**WVDRS Topics for Discussion**

1) Do you agree there are aspects of blindness rehabilitation services in West Virginia that could be improved and if so, are you willing to collaborate constructively with the NFBWV and the blind community to explore strategies and solutions?

2) For those who don’t know, define Order of Selection 1 & Order of Selection
2.3) Why is DRS implementing closed OS so early in the fiscal year? Is the bulk of the money being spent on new referrals?

4) With the closing of WVRC and using community vendors to teach Braille and access technology, and the criteria for teaching no longer applies, why not change the criteria for filling these positions so more instructors can be hired statewide, and more blind people can receive comprehensive and continuous services? NFBWV could go to the legislature if needed to assist with this job reclassification.5) For College-bound students… appropriate access technology is crucial for their success. It appears that additional Access Technology Specialists and Braille instructors are needed statewide. Why not hire additional staff who can do comprehensive assessments and individualized training?

6) What effective strategies can be put in place to ensure blind college-bound students receive blindness skills BEFORE college?

7) Accommodations at the college and university seem to experience great difficulty with accommodating blind and low vision students. While students wait on needed accommodations from their learning institution, they need to know what already exists for them. Counselors for the blind need to be better informed so they can better prepare students on available services such as Braille. Bookshare, Learning Ally, DRS provided reader service, etc.

8) No counselor for the blind should EVER tell a client that Braille is obsolete. Case in point, elevators.

9) Delores (Nikki) Jackson with NFB heads a program called “Where the Blind work”. Her contact info is:
njackson@nfb.org, 410-659-9314 - Ext. 2404. Link: <https://nfb.org/programs-services/employment/where-blind-work>

10) Counselors for the blind would do well to work with her to ensure no occupation desired by a blind person is ruled out before it has been thoroughly explored. Example, can a blind person be a doctor? Yes!

11) We understand that RSA has provided guidance to no longer provide any Independent Living products such as a talking microwave to blind individuals seeking employment. With such services as cooking no longer being provided, what is a blind person with no cooking skills to do? Please Clarify.

12) To do a thorough job in assessing, training and placing blind individuals, small caseloads are essential to meet each blind or low vision person’s needs. Carrying large caseloads to include others who are not blind feels like a “numbers game” of quantity, rather than providing quality services to blind individuals needing specialized services. Could this be reconsidered? Can this be resolved?

13) VISIONS provides no canes, O&M training, or Braille. If money is the issue, NFBWV is willing to go to the governor or legislature. Other states acquire stated funding for their ILOB programs

14) NFBWV continues to feel that a blind individual with good administrative skills should head Blind Services. Yet, when we look at individuals in charge, yet only one blind is employed with minimal authority or leadershipopportunities. Why?

15) While we are aware that color blindness and having only one good eye are listed under ADA as disabilities, questions continue to arise regarding real functional limitations and DRS eligibility.