

**Governor's Council on Blindness and Visual Impairment (GCBVI)**  
**Education Committee Meeting Minutes**  
October 30, 2018

**Members Present**

Bob Kresmer, Chair  
Ed House  
Lisa Jackson  
Doris Woltman  
Jared Kittelson

**Members Absent**

Lisa Yencarelli  
Janet Fukuda  
Julie Urban

**Staff Present**

Lindsey Powers

**Guests Present**

Colin Wong  
Jared Leslie

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**Call to Order and Introductions**

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

**Approval of September 17, 2018 Meeting Minutes**

Doris Woltman motioned to approve the minutes from the September 17, 2018 meeting. Jared Kittelson seconded the motion. The minutes were approved by unanimous voice vote.

**High Stakes Test Score Collection Discussion**

Bob Kresmer stated the committee was interested in obtaining basic information to make recommendations to the GCBVI, the Governor and the Legislature regarding the education of blind and visually impaired children. Bob Kresmer stated the committee was interested in developing a data driven policy, although the committee experienced challenges in collecting data while protecting the identity of the students. Mr. Kresmer noted that if

a school district had a small number of blind or visually impaired students, those students' identities could be discovered. Bob Kresmer stated the committee had received general information regarding high stakes tests scores. He added that Lisa Jackson, Jared Kittelson and Jared Leslie had compiled statistics from the American Printing House for the Blind (APH), which provided materials and resources to school districts and Teachers of the Visually Impaired (TVI)s. Lisa Jackson stated she had the information for the students that did not qualify for Quota funds, which was 172 as well as the number of students that did qualify. Lisa Jackson stated she forwarded the information, which included the grade level, home language, AHP qualification number, primary and secondary reading mediums for the students included. She added that she could run a report that included the county the student resided in. Bob Kresmer inquired how the committee could continue to drill down into the information without identifying the student. Lisa Jackson stated that she had that information in another database. Bob Kresmer inquired whether the committee should review the data for the students that did not qualify for Quota funds. Lisa Jackson stated that a student could potentially qualify for Quota funds if the individual's vision worsened. Bob Kresmer inquired whether those students would still receive TVI services. Dr. Jackson stated that a student with low vision could still receive TVI services.

Jared Kittelson stated the Foundation for Blind Children (FBC) would begin obtaining information for the upcoming census in January, and the agency could include any additional questions when requesting information. Bob Kresmer stated that Jared Kittelson and Lisa Jackson could obtain useful information regarding the student's statistics. Mr. Kresmer inquired whether the FBC was providing services through the APH or direct services to approximately 700 children. Jared Kittelson stated that FBC was serving 145 children. Bob Kresmer stated he wanted to ensure that the reports were not double counting the numbers of students. Lisa Jackson stated the APH had a process in place to find any duplicate students. She stated that Jared Kittelson also reviewed the student information Lisa Jackson sent to verify there were no duplicates. Jared Kittelson stated that FBC would begin reviewing data in January in Arizona and nationwide if a student moved to another state. Ed House inquired whether the statistics included all students with a vision loss. Lisa Jackson stated the information included any child that qualified due to a vision impairment. Ed House inquired whether vision loss was the primary disability of the students included. Lisa Jackson stated that vision loss did not have to be the primary disability. Ed House stated that the committee would benefit from breaking down the student information by county if possible. Mr. House stated his understanding that the committee was also interested in identifying the schools with best practices and to share that information with schools that were not

performing well. Bob Kresmer stated the committee could identify students by county or school district. Lisa Jackson stated a student might initially score well on tests, but then move to a failing school, which would distort the data.

Bob Kresmer inquired whether Doris Woltman reviewed the information and whether the information was useful to her. Doris Woltman stated she would benefit from reviewing the curriculum and how the students were progressing in their academic performance. Bob Kresmer inquired how the committee could review that information while still protecting the student's anonymity. Doris Woltman stated she that individual departments within the school districts could review that information, although she was unsure how the committee could review the information. Ms. Woltman stated she was also interested to know the types of technologies that were distributed to students, and whether the technologies were useful. Bob Kresmer stated the distribution of technologies would likely vary between different co-operatives as well as in rural and urban areas. He noted that the committee could not make any recommendations without data driven information. Jared Leslie stated that FBC tracked the amount spent, which would be included in the overall technology usage. Lisa Jackson stated the intent of APH was not to include students as pre-readers at the age of 15 and noted the students should be classified as symbolic/non-readers. Bob Kresmer stated the FBC data included a high number of symbolic readers. Jared Leslie agreed that an individual should not be considered a pre-reader at age 15.

Lisa Jackson stated she had not received student ACT information recently, although she did have student AZ Merit information for regional and sight-based students for 2015-2018. Dr. Jackson stated she would review the information and pull basic data such as the percentage of pass and fail scores. Lisa Jackson inquired whether there were any organizations that awarded scholarships for blind and visually impaired students. Bob Kresmer stated that consumer groups such as the National Federation of the Blind (NFB), National Federation of the Blind of Arizona (NFBA), American Council of the Blind (ACB) and the Arizona Council of the Blind (AzCB) awarded scholarships to students according to ACT and SAT test scores. Lisa Jackson stated she would like to share information regarding scholarships with the ASDB Superintendent. She inquired whether the scholarships also applied to students interested in attending two-year schools. Bob Kresmer stated the scholarships could be awarded to students attending two-year, four-year or trade schools. He noted that the consumer groups would begin reviewing applications for scholarships in November and he would share information with Lisa Jackson.

## **Early Childhood Activities Discussion**

Lisa Jackson inquired whether the committee was still interested in discussing the early vision screening for children. She noted that many children were not enrolling in the Early Childhood program because they had not been identified as having a vision impairment. Bob Kresmer stated that Colin Wong, Chairman of the NFBA Education Committee, could discuss one of the NFBA's resolutions. Colin Wong stated at the NFBA State Conference, the consumer group made a resolution to recommend that blindness agencies develop a task force to gather data regarding students with vision impairment. Mr. Wong stated the NFBA was also interested in learning whether the students were receiving vision services and to document whether the students benefit from those accommodations. Bob Kresmer stated the consumer groups could do more advocating with the Governor and Legislature compared to the GCBVI, which could only make suggestions for items the Governor supported or was neutral on. Colin Wong stated that information gleaned from a task force could encourage schools to provide vision assessments if students benefited from accommodations. Lisa Jackson stated she would obtain the average age of students that were identified as being visually impaired. Bob Kresmer stated there were no mandates regarding vision assessments currently.

## **Youth Transition Program Discussion**

Bob Kresmer stated that Rehabilitation Services Administration (RSA) had a great Youth Transition program that students could begin the summer after their Freshman year. Bob Kresmer stated the committee would benefit from knowing the number of blind and visually impaired students statewide to know whether the students were benefitting from the Transition program. Mr. Kresmer stated he received calls from parents and students that indicated they had never been told about the Transition program. Lisa Jackson stated that the Arizona State Schools for the Deaf and Blind (ASDB) and FBC could be cognizant of that when talking to parents and students. She noted that teachers that were not part of a co-operative or teachers in rural areas might not be aware of the Transition program. Bob Kresmer the information reported from FBC included several school districts with less than 15 students, and he inquired whether the information could be broken down further. Jared Kittelson stated FBC could provide the total number of districts with those numbers to protect the students' identities. Lisa Jackson stated that Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) could send information to the Special Education Directors of the schools. Bob Kresmer stated that Ed House was responsible for the initial implementation of the Transition program and inquired regarding the process for distributing information. Ed House stated that RSA sent out information to the schools, met with the

schools and sent out information to the TVIs. Ed House stated he was unsure regarding the current processes although he suspected that VR would be interested in distributing the information to schools. Bob Kresmer stated the committee still did not know the number of blind and visually impaired students statewide. Ed House stated the Arizona Department of Education (ADE) knew the school districts with blind and visually impaired students and could send out the information. Mr. House noted the committee still did not know the students that were successful in schools, although he was unsure how the committee could obtain that information. Lisa Jackson stated that not all TVIs were employees of the school district and would not necessarily receive the information regarding the Transition program, and she suggested that all Special Education Directors receive the information. Bob Kresmer stated that the Special Education Directors had been sent information regarding the Transition program, and there was a poor response from the schools. Jared Kittelson suggested the information also be distributed at conferences such as the Association for the Education and Rehabilitation of the Blind and Visually Impaired (AER). Bob Kresmer stated that VR began contacting schools regarding the Transition program in December or January.

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

The next meeting of the Education Committee will be on Tuesday, December 4, 2018, from 1:00 pm to 2:00 pm. in the RSA Conference Room, Phoenix, AZ. Agenda items are as follows:

- High Stakes Test Score Discussion
- Early Childhood Program Discussion
- Youth Transition Program Discussion

### **Announcements**

Colin Wong stated the NFBA was seeking individuals that could educate parents and teachers regarding the IEP process in an IEP workshop on November 4, 2018.

Colin Wong stated the NFBA would hold the Braille Readers are Leaders contest and would compete with other states to promote Braille literacy. Mr. Wong stated any committee members interested in promoting the program should contact him.

### **Public Comment**

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

**Adjournment of Meeting**

The meeting was adjourned at 2:00 pm.