggested that HB# 5777 include the verbiage "deafblind". We acknowledge that this is a sector that has specific needs that may be associated with specific techniques.

In all of the 19 states that have passed the LEAD-K bill, not one has included the term "deafblind" in their legislation due to the fact that this specific group is receiving services that are far reaching past the Deaf/HH student.

DeafBlind have outstanding resources (DeafBlind Central) that they can benefit from in all regards.

LEAD-K opposes adding the term "deafblind" to HB #5777.

Mr. Reide also suggested that an advisory committee is not needed as there is already one available. However, the current advisory committee that Mr. Reide is referring to has no deaf specialists on the list, and no assistance for ASL to be included in the assessments.

LEAD-K stands with the Advisory Committee as proposed.