

West Virginia Commission for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing Minutes

February 26, 2026

Grandview Elementary
959 Woodward Drive – Room 205
Charleston, WV 25313

Commission Members Present:	Commission Members Absent:	Commission Staff Present:	Public Visitors:	Interpreters:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Paul See • John Burdette • Nancy Gillispie • Gloria Hollen • Roy Forman • Meegan Wolfe • Angela Wilson • Mary Anne Clendenin • Crystal Law • Dawn Embry-King • Regina Woodcock • Jennifer Casto <i>(proctor for C. Burch)</i> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Shakita Micek • Mekell Golden 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Julie Shoeman • Paula Forman • Earl Hollen • Hal Suddreth • Franny Lawrence-Walker 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Brooks Belcher • Jeremy Batten

Call to Order

- Paul See called the meeting to order at 10:03 a.m.

Reading of Mission Statement and Introductions

- Paul See read the Mission Statement.

Minutes

The minutes from the November 14, 2025 meeting were reviewed. Minutes were approved.

Public Comments

- Hal Suddreth
 - He enjoyed Deaf Awareness Day and thought it was good for everyone to come together.
 - He is hopeful for the open captioning bill to continue to move forward. It is now progressing from the Senate to the House of Delegates.
- Franny Lawrence Walker
 - She had an amazing time at Deaf Awareness Day and is proud of the high level of participation of the community during the event.

Executive Session

A motion was made by Meegan Wolfe to go into Executive Session. Nancy Gillispie seconded the motion. The motion was approved.

The public was asked to leave the room during the session.

A motion was made to go out of Executive Session. The motion was approved.

The public was invited back into the room for the remainder of the meeting.

Board Member Reports

- Paul See
 - He shared the Declaration from Deaf Awareness Day.
 - He will have an open-door policy as executive director starting on March 9, 2026. He expressed a desire for collaboration and transparency with the board and the public.
- Mary Anne Clendenin
 - She shared updates on WVDE/WVSDB Outreach initiatives, upcoming events, and program growth across the state.
 - March 10 – WVSDB Outreach Hands Up WV Episode
 - March 15 – WVSDB DHH Social
 - March 22–26 – Discovery P.O.I.N.T. at WVSDB, allowing students to visit WVSDB to participate in extracurricular activities and learn new skills.
 - March 31 – WVSDB Outreach Hands Up WV Episode
 - The WVSDB Early Intervention Incentive Program, All Aboard, is currently in its second year of implementation and continues to demonstrate positive growth and impact.
 - Outreach services have supported over 70 students/teachers and provided training for 140 staff members in the past month.
 - The outreach team plans to post positions for a VI specialist and a full-time psychologist.
- Jennifer Casto
 - She shared information about the "Hands Up West Virginia" platform, a video podcast series created to showcase local West Virginia Deaf individuals, highlight community advocacy efforts, and increase awareness of ASL and Deaf culture throughout our state.
 - The project aims to break down barriers, reduce stigma, and provide educational opportunities for hearing people to learn ASL and cultural background knowledge.
 - The sessions are open to everyone, including educators and students, and can be found on the School for the Deaf and Blind's YouTube page.
- Meegan Wolfe and Nancy Gillispie
 - Meegan and Nancy led a discussion with the board regarding cochlear implants and the education of families.
 - Concern was expressed that families are frequently implanted without adequate counseling regarding the reality of the procedure, necessary therapies, and the limitations of the technology.
 - A primary concern is the lack of language access, regardless of the auditory device used.
 - Healthcare providers should ensure families are fully educated on all options and potential outcomes before moving forward with surgery.

Future Meeting Dates

- May 1, 2026 – Charleston, WV

Adjournment

The motion to adjourn the meeting was approved. The meeting was adjourned at 12:30 p.m.