



National Intervener & Advocate Association

January 17, 2023

Ryan Gollner, Project Director
Wisconsin Educational Services Program
for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing (WESP-DHH)

Dear Mr. Gollner,

The National Intervener & Advocate Association (NIAA) is pleased to write this letter of support for the Wisconsin Deafblind Technical Assistance Project as you write your application for funding from the U.S. Department of Education, Office of Special Education Programs, State Technical Assistance Projects to Improve Services and Results for Deafblind Children and National Technical Assistance and Dissemination Center for Deafblind Children, CFDA 84.326T.

NIAA believes that children with deafblindness have the right to access information about people and things in the environment that are necessary for learning, interaction, and overall development. We believe that this access can be provided by the services of an intervener who works one-to-one with a child who is deafblind and who has been trained through an intervener training program at a university or college.

The Wisconsin Deafblind Project has a long and excellent history of training and supporting interveners in the classroom for students who are deafblind. Wisconsin was one of the first states to recognize the need to train interveners and initially used an in-service training model. When the first university training program in deafblindness for interveners was established, Wisconsin promptly changed course and offered university training which offers a consistency of competence. Universities have structures in place with checks and balances to ensure the quality and sustainability of intervener training programs.

The WESP-DHH staff is knowledgeable in the field of deafblindness and has the capacity to provide appropriate coaching and support to their interveners once the university coursework is complete. We have a history of collaboration with Jolene Gruber, Jennifer Gettelman, Jodi Anderson and Heidi Hollinberger and we have high regard for your staff and have supported our efforts with NIAA.

We wholeheartedly support your application and look forward to continued collaboration.

Sincerely,

Sally Prouty, Co-Director
National Intervener & Advocate Association