

**Governor's Council on Blindness and Visual Impairment (GCBVI)**  
**Education Committee Meeting Minutes**  
October 17, 2017

**Members Present**

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

**Members Absent**

Ed House  
Doris Woltman

**Staff Present**

Lindsey Powers, Admin Asst.  
\*Teleconferenced

**Guests Present**

Lisa Jackson\*  
Maria Murphy\*

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**Call to Order and Introductions**

Bob Kresmer, Chair, called the meeting to order at 1:10 pm in the RSA Conference Room, Phoenix, AZ. Introductions were made and a quorum was present.

**Approval of September 19, 2017 Meeting Minutes**

Julie Urban motioned to approve the September 19, 2017 meeting minutes. Lisa Yencarelli seconded the motion. The minutes were approved by unanimous voice vote.

**Education Committee Activities**

Bob Kresmer stated the Education Committee advocated for equitable education for blind and visually impaired individuals from birth to elderly. Mr. Kresmer stated the committee was interested in reviewing current infant and toddler programs in Arizona. Bob Kresmer stated that the Arizona State Schools for the Deaf and Blind (ASDB) requested additional funding due to a lack of funds and teachers to support students. Bob Kresmer stated that feeder programs such as the Arizona Early Intervention Program (AZEIP) were not working as effectively as they could and needed to be improved. Bob Kresmer inquired regarding the data that ASDB gathered to support the agency's request for additional funding. Lisa Jackson stated ASDB received several requests for more information from the Governor's Office of Strategic Planning and Budgeting (OSPD), regarding any changes in the student population, common indicators, performance levels, cognitive, language,

social and emotional statistics. Lisa Jackson stated ASDB was also asked to provide information regarding caseloads, time and frequency of services, and the numbers of cases in rural and urban areas. Maria Murphy stated ASDB had provided three different packets of information to the OSPD. Bob Kresmer inquired whether the information from ASDB was to be sent to the Governor or whether it would be placed into a bill. Maria Murphy stated ASDB was taking a multiple prong approach and hoped that the information would be included in the Governor's recommendation for the budget. Ms. Murphy stated ASDB was also approaching the Legislature as a potential bill and noted that Representative Paul Boyer, Chair of the House Education Committee, had committed to sponsoring the bill. She added that ASDB received the recommendation that the agency request the Senate develop a companion bill. Maria Murphy stated Senator Sylvia Allen was the Chair of the Senate Education Committee and would be the most ideal individual to sponsor the companion bill, although ASDB had not approached Ms. Allen yet.

Bob Kresmer stated the GCBVI could support any bills that the Governor approved or was neutral on. Mr. Kresmer stated that consumer groups were not restricted and could work directly with Legislature to help craft bills, speak at hearings, or act as lobbyists. Lisa Jackson stated she continued to collect data in case the OSPD requested additional information. Ms. Jackson stated she also met with Barbara Schrag, Director of Early Childhood and Family Education Program at ASDB, to develop a data collection plan. Bob Kresmer inquired whether AZEIP was able to provide any data to Ms. Jackson. Lisa Jackson stated AZEIP provided a year summary of their monthly reports, which included entry and exit assessments. Bob Kresmer inquired whether AZEIP was able to work with ASDB to show progress once an infant or toddler exited the program and entered preschool or kindergarten. Lisa Jackson stated ASDB received their first data pull for children that exited AZEIP and had entered preschool. Bob Kresmer inquired ASDB received data regarding the number of children misidentified or did not make it to ASDB for services. Lisa Jackson stated she received data indicating that ASDB had 428 infants that were still enrolled up to 12<sup>th</sup> grade. Ms. Jackson stated she also received AZ Merit data, Aims Science data in order to compare student scores across the categories. Bob Kresmer stated an AZEIP representative informed the committee that often children were not diagnosed with vision impairment but were diagnosed as having a cognitive impairment, and therefore did not receive the appropriate services. Bob Kresmer stated children did not receive vision screening tests until third grade, and noted a significant number of children were misdiagnosed and later reclassified as having vision impairment.

Julie Jones inquired whether the reports that Lisa Jackson received were ASDB data or data for students statewide. Lisa Jackson stated ASDB received data on the infants and toddlers receiving services through the Foundation for Blind Children (FBC). Bob Kresmer stated AZEIP identified the children with vision impairments, and ASDB's Early Intervention Childhood Program sent the children to FBC or one of ASDB's Co-Operatives. Lisa Jackson stated ASDB was ultimately responsible for children from birth to age three, and FBC was a subcontractor of ASDB. Bob Kresmer stated if a child was not identified as having a visual impairment by a doctor or the parents, the child might not receive services until elementary school. Lisa Jackson stated every baby born was screened for a hearing impairment before leaving the hospital and inquired whether doctors and nurses could be trained to screen babies for vision loss also. Bob Kresmer inquired whether Maria Murphy was familiar with a statute that required doctors to screen babies for hearing loss. Maria Murphy stated she was not familiar with a statewide statute requiring that babies be screened for hearing loss. Bob Kresmer stated if a statute already existed for Deaf and Hard of Hearing screening tests, language could be added that required vision testing as well. Bob Kresmer stated some parents did not take their children to follow up appointments with doctors due to a lack of medical benefits.

Bob Kresmer stated the Education Committee was also interested in reviewing the performance of students taking the high stakes testing. Mr. Kresmer stated Annette Reichman, Superintendent ASDB, reported student test scores to the GCBVI Full Council, and noted the test scores were discouraging. Bob Kresmer stated the council was interested in reviewing the test scores of blind and visually impaired students in the co-operatives and school districts and how they compared to their sighted peers. Lisa Jackson stated for the last four years, ASDB had not received student test scores from the Arizona Department of Education (ADE). Ms. Jackson stated there were questions whether ASDB would be privy to that information if the agency did not provide services to those students even though the students were vouchered to ASDB. Lisa Jackson stated she did receive the Aims Science test scores. She added that students took the AZ Merit test for ELA and Math, and the Aims test for Science. Lisa Jackson stated she was interested to know whether all students were being tested, and if not, why they were not being tested. Bob Kresmer summarized that the ADE told ASDB that the agency did not have the right to request the student test score information, and that each school district would need to offer that information to ASDB. Lisa Jackson stated ASDB captured about one third of the blind and visually impaired student information from the American Printing House for the Blind. Bob Kresmer inquired whether the ADE would have information regarding the remaining two-thirds of blind and visually impaired students. Lisa Jackson stated each student's information would be

entered into the ADE database and would include whether any students had a disability. Lisa Jackson stated she received information from the American Printing House for the Blind, which included the students served across the country and was broken down by the providers in a district. Lisa Jackson stated she received data indicating that 1419 students were served for the previous year. Jared Kittelson stated the number of visually impaired students would be public information. Lisa Jackson stated the data was reported on the ADE website, although the information was not broken down by disability. Ms. Jackson stated she could contact a representative from ADE and request student test scores for blind and visually impaired students. Julie Jones stated the committee also needed to review the number of students taking the AZ Merit tests by computer, paper, and Braille. Lisa Jackson stated she could potentially get the percentage of students taking the Braille tests, and noted the rest of students typically took the tests on the computers. She added that there were several functions on the computer that allowed students to take the tests online. Julie Jones stated the GCBVI received a presentation regarding about 28 functions that did not work for students taking the tests on the computer. Ms. Jones stated students were given Google Chromebooks, which were too small for students. Lisa Jackson stated ASDB schools had larger monitors for students and noted that the computer screens could be enlarged up to 10X, which was compatible with Zoom Text. Julie Jones stated not all school districts had larger computer monitors. Bob Kresmer inquired whether Maria Murphy could communicate with the Legislature regarding the issues discussed. Maria Murphy stated she would be willing to speak to the Legislature regarding the issues raised by the committee. Bob Kresmer stated GCBVI representatives would like to meet with Maria Murphy prior to Ms. Murphy's meeting with Legislatives. Lisa Yencarelli inquired whether the council had exhausted collaboration with the ADE. Bob Kresmer stated a representative from the ADE had been assigned to work with the GCBVI on the education issues discussed. Lisa Jackson stated in her experience, the ADE was willing to work with her and would likely be able to assist the council. Bob Kresmer requested that whether Julie Jones would work with Lisa Jackson to identify the 28 areas of concern regarding the AZ Merit test accessibility. Maria Murphy stated the statute requiring that babies receive hearing tests was ARS 36-694. Ms. Murphy stated the statute did not require a corresponding visual test requirement.

### **Workgroup Activity Discussion**

This item was tabled.

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

The next meeting of the Education Committee will be on November 13, 2017, from 1:00 pm to 2:00 pm in the DERS Conference Room, at 1789 W. Jefferson Street, Phoenix, AZ. Agenda items are as follows: Agenda items are as follows:

- Education Committee Activities

## **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 2:00 pm.