

Michigan Speaks!

Michigan Chapter

Alexander Graham Bell

ALEXANDER GRAHAM BELL

ASSOCIATION FOR THE DEAF AND HARD OF HEARING

Fall

2009

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From the President: Coming “Together” for Fall Conference

Fall is here. As always, for our professional and parent members, this is a time for getting back to work. For setting new goals and making fresh starts. For making changes and making friends. It can be a challenging and exciting time for our children with hearing loss and for those that support them.

With the challenges of school in mind, our Fall Conference Committee brings us “We Are All in This Together”. This full day workshop on November 6 is designed, as always, to bring high quality speakers and best practices information to our professional members. This year, however, we’ve taken

that mission a step further and offer a program that will have equal impact for those teachers outside of our field who are just as dedicated to providing quality instruction to children with hearing loss as we are – general education teachers. Unlike those of us who concentrate our efforts in this area, general education teachers do not often begin the school year prepared for the child with hearing loss to walk through their door. They really on us to bridge that gap between general education and special need.

“We Are All in This Together” brings the accom-

plished staff from the CLARKE Mainstream Center to facilitate our partnership through strategies and techniques that will help us all maximize the success of students who are Deaf and Hard of Hearing. Our hope is that each professional in the field of Deafness – teachers, teacher consultants and therapists – will team with a general education teacher (or two!) who serves a child in common. Or that each parent will gather their child’s team and come as a group. The workshop will be designed to begin or continue collaborations with the child’s success as the result. Take a look inside this edition of MI Speaks for a registration flier. We hope to see you there.

Ashley Garber



Speakers from Clarke School for the Deaf will join us at the Fall Conference

Introducing...

New Board Member, Daniel Seraphinoff

We recently welcomed a new member to our Board of Directors. Please join us in welcoming Dan and read on to learn more about him:

“I was born with hearing loss and diagnosed at the age of three years old. My parents enrolled me in the aural program and I remained in special education classes until fifth grade. From there, I was mainstreamed in my home school district of Van Dyke Public Schools. After graduating from Lincoln High School, I attended Macomb Community College and earned an associate’s degree in Electronics Engineering Technology. Later, I also attended Wayne State University and Lansing Community College. I have been working in the electronics engineering field with an automotive supplier in the Detroit area. I am also the holder of a private pilot license. My wife is a third grade teacher and we have two children.

In 2007, I lost the rest of the hearing in my left ear, which made me a candidate for a cochlear implant. On April 15, 2009, I received my implant on the left ear. I still wear my hearing aid on the right ear. In May, the implant was activated and I had to learn how to hear again for the second time in my life. I love the technology of having a CI. I am excited to start working with the others in the AGBell Association.”

The Legal Connection: Resolving Special Education Disputes—New State Complaint Procedures



By: Sidney Kraizman, Esq.

New Michigan Special Education State Complaint Rules and Procedures became effective April 3, 2009. The new Rules are designed to speed up the state complaint procedures. The biggest change is moving from a two tier complaint

system to a one tier system with a built-in opportunity to resolve

the matter by mediation in the first ten days. This article is intended to provide parents with information that will help them in the event that they need to file a Special Education State Complaint, but it is not intended to cover all of the provisions of the Special Education State Complaint Rules and Procedures.

A special education state complaint can be filed where a school district has: failed to implement the Individualized Education Program (IEP) for a student with a disability; failed to implement the decision of an Administrative Law Judge; violated the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act of 2004 (IDEA 2004) and its regulations; or violated the Michigan Special Education Rules, the Intermediate School District Plan, or Michigan's application for federal funds under the IDEA.

The special education state complaint procedure is used most frequently where a school district failed to implement the IEP for a student with a disability. For example:

The IEP for a student with a hearing impairment provides for speech & language services four times per week for twenty minutes each session. The professional who has been providing those services leaves her employment at the school district in January.

It is March, and the parent just learns that the student has not received speech & language services for two months.

In that situation, the parent may well want to file a Special Education State Complaint. In such a case, the parent files with the **Michigan Department of Education, Office of Special Education and Early Intervention Services, 608 West Allegan Street, Lansing, MI. 48909.** A copy must be sent to the local school district.

The Michigan Department of Education (MDE) has a new publication, *Resolving Special Education Disputes – The Michigan Department of Education (MDE) Special Education State Complaint Procedures, April 2009*, (20 pages); Appendix B is a Model State Complaint form, and Appendix E is the new Part 8 State Complaint Special Education Rules, R340.1851 (Filing a state complaint) - 340.1855. If a parent thinks that they might need to file a Special Education State Complaint, I recommend reading the entire publication. It can be found at:

www.michigan.gov/documents/mde/StateComplaintProcedures-April09_274205_7.pdf

The Model State Complaint form is helpful to parents. It asks for information identifying the complainant, the student, address, contact information, the school district, a statement of the violation, facts, proposed resolution, interest in mediation, and signature.

The state complaint must be received by the Michigan Department of Education and the school district within one year of the violation. After a Special Education State Complaint is filed, the Michigan Depart-

ment of Education will coordinate its investigation with the Intermediate School District (ISD) and complete the complaint procedure within 60 days.

Page 12 of the complaint procedure document provides a timeline for the completion of a state complaint investigation:

-First 10 Days – Resolution period – parent and school district attempt to resolve the dispute through discussion or by utilizing mediation.

-Next 30 Days – Investigation Conducted, Final Report Written and Issued.

-Next 10 Days – Any request for reconsideration is submitted.

-Last 10 Days – Reconsideration of Final Report, Amended Final Report Issued or Letter Stating, "No Change".

Many state complaints will be resolved by the parents and the school district in the first 10 days through mediation and trying mediation is generally considered to be a wise course of action.

Let's go back to the earlier example. This violated the provision in the IEP for speech and language services four times per week for twenty minutes per session. The resolution of the parent's Special Education State Complaint will likely be that: 1) the school district will either hire or contract for the services of a teacher of the speech & language impaired; and 2) the school district will provide compensatory education to the student by additional speech & language sessions (to make up for those missed) during the school year or in the summer or reimbursing the parent for private speech and language services.

Wanted! Email Addresses

We are looking for missing members! Did you know that we have begun sending e-news updates? Did you receive an update in your inbox this Summer? If not, please take a moment to e-mail us with an updated e-mail address. We have several members whose e-mail information is incorrect or absent altogether. Don't miss out on the latest announcements, news and happenings of the Michigan Chapter of AG Bell! Please send your updated information to: **Dee Rigg, MIAGB editor** at: jimrigg@centurytel.net or you can contact Ashley Garber at: asgarber@llconnections.com

Michigan Speaks!

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MI AGBell Talent Search

Do you have fundraising skills?

Write grants for a living?

Enjoy babysitting?

Have design or publishing skills?

Love to organize events?

Do you have a desire to support individuals with hearing loss and their right to listen and speak?

Then We Want You!

Please contact Ashley Garber at 734-930-0737 or

asgarber@llconnections.com

for more information on how you can become involved in MI AGBell