

Governor's Council on Blindness and Visual Impairment (GCBVI)
Education Committee Meeting Minutes
September 17, 2018

Members Present

Bob Kresmer, Chair
Ed House
Lisa Jackson
Lisa Yencarelli
Doris Woltman
Janet Fukuda
Jared Kittelson
Julie Urban

Members Absent

Staff Present

Lindsey Powers

Guests Present

Call to Order and Introductions

Bob Kresmer, Chair, called the meeting to order at 1:02 pm in the DERS Conference Room, Phoenix, AZ. Introductions were made and a quorum was present.

Approval of August 20, 2018 Meeting Minutes

Lisa Yencarelli motioned to approve the minutes from the August 20, 2018 meeting. Ed House seconded the motion. The minutes were approved by unanimous voice vote.

High Stakes Test Score Collection Discussion

Bob Kresmer stated that Jared Kittelson tried to obtain information that the committee could glean from the American Printing House for the Blind (APH) data. Mr. Kresmer inquired whether the student test score information from the APH could be broken down by school district, or the Teachers of the Visually Impaired (TVI)s. Lisa Yencarelli inquired regarding what the committee was hoping to determine with the information received. Bob Kresmer stated the APH information indicated there were approximately 1400 blind and visually impaired students in Arizona, in which 450 were

served by the Arizona State Schools for the Deaf and Blind (ASDB), 250 were served by the Foundation for Blind Children (FBC) and 700 were served throughout the state. Bob Kresmer stated the committee was seeking data that would indicate why some blind and visually impaired students were failing the high stakes testing and why many students were not engaged in higher education. Bob Kresmer stated the committee was interested in making recommendations to the GCBVI on identifying a data driven system or curriculum that would make blind and visually impaired more successful compared to their sighted peers. Bob Kresmer stated he had inquired whether Jared Kittelson could determine the TVIs for each school district or break up the data according to elementary and high school students. Julie Urban inquired whether the APH information included data for kids birth to age three. Jared Kittelson stated the information included data outside of educational programs. Lisa Jackson stated FBC had access to account eight and account nine, which would offer information for all school districts. Jared Kittelson stated he did not have access to run the reports but would request that information. Ed House inquired whether the APH data identified the level of visual impairment of the student or the type of reading media the student used. Lisa Jackson stated ASDB reported the primary and secondary reading medium and whether the students met the definition or function of blindness to APH. Ed House inquired whether the reports included the age or grade level of the students. Lisa Jackson stated ASDB reported the age and grade level of the students to the database.

Janet Fukuda stated her concern that the APH information could possibly identify a student. Lisa Jackson stated the information from the school districts would need to be categorized in groups of ten or more. Bob Kresmer stated there were some charter schools with one student, although other school districts had many blind and visually impaired students. Ed House inquired whether the information identified the special education teachers. Janet Fukuda stated that information could not be reported to protect the identity of the students. Bob Kresmer inquired whether Lisa Jackson could break down the information to identify the number of students that were passing or failing the high stakes tests. Lisa Jackson stated she could identify that information. Julie Urban stated the committee was still missing the information regarding students in private schools. Lisa Jackson stated that information was included in FBC's account nine. Bob Kresmer inquired whether Lisa Jackson could work with Jared Kittelson and FBC to obtain the information without identifying the students at each school district. Lisa Jackson stated the data could be regrouped so that any school district with less than ten students could be reclassified as "Other" or "Public or Charter Schools".

Bob Kresmer inquired whether Doris Woltman had access to the information for the students in the Southeastern Regional Co-Operative. Doris Woltman stated she received information for the voucher students determined eligible for VI, although in the past she received information for all the students. Bob Kresmer stated his understanding that Doris Woltman, Lisa Yencarelli and Annette Reichman, ASDB Superintendent, were interested in improving the outcomes of the ASDB co-operatives. Doris Woltman stated she was working with some of the teachers to review the teaching materials and identify whether different materials would improve student literacy. Bob Kresmer inquired Doris Woltman was working with teachers of blind or visually impaired students. Doris Woltman stated she was working with teachers of blind and visually impaired students, although the school did not have the resources to work with large groups of students. Bob Kresmer stated his understanding that the APH information could be broken down into Braille and print users. Lisa Jackson stated she had that information for ASDB and she could assist Jared Kittelson with locating that information. Lisa Jackson stated she also had information for the students that did not qualify for federal quota funds. Ed House requested clarification regarding non-qualifying students. Lisa Jackson stated a student would qualify for federal quota funds if the student's vision was 2200, had a visual field block of 19 degrees or less, or had a neurological condition that caused the blindness.

Bob Kresmer inquired whether the committee would be interested in obtaining additional information that would be useful to the committee. Ed House inquired whether the information include the speed of words per minute that the student could read. Lisa Jackson stated that information was not available. Bob Kresmer inquired whether ASDB intended to use the information from Doris Woltman and implement in other schools. Lisa Yencarelli stated that ASDB would use the information for Doris Woltman and implement in other co-operatives. Bob Kresmer stated that Doris Woltman had indicated that she had not received all the data thus far. Lisa Yencarelli stated ASDB was in the process of identify the information for each of the school districts, which was a time-consuming process.

Lisa Jackson inquired regarding the desired result from obtaining the student test score information. Bob Kresmer stated the committee was interested in learning the number of students that were passing the high stakes tests. Mr. Kresmer stated, for example, if 75% of sighted students passed the high stakes tests and 37% of blind and visually impaired students passed, the committee was interested in identifying the teaching methods for sighted students versus blind and visually impaired students. Bob Kresmer stated the committee was also interested in learning what a Braille reader learned compared to what a print reader learned. He noted the committee would

like to assist the TVI development program, the teacher preparation programs and ASDB's continuing education of TVIs. Bob Kresmer stated the committee was interested in identifying better teaching components, resources and teacher training programs. Ed House stated his understanding that the committee was also interested in identifying whether some school districts were performing better, and to share those best practices with other school districts. Mr. House stated the data received from APH would not provide all the necessary information to identify which students were performing better, although it would give a general understanding of how each school district was performing. Lisa Jackson stated there were many variables that would affect a student's performance such as whether the student was in a rural area with a high poverty level, or if the student's family spoke another language. Bob Kresmer stated the committee should start analyzing the data received to narrow down the focus.

Bob Kresmer inquired regarding ASDB's goals for the ASDB co-operatives statewide. Doris Woltman stated the goal that all the co-operatives took the same measured approach and that all school districts offered the same resources to the students and support to the teachers. Bob Kresmer noted that the Southeastern Regional Co-Operative had a different approach regarding Braille production compared to the other co-operatives. Doris Woltman stated the Southeastern Regional Co-Operative began the centralized Braille production in 2011 and noticed improved outcomes to those students. Doris Woltman stated she was also interested in reviewing the success of the students that could access the general curriculum compared to their peers. Ms. Woltman noted that the AZ Merit test was not the only indicator of successful students. Bob Kresmer stated that the AZ Merit test scores were available and inquired regarding additional information that the committee could review. Doris Woltman stated she reviewed how the students taking the core curriculum classes compared to their peers and could provide intervention if necessary. Ms. Woltman suggested the committee start by reviewing the AZ Merit test scores and then narrow the focus to identify the reasons that students were not performing.

Bob Kresmer inquired regarding the teacher preparation program in partnership with FBC. Jared Kittelson stated FBC was working with Arizona State University (ASU) to develop a TVI program, which had been approved by the College of Education and the Provost Office. Mr. Kittelson stated the program would be a Special Education Bachelor's program with an emphasis in vision. He noted the program would include approximately seven courses related to vision and finish with the Bachelor's degree. Bob Kresmer inquired whether an individual in the College of Education had taken

ownership of the program. Jared Kittelson stated an individual had taken responsibility and he anticipated that the program would begin in fall of 2019. Jared Kittelson stated the program had not been announced, and ASU was currently seeking adjunct faculty to teach the courses in person at FBC.

Early Childhood Activities Discussion

Bob Kresmer inquired regarding an update on ASDB's status on hiring more teachers at ASDB in the Early Childhood program. Lisa Yencarelli stated that 14 teachers had been hired to work in the Early Childhood program. Bob Kresmer inquired whether the teachers had been hired to teach the students that were deaf and hard of hearing or blind and visually impaired. Lisa Yencarelli stated she did not have the exact number of teachers for each population, although the school had a higher demand for students that were hearing impaired. Bob Kresmer inquired regarding the current school population for students at ASDB and the co-operatives. Lisa Jackson stated there were 45 students at ASDB, 33 at FBC, 138 voucher students for visual impairment, 150 visually impaired or visually impaired with another disability, and 27 deaf-blind students. Bob Kresmer stated the APH information indicated that there were 450 students receiving services from ASDB. Lisa Jackson stated she ran a file recently, which indicated that ASDB had 747 students with visual impairment or one specialized need. Dr. Jackson stated approximately 427 of the students would likely qualify for federal quota funds. Lisa Jackson stated ASDB reported the student's primary indicator as well as additional special education needs, although there were 747 students with a visual impairment component.

Bob Kresmer inquired whether all the ASDB teacher vacancies had been filled. Lisa Yencarelli stated there were some teacher vacancies for Orientation and Mobility instructors and VI teachers. Ms. Yencarelli stated that ASDB had the standard number of teacher vacancies. Bob Kresmer inquired whether Jay Johnson or the Arizona Department of Education (ADE) had followed up on the Post-Outcome Surveys for the students that had graduated. Janet Fukuda stated the PSO survey closed at the end of the month, and the ADE would pull the information and run the reports. Janet Fukuda stated that Jay Johnson would likely be able to provide that information in a couple of months.

Youth Transition Program Discussion

This item was tabled.

Date and Agenda for Next Meeting

The next meeting of the Education Committee TBD.

Announcements

There were no announcements.

Public Comment

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

Adjournment of Meeting

The meeting was adjourned at 1:55 pm.