

Note from the Director

Alex H. Slappey

WESP-DHH Director

We are very excited to be able to introduce our new strategic plan for the future of WESP-DHH. This plan could not have been accomplished without the participation of many individuals. Thanks to our many stakeholders, who have invested their time and have been committed to the success of our school, the Outreach program, and most of all the Wisconsin students who are deaf, hard of hearing and deafblind. A very special thanks to our dedicated administrative team, who have been the work horses behind this LRP, and our knowledgeable and experienced consultants from ALG, Inc., who guided us through the process.

The LRP will serve as a guide for both the Wisconsin School for the Deaf and the Statewide Outreach Program, in order to ensure the effectiveness of our programs for the future.

The purpose of this 'Year in Review' document is to inform and update our many stakeholders on a yearly basis about the progress of our new Long Range Plan.

INSIDE THIS ISSUE

This LRP document serves as a living and ever-changing document that will guide our work as a program. Through the work of the individuals named above, we have developed a Mission, Vision, and Values document (shown on page 2), and, to guide our work, the LRP Administrative team has developed a set of ten Priority Goals, which came as a result of feedback we received from the survey process. This document will outline the ten Priority Goals set by the LRP Administrative Team, and will highlight the accomplishments and progress made on each goal.

We will continue to provide a yearly update on this plan, our progress, and our future endeavors through this "Year in Review" document. Be sure to follow us on the links provided on this page to get up-to-date information, videos, and other information about our services and programs.

LRP Administrative Team

- John G. Brown, Superintendent of Buildings and grounds, WSD/WCBVI
- *Shari R. Decker, Dean of Students, WSD*
- *Marcy D. Dicker, Director, WESP-DHH Outreach*
- *Matthew L. Eby, Athletic Director, WSD*
- *Dr. Constance M. Gartner, Director of Curriculum and Instruction, WSD*
- Anastasia L. Heckendorf, Educational Audiology Consultant, Outreach
- Heidi T. Hollenberger, Deaf-blind Coordinator, Outreach
- Scott D. Kendzierski, Psychological Services Associate, WSD
- *Diane R. Nelson, Nursing Supervisor, WSD*
- *Maria D. Rivera, Administrative Assistant, WSD*
- *Marla B. Walsh, Director of Pupil Services/Principal, WSD*
- *Jeffrey C. Rawlings, Assistant Dean of Students, WSD*
- Daniel E. Houlihan, Sign Communication Specialist, Outreach

ALG, Inc. Consultants:

Thomas P. Mickelson, President, ALG, INC-
Project Manager, Facilitator and Event Planner.

Dr. Dean Ryerson, Consultant, facilitated numerous meetings that reached consensus.

Carl Mickelson, Technical Editor

Administrative Team members in italics are also implementation team members, managing the continued progress of the LRP, and meeting on a monthly basis.

IMPORTANT LINKS

LINKS TO A FULL VERSION OF THE LONG RANGE PLAN, VIDEOS FROM THE DIRECTOR AND OTHER WESP-DHH-RELATED INFORMATION CAN BE FOUND AT:

[HTTP://WWW.WESP-DHH.WI.GOV/](http://www.wesp-dhh.wi.gov/)

BE SURE TO KEEP UP WITH THE LATEST NEWS, EVENTS AND RESOURCES ON OUR WEBSITES AND FACEBOOK PAGES:

WISCONSIN SCHOOL FOR THE DEAF

WEBSITE: [WWW.WSD.K12.WI.US/](http://www.wsd.k12.wi.us/)

FACEBOOK: [WWW.FACEBOOK.COM/WISDPI.WSD](http://www.facebook.com/WisDPI.WSD)

STATEWIDE OUTREACH PROGRAM

WEBSITE: [HTTP://WWW.WESP-DHH.WI.GOV/WESP/](http://www.wesp-dhh.wi.gov/wesp/)

FACEBOOK: [WWW.FACEBOOK.COM/WISDPI.WESPDHH](http://www.facebook.com/WisDPI.WESPDHH)

WESP-DHH LONG RANGE PLAN - YEAR IN REVIEW

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2014-2015

WESP-DHH LONG RANGE PLAN

Mission

To provide comprehensive education and support services to all Wisconsin children who are deaf, hard of hearing and deaf-blind, their families and their service providers.

Vision

The programs of WESP-DHH utilize evidence based practices and seamless supports, services and resources to enable all children to achieve their maximum academic, social and emotional potential in their respective environments.

Values

Student-Centered: We support and foster the development of the whole child, including physical, intellectual, emotional and social abilities.

Diversity: We embrace the diverse needs of the student and their families, respecting varied communication styles and preferences, family dynamics, cultures, creeds, religious preferences, identity, race, and ethnicities.

Service: We strive to serve as a first point of contact for families, service providers, and the community, providing a complete spectrum of resources, supports and services, with expertise in the field of deafness.

Excellence: We pursue excellence, using evidence-based practices, provided by experts in the field of hearing loss.

Collaboration: We work in partnership with parents, school districts, Birth to 3 programs, service providers, and other hearing loss-related entities, organizations and agencies, as well as programs within WESP-DHH to ensure seamless provision of services in a timely manner.

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2014-2015 Accomplishments and Progress based on Priority Goals

Goal #1- Region/Center/Satellite: To establish a comprehensive program, including regional centers (in addition to WSD), in order to provide resources and services by highly skilled professionals to all people involved with the education of children who are deaf, hard of hearing and deaf-blind in Wisconsin.

2014-2015 Update: Contact has been made with USDB, ISD and other regional programs. The LRP admin team is in discussion on basic financial and logistical structure of those programs and how they compare to Wisconsin's educational climate. The discussions are in the very preliminary phases.

Goal #2- Technology: To use contemporary and emerging technologies to access and facilitate communication and as a teaching tool for students, families, and professionals.

2014-2015 Update:

- WESP-DHH (WSD and Outreach) have hired on a new Webmaster, Amanda Frisbee, who started in February of 2015. Her current focus has been on: Branding, website development, and information gathering for both WSD and Outreach.
- In order to improve communication between programs and platforms, both WSD and the Statewide Outreach Program have purchased domain names with the intent to start developing forms and procedures to switch from our current First Class email/document/forms system to Google Apps for Education. Plans for anticipated rollout in the fall of 2015.
- WESP-DHH and DPI have been working on establishing a visual identity, or "branding" of our programs. Work on this includes new website designs, standardized icons, and consistent use of branded materials. This will help to ensure that all DPI, WSD, and Outreach platforms are compatible and user friendly.
- WSD has established and completed an online course in World History, taught by a WSD teacher for a DHH student as a pilot to explore the possibility of offering additional distance learning opportunities for students who do not attend WSD. Information has been gathered via survey from DHH educators and Educational interpreters in WI regarding the kinds of classes the DHH students in the state might be interested in taking. The top three course offerings that respondents suggested are:
 - ASL
 - Deaf Culture/Deaf Studies
 - Future planning/Transition
- A WSD teacher is taking coursework to receive the 824 license (World Language Certification) in order to begin offering ASL classes online.
- The WSD Summer program offering of the "New Signers Camp" came as a result from responses to a survey sent out to parents and educators assessing the need in WI.

Goal #3- Vocational/Post-secondary readiness: To develop, expand upon or enhance current transition programs for children who are deaf, hard of hearing and deaf-blind in Wisconsin by providing vocational and post-secondary readiness training.

2014-2015 Update:

- The focus of the fall Family and Professional Conference will be "Transition", which came as a result of survey responses from professionals in the field, identifying the need for information/training on this topic.
- The College Fair will be enhanced, and held during October 2015 Family & Professional Conference. A strand of engaging "transition" related workshops will be offered for parents AND students to attend together
- The PepNET group is joining with members of the Outreach team in order to determine unaddressed needs in WI, and has developed focused activities, including:
 - 1) transition focus for a component of the Adult Role Model Program
 - 2) development of an online resource directory and
 - 3) focus on gathering data on d/hh students for indicator #14
- Student Life Transition Coordinator has been hired at WSD, and the dormitory has created a transition floor, and created a transition program that serves students after school hours. This program will work closely with the S.T.A.R program that is established in the school. Both the school and dorm transition programs meet on a monthly basis.

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Goal #4- Diversity: To address the diverse cultural, ethnic, communication modality, and disability needs of Wisconsin's children who are deaf, hard of hearing and deaf-blind.

2014-2015 Update:

- WESP-DHH (WSD and Outreach) held a Spanish-speaking Family Weekend at WSD in September 2014 for Spanish-speaking families with children who are deaf, hard of hearing, or deafblind. Plans are currently in motion to hold a second SSFW event in July 2015.
- WESP-DHH has been collaborating with WDBTAP to provide supports necessary for deafblind students to attend and benefit from placement at WSD.
- WESP-DHH has made it a priority to make sure that documents are translated to Spanish.
- Staff is encouraged to connect with families directly using Spanish/ASL interpreters through the Video Relay Services.
- Spoken language and/or ASL interpreters are provided at all Professional and Family conferences, graduations, IEP meetings and other such events when needed/requested.

Goal # 5- Internal/External communications: To increase an understanding (both within and outside of WESP) of the WESP-DHH programs and goals.

2014-2015 Update:

- Alex has posted a video and a Q & A document to the WESP-DHH landing page regarding his retirement and the recruitment process.
- Alex has filmed four videos to date that explain our LRP and in turn, the structure and goals we are setting for ourselves. This information is live on the WESP-DHH landing site (link on pg. 1).
- WSD School and Dorm staff has shared feedback and began planning action points on how to improve communication between the school and dorm staff.
- A new informational booklet, which explains WSD's programs, and gives an introduction to Outreach programs has been created and is in the printing process. This booklet will serve as a model for other booklets, possibly for WCBVI and/or the Outreach program.
- This "WESP-DHH LRP Year in Review" document has been created as a way to inform our stakeholders of the progress and work being done around the LRP and future growth.
- WSD has begun the process of establishing a structure for creating an annual report for the school. The first issue is expected in May of 2016.
- WSD is hosting their first 5k walk/run as a way to encourage community, networking, and collaboration.
- Plans for a community co-ed volleyball tournament at WSD are in the works for the 2015-2016 school year.

Goal #6- Birth to 3: To strive to serve the needs of children with hearing loss as early as possible to ensure they receive information and services they need to reach linguistic milestones, and be on par with their peers, as much as possible.

2014-2015 Update:

- There have been meetings regarding the role of the Outreach Program within Birth to 3 programming and the feasibility of establishing WESP-DHH birth to three services for children with hearing loss.
- Discussions have been had regarding the establishment of a Birth to 3 Playgroup to be held at WSD.

Goal #7- Whole Child: To increase knowledge and awareness of the academic, social, and emotional needs of students who are deaf, hard of hearing, and deaf-blind.

2014-2015 Update:

- WSD and Outreach have collaborated to provide a Support Group for school districts, which received very positive responses. This pilot group will serve as a model to implement around the state.
- The Expanded Core Curriculum for students who are deaf/hard of hearing/deafblind has been completed and is now posted on the DPI website (<http://sped.dpi.wi.gov/sites/default/files/imce/sped/pdf/hi-ecc.pdf>). The tool was developed for use by educational staff in school districts. It has been shared and discussed at the upcoming Spring PST meeting.
- WESP-DHH has used media resources such as our Facebook and/or YouTube pages to provide information and resources to people across the state and beyond.

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Goal #8- Deaf Adult Role Models: To foster and provide opportunities for children who are deaf or hard of hearing to interact with deaf or hard of hearing adults who serve as mentors and role models.

2014-2015 Update:

- The Outreach Program hired a new Adult Role Model Program Coordinator/Interpreter, Brice Christianson, who started in February. His current focus has been on research, data, and information gathering, which included developing a mission and goals for the program and conducting interviews with Deaf staff at WSD and other community leaders who are deaf, hard of hearing and deafblind.

Goal #9- Professional Development: Adapt WSD specialized resources to support local LEA's and provide targeted professional development in order to enhance the skills and abilities of individuals serving students who are deaf, hard of hearing, and deaf-blind.

2014-2015 Update:

- WSD and the Outreach Program have had lengthy discussions with those involved with the development of the Smarter Balance testing system regarding accommodations needed for students who are deaf, hard of hearing and deafblind.
- In addition to WSD staff presenting at the Professional and Family Conference, the Outreach Program staff have developed new ideas/ways to highlight WSD's programming.
- A survey was developed and disseminated to determine topics of high interest in order to match professional development topics with interest and needs of professionals in the state.

Goal #10- Parent/Parent Education: To foster family involvement in the education of their child who is deaf, hard of hearing, and/or deaf-blind.

2014-2015 Update:

- In order to provide parents with well-rounded knowledge about hearing loss, the Outreach Program strives to provide keynote speakers and workshop presenters from different backgrounds, with different perspectives, and from a variety of standpoints for the Professional and Family conference. Thomas Holcomb and Djenne Morris have been confirmed as keynote presenter at the October 2015 conference.
- Widespread dissemination of information to parents has been a focus for both programs. The Outreach Program is using listservs and email blasts, and WSD is using social media to get information to as many people as possible.
- The Outreach Program has been investigating website changes and mail programs as a way of sharing information with families about upcoming events.
- WSD is working to film and post as many events as possible on their YouTube page in order to allow parents to watch their child's participation in school programming.
- WSD collaborated with the Parent Staff Association and hosted a Parent Social during the winter performance in order to gather feedback and encourage more parent involvement. Plans to begin hosting Family Day at WSD have begun.
- WSD is in the process of hiring an ASL instructor to provide online ASL instruction to parents via long distance learning.