

**Governor's Council on Blindness and Visual Impairment (GCBVI)**  
**Education Committee Meeting Minutes**  
June 11, 2018

**Members Present**

Bob Kresmer\*, Chair  
Jared Kittelson\*  
Ed House\*  
Lisa Jackson\*  
Lisa Yencarelli\*  
Julie Urban\*

**Members Absent**

Doris Woltman

**Staff Present**

Lindsey Powers, Council Liaison  
\*Teleconferenced

**Guests Present**

Pat Reynolds\*, ADE  
Lietta Scott\*, ADE  
Audra Ahumada\*, ADE  
Melissa Stinson\*, ADE  
Margaret Bowerman\*, ADE  
Janet Fukuda\*  
Amy Porterfield\*

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**Call to Order and Introductions**

Bob Kresmer, Chair, called the meeting to order at 1:00 pm in the Council Liaison Office, Phoenix, AZ. Introductions were made and a quorum was present.

**Approval of March 12, 2018 Meeting Minutes**

The minutes were approved by unanimous voice vote.

**High Stakes Test Score Collection Discussion**

Bob Kresmer stated the GCBVI was tasked with examining any barriers that would affect the education of blind and visually impaired children. Bob Kresmer stated the council had identified some deficits in the education of blind and visually impaired students and was interested in identifying potential reasons for low student test scores. Bob Kresmer stated the GCBVI made previous requests for student test score information but was unable to obtain that information. Bob Kresmer noted that Annette Reichman, Superintendent for the Arizona State Schools for the Deaf and Blind (ASDB) requested that information for ASDB students and was told she could not request that information. Mr. Kresmer stated the Education

Committee invited Arizona Department of Education (ADE) staff to discuss the process for obtaining any information regarding the test scores of blind and visually impaired students. Audra Ahumada stated the ADE had been in communication with ASDB and noted that ASDB would have all the student test score information for all students receiving services from ASDB. Audra Ahumada stated that ASDB was responsible for obtaining the student test score information for ASDB students. Amy Porterfield stated the council learned that student test scores from ASDB students were quite low and that anecdotally, ASDB students required remedial courses before entering college. Amy Porterfield stated the council was interested in learning if the students in some school districts had higher test scores and to identify the reasons for those higher test scores. Amy Porterfield stated the challenge in identifying the blind and visually impaired students in each school district and inquired whether the ADE could provide that information. Lietta Scott stated the Family Education Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) prevented the ADE from sharing information from one entity to another entity. Ms. Scott stated she could aggregate student test score information by grade level. Bob Kresmer inquired whether the information could be separated out according to disability such as blindness or deaf-blindness. Lietta Scott stated she could separate that information by disability. Audra Ahumada stated the ADE only had the information reported into the statewide data system. Amy Porterfield clarified that the entity requesting the information would have to identify the blind or visually impaired students in each school district and supply the ADE with their school ID numbers to request that information. Lietta Scott stated due to FERPA, she could only offer the information at the state level rather than the district level due to the low number of students.

Lisa Jackson stated she could forward a list of ASDB student ID numbers and inquired whether the ADE could supply their AZ Merit score information. Audra Ahumada stated the ADE could not supply the AZ Merit test scores but could offer the percentage of blind students statewide with passing scores. Lisa Jackson inquired whether the student test score information could be broken down by co-operative region. Audra Ahumada stated the information could not be broken down by co-operative region. Ms. Ahumada stated that ASDB would be responsible for contacting the co-operatives and obtaining that information, and noted the data belonged to the schools. Bob Kresmer summarized that the ADE could offer a statewide aggregate number but could not offer more detailed information. Amy Porterfield inquired whether the council could submit four requests broken down by location. Amy Porterfield stated her understanding that an entity could supply student ID numbers and the ADE could offer the student test score percentages. Audra Ahumada stated the ADE did not own individual student data and could only offer performance level of blind and visually impaired students. Amy

Porterfield stated each school districts could research their student test scores. Audra Ahumada stated each school district would have District Student File and they could search by any demographic for student test scores. Bob Kresmer stated an entity would be required to contact each school district to request that information. Audra Ahumada stated an entity could submit a Public Records Request, although the ADE was not currently accepting Public Records Requests. Amy Porterfield stated she attempted to submit a Public Records Request and inquired how the state was able to not honor those requests. Audra Ahumada stated the ADE was short staffed and not accepting Public Records Requests, although she would follow up with her supervisor regarding the requests.

Bob Kresmer summarized that the ADE could not supply the blind and visually impaired students' test scores and the council, or any entity would be required to contact all school districts to request that information. Mr. Kresmer inquired whether the ADE could identify the appropriate individuals to contact in each school district. Audra Ahumada stated she was unsure whether the ADE could supply that information, although Mr. Kresmer could submit an email inquiry to the ADE. Lisa Yencarelli stated that ASDB could contact the ASDB school districts, although the agency would not have information for the students not served by ASDB. Amy Porterfield stated the council had requested that information from Annette Reichman, whom indicated that she would need to request that information from the ADE. Lisa Yencarelli stated she was not familiar with the data collection, but she understood from the current conversation that ASDB could request that information from each school district. Lisa Jackson inquired whether the ADE website included a master list of testing coordinators for each school district. Amy Porterfield stated that ASDB was able to obtain that information, although the agency did not have a list of the appropriate contacts in each school district. Audra Ahumada stated the testing coordinators would not be responsible for the student test score information and that each school district would have an Assessment Director or Data Manager and noted the ADE would not have that information. Lisa Jackson stated another option would be for each teacher to request a copy of a student's AZ Merit score. Amy Porterfield stated the process was an unwieldy process and noted that ASDB did not have the proper connections to get the information. Audra Ahumada stated that ADE did not know the process at each school and school district and inquired whether ASDB currently had a data sharing agreement with the school districts. Lisa Jackson stated ASDB did share information with the school districts. Bob Kremer inquired whether ASDB would be willing to contact the teachers to request copies of the students' AZ Merit test scores. Dr. Jackson stated ASDB had relationships with the school districts, although she did not have the names of the appropriate contacts at each district. Audra Ahumada

stated the ADE did not have that contact information for each school district. Ms. Ahumada noted that ASDB should include the request for student test scores in the school contracts. Lisa Yencarelli stated that ASDB was in the process of developing the Intergovernmental Agreement (IGA) with the school districts and could include the language that would request that data from the school districts. Lisa Jackson stated that the school districts would be unlikely to send all of the test score information. Bob Kresmer stated the contracts would offer future student test score information, although ASDB did not have a method for collecting the current data. Lisa Yencarelli stated ASDB could request the data manager contact information from each Regional Director. Lisa Jackson stated the student test scores would be included in each students' Individualized Education Plan (IEP).

Ed House inquired whether the ADE could provide the student IDs for each student not served by ASDB. Audra Ahumada stated the ADE could not offer that information. Ed House inquired whether the ADE could provide the case ID statewide for every individual with a disability. Audra Ahumada stated the ADE could not supply that information. Ed House inquired whether the school districts could make those requests to the ADE. Audra Ahumada stated the school districts could not request that the ADE share that information and noted the school districts would be responsible for sharing that information. Ms. Ahumada stated the ADE could not share any student information and that any entity would submit a Public Records Request to the school district. Amy Porterfield summarized that the council would continue to investigate how to submit a Public Records Request for an overall state percentage of blind and visually impaired student test scores statewide. Ms. Porterfield stated ASDB would potentially add language into their contracts that would request student test scores from each school district, which would offer a long-term solution. Amy Porterfield stated that ASDB could also research the student IEPs in each of the co-operatives to identify the student AZ Merit test scores. Amy Porterfield stated the other option would be for the Special Education Directors in each school district to contact the individuals that would manage the student test score data in each school district. Audra Ahumada stated she would inquire whether ASDB's Public Records Request could be fulfilled.

Bob Kresmer stated that Lisa Jackson had indicated previously that one of the AZ Merit tests was not accessible for students using JAWS or Zoom Text. Lisa Jackson stated that ASDB was able to use the standard computer zoom functions to access the new Science test, although the function did not allow the user to navigate the same as Zoom Text. Dr. Jackson stated she had been in contact with the ADE, which was in the process of addressing the issue. Lisa Yencarelli stated some teachers had inquired whether the new bundle of JAWS and Zoom Text, Fusion, would allow students to use Zoom

Text. Lisa Jackson stated she would share that with the appropriate contact in the ADE. Amy Porterfield inquired how the AZ Merit tests were performing using screen readers and Braille displays. Lisa Jackson stated students were able to take the tests using paper Braille documents as well. Lisa Jackson stated she was unaware regarding the effectiveness of refreshable Braille displays. Bob Kresmer inquired whether a student could use JAWS to take the AZ Merit tests. Lisa Jackson stated the test could be administered in a printed Braille version. Amy Porterfield stated the AZ Merit tests were designed to be computer driven, therefore the experience would be different for individuals taking the tests on the computer versus a printed copy. Melissa Stinson stated ADE distributed surveys to the schools in 2016, inquiring whether the schools were ready to move to refreshable Braille and noted that the schools indicated that students were not ready. Ms. Stinson stated that ADE surveyed the schools again inquiring whether the students were ready for refreshable Braille and were informed that the students were not ready. Melissa Stinson stated there were no technology enhancements offered to students taking the tests via the computer, and noted the tests were administered using two test modalities.

Amy Porterfield inquired how students that were not proficient in text magnification or Braille would be able to take the tests. Lisa Jackson stated that teachers could read the tests to students if the students were unable to access the tests, although many students began using Braille displays at earlier ages. Amy Porterfield stated she was interested in learning whether students' lower test scores were due to a lower reading fluency. Audra Ahumada stated the AZ Merit tests were untimed and noted that students reading a slower rate would still be able to complete the test. Amy Porterfield stated if a student took seven minutes to read a question, whereas other students took three minutes, the slower reading student required more energy to complete a test and would experience more fatigue. Audra Ahumada stated the ADE encouraged schools to allow students to take breaks during tests or take the tests over multiple days. Ms. Ahumada stated the ADE was interested in hearing about the challenges that students were facing. Amy Porterfield stated that reading fluency was a large part of the test and she was interested in analyzing the issue. Bob Kresmer inquired whether ASDB would be willing to explore the differences in fluency in the ASDB schools. Lisa Yencarelli stated that ASDB would be interested in exploring that issue moving forward. Bob Kresmer inquired whether ASDB would assign personnel to review the reading fluency issue. Lisa Yencarelli stated she would share the information with Annette Reichman, and report back to the committee. Pat Reynolds stated the committee asked many great questions and the ADE would follow up on the questions. Amy Porterfield stated she appreciated that the online tests were not offering a different testing experience compared to the paper tests. Audra Ahumada

stated the ADE was not trying to be a barrier and she understood the importance of accessibility to ensure that students could demonstrate their knowledge. Lisa Jackson stated the ADE was always willing to answer questions or offer solutions to schools and she appreciated their willingness to help.

### **Early Childhood Activities Discussion**

This item was tabled.

### **Youth Transition Program Discussion**

This item was tabled.

### **ASDB Post Outcome Data Discussion**

This agenda item was tabled.

### **Date and Agenda for Next Meeting**

The next meeting of the Education Committee TBD. Agenda items are as follows: Agenda items are as follows:

- Early Childhood Activities Discussion
- Youth Transition Program Discussion
- ASDB Post Outcomes Data Discussion

### **Announcements**

There were no announcements.

### **Public Comment**

A call to the public was made with no responses forthcoming.

### **Adjournment of Meeting**

Lisa Jackson motioned to adjourn the meeting. Lisa Yencarelli seconded the motion. The meeting was adjourned at 2:00 pm.