

Governor's Council on Blindness and Visual Impairment (GCBVI)
Assistive Technology (AT) Committee Meeting Minutes
December 13, 2017

Members Present

Sharonda White, Chair*
Terri Hedgpeth*
Nathan Pullen*
Jaime Trausch*
Julie Jones*
Ed Gervasoni*
Bea Shapiro*
Sue Lehew*

Members Absent

Adam Cruz

Staff Present

Lindsey Powers, Admin Assistant
*Teleconferenced

Guests Present

Call to Order and Introductions

Sharonda White, Chair, called the meeting to order at 3:04 pm in the RSA Conference Room, Phoenix, AZ. Introductions were made and a quorum was present.

Approval of October 18, 2017 Meeting Minutes

Ed Gervasoni motioned to approve the October 18, 2017 meeting minutes. Julie Jones seconded the motion. The motion was approved by unanimous voice vote.

GCBVI Strategic Plan Discussion

Sharonda White stated the GCBVI developed the Strategic Plan, which assigned certain outcomes to committees to complete. Ms. White stated the AT Committee was responsible for assisting other committees in the completion of several outcomes. Sharonda White stated under the Education category, for example, the AT Committee was responsible for assisting other committees in the following outcomes:

- Accessibilities standards are developed and implemented for instruction and testing for infants and toddlers through Post-Secondary

Education

- Best practices are developed and implemented and available for all Arizona school districts to administer expanded core curriculum education
- Develop and implement collaborative data collection mechanism to track test scores K-12 for all school districts in Arizona

Sue Lehew stated the AT Committee was not listed as a responsible committee for some outcomes, although the committee could assist with the completion of:

- DES revises procurement process to be commensurate with purchasing technology that is subscription and cloud based
- SBVID best practices are revised with collaboration with GCBVI and blindness stakeholders

Ed Gervasoni stated that several outcomes would include multiple committees, although the Strategic Plan identified the committees that would take the lead on completing the activities. Ed Gervasoni stated the outcome under the Education category included gathering data from schools from K-12 and postsecondary schools was a large task. Sharonda White stated all outcomes would require the AT Committee to identify the methods for completing the tasks.

Sharonda White stated under the Independent Living (IL) category, the committee was responsible for:

- Public service agencies receive regular feedback regarding accessibility

Sharonda White stated the committee would not be able to complete the tasks right away, and inquired which task the committee would like to begin. Ed Gervasoni suggested the committee discuss how the committee could collect data and identify who could offer that information. Julie Jones stated that not all school districts would be willing to offer student assessment information. Ed Gervasoni stated the committee could inquire how many students did have accessible technology. Mr. Gervasoni noted his understanding that the Education Committee was working with the Arizona Department of Education (ADE) to gather test score data. Sharonda White summarized that the committee was interested in learning which students had access to information, and whether they accessed the information through computers, screen readers, or Braille. Julie Jones stated the committee could also inquire how the accessible technology complied with state mandated policies regarding accessibility. Sharonda White inquired whether the committee would be interested in developing a survey that

could be administered to obtain the data.

Sharonda White inquired regarding the assessment process in universities. Terri Hedgpeth stated at Arizona State University, the students were not required to take assessments other than the required academic standards such as final exams. Ms. Hedgpeth noted that students were required to take placement tests on subjects such as Math and English. Ed Gervasoni inquired whether the AT Committee could obtain placement test scores from blind and visually impaired students. Terri Hedgpeth stated all student test information was private and could not be shared. Ed Gervasoni stated the committee could potentially track the number of students with visual impairment, the number of visually impaired students in a certain grade, and how many students passed the ACT tests. Ed Gervasoni stated the committee could inquire whether the standardized tests administered were accessible for blind and visually impaired students. Julie Jones stated the challenge was that each school, teacher, and school district used different platforms and offered accessibility in different ways. Ms. Jones noted that teachers had no control over the AZ Merit test. Sharonda White inquired whether the committee should develop a survey and inquire regarding the platforms that schools were using and suggest accessible platforms for students. Julie Jones inquired whether the committee was interested in learning about accessibility for standardized tests, or any tests administered to students. Sharonda White stated the Strategic Plan outcome stated that the GCBVI was interested in accessibility standards for instruction and testing. Ed Gervasoni suggested the AT Committee partner with the Education Committee prior to developing a survey to not duplicate efforts. Sharonda White inquired regarding the activities that the AT Committee would be interested in starting. Ed Gervasoni suggested the committee review the information that specifically could be measured through AT usage, such as standardized testing. Terri Hedgpeth agreed that the AT Committee should meet with the Education Committee to identify the tasks for each committee.

Sue Lehew stated the priority under the Education category was a huge goal. Ms. Lehew suggested the committee review the accessibility mandates for schools, such as Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), American with Disabilities Act (ADA) and Section 504, and offer suggestions for implementing the laws. Sue Lehew stated the challenges in administering surveys was that the individual taking the survey did not necessarily have the knowledge to answer the questions truthfully. Sue Lehew stated individuals often would indicate they their services or accessibility was good, although the individual did not know enough about the topic. Bea Shapiro stated the surveys would have to indicate who should be taking the survey. Sue Lehew stated the survey questions would need to

be specific enough to receive accurate answers. Ed Gervasoni suggested the committee request information from schools such as the Arizona State Schools for the Deaf and Blind (ASDB) co-operative teachers. Terri Hedgpeth suggested the committee request the information from the Teachers for the Visually Impaired (TVI)s. Sue Lehew stated any vendor that sells technology to a school would assert that the technology was accessible, although the accessibility was not validated, and the students were not always able to use the technology.

Sharonda White summarized that the AT Committee was interested in meeting with the Education Committee to collaborate on the Strategic Plan outcomes. Ms. White stated the committee could also begin compiling questions that could be asked in a potential survey. Bea Shapiro suggested the committee inquire regarding the accessibility tools that the schools were using, and whether the software was current. Ed Gervasoni stated the committee did not need to know detailed information regarding technology software, as each school district would use different software and platforms. Ed Gervasoni stated the committee could identify the schools that were offering accessible information and tests and distribute those Best Practices to other schools. Terri Hedgpeth suggested the AT Committee develop a survey with the Education Committee members and then discuss the issue with the ADE. Sharonda White stated the AT Committee could develop potential questions prior to meeting with the Education Committee. Ed Gervasoni suggested that some committee members develop a workgroup and develop a prioritized list of questions that could be asked. Sharonda White stated Lindsey Powers could distribute the list of potential survey questions to the committee and the committee members could prioritize the questions. Sue Lehew suggested Ms. Powers also develop a list of the committee's suggested ideas and distribute to committee members. Lindsey Powers agreed to develop a list of the committee's ideas and potential survey questions discussed during the meeting. Julie Jones and Jaime Trausch agreed to work on prioritizing the survey questions.

Sharonda White stated the AT Committee was also responsible for assisting the Public Information Committee in the outcome: EyeKnowAZ includes an accessibility resource page. Sue Lehew inquired regarding the information included in the EyeKnowAZ database. Sharonda White stated the Public Information Committee developed the database with the Secretary of State Office, which offered resources for blind, visually impaired and deaf-blind individuals. Sharonda White encouraged committee members to visit the database, <https://eyeknow.az.gov/> and review the accessibility resources included in the database under the Best Practices and Standards page. Sharonda White stated the committee members could review the accessibility resources and offer any additional resources that could be

added. Sue Lehew inquired whether the Strategic Plan distributed to committee members was the final draft of the plan. Sharonda White stated the GCBVI members voted to approve the GCBVI Strategic Plan that was distributed.

2017 VRATE Presentation Follow-Up

Sharonda White stated that several AT Committee members participated on a panel presentation at the Vision Rehabilitation and Assistive Technology Expo (VRATE) presentation and inquired whether committee members had any feedback. Nathan Pullen suggested the committee have a larger room and more time to present at future VRATE conferences. Terri Hedgpeth suggested that committee members have microphones to be able to reach all audience members. Sharonda White agreed that some members in the back of the audience might have had difficulty hearing the presentation. She noted that she would share the committees' feedback with the VRATE Committee. Sue Lehew stated that all members that presented offered great information and the presentation was great overall.

AT Trends

Jaime Trausch stated the new version of Non-Visual Desktop Access (NVDA) 2017.4 would be released shortly. Bea Shapiro stated that Apple released new headphones that did not include the small adaptor that was distributed with earlier versions of the iPhone 8. Sharonda White stated Zolo released earbuds similar to Apple's earbuds that had recently been reduced in price on Amazon. Terri Hedgpeth stated the Trekz Titanium headphones by Aftershokz had recently been reduced in price on Amazon as well.

Agenda and Date for Next Meeting

The next meeting of the Assistive Technology Committee was scheduled for January 10, 2018 from 3:00-4:30 pm in the RSA Conference Room, Phoenix, AZ. Agenda items are as follows:

- GCBVI Strategic Plan Discussion
- VRATE Presentation Follow-Up
- AT Trends

Announcements

There were no announcements.

Public Comment

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

Adjournment of Meeting

Terri Hedgpeth motioned to adjourn the meeting. Bea Shapiro seconded the motion to adjourn the meeting. The meeting was adjourned at 4:22 pm.