

1. Lack of support for implementation of 0-3 ASL-English bilingual programs

Like I said in October there really is no zero to 3 bilingual programs in Michigan. None. So that's all over Michigan. I'm talking statewide.

>> For clarification you said zero programs exist. Is it because a lack of funding, they want the program and they don't have the funding or the philosophy is there's no reason for it?

>> The state funds each ISD. I don't know what it's called for early intervention. So the ISD decides what to do with the funding. Some have a few oral 0 to 3 but -- and they typically place them with other children with disabilities. One county had one but Kid Black retired so now they have none. So I don't know if it's they don't want to have a program or it's the funding issue. I think -- maybe funding is the wrong word. Maybe there is funding for it I guess but there's no incentive to make one for the state.

>> Okay I understand.

>> I'm going to ask do you want to amend your statement in any way?

>> I don't know. I don't know. Maybe the word funding isn't the right word. Lack of mandated from the state support. Okay. Lack of support.

>> So lack of support for 0 to 3ASL.

>> I think support is more inclusive as far as funding or maybe not.

>> Clear?

>> I'm just wondering for clarification the type of support. What she would she would envision that support to look like.

>> Sure. I want teachers who are fluent in American Sign Language to do home visits or maybe going to a regional center but I want the teachers to be completely certified fluent in American Sign Language and English, bilingually. My son went to a zero to 3 program. There wasn't one in the county. It was early on. It was for the hearing impaired. It was a hearing impaired specialist and they didn't know how to sign. So she said she could come to my house and teach him some speech skills and really I'm thinking oh my gosh why am I talking about my son doing this., you know, a hearing impaired specialist doesn't know how to sign or didn't know how to sign so parents should have a choice if they want someone to come do speech or have someone do sign. So Oakland county had a program. I wanted to drive him to the county program but they wouldn't let me. So now that program is defunct. Anyways there are no 0 to 3 hearing impaired specialists in Michigan who can sign. Maybe they can sign but are not fluent in American Sign Language. They don't have the ASL PI4 or above. Really there is no sign language level requirement for those people.

>> Clear?

>> I think so. It clarifies it because initially I thought it was about funding and how I'm thinking it's more about again the number of people that are qualified with the appropriate skills.

>> Yes. I understand it's impossible for every county to have a hearing impaired specialist who can sign but I'm thinking a statewide program. Maybe regional centers or something. More of a statewide approach. I don't know exactly how it would work or what it would look like but right now we have nothing.

>> I'm wondering too if you could maybe elaborate on what you mean by ASL bilingual program. Because some people may not know the difference between a bilingual program and a person who does home visits and can do some sign language.

>> Sure. ASL you would first be fluent in ASL and use that to build your literacy in English. There's a difference between kind of this signing and fluent American Sign Language. And really I could go on and on about it. If you know how to sign it does not necessarily mean that you are fluent. Maybe a Deaf educator could explain the difference. I know there's the

difference but how you actually go about teaching the different methods maybe someone else could clarify.

>> Is that clear? Does that clear it up before we elaborate further or would you like further elaboration?

>> [Off mic]

>> Do additional folks require clarification on the meaning of bilingual? You need additional clarification on the meaning of bilingual?

>> Yes. Yes I can point out the difference. You have to keep in mind -- what?

>> I want to know if anyone requires anymore clarification on it because if not we can move on. If we don't require additional clarification on what the intent is behind bilingual we can move on. Okay. Let's move on.

>> You mean implementation. Implementation of a 0 to 3 program. Support and implementation. Lack of support for implementation of. I would like to amend my statement to lack of support for implementation of.

2. The conflict between certified teachers for the hearing impaired and certified teachers of Deaf education, they're different, and the method of teaching for each

What I mean by this statement, we notice that many teachers who receive a certification, a license to teach it is in hearing impaired. Their endorsement says hearing impaired. And that is a very different philosophy on how you should approach educating Deaf children. For those who have degrees in Deaf education they know the culture, the linguistics, they are immersed in Deaf education, how to teach Deaf individuals. There's no time to -- who has a hearing impairment endorsement to teach them -- it's just not teaching them signs. They have to know the culture, they have to know how to socialize within the world. So I would like to -- well I would propose to really remove that whole endorsements of hearing impaired and have a licensure or credential in Deaf education and make it standardized on how to educate Deaf children.

>> I want to clarify, do you mean you're talking about the standards for certification? Is that really what you mean?

>> Well the current -- currently in Michigan specifically Michigan you go to get your degree and the degree says hearing impaired and that's a completely different philosophy from a degree in Deaf education. And I don't want to see all these different terms, you know, degree for hearing impaired or degree for teaching Deaf education. I would like it to be more standardized.

>> When I think of these issues and I'm trying to understand, I think of you have a certification to teach. There's a skill in teaching, instructing, methodologies. There's a skill in the content area whether it's English or math or a particular area, sign, social studies, what not.

>> Then there's the issue of the Deaf piece or the Deaf culture or the hearing impairment or the signing and I see those as 3 separate issues but things that need to be integrated completely for the Deaf culture. Is that accurate to what you're trying to express here?

>> All right. Um, holistically there's this attitude towards Deaf education, an attitude towards teaching Deaf children and it varies. Did that help clarify? Can you tell me more about the attitude towards teaching Deaf children?

>> All right. I'll try my best to kind of summarize it. Those who take education courses -- here in Michigan we call it Special Education. Am I right? It's Special Education, hearing impaired. Right? All right. Students study to become future teachers. They take their courses and maybe they only have one or two semesters of ASL courses and that is

insufficient. There needs to be more emersion into the ASL culture, into the ASL world in order to teach Deaf children. That's really what I mean.

>> Oh, I knew it. So you mean hearing impaired. On the certification it says hearing impaired. You want that to change to Deaf education? And that will change the perspective of Deaf education from a pathology. Is that really your intent to remove hearing impaired off the certification?

>> I want to make sure I understand if it's just the wording that has changed to Deaf and hard-of-hearing now. There no longer is hearing impaired on the certificates. It will always be Deaf and hard-of-hearing. But I don't think that's really the issue you're getting at is it? We don't need to be fixed. Hearing impaired implies that we need to be fixed. So I would like to get rid of that antiquated term and have Deaf education. And encompassed in that it means that the goal of the teacher is to have a positive attitude and goals about teaching Deaf children.

>> It has changed on the certificates now so the endorsement will no longer read hearing impaired and people can change their certificates that currently read hearing impaired to read Deaf and hard-of-hearing.

>> Again for clarification. I'm not from Michigan. So when the school district hires an individual for a job to teach Deaf children that individual follows a state requirement for hiring or is it the local school district that decides to hire the person? And I understand your point the difference in the degree focusing on kind of speech or on ASL but just so I understand who is doing the hiring? Is it the state or is it the local district? You need to change your standards?

>> So if we're talking about the school for the Deaf the school for the Deaf is not a district. It's run by the state of Michigan so the state of Michigan hires them through the civil service process. For our ISDs and local districts thorough documentation are ISD or local district practices and they have their own requirements. They have to be certified and endorsed but they follow their own hiring practices.

3. Lack of funding to build capacity, to implement new programming and to hire new staff

We at MSD are very aware of our lack of ability to implement new programming to expand on programming that we have. We are limited in the number of staff we can have based on the number of students that we have. We would like to do more outreach with school districts and ISDs and agencies and universities but we don't have any funding to make that happen. So we have to look for collaborations and we have to do very small statewide impacts and that's what I meant by that.

4. Michigan has a shortage of qualified teachers for Deaf and hard-of-hearing

I don't think it needs clarification. While Michigan doesn't have any University here in Michigan that actually offers teacher prep programs for Deaf and hard-of-hearing. We have a consortium which we offer which is out of state institutions then we give them the Michigan endorsement but here in Michigan we have no University to offer such a program. So that makes us with a major shortage for low incident areas especially Deaf and hard-of-hearing and DI.

5. Inability to attract Deaf leaders

Just based on my observations throughout the country great Deaf leaders haven't emerged in Michigan. We've got some but I think there's certainly the ability for those numbers to grow in this state. So if you have any questions I'm happy to answer about this statement.

>> Just a point of clarification. Can you give me an example of Deaf leaders that you would like to see or talk about?

>> So for example I'm on the board of Rochester school for the Deaf and there's a Deaf superintendent and principal. In other states, in Michigan I don't see one yet. Perhaps in the past. Currently in 2015 that isn't the case but I would certainly like to see that happen again. I don't see Deaf leaders in the Michigan Department of Education.

6. ISDs are forced to pay tuition and there is no birth-to-3 funding or outreach funding

Prior to 1981 local school districts the ISDs did not pay tuition to send their students to MSD. It was all 100 percent funded by general fund. In 1981 the state started charging the ISDs and made them pay to send their kids to MSD to pay for the academic program. Before the state made that change it was my understanding there was 4-500 students at MSD. I was told his class was 40 students alone. Within 5 years after the state made that change the total enrollment at MSD was down to 125 students. So I think there's a real relationship between that cost and the number of kids who get to come to MSD and maybe the natural -- the natural number of kids who come to MSD is really 4 to 500 and the city has grown in population since that time. So I think that's a real barrier to the success of the MSD program and the success of those kids who wish they could come there but don't get to and those families who don't get to have their kids go to MSD. So I think that's a barrier. At the same time we talked in the first two days here about new goals and birth to 3 coming up and outreach to work with other agencies and districts and colleges. There's no funding for that either. So I just want to put that out. Our current funding structure is a real barrier to the goals of our gathering here.

7. Politics prevents full collaboration

This is a sensitive topic naturally. What we've talked about is Deaf ed and a lot of the things relate to this issue and we've got different opinions and approaches and they all vary. It is easy for the community at large, staff, administrators to impose their own opinions and promote their own positions to promote change. So I think that's part of the issue here.

8. There's a lack of trust between MDE leadership, ISDs and LEAs, the MSD staff, and the Deaf community

Okay so this is a sensitive one too. So having been at the MDE for only 5 years it has become increasingly clear to me that there's been a history between the Department of Education and the school for the Deaf that has been such that there is a lot of lack of trust between how the state department operates, how they interact with the school, how they support the school and just the Deaf community in general. I know the recent decision to hire a state superintendent and his decision to close a program in his previous district also fed the fear and the lack of trust between the department and the Deaf community. And so while this process was not convened because of any of that this process to me is an opportunity for us to address the issue. So I needed it to be out as part of the barrier in our ability to work together with some fragile but maybe beginning to develop trust so that we

can actually have some honest communication about this important issue and maybe come together and begin a new relationship. But I needed this to be part of the discussion.

>> Even if I could answer which I can't this is a long history. I think there's probably lots of ideas and opinions about why there's no -- why there is this lack of trust. I can't answer the question. I can only tell you a few things. But there are probably others in here that could say more about that. The details of why that's a problem I don't think is my point. My point is let's acknowledge that it is a problem and figure out a way to rebuild and establish some kind of trust so we can begin to work together.

>> Are you also taking into consideration the lack of trust with ISDs as well or is this only between MDE and MSD or also ISDs?

>> So that's a great question and I would be completely comfortable with adding that because I think that the issues around funding and the impact it has on ISDs and locals is also part of the problem and part of this issue around trust. So yes I would be happy to add between the MDE leadership, the ISDs and local districts. You can say ISDs and LEAs and the MSD staff and Deaf community. Thank you. That's a bigger part of the issue.

9. Conflict between staff for the students in the dorm vs seniority of staff

Sometimes union rules prevent us from doing what's best for our students and seniority places people in positions that they perhaps might not always be successful at. I believe that was a politically correct response to my statement.

>> This is a space where we don't have to be politically correct. So however you guys want to phrase it is up to you. But... All right.

>> I think what I'm hearing is MSD does not have right to place in their teaching staff.

>> If I may... MSD has 4 or 5 unions that they have to deal with. They've got the dorms, the students, the interpreters and employees, MSEA. Right? Interpreters. Yep that's right. Sometimes we are forced by the agreements in place to do things that are not in the best interest of our children. So we bulk at some of the challenges and we've actually stepped forward and we've lost those challenges and here we are with the statement and sometimes we do challenge and we lose those challenges.

>> So this is the place where you don't have to agree. You don't even have to accept your amendment.

10. Lack of school district support for birth-to-3

There is a great school initiative for birth to 3 across the country. It is a priority. So most school districts have this program. So there would be push back to have specific (sound going out). However the theory is if MSD is in fact the expert in Deaf education, Deaf culture school districts will welcome your input, your expertise or sending someone to those districts to support them in this effort to get ASL integrated into the program.

11. Lack space to expand

The size of the building of the school, MSD. I graduated from MSD in 2009. I really my schooling was in a different building before it was demolished. Twelve years I went to the same building P it was very comfortable, roomie. I always had about 150 to 180 at most 200 it could probably fit but now it's really cut in half pretty much. It's very condensed. I can't imagine myself growing up in that environment. It's a good environment for a limited number of students but we hope to expand the enrollment. We need a bigger facility.

12. Deaf people have no influence on the system

Really, first I want to explain what I mean by the system. You are aware that schools, you know, are regulated by government from teachers to the principals to legislators, from top down. All of it. How many Deaf people do we have involved in that system here in Michigan? To me it seems like none. I'm not blaming the Deaf community at all. I'm talking about where the power lies and having the power of opportunity. Where do Deaf people have the opportunity to become part of the system and to change from within the system?

13. Underutilization of professional development opportunities

Under utilization. That was what was up here. I do know that in the past there were professional development opportunities that were turned down so to speak, not by the school. But the staff did not have access to. I also know that we at LEA offer a lot of professional development opportunities and so I guess what I really like to explain is that I think professional development is really important and the more staff that can access it the better for the students.

14. Geography impedes access for all students

This is just about how large our state is and we have a school for the Deaf that when parents are given choice may not fit with their desire when they have to travel 6, 8, 12 hours to get their kid there. So this speaks to the largeness of our state, the lack of access to a variety of services, not just the school of the Deaf but the number of interpreters, the number of qualified teachers and so on. And the barrier that presents and how we can utilize various tools to for professional development or technology to bridge that geography.

15. The school district denies Deaf students the opportunity to attend MSD

The school districts want to keep, retain their students in order to keep the funding from the state. If they keep their student in district they keep the funding. Students in the past couldn't come to MSD until late September after school had their count day. Once they had their count day they submit it to the state, they receive the funding then that student they said, okay, go on. Go to MSD and they kept the money and that was really kind of dirty politics.

16. Inadequate data regarding student outcomes, family needs, and teachers' skills

So this is speaking to the information that we don't have yet. Where are the Deaf and hard-of-hearing students in the state? What are their outcomes already in their programs? (Sound stopped) -- working as teacher consultants who are teachers. So where are the needs? We have to have the information to know where the needs are so that we can respond to the needs.

17. Insufficient signing abilities of staff

Well as I said a lot of staff are not fluent. They don't understand what the students are saying so the students really aren't able to get their point across so I think that if the people who are there are more fluent then they'll understand the students and things will go better.

18. Lack of positive public relations

People just don't talk about MSD a lot. They talk about the public schools. They've got a lot of public -- publicity out there. I don't see a lot of it about our school. I mean we're the only Deaf school in Michigan. We need more recognition out there in the state.

>> Can I just clarify, please? Do you mean that we don't have enough attention out there in the community? There should be more attention brought more publication, more professional development, more outreach in the community? MSD should be in the spotlight? MSD, we should just be out there in the community that people should know more about us?

19. Conflict between federal and state requirements and the actual linguistic needs of Deaf students

As a teacher for the Deaf I'm sure other teachers have the same challenge. We feel that we're oppressed and the literacy requirements that are placed on our students, math as well, I think that we would like to focus on the student's abilities to achieve linguistically and we feel a conflict. The conflict is our students have not achieved their full linguistic capabilities yet in either language. And we -- I'm required to produce, produce, produce but it hasn't happened yet for the students. And I have to show that they have when they haven't.

>> I was just wondering if this would also include rules, policies and procedures in place at the state level.

>> I just wanted to make sure. I didn't want to interrupt the process. You're famous for interrupting and saying I'm interrupting so I just want to make sure. Okay. Yes. As a teacher I have to comply with state and the feds. I'm under MDE, under their umbrella. We have to comply with their requirements, the standardized testing assessments. So we have to emendate the students and we have to make sure we're trying to implement a thought process for those students. So some of those students haven't had the ability -- haven't reached their full ability linguistically to even pass those state assessments yet and it makes MDE look Bahama bad and people say oh once they see the assessments that school is not an achieving school. But they are actually growing linguistically but they might not be hitting those milestones based on those standardized tests. So the way that the curriculum is based and set up they actually can't meet or actually it's not -- it's actually not set up for them to actually maximize -- I just feel like it's word vomit coming out of my mouth. I hate to use that statement but that's what I feel like. The curriculum doesn't match their needs. So...

20. Lack of bilingual ASL-English teacher prep programs in Michigan

I think it explains itself. MSU used to have a program. It wasn't a great program. Sorry MSU fans. It wasn't great. But it's now defunct so we need a teacher prep program that supports this ASL, English, bilingual methodology.

>> I'm trying to think about what am I allowed to announce and what am I not. Yes... Madonna University has written a program, a Master's degree in Deaf education. A graduate level endorsement and we sign it this way (indicating). Different than a degree. And so we have created some -- we have thought about some Deaf leaders being involved and created the curriculum and now we're applying to the state of Michigan. The University itself has already signed off on the program. But the state of Michigan has to also sign off on it and we

think they will. Hopefully. And once we have that we will immediately start the process of implementing the program. However honestly we first want to hire a full-time staff person for that program. So it will be ASL.

>> What method will you use?

>> Bi biprogram. Bilingual, bicultural. Plus we will try to comply -- we will accommodate with all of the modalities, all of the modalities. We don't want to say children with cochlear implants can't do this. So it will be a bi bi approach. Maybe there won't be a lack of --

>> How long will it take?

>> It hasn't happened yet. It hasn't happened yet.

>> So I should leave it?

>> So this was my -- hold on. Hold on. This was my point in letting him talk and explain what's happening because now her knowing that information may decide to keep that statement, may decide to delete that statement. It is completely up to her. But we've captured the conversation in the dialogue. So everyone knows that there's a potential for an emerging program. I don't know if that would sufficiently address and only she can tell us that.

>> I would like to leave this statement because of, you know, people from the state level are here and they're looking at this. I want to make sure this is noted.

>> I just want to add maybe more specifically you want to add a bachelor's degree or only a Master's degree level? What are the teaching requirements here in Michigan to teach? Do you need a bachelors or a masters? I guess we can just leave it. What is the straight requirement for teaching?

21. There's lack of oversight for the credentialing system for the individuals who are teaching the students, the ASL PI expectations have not been met

All right. What I mean by this is the licensure or the certification for teaching Deaf education there should be a screening that involves the ASL PI prior to actually being able to teach.

>> Are you talking about just for the Michigan school for the Deaf or a larger --

>> They all need to make sure they have an ASL PI score of 4 or above. The scoring goes from 30 to 5. So it would be appropriate to have a score of 4 or above. Below that threshold we would encourage them to continue taking courses in sign language.

>> I would like to clarify her clarification.

>> Well you can ask for additional clarification.

>> Okay. I would like to ask you the clarification. When you said Deaf programs does that include all mainstream programs?

>> Yes. Exactly.

22. Deafness is still seen as a pathology rather than as a cultural linguistic group with unique educational needs

Well I don't think that needs clarification but I will try. We need a paradigm shift. We need to move away from fixing Deaf and hard-of-hearing babies, toddlers, children, young adults to understanding that they're just Deaf and how they learn is different because their mode of communication is different. They still can learn all the same things. They still can make all the progress but if they don't have access to the communication because their linguistic needs aren't being met we aren't going to be successful whether that's at MSD or anywhere else in the state of Michigan.

23. It may be difficult to access additional funding for changes at MSD

By saying there may not be additional funding I put that out there as we may need to be creative in thinking in what we can do with the funds that are available. We couldn't even get enough money to get our roads taken care of and legislators to agree on that let alone to try to change something for funding for education as we've been trying for years. So given that we may need to think of what we have and what we can do to make it better with the resources we have.

24. Lack of statewide assessment with specific data applied to deafness

I think really your discussion really correlates with that about statistics and data. So I believe if we have a standardized assessment we can collect data and data will help us interpret the room for improvement that may be there. So lack of statewide, you know, assessment. Any questions on that?

>> A clarification. Michigan has a statewide assessment currently. However the data really isn't able to impact our teaching. As statewide assessment we have -- are we able to use that data? I'm not really asking you to change your statement but really we have a statewide assessment but the data that we receive is insufficient.

>> I accept your suggestion because I wasn't sure if there was a statewide assessment. Okay. So I would like to rephrase. A statewide assessment with specific data applied to the -
- I'm sorry -- applied to deafness.

25. Current facility location, size, and design are all limiting factors

I would just like to phrase my explanation by saying it's awkward to be honest about these things because every day she and I deal with staff complaints, parent complaints about the current facility, its location, the size and the design. We normally try to put a positive spin on things or make the best of things. It's not that bad. We're still open. But to be honest with this process we should talk about the location. It was brought up in the last two day session we had about Flint and the bad press it gets for crime and unemployment and bad water. The impact that has on people wanting to send their kids there and the size we're up to 162 kids and we were told when we moved that 180 was the capacity and we're feeling that limit right now. We don't know what we're going to do if more kids would want to come here. And the design. The building it doesn't have an auditorium. It doesn't have some of the things that we had in the old school and if we hadn't worked in the old school it might feel differently to us but we did. So we see that we don't have a wood shop, that vocational type opportunities for the kids that we used to have. We don't have a home-ec life skills room where the kids that aren't going to be successful in their college lives could learn about just living and surviving, how to care for themselves in every day normal life. We don't have that opportunity. And, you know, we talk about the limitations the current school has connected to a dorm that's almost 70 years old and we would like to have -- to offer the best educational opportunities and that might mean a balanced school year but the developer tells us it's about a million bucks to get air conditioning so the kids could stay there during the summer. And we need to question the value of pumping that kind of money into a small school with a really old dorm. So I think these are real barriers for the program to be the program it really needs to be for Michigan's Deaf kids.

>> I do have a statement. Just to back up. Do you mean the facility is not designed as a deaf space, Deaf friendly so to speak? Is that included in your barrier?

>> One thing I was thinking of but didn't say for example if you look at the front of the school there's this big glass space and I know that the architect was very proud of that but I've seen Deaf people constantly struggle to really use the media center at all because if you're looking in a certain direction in the room it's bright light behind them and they can't see and they're constantly having to rearrange themselves and it really inhibits communication. That's from the inside looking out. Just normal communication. The kids are distracted by every bit of foot traffic going by that room. There's constantly distracted away from the instructor and I've heard Deaf people complain this is not Deaf friendly to us. They didn't think about our communication needs. And that's just the reality that's there. So to answer her question yes I was thinking about that. I didn't elaborate but yes.

>> Thank you. Clear?

>> I am curious again for clarification. Is part of the problem because you're leasing the building, the campus? Is that part of the issue as well? Because the campus is on a lease. Correct?

>> Yes.

26. Too much emphasis on standardized testing score

Really this ties in with a lot of what she was saying. She already mentioned. But I think it's important not just the problem in Deaf education, the problem is really education, the system, gen ed in its entirety. With the amount of testing kids miss 11 school days just taking tests. They should be learning and instead they're taking tests. Really, I think this really emphasizes that there's too much emphasis on one area, on one definition of what it means to succeed. And so I think we need to -- it allows for us to ignore other areas in which children could succeed. And that's unfortunate.

27. The funding protocol (how we fund) the MSD

So this isn't so much about the advocacy of funding. This is about how the money is used to fund the school. And I think this process that we use is part of the problem when you're talking about public relations and trying to increase awareness and in turn enrollment. Currently local districts along with parents in an IEP team meeting make decisions about placement. If the placement is determined to be the school for the Deaf the school district essentially the money that would go to them for that child if that child were to stay in their local district program now has to go to the school for the Deaf. So the system puts the school district and the parent at odds because while people might want to think local districts don't operate good programs, many of them do. And so to me this funding issue denies parents of children who are Deaf the opportunity to just simply make a decision as a parent that they want their child to attend the school for the Deaf. This funding process denies parents of children who are Deaf of that school of choice option that every other parent has. But the law about school of choice is written for school districts and the school for the Deaf is not a district. So that law does not apply. And so while we can talk about is there enough money and that is part of our challenge, but how these decisions are made regarding whether our child attends a school comes back to how we fund our school. If we could fund the school by itself then essentially a parent could still decide that even if the district in their local community does a great job as a parent they still want their child to go to the school for the Deaf. They should have that option and this process denies them that opportunity.

>> Yes. I have a question. Yes. I'm wondering how we do the funding. Is it possible to change or is it impossible? I'm just wondering how that goes.

>> Anything is possible but one of my whole purposes in convening this group in such a

structured way is to give power to this community to give feedback to the department about the real challenges that are in place that are keeping us from being able to do a good job for the kids in our school and beyond that to support other programs across the state where there's a continuum of need for Deaf education. Not every program, every child needs the same type of support. But this stakeholder input is going to be very powerful in our ability to communicate to the department challenges and hopefully as Jeff said talking about action steps. I can talk to the right people but just because I'm the director of the office it doesn't matter. They'll say thanks for your input. What we're coming up here will carry much more influence with the department's ability to really understand what needs to be changed.

28. Inability to get formal advice from the Deaf community and other stakeholders, possibly an advisory board

You see nationally in the community there are a lot of people that are at odds with what's happening with residential schools for the Deaf. On my personal Facebook page I get advice every day privately from Deaf people. Are you doing this? Or you should do that. And I wish I had one group, an advisory board that they could come to a consensus and bring that to me about what the community wants because individuals have varying opinions and if I meet one person's, you know, opinion or need someone else is at odds with that. So I'm not saying that there has to be a unified voice but I like what she said as far as there's all this distension in the ranks where is a unified voice. And I would call it myself involved with that group, where is the -- why aren't we all rowing the same way in the rowboat? We're rowing opposite ways and getting no where. I think we need a formalized group that could, you know, change with terms and that would help leadership make the final say of what we do. I wouldn't say that but kind of get the pulse of what's going on in the community and advise the school.

>> I need a clarification. Do you mean you would like to set up a community advisory group outside of the school or would it be within the school? Like a school board? Like someone mentioned we don't have a board. We don't have a school board. So if we had a board of advisors that would just have suggestions or would they have decision making power?

>> Yes I think it would be outside of the school. What's happening outside. They could learn about the school itself but we could learn from each other. There would be transparency as well. So we would report to -- right now we report to the state board of ed. That's our board. But if we had the board with specific roles to help make decisions outside people maybe alumni, leaders, those that are appointed and meet frequently with the school administration.

>> Yes I do. First if you look at the sentence the statement, did you mean lower case D or upper case D?

>> I think upper case D. Because lower case D means the community in general whereas upper case D means the Deaf community. All right?

>> And then also I have a second. You also said a formal advice from the Deaf community. You could set up an advisory council. That's the goal. Right? Um, do you mean specifically and solely the Deaf community or what is the membership of that board and the roles that it would have.

>> Again that's moving into the action details of what it's going to look like.

>> I don't think so Jeff. My question is Deaf community. I read it as only Deaf people. Only Deaf people from the community.

>> Is that your intent. Only Deaf people from the community?

>> No.

>> It's not clear. I want to know what her definition of Deaf community is.
>> My understanding from her is that it's not only the Deaf community, it's Deaf community and a group of stakeholders. Is that what you mean?
>> No is that what you mean?
>> Yes. Not just a board of fully Deaf individuals. No. I mean a Deaf voice is 'heard'. It should be representative but not totally Deaf. No that was not my intent.

29. Different funding sources for English language learners, bilingual education, and ASL

In the world of education English language learners receive funding from I believe it mild be Title II. I'm not sure. Bilingual education is a different funding source and as far as I know for American Sign Language it's part of Deaf and hard-of-hearing programs with very little funding support. That in itself is a barrier.

30. Inadequate influence on early detection and early intervention process

When children are born they have a screening at the hospitals. That testing occurs. That's already inherently a medical process. There's a benefit to both sides. I mean it benefits the parents. We want to know if our children are Deaf and the hearing parents want to know if their children can hear. There are so many stories that I've heard. I work at an audiology clinic and I've had just a stream of individuals come in that -- and their role, there are people identified there, their role is to give information and resources. The nurses and the doctors who are there provide information. Typically the information that they give -- I mean it's not standardized by often the information that they give is one of sympathy, empathy, misery. And those are all very negative connotation that is are placed early on. They talk about programs that are focused on the speech and pathology part of the medical process. I would like to see a change there. I would like to see information and resources -- first of all I would like a mindset and philosophy change to say your child is fine. Your child will succeed. Your child will be a success in life. Look at me. I'm alive. I'm Deaf. I've been a success in my life. I'm able to meet my bills, I've got a great job. I do everything that a person does, a human does in their life. So speaking for the Deaf community that philosophy -- I just would like to see a change in that mindset and so that's the Deaf perspective. The mindset of just giving information that focuses on the speech pathology side of things to a family early on is often emphasized. I think there needs to be an equal balance of giving resources information, to equal the playing field so a family can make their decision.

31. Limited availability of quality of life residential experiences for students

So last time several different things that were brought up talked about quality of life experiences for students and these included internships, vocational training, community service, building relationships with other Deaf students outside of the school, opportunities for families to improve their interactions with their student, education on civil rights meaning the student's civil rights and how they can access those and social and emotional support after school hours including opportunities for students to interact with adults outside of the classroom who can communicate with them meaningfully and share with them the things that other kids get to share in such as cooking, building a dog house, current events discussions, fixing a flat tire. All the things that we're supposed to be doing with our kids at homestead of watching TV. Making meal plans, grocery shopping, knowing what's going on when mom and dad are at the Secretary of State registering their car. Things that Deaf students may not actually be aware of because they can't communicate meaningfully. Those

are residential experiences that could be included in the school for the Deaf.

>> Are you saying that there's a lack of those in a barrier phrase?

>> I'm saying it was explained to me that those are opportunities that don't exist and last time we heard there could be more opportunities rather than just watching TV.

32. In the Michigan educational system the oral system always trumps the ASL system

I feel that this correlates with other people's statements. We have laws that are enacted that say parents have free will and free choice based on where they live every day. But there seems to be a focus on the oral method and the ASL opportunities aren't always available and wide spread and it does feel as if that oral philosophy trumps ASL on a daily basis.

33. Underutilization of resources, extend collaborations with all agencies or entities to expand possibilities for students

There's been much discussion about funding or lack of and so the point of this barrier is that let's all work together, agencies or community groups or any entity that works with students who are Deaf hard-of-hearing or staff. So that we can leverage the opportunities for students. So for instance if we all work together like DOD, BHH, LIO, MSD, local districts, um, we will have more funding, more availability and we can use the valuable resources of staff and also perhaps things that are already in place to make things better for all the students at MSD.

34. There's an insufficient number of highly skilled interpreters across the state

Again this kind of speaks to -- across the state. The lack of skilled people across the state. Not all parents -- it speaks to other issues as well. Not all parents want their child to go to the Michigan school for the Deaf. They want to educate their kid in their own community or in the local school district. And without adequate interpreters and other skilled professionals that's a very difficult challenge. I think it speaks to many of the issues that have been addressed already.

35. State requirements for teaching degrees turn away out-of-state candidates

Here in Michigan we have a special endorsement requirement for teachers to have that endorsement to teach Deaf education or in a Deaf program. A lot of Deaf instructors out of state already have a degree and have the skills necessary. But when they come to Michigan and they find out that they have to go back to school for additional training or endorsements they are turned away. They're swayed to go to other places that are more convenient.

36. Conflict between philosophies/methodologies of Deaf education

Well I think this has been touched on in multiple ways already but I think it's the elephant in the room that we need to discuss that in the field of Deaf education there's always been conflict and disagreement among philosophies and methodologies and I heard a phrase this summer that sticks in the back of my mind. It would be great if we could be complementary and not competitive. So specifically I mean to clarify I'm talking about the whole spectrum of deaf education from the lower case D to the capital D, from oral auditory verbal all the way to ASL, bilingual, bicultural. I would love to have a spectrum of services throughout the state and one barrier is the amount of energy expended in the arguments.

37. Lack of confidence in Deaf students ability succeed

I notice some students feel like, you know, like, oh you're not going to emphasize these things. They learned bad ways of doing things. Really there's no emphasis on becoming a better person.

>> I just wondered if you're talking about the confidence of the Deaf student themselves or are you talking about the confidence of the teachers being confident that that student can learn? Does that make sense?

>> Really both. Both.

>> For clarification... First that's all Austin. Really you are a great leader. I want to say that first off but really just I want to clarify your intent. Do you receive inadequate encouragement or guidance to meet your goals? Is that what you mean?

>> Well really, um, like to be college ready, to be -- emphasis on that. I don't feel like maybe there is an emphasis on that and therefore people don't achieve what they can.

>> Do you mean you need more Deaf role models or just you want the staff, the teachers to show more confidence and that confidence will spread to the students and they can become more confident in themselves?

>> Well first I thought Deaf role models. Yeah I think that would give kids more confidence. And also the staff could give them confidence as well. Yeah. I think both.

>> But you're talking about confidence, right? The point is confidence. It's not necessarily Deaf role models.

>> Right. Confidence is the point.

>> Okay. I just wanted quick clarification. When you're talking about ability to succeed do you mean in college only or transition? How general? I'm trying -- more specifically what do you mean?

>> With this confidence to become, I don't know the first Deaf President. I mean really that's my point.

>> So the system is designed to identify impairment. That's what the federal law talks about. That's why we fund programs. What you're saying is stop looking at students who are Deaf as having an impairment which may result in people not expecting you to perform well in anything. But see you more as a person who is Deaf and has the confidence in you to be as successful as anyone else?

>> Yes. That's exactly right.

38. The influence of insufficient public relations leads to low enrollment

For example I can't remember who said it but people last meeting said Flint is bad, the water is bad. You said that. The water is bad. Flint, not so good anymore. So I think that we need to talk about MSD, the school. That the school isn't bad. That we're not bad because Flint's bad. That we give a good education at MSD. And that MSD should become a center of excellence for Deaf students and that people need to recognize MSD.

39. Insufficiencies in providing teacher training and being able to provide direct explicit instruction in ASL

This really ties into another barrier talking about federal and state requirements of teachers because of those requirements they focus on the development of students, the strategies on how to actually have them achieve in literacy or math or whatever those are and we need to focus on how to grow ASL for those students and how to have a student become fluent in that language and their language as a student and have direct instruction with those

students in ASL. So that those students have opportunities. And training is actually -- there's so much focus on state and federal requirements that we don't get enough opportunity for direct instruction.

40. Lack of collaboration between MSD, local public schools, and local private schools

I don't know if it is or not but my experience is my son was going to MSD and then we did along with other parents went to a public school half day. And this is my interpreter. My son's interpreter here. Anyways that's neither here nor there. On my own I reached out to my local school district. I had to figure out who was going to be the interpreter or go through an agency, CAC. It wasn't ready. And I want everything to be ready and not have that burden on the parent. And then a second example is when Powers Catholic high school moved on to the campus I thought this was a great idea to have, you know, cross collaboration. But they said that they could not use public funding for a private school. I'm not talking about tuition. We can pay tuition ourselves, we could negotiate with Powers. But we were talking about interpreters. So there was an issue with Special Education requirements and state dollars. I think it was Eleanor White at that time said sorry we cannot and Eleanor White was adamant, no. This couldn't happen. And I thought it's right there. It's within walking distance. And since then I have had to remove my child from MSD and send him out of state to another school. So that was my experience. And it's not a barrier for most schools so to speak. The school districts seem supportive but I think it was the state rules that were inhibiting that.

>> Okay and I understand that. However I don't mean like the school -- the school moneys for the interpreter. Who is going to provide the interpreter? CAC, the agency. So the district would pay CAC to send an interpreter and they said no we couldn't do that and we went around and around and that was really my frustration. It's right there. Can't we figure out something to make it work? I understand that tuition wouldn't be able to be reimbursed by state dollars but what about providing the interpreter, providing the interpreter? I just feel like we should be taking advantage of that resource on campus.

>> The school's obligation is to provide a free appropriate education and they are required to pay for whatever they believe is appropriate for that child. So if they think it's appropriate for the child to have the experience that you're describing it would have to be through a different school. It would have to be through a public school.

41. Lack of being open minded and collaboration in terms of reading and writing abilities with other Deaf schools

What I mean by this statement, the curriculum that we are following by is state curriculum and sometimes it doesn't really fit the needs of our Deaf children. So I suggest that we be open minded and explore other ideas that other residential schools for the Deaf in regards to reading and writing or literacy and we should communicate and network within other residential schools and not just be kind of short sighted and only using the curriculum in state. Is that clear?

>> I have a clarification. Are you saying MSD needs to be open -- more open minded to see what's out there? Is that what you mean?

>> That's correct. Yes. And myself included as a specialist at literacy specialist, education specialist, I can -- I know that it is out there. I know that there are resources available and to be able to bring them into the school and try them. You know? But when I came in its kind of like this is the curriculum and you have to abide by it. If this doesn't work -- okay let me

clarify. I want to clarify. For example Shakespeare. Before reading Shakespeare in high school, right, we have this curriculum. First of all our students' reading levels are way below what Shakespeare needs are. So if we say you need to read Shakespeare and understand the language we need to make sure we can clarify that prior to introducing Shakespeare's content.

>> MSD has direction from the department of school improvement and to improve our literacy they gave us the initiative of what to do. But you're saying that you feel like the English is trumping the ASL and to improve literacy your other suggestion is limiting to only MSD. Correct?

>> There are other ways out there. What do you mean by out there?

>> Other deaf schools, MDE directs us to prioritize English. Is that what you're saying?

>> Well yeah. In a way that's how I see it. English is prioritized and ASL is seen as a, well, you know it's going to be later. We'll teach that later. Where it should be the reverse. Right? We should have ASL be primary and then we can use it to introduce the English concepts and that way they can acquire language more quickly. But the way it is now it's going to take students forever to learn.

>> We have the MDE school improvement requires these mandates. Right? And we really shift our focus to abiding by all of those and really neglect the needs of the children. We really forgot these important linguistic needs. Is that what you mean? You know, and that speaks to your phrase open minded. We seem to be focused only on these mandates.

>> Deaf children their first language is ASL. It should be taught in ASL and once they understand the content, right? Just like like English grammar. Deaf children are not introduced to that initially. So that's why I suggest we introduce ASL once they understand ASL's word order, structure and then at the same time introduce English because it is important and it has its own word order and structure that that will help in the progress of literacy skills. And that's research based and I think there's more out there and I think we need to bring those research based practices to MSD and make that visible. The materials that are available.

42. Interpretation of the meaning of the least restrictive environment

Least restrictive environment is in federal law and least restrictive environment is in federal law and it's commonly referred to as LRE and a child needs to be educated in the least restricted environment but for some Deaf and hard-of-hearing children their least restrictive environment is a language rich environment. That's the way we like to look at LRE. So typically when people enter LRE they look at a list of kids closer to home, kids without disabilities down to here's the Deaf school. What if we looked at LRE like this and we looked at the pros and cons because they all have pros and cons. What if we looked at the pros and cons and we looked at that child and said where does that fit fit the best? What's least restrictive for them. That's what I mean by there are ways to interpret that meaning.

43. Lack of understanding of the teacher requirements and qualifications in the Deaf community that the state requires

So what I meant by lack of understanding teacher requirements and qualifications for the Deaf community I only addressed it for the Deaf community because we're here talking about improving MSD. I think in general populations they don't understand the teacher requirements, the process, the federal law, the state law. So again I put Deaf community here because we're talking today about MSD. And there are a lot of levels and it is confusing and even today working in the field for 15 plus years there's things that come up that you have to go to my director and colleagues and talk about and discuss. So the reason I bring

this up is lack of understanding sometimes causes lack of improvement. So unless you really understand or ask the right questions or talk to the right people it's hard to move forward with how you can change to have a better quality program for students, better quality teachers. That's what I meant by this statement.

>> I need some clarification. Me? Okay. I don't understand qualifications in the Deaf community. You mean deaf educators? What do you mean by qualifications in the Deaf community?

>> I meant the teacher qualifications. Teacher requirements and qualifications. All attached to the teacher. I could have put a comma.

>> Because that was confusing to me. You have no right to tell me if I'm, you know, a Deaf community qualified person or not. But I get what you're saying now. Teacher.

44. Inability to attract Deaf and hard-of-hearing students to MSD

I understand that you have pretty good numbers now. 160 students did you say? Okay. My understanding is that a good number -- the more numbers you have the bigger school you would have. So 400, 500 that means there's more opportunity to offer more courses, more students per classroom. Not small classrooms of two then their parents would pull them out to go to another school because it's such a small class size. So up till now we haven't had the ability to draw or attract different students. So I think really the statement, the goal is to expand. So I think right now the barrier is that you don't have the ability to attract more Deaf or hard-of-hearing students to MSD.

45. Lack of planning for hiring a future principal

Obviously because there's a lot of things happening around the country and in Canada as well. On the status of Deaf education in residential schools for the Deaf I am not going to talk about the action because I do have some suggestions from other states who are searching for superintendents in particular. (Sound stopped) -- we have a unified voice and to make sure that we have a well planned outlet or outline, um in how to hire a new principal.

46. Lack of overall support from MDE beyond the office of special education

So I think I may have mentioned the last time we were together that primarily the Michigan school for the Deaf is over seen by the office of Special Education within the department of ed. Primarily because the funding for the school comes through our office and the requirements that must be followed are enforced by our office either through the individuals with disabilities education act we call IDEA or through Michigan rules. I think if we are looking at Michigan school for the Deaf as actually being a school for the Michigan Department of Education then the divisions within the department all need to have a better understanding of the school, they need to understand these barriers, they need to understand their role in how to really work together to support our school, being a model for how school districts meet the requirements that the department has, how does that look in our school and how can we work more collaboratively across the department in support of the school rather than just relying on the office of Special Education only. We don't have enough expertise to be able to effectively run the school.

>> Does this also include -- close office of special ed and department of ed also -- are they responsible for the hiring practices as well? That's not a larger department of ed issue?

Specific of office of ed.

>> The Department of Education human resources office works closely with the school in securing certified staff. Part of the problem is that the postings for school personnel are within the civil service descriptions. So what you really have is a lot of position descriptions written within unions regarding other work in departments like the corrections department. They need teachers for kids who are in jails or juvenile facilities. So the teacher hiring process for them is essentially the same process for hiring teachers at the school except that the needs are considerably different but the process is the same. So our human resources office has to work with the people at the School for the Deaf in figuring out what the identified needs are and then looking within civil service to figure out what do we need to do to make these positions inclusive of the type of professional we're looking for. That's also why we have so many different unions. All those things are parts of government. There's 17 different departments in Michigan government. Michigan department of ed is one of 17 government departments and all these position descriptions apply to any of them. So trying to make that fit for a school is part of the challenge.

47. Underutilization of social media or any media to give MSD a social media foot print

Most school use Facebook, most schools use Twitter, most schools use a variety of social media. MSD does not have a person assigned to keep up with, you know, what's going on with the school or current events. You're saying people don't know who we are? We have no social media foot print.

48. Lack of education and understanding of the importance of language development in the homes of hearing parents with Deaf and hard-of-hearing children

Basically hearing parents are not educated about the importance of American Sign Language and that language for their Deaf students or even language development in hard-of-hearing children.

49. The danger of lumping Deaf Education within the Special Education system

I don't think this is accurate. I think the definitions do need to be changed. I think in somehow with MDE or within the legislature when you look at the term special ed it's inclusive of all disabilities, physical, whatever the case may be, whatever type of disability it is. I think the danger lies in including Deaf ed within that entire spectrum. So as we were talking about earlier that endorsement and just saying Deaf education may be perhaps not putting hard-of-hearing or even hearing impaired within that endorsement and the reason lies in the fact that the teaching methods differ. And so someone might say what's the difference between the term hearing impaired, hard-of-hearing and Deaf. There is a significant difference in what those terms mean. So the administrators and the persons who are making those decisions on a higher level -- I mean Deaf is a subset of special ed.

>> What I'm saying, I'm clarifying for someone at the table. Deaf education -- Deaf education is not just a subset. It's its own specialty. I'm just trying to figure out how to word this.

>> I guess I'm not clear because I think of this -- I think of Special Education in terms of a continuum but also in terms of the need for specialized instruction and I guess I can't get around differentiating Deaf --

>> I'll respond. Ladies if you don't mind I'll respond first to that. Let me give you an example. In Deaf education you have a DeafBlind teaching method that has its own specialties. You have Deaf plus with emotional cognitive impairments perhaps. I'm just looking back to

elementary school when I was young using myself as an example. There were 4 of us. Myself, one girl who had autism. Am I using the correct sign that's being used these days? All right here's another sign. Autism. And one had emotional problems. Boy that kid flipped out all day long, constantly was being hugged and calmed down by somebody in the classroom and another student who had social impairments. And so there was a variety of students in my classroom. So the idea of putting all of us in the same classroom simply because we were Deaf was what I'm discussing here. That's the special ed. So each of these students were Deaf but they each had their own specialty perhaps within that deafness. Does that make sense what I'm trying to explain?

>> I'm not sure -- correct me if I'm wrong. I'm going to move over here to this side. Okay. Maybe you can see me better here. So as I'm thinking about what you're saying I think the danger is the misconception is that Deaf people who just have a different linguistic need are lumped in with the category of somebody who has other disabilities perhaps. So the expectation of the one size fits all type of educating Deaf students. So the linguistic needs may be different but it may be only where they differ from their hearing counterparts for teaching methods.

>> It does. Yes. She captured it.

>> If I may. I'm just trying to understand -- I'm dealing with the barrier issue. So we've got special ed and how students are taught in Deaf ed and I'm thinking what is this barrier. So if you hire a person who is teaching students and their specialty is special ed and you think perhaps that individual might not be able to accommodate the needs of Deaf students and if they simply need to learn ASL and that's simply enough but they don't have the cultural competency and they need to understand the other nuances of the culture so the question is do you believe they are focusing only on the special ed endorsements for the hiring. So are you saying that the barrier is only for the Deaf -- the Deaf issue or special ed? So I'm trying to figure this out.

>> Okay so if you think about teaching -- you know the thought process of the word hearing impaired. One size fits all, teaching students no matter what. They had a hearing problem of some sort. What we need to do is actually think about the different classifications within the subsets of persons with a hearing loss. So it's very important that everybody recognizes that -- they may have one thing in common. Something might be wrong with their hearing but they each learn in their own individual way and they each have their own abilities as students. So I don't think we -- we shouldn't go back to antiquated models. It's something we need to keep in mind. We need to look back to go forward but, yeah, I think what --

>> So lumping everybody into one classroom is right.

>> Right. We can't just throw everybody in one classroom. We can't think about that and make that the priority. We have to be aware of individual needs of each student.

>> Okay so you're saying that for a student -- so throwing all the students together in one classroom is a failure. You think that's a barrier?

>> I do. I think it's wrong. You can blame whoever you want, the administrators, MDE, the legislators. I think it's dangerous to do that in a classroom.

>> So based on putting everybody in one classroom, correct?

>> Yes.

50. Lack of access to updated technology for the workplace

Technology ready means career ready.

51. Resources for Deaf children are not on par with the resources for other children, for example resources that are available to blind children

This may not be specific to education but what I have in mind -- let me clarify. So if we look at the division on Deaf, DeafBlind and hard-of-hearing the staff is -- 5. Okay. Five. So if we compare that to the government agency for blind individuals, do you know how many staff they have? Over 100. I think it's 119 as of now. And the division on Deaf, DeafBlind and hard-of-hearing has 5. Statistics show we have more Deaf individuals than we have blind individuals. So we're talking about the allocation of resources in that spectrum in Michigan and how those resources are allocated. So I think there's a parallel in how we use resources in education as well.

>>When you're talking about over 100 staff for children who are blind are you talking about services for blind persons? Is that the agency you're talking about or teachers of the blind?

>>Thank you. I'm not really talking about teachers at this point. I was talking about the agency for Deaf services versus the agency for person who are blind. And just comparing those. Assuming that the parallel exists in the educational system as well. So they tend to provide more resources to blind children or blind individuals in general compared to Deaf children. So maybe I'm making an assumption and maybe my assumption is not based on fact but I think we need to invest resources wisely. I mean we need to invest resources wisely on a governmental agency level as well as in the educational system.

>>Well I just want to clarify that our agency -- our agency has 3 people to address the needs of blind visually impaired and currently we have one person for Deaf hard-of-hearing.

>>I know this is clarifying time but the blind commission does have close to 120 members and the division of Deaf, DeafBlind hard-of-hearing was under LARA, and it was moved out into the department of civil rights. And so there's talk about how the blind commission was able to grow and have resources under LARA and the division on Deaf, DeafBlind and hard-of-hearing is under a different department. So if I have to ask for clarification I would just say for supporting resources would you support looking at those resources comparing the blind commission and the division as they are under separate departments now but they used to be under the same department.

>> Yeah the reason I'm making this point is because I remember my other point was that Deaf people are really not -- they don't have any power in the system. And the result of not having power is that there's one Deaf in LIO and 3 for the blind population. You know, 3 to 1. I think there is a reason behind it and that is because people do not have power within the system to lobby for their own needs. And so I think that that's the impact on the resources at the state level.

>> I just want to clarify one more thing BSBP is an adult agency. It's not for children. They may do transition from age 14 up minimally but LIO, low incidence outreach is the agency in the office of Special Education that serves the students. So that is the clarifying factor here.

52. Lack of accessibility to state assessments

I think this one is pretty clear. The division of assessment and accountability while we're very much a part of that team representing students who are Deaf, hard-of-hearing and blind, visually impaired that are working very hard to make accessible but we are not there.

53. Lack of traditional school board

Obviously we don't have a school board and I think without a school board MDE office of Special Education has a lot of things on their plate and to establish a school board would reduce MDE's plate and let some of the operational things get passed over to MSD and that school board.

>> Yeah. We do have a school board but it's under the state. It's different.
>> I understand. I understand. So the point is no school board specifically in MSD. So we do have a school board but there's no advisory board specific to MSD.
>> That's what I mean. That's what I mean by this statement. MSD have its own school board.
>> Just for clarification. I might need to ask her to explain what the school board that you currently have, the current structure. Because I don't know much about it.
>> So the State Board of Education has members who are elected by the state of Michigan and they are there to conduct business over the state's resources as it pertains to education. They set policy and guidance for the state school system. Because the Michigan school for the Deaf is a budget that they have authority over they have all the final say on policies and procedures and budget and the decisions that are may pertain to the school even as it relates to the facility and how the lease agreements go. Those are all kind of taken care of by the State Board of Education because of the department's role with the school. So again school boards are for school districts. The Michigan school for the Deaf is not a school district so if there is a need for an advisory board that works more closely with the disability - with the Deaf community regarding the school and curriculum and things like that, that would be a different role than a school board would play. Those functions are served by the state board of ed.
>> I appreciate the clarification and advisory board in a publicly elected school board are two very different things. A school board has real power and I completely understand that the systems not set up for the school to have a board that has power that parents could possibly be involved in but I still see that as a barrier and I would have added lack of a publicly elected school board in the traditional sense that other school districts have them as a barrier if I knew this statement was going to get changed because I think an advisory board would operate very differently than a school board that parents have the opportunity to serve on and community members have the opportunity to serve on.
>> Yes. The traditional -- a traditional advisory board that's what I want to clarify. A traditional school board. A traditional school board. That's what I'm looking for. I want one that solely focuses on MSD. So I would say maybe lack of traditional school board. Good.
>> I do have a question. Can MSD become a school district? Is it possible for MSD to become a school district?
>> It's not possible. No.
>> I think we talked about that before but I forgot.

54. Lack of a Deaf friendly space

I noticed at MSD a lot of the classes or my friends will get together and there are a lot of barriers. We can't see around things. We wish we could move things around. It's like things are always in the way. You know? So I think it would be better if we had more open space so that we could -- it would be more visually accessible.

55. Insufficient family and community alliance and involvement

This is a huge barrier. Just like he mentioned geography. It's hard to reach out to families who are a great distance away. Also the community, the Deaf community we have a huge Deaf community in Flint and they feel very comfortable but we need to have positive collaboration with the community plus families and how we could attract more alliance to the Michigan school for the Deaf. I want to make sure -- I talked about the Deaf community is not comfortable coming in. They don't feel welcomed. So I just want to make sure that we need -- how could we fix that on my statement. When I was explaining about families in the

community coming together one reason is because the Deaf community does not feel comfortable. I understand the interpretation was not correct. I just wanted to make sure I made that clarification.

56. Lack of positive relationship with the state legislators

I thought of this because in Maryland, the Maryland school for the Deaf the superintendent James Tucker is very close with the state legislature. We're always seeing pictures posted, you know, their team won a state award or something and they went to the Capitol. It's one of the best schools nationwide. And I think it's because of their great relationship with state government. So I know we're starting now small locally with like coffee chats but I think it was worth it to put it up here as a barrier.

57. Failure in the process of hiring teachers, recruiting from out-of-state

Hiring teachers we've always had problems with that. And it's really a nationwide problem. For MSD we want the best qualified candidates and teachers and it's hard and we're trying to recruit from other places. But I think we had about 16 applications for teachers and some of them I had never seen before but how do we get there? How do you get there? And to attract more teachers from out of state? My point is searching for teachers -- I don't know, um, P-12, P-11. It seems like I'm afraid. I'm afraid that are the teachers going to be able to linguistically meet the needs of the students? Are they going to be able to sign? I do not want to have to have a teacher have an interpreter in the classroom.

58. Insufficient use of access technology in the education of Deaf and hard-of-hearing

I'm in charge of access technology at RIT. So it's about access in the classroom and I don't think that Michigan's keeping up with technology for Deaf individuals in the classroom. So I think that's self explanatory.

>> Are you talking about Deaf students being in a classroom and being able to access the instruction by using technology? For example an interpreter, a CART or are you talking about a Deaf student using a computer and other technology to access information?

>> Everything you just listed. I think that's a good point. Here's a good example. CART services. C-print for example. Research has shown that watching the captioning with the teacher instructing -- if you actually put the C-print next to where the teacher is and actually have the C-print move along with where the teacher is proximity, location of instruction, research shows that that influences teaching and learning. Having the -- interpreter over there, Jeff is over there, the interpreter is over there. It's hard on a student's eyes to proximity of teaching. Again it's an opportunity to improve logistics and access in the classroom and I don't know if MSD is using the latest research or not and technology. So I just know it's out there and available to take advantage of.

59. Not enough awareness that MSD has services for DeafBlind students

I feel that often times when we talk about services for Deaf and hard-of-hearing individuals that we forget that we need to talk about DeafBlind students as well. I think that we need to be better collaborators with the bureau for services for blind persons, that we need to focus more on encompassing the needs of DeafBlind individuals as well.

60. Challenges due to requirements for public education school districts and civil service requirements for state agencies

So this is mine again and I keep bringing this up because so many challenges that we have keep coming back to this issue that we are trying to operate a school with what we know about public education in a civil service structure and I think the more we can get clear on where those issues are the better able we may be able to work around some of those. I'm not sure we can change things. We can't make the school a district. We can't take it outside of civil service but there are things within the structure that we could possibly look at differently or propose different options for that I don't think have been discussed. I just think it's important to keep this out there that the fact we want to keep talking about our school which it is a school but it is operated within civil service and it's not a district, it's not tied to an ISD, it has no connection to any of the supports that our school districts have across the state and that is a challenge.

>> If I may. Can't? I think it's possible. I think the state needs to change its perspective through legislative processes. There are some schools, Delaware is a Deaf district. So I think it's a constitutional amendment.

61. A new type of leadership structure on the campus

Insufficient leadership team on the campus. I think we don't have a superintendent. We have M and C and that completes the list. 24/7, 6, stand corrected. We do get some time off. Saturdays off. But yeah that's 24/6. That's the 3 of so... should I say anything more.

>> You're great leaders. Wait I'm reading what you're saying. I'm just making sure before I respond.

>> It is not clear to me what better leadership means. Does it mean you want to improve the leadership structure as it is? Does it mean you want to look at a different type of leadership structure? Do you just want to fill in the blanks with the old structure we used to be following but we're not following? What do you mean by better?

>> A new type of leadership structure on the campus or to run the campus. A new type of leadership structure to run the campus.

>> It says a new kind of leadership structure on campus. And again I would like to ask you to clarify do you mean you want to recruit an enhance leadership instead of just having the 3? Do you want to grow those numbers to 10 and more so leadership responsibilities can be allocated? It was mentioned earlier that having one Deaf leader at DOHH, you know that division and then you've got 100 plus people at that other department but still having one -- he is still the only Deaf person in that list of 3. So if you're talking about equity -- do you mean that? Is that what you're talking about in those numbers?

>> I guess I wasn't thinking about equity necessarily. I think there's not enough people to do the actual work. And people to make the decisions across the 5 unions. So we've got discussion and we need to have people making decisions. So we've got a limited number of people making those decisions. I mean there's no superintendent. I don't know what that would look like but that's the structural break down that's causing these issues to happen. It's exhausting by the way.

62. Lack of funding for weekend residential programs

Initially when we were dreaming we talked about bringing students to the campus on the weekends and this barrier is a barrier to that in that how we fund those weekend programs.

63. The culture of can't

Maybe this is a pipe dream but my tendency is not to even go there and think about what we can't do. I like to focus on positive things and what we can do. When I look around the table and hear the word can't, we can't do this because of this, if then, we can't... In the back of my head I'm thinking of the plethora of opportunities that we each have and every time I hear the word can't in my head he is saying opportunity. It is there. We can.

>> I understand your perspective but I mean can you be more specific about the barrier of can't?

>> Okay I will. Let me give you a point. Often we say can't. But what we really inherently mean is we don't believe that we can change that system or we can't enhance something. I mean it very hard? Is it a big task? Yes. But if we say we can't change a structure we will forever be stagnated in a system that we are not happy with. So honestly throughout my life I have heard the word and seen the word can't and I said a big FU to all of those people and said, you know what? I can. I can do it. Look at this. Yeah. So there's a lot of terms for that but I said, you know what? I have no obstacle in front of me. I certainly can do it. So I continually in the back of my head that little voice says to me if we collaborate maybe we can. So that is the point of those 3 or 4 words.

>> So do you mean that when you're saying it's a mindset, change the mindset?

>> I do.

>> Don't call something a problem, call it a challenge and how do we resolve the challenge.

>> You're right. Thank you. Thank you. That is exactly what I meant.

64. The insufficient pool of qualified teachers for students who are Deaf or hard-of-hearing is not on statewide problem, it is a national issue

Again we've talked about this a lot but when we are talking about trying to get teachers, qualified teachers for our students in the nation, it's statewide and a national issue.

65. Lack of understanding of what Deaf culture is

I think we already experienced this even in this room where we come from a varying backgrounds and have varying understanding of Deaf culture. And so this little experience is a snap shot of what Deaf and hard-of-hearing students and families experience all the time in school districts. So I think moving forward it's really important for the people who have the decision making power if we're talking about legislators or people higher up that we're going to take these suggestions to that they have an understanding of Deaf culture and I would be even more specific to say the benefits of Deaf culture. Because even a hearing parent who chooses auditory/oral can be educated about the benefits of having their child be exposed to Deaf culture. So not competitive but complementary.

66. Teacher aides as well as staff are contractors instead of receiving full salaries and benefits

Wow this is a great challenge. Our teacher aides are contractors and they do not receive any benefits at all so therefore if we have after school meetings or trainings or activities we can't pay them. So we have some staff who are contractors -- they really have no protection of their job. Will they be let go today or tomorrow? Will we lose them? There's a lot of uncertainty. I call it soft. There's no real hard commitment. So for our students we want to

make sure that we have all the teachers, the aides, the staff on the same page so that we can all have the same training.

>> So you're saying that all the people instead of having a contractor they should be a state of Michigan employee?

>> I am not saying SOM, state of Michigan necessarily. How can we provide perfection? It would be nice that they could be state of Michigan. I know in the past they were under the state and had some protection. And we had a pretty good group of aides. So sure. Why not?

>> There's more security.

67. Inadequate educational requirements for residential staff

Right now there's no college degree requirement. They're supposed to be teaching life skills in the evenings. They should have a diploma. More than a high school diploma. Maybe not a bachelors but certification or associates degree. Something more than high school diploma.

>> Just for clarification, the barrier from this -- can you elaborate on that. The barrier is kids are not fully benefiting from potential learning environment. Have they had higher requirements for the staff.

>> I'm not saying some have and some don't but really mostly they don't and that really I think influences the kids and I think it's an attitudinal influence as well. So maybe it's a union thing. I don't know. I don't know. If they were educated it wouldn't be such an issue. You know the teachers all day have to have this requirement and really they're kind of like babysitters at night. But they should be educators. So I don't know if they really should, you know -- what they have to have for the state requirements.

68. Inability of parents of Deaf and hard-of-hearing children making the decision to attend MSD

Really my only reason in wanting that up there as a barrier is in case there are any people in this room who don't understand that parents don't make the decision to go to the school for the Deaf. It's an IEP team decision and if the school district disagrees with the parent the student doesn't go. The parent has due process rights but that's a long involved exhausting stressful process and most parents don't take it. They just kind of back up. So just in case anybody thought that parents just say I want MSD and it magically happens, it doesn't.

69. Inadequate sports program

I think for a well rounded human being not just academics but also a physical activity. So I notice many parents want their kids involved in athletics or sports and if you only have a few it could be a factor in the decision making process of not to send their child to MSD if they don't have inadequate after school programs or sports. I remember back in my time we had many different athletic options and I think that those have lessened since my time.

70. Inadequate focus on transitional services

I think this is very important because it's a barrier specifically for students who are drop outs. Students who fall through the cracks. There are students who want -- that are preparing for college but what about those students who are not college bound and not ready for either? So we need to focus on collaboration with outside resources for those students to prepare them for their life skills to come, to have the training available. We know that there have

been tremendous budget cuts for those types of transitional services, especially in Michigan. So we need to make sure that we're attuned to what's going on there.

71. Lack of teacher aides training

This ties in with my previous statement because the funding doesn't exist for paying somebody. They go home. So training is relevant. In a way it's sad because they do become babysitters. There isn't an engagement in dialogue. There's no incentive to provide a good job. So that's what they need. But they don't have it.

72. Antiquated job description for various positions on campus

So we were talking about -- she was talking about retiring. I know that. I was talking about the job description but I know that that position description just like we talked about the interpreter position was posted and it had a QA certification required and that has not been a certification required in a long time. So as we've talked about ASL PI, those requirements. So we need to enhance requirements in position descriptions for teachers, for principals for really everybody that's on campus and we need to upgrade the position description requirements and as we talked about -- wait is hearing impaired still on? Is that still there? Are we still using that term? It says teacher of the hearing impaired. She is responding yes it is or not it's not. It now says teacher of Deaf and hard-of-hearing.

>> Certificates say that. But the posting may still have hearing impaired. I don't know.

>> On Facebook I think --

>> But the posting for the position opening it says teacher for the hearing impaired. That antiquated language is still in there. But maybe on the endorsements it says that but it's slightly embarrassing that terminology is still used on those postings to we need to upgrade and update the terminology.

73. Difficulty in implementing after school programs

I believe that this goes -- is hand in hand with what she said. Life skills and what he said as well. There could be an improvement for after school programs being implemented, crafts, arts, a variety of programs, cooking, all of those things could be brought into an after school program but funding we know is the catalyst for all of this change. The RCAs, I know those unions issues -- there's that word can't again. We need to say did and figure out a way. So implementation is an issue and I know we need to find a way to implement new projects.

74. Inability to raise the bar of Deaf education with hearing peers

I just feel as a professor at NTID we're not seeing an influx of students from here. So I'm wondering about where their education is as far as being on par with their hearing counterparts throughout the state.

75. Differing views and message on the perception of MSD as the last resort for the school of choice

We've been hearing a lot of dialogue and rhetoric regarding local school districts and special ed directors, parents, former alumni and administration and a variety of messages about what the school for the Deaf is. Is it the school of last resort? Are students being sent there who are complete failures in their programs respectively in their public school districts? And a parent should have a right to choose. And I noticed that these conflicting messages are

truly a barrier to MSD being a model for education for Deaf and hard-of-hearing students in the state of Michigan.

76. Lack of on campus staff's ability to collaborate move the vision forward

We've had people that have stayed for some time. We've got some an alumni who are born and raised in the school and there has been just an inherent negative conception that has been part of that generation and we need some people to buy into the I can philosophy. And if we are to collaborate it would just be stunning if we were able to do so.

>> So do you mean that people are afraid of change? Are they not willing to change? Is that what the point you're bringing up? I mean is it a change to the whole process? Are they resistant to change? Is that what you're thinking?

>> We're safe here. Right? Can I just throw it all out on the table? 85 percent of the people - - 85 percent of the people that I work with every day I am blessed to work with. Some I would like to claw their eyes out. I would like to admit that. I'm not going to lie. I just -- it is a process every day. I don't -- people -- there are just people that walk in the door and they're negative. I mean most of the staff are motivated and enthusiastic and I believe that if they were to change they would be there and there's a lot of people that would be. But just not having the power to create change and so those people that are negative that's -- I feel like there are days I'm drowning in that negativity. We are blessed in so many ways. I mean it's wonderful to have the jobs that we have and I would like to say to them, knock it off. Get with the program. Work with us. Not against us.

77. Lack of sensitivity and understanding of Deaf needs

One of our topics that we discussed last meeting was that MSD should be more involved in the hiring process. I think that's right because people for a long time have had this notion of Deaf heart and that is a concept that they know the culture and linguistic needs of Deaf people. Whether they grew up with Deaf relatives or they're just familiar with the community, not only the school but they go to fund raisers, they go to Deaf night out, DNO. That's one night every month where Deaf people typically get together at a restaurant and just to meet and to network. And people are not taking advantage of that as often as I think they should. So it's important for people who are the decision makers hopefully in collaboration with Michigan school for the Deaf to have some understanding of our Deaf needs. Why we are who we are. And some of you are fluent signers. That's great. But are you communicating to the Deaf community? Are you communicating and the affluent signer is very different. Do you have that kind of sensitivity in the decisions you're making? Are you well informed? I'm seen some of you when I went to MSD for maybe one day in the classroom saying oh, look at the little kids. But... Um, like CSD, remember CSSD, central state schools for the Deaf? It's where Indiana, Illinois, Ohio, mid western states all get together annually for their athletic tournaments. Typically basketball. Right? All of the residential schools come together in one place and that would just be a cultural shock for some of you. It's -- I mean you think maybe some of the students were acting like animals. Really that would help with your cultural knowledge and it's important to have that kind of experience and understanding and it takes a long time and a lot of interaction with Deaf people but you need to open yourself to new experiences and try to be more involved in the Deaf community and not just in the educational setting. But in the community as a whole.

>> I was just wondering if we could look at best in 65? I'm trying to understand how they're similar or maybe they aren't.

- >> Look at what ones? Sixty-five in regard to? Are you the author of 65?
- >> [Off mic]
- >> Bring up 65. So who is the author? From what you heard is it aligned with your intent? Are there differences?
- >> Because mine comes from a hearing person's perspective and his explanation came from a Deaf person's perspective. So the explanation -- the words are almost the same but the explanation is slightly different. So I would leave it up to him if he thinks they're the same.
- >> Well it's actually up to both of you. If there are distinctions then keep them both. They'll be caught.
- >> I think they should be separate. I think they're separate issues.
- >> They're different. They're different viewpoints.
- >> The authors are the ones that are going to be able to tell us. If they come to agreement that they're the same exactly then we'll combine them. If there are distinctions then we'll keep them separate. And if there's an unknown we'll keep them separate.
- >> Mine is more broad. I think yours is very specific to culture and mine is more encompassing of the language, the linguistic needs, the community and identifying those.

78. The dorm union is a barrier between the school and the dorms

It's becoming -- the dorm is saying you can't do this, this, this, this. And so it really I think it's the union. Yes, it does create a problem but really it's not something we can't overcome. I think it is a huge barrier because the union has too much power. And I would like to add -- I'm sorry. I would like to add one more thing. Another reason. We as teachers we educate of course and then we have our own teachers union then our union is under auto workers. Go figure. Maybe we're the creating future engineers and will work in the auto industry, I don't know. But the point of that is every year we develop a calendar and the dorm union seems to have the final say. They have the ultimate power. Even though they don't make the ultimate decision but it seems like they have more power than the teachers. So it seems there's a power imbalance there.

- >> I would like to clarify your point. Are you saying the union has too much power that does not meet the student's needs?
- >> I'm saying this has become a barrier between the school and the dorm. We're two separate entities. It's like we're not working together. So it doesn't function as MSD as a whole. It's two MSD entities.
- >> I need a little more clarification on the dorm union. Who makes that up? Who is the dorm union?
- >> ASSAME.
- >> My understanding, pardon my French that they're a pain in the ass. Really. That's the whole point. Having to work with them and that's the huge barrier.
- >> But could they stand up to the union and say no?
- >> Well I think that's an administrator's response.
- >> The unions have agreements with just like school districts have unions they have agreements between themselves and their employers. So these union agreements exist in agreement with the Department of Education. So the fact that you have different unions means that each of those are negotiated differently and not always in combination with the common work that they do in a school. So in my own office I have people in these different unions that sit outside my door and they all work in cubicles next to each other but they may be represented by different unions. So the agreements are entered into between themselves

and the employer. The fact that they're not well coordinated is because they were designed to work that way. They were working off the interest of the people who are their members.

79. Underutilization of Deaf bilingual experts statewide, nationally, and internationally

I don't see LIO or MDE or MSD really bringing in Deaf experts to come for trainings or seminars. And LIO has a Deaf employee and wanted to pull in some training for Deaf instructors but was told no that they couldn't provide that bilingual training because the oral program would be upset. I said why not? We have a lot of people who would be willing to come to that training and we're not using those people.

>> Actually we are in the process of creating some opportunities statewide and we are looking at Deaf bilingual experts as well as other experts in the field. So we haven't had the capacity because we haven't had staff. So we are doing that. Just so people know the accurate information.

>> I do contract work with LIO, MDE-LIO and I get the e-mails periodically. I see what's going on with the programs and workshops and there's a whole lot of blind stuff but there's not a lot with Deaf. If I can throw that out there.

80. Lack of protection of MDE funding for MSD

I know the state controls the funding. They allocate resources by way of money to MDE and sometimes if the state falls on hard economic times there's going to be departmental cuts that will be a heavy burden on MDE and that's going to trickle-down to MSD. You've experienced that before I'm sure. How to improve that I'm not exactly sure but... I think that we need to try to figure out how to talk to the legislators about not playing around with children and their education and to have lobbyists to fight for the protection of their funding and I know that's a barrier. How we improve that process so that we have stability for the funding for MSD to have a guaranteed stream line of funding to MSD is the million dollar question so to speak. So we need to protect that funding.

81. Failure to fully collaborate with parent support groups

We know that parent support is critical for the development of any child whether they're Deaf, hard-of-hearing or DeafBlind. And I believe that insufficient collaboration in regards to teaching Deaf leadership role models, having access to resources whether it's at the school for the Deaf or mainstream programs and not having that collaborative effort through that entire spectrum of resources is a barrier. And having that would improve access and education at the school for the Deaf.

82. Lack of disciplinary issues

I notice that some of the kids did some things that were pretty bad and their discipline really didn't match what they did and it should be stronger so that kids pay better attention to what they're doing. I think they need more discipline.

>> I think kids just go along thinking things aren't a big deal. So in the future whether he they might do something that's really bad they should -- they should have more punishment now so in the future they know what they did was bad.

>> I like when you said you need more discipline. I like that you said that. But do you want more structure, more -- I know you were saying discipline but... Like the 3 strike rule kind of thing? When you say the kids don't think it's that big of a deal but you want people to be

more firm and strict with you and so that you feel like you learned a lesson. So maybe you have to do community service. Not just hearing someone say you did something wrong but to actually have to do something and learn that there's a right and a wrong and there's a right way to do things and learn from it.

>> So it's just like at home you might get in trouble at home for something and at school you don't get in trouble for doing the same thing. You see what I mean? Wait like sitting in the corner. When I was a little kid I had to sit in the corner but at school they don't make me sit in the corner if I do something. Just trying to give you an example.

>> Let me clarify. You mean some kids get really strict punishment and you think other kids don't and you think it needs to be more equal with all the kids? Let me just make sure.

>> Well some kids do things that are really bad and then other kids don't or do the same thing and I don't -- I don't -- yeah. And things are different with the kids. The same problem happens with different kids but the punishment is not the same.

>> You feel it's not even?

>> Right I think different punishment is handed out for the same thing.

>> Can I give just an example that might apply to clarify? So say for example -- tell me if I'm wrong. Okay? Let's say one student gets in fights all the time. Picks fights with everybody. Just is a trouble maker. He's in trouble all the time. He or she is in trouble and another student he's a good kid. And they may happen to get into one fight with that kid who is always in trouble and then the kid that's always in fights just gets disciplined by someone saying you shouldn't get in fights and then the kid who hardly gets in fights got suspended for 3 days. Even though the good kid that was their first fight and they got suspended 3 days and the kid that gets in fights all the time has so many suspensions, if we suspend them one more time we will have to have an IEP meeting. So we'll say go to time out. We'll give you a pass on this one. You don't think that's fair. Right?

>> Let me give you an example. Gosh I have to think of an example. Let's say one kid slaps another kid. It's a boy. Then they just say you get 2 days -- I don't know you've got -- slap and punch. Punch goes home. Somebody punches another home they go home. Another kid slaps they get 2 days where they have to do reading and stuff. That's the same thing but they don't get the same punishment.

83. The current MDE endorsement requirements for teachers for Deaf and hard-of-hearing children does not require a high enough ASL and cultural competencies

I think that ties in with the job descriptions. Don't you think? My understanding is that after MSU closed MDE had some kind of program where different colleges you can take -- I forgot what it's exactly called but it only requires like 2 ASL courses and you are endorsed. And that really can't be -- that can't be the case. You need to have at least an ASLPI above, have a full endorsement, have a full understanding of cultural and all the issues we talked about. So job description and from the MDE level if you want to educate Deaf children you need to have more stringent requirements.

84. Status of current Deaf education MDE/MSD there needs to be a wake up call of what's happening in Deaf education across the country

Deaf education all over -- Michigan, not just Michigan but in the state what's happening currently? What are the hot topics, the cutting edge? Is MDE aware? Are they looking into those things? Really, there are a lot of issues with hiring Deaf leaders, superintendents, principals. Oh, yes, language. Language deprivation from children. So the list goes on and on and on. Are you aware of those topics? I think that people need to become more aware of what's happening nationwide, in schools, even in Canada, other states. More and more

schools for the Deaf are looking at these hot topics. I want to make sure that we are in on it too. I'll make it more clear. In Canada currently there's an argument because they chose a superintendent who was hearing and the assistant at the 11th hour and a Deaf superintendent and that person has the -- is more highly qualified than the hearing superintendent that they chose. So why did they do that? What's wrong with having the Deaf people be the superintendent and having the assistant superintendent hearing? It's 2015 people. It seems like hearing people have been picked way too long. And they are kind of using us as puppets. It seems like we have this glass ceiling where we try to rise up the ranks and you can never get to the top. I know the superintendent will leave but now the school, the language of ASL they're saying no they will use cued speech. And that's not a language. So it's only a tool. So that sort of thing really is important. Those issues are important and we need to be aware of them, what's happening. And it could affect MSD ultimately. So I want to improve that with better planning, making sure we're on the same page and that's what I meant by this statement.

85. Lack of Deaf stakeholders in MSD

One of my concerns is we have a lack of stakeholders in decision making at MSD for everything. I feel like -- I'm sorry to say those people who are not Deaf are the majority of making the decisions based on our future, on our children. And who is best to contribute but Deaf people themselves? So we need transparency. For example we have Gary from Rochester school for the Deaf and he has a different perspective. We need that. Not only that but that influences our children and they gain from that. You can believe in us.

86. Inability to attract and retain ASL Pro families in Michigan

ASL pro. Pro ASL. I don't mean people who support ASL. Really I mean people who are fluent in ASL. I know that there are about 50 families who were fluent in ASL and they left the state because Michigan is not really a Deaf friendly state. And so we're not retaining them and we're not getting people to move here. So I don't mean supportive of ASL. I really mean people who use ASL. It doesn't matter if they're Deaf or hearing. Families who use ASL in the home.

87. Lack of community service requirements

Some schools have a community service requirement and MSD doesn't. Again if you are a repeat offender and being suspended all the time really to learn your lesson you should be out in the community doing community service work. Lack of community service requirement.

>> I want to make sure I'm clear on this. You mean that all -- before you graduate students should be able to do community service because it will apply to you out in the community and then second you're saying that there should be a consequence for those people who have violated some type of rule?

>> Yes, community service for graduation requirements. So maybe working out with the Geriatric population or even helping to clean up litter. That sort of thing.

88. Our biggest barrier is the state of Michigan's constitution

I would like to say our biggest barrier is the state of Michigan's constitution. I'm waiting for her to look up at me. Not only the state constitution but also our federal constitution and all of the rules. The war that has continued since the inception. So really to have our own

independent school is what we want. Run by our own school board. Our school board who is primarily of people who can run the school and to make sure that we have a reputable name. It's been a long time that we've been under the state because of the constitution and the challenge is how do we become a more -- a more strong residential school so that we have power in the community.

>> Did you say that? Because you said we can't become a school district. It says right in there in the state constitution it says we must be -- I don't know, you know the number, the constitutional number, the article number blah blah blah.

>> Yes it does and it says it has to be in Flint, Michigan too.