

Governor's Council on Blindness and Visual Impairment (GCBVI)
Education Committee Meeting Minutes
August 17, 2020

Members Present

Bob Kresmer, Chair
Doris Woltman
Lisa Yencarelli
Lisa Jackson
Julie Urban
Jared Kittelson

Members Absent

Ed House

Staff Present

Lindsey Powers

Guests Present

Colin Wong

Call to Order and Introductions

Bob Kresmer, Chair, called the meeting to order at 1:06 pm. Introductions were made and a quorum was present.

Approval of January 13, 2020 Meeting Minutes

Doris Woltman motioned to approve the minutes from the January 13, 2020 meeting. Jared Kittelson seconded the motion. The minutes were approved by unanimous voice vote.

Education Committee Updates

Bob Kresmer inquired whether committee members could provide an update regarding a survey that was sent from the Arizona Department of Education (ADE) to learn about certifications for Teachers of Students with Visual Impairments (TVI)s. Lisa Yencarelli stated the survey inquired whether TVIs supported an endorsement as an additional pathway for experience and certified special education teachers to become qualified to teach visually impaired special ed. Lisa Yencarelli stated the survey also inquired regarding the number of teacher shortages. Ms. Yencarelli stated the survey indicated the summary of proposed requirements were: a valid Arizona

professional standard teaching certificate, three years of full time teaching experience, six semester hours of professional education courses to include the following; methods for teaching students with disabilities, behavior management for students with disabilities, the use of instructional and Assistive Technology (AT) in the classroom. She noted the requirement would be for 15 semester hours in visually impaired special education to include the following: teaching methods and IEP planning for students with vision impairment, methods for facilitating literacy development in blind, low vision students, AT for students with vision impairments, assessment instruments and interpretation of assessment data for students with vision impairment, early intervention and parental involvement for students with vision impairment, anatomy and physiology of the eye to include cause and implication of visual impairment, methods for teaching basic concepts and related travel O&M for students with visual impairments, methods for teaching students with multiple disabilities including dual sensory impairment or deaf-blindness, 45 clock hours of practicum or field experience working with students with visual impairments that may be included in the courses above, and a passing score on a Braille proficiency exam administered by a national agency or an accredited college or university. Lisa Yencarelli stated that lastly, the survey inquired regarding individuals' level of support for the endorsement. Bob Kresmer inquired whether the survey was sent to the TVIs. Lisa Jackson stated her understanding that the survey would have been sent to TVIs, as it asked the individual's role. Doris Woltman stated that she received the survey and forwarded it to TVIs. Julie Urban stated she had not received the survey and she knew teachers that would be interested in that information.

Bob Kresmer inquired regarding the committee members' opinions on additional teaching requirements. Lisa Jackson stated the survey was unclear regarding the "45 hours of practicum or field experience". Julie Urban stated that practicum experience was necessary to work with students with vision impairments. Doris Woltman stated that TVIs should be required to obtain student teaching experience and to experience different environments such as public schools. Jared Kittelson stated that student teaching experience was beneficial, and that the role of mentor/teacher needed to be laid out well. Lisa Yencarelli stated she would like to know what was meant by "that may be included in the courses above". She noted that if the individual was working in a classroom with students with vision impairments, that could be counted towards the 45 clock hours, although a practicum for special education would not be the same. Lisa Jackson inquired regarding an agency that would be considered a national agency that could administer a Braille proficiency test. Bob Kresmer stated there was a nationally accredited UEB Braille proficiency test that had been verified. Lisa Jackson stated she would like to see a list of the agencies or

colleges/universities that they would accept. She noted that not all Braille tests would be the same and would they all include math proficiency. Bob Kresmer inquired regarding the deadline for submitting the survey. Lisa Yencarelli stated the survey requested feedback by August 20th. Bob Kresmer inquired whether the committee should contact the individual that distributed the survey. Jared Kittelson inquired whether the survey was sent to the Association for the Education and Rehabilitation of the Blind and Visually Impaired (AER) listserv. Julie Urban stated the TVIs that she was in contact with had not mentioned the survey. Lisa Jackson stated the survey did not specify that it should be distributed to the TVIs. Dr. Jackson stated the survey was sent by the ADE Certification Office. She noted that she an email to the sender and inquired whether it could be forwarded to the Education Committee members and had not received a response. Lisa Yencarelli noted that most ADE emails would indicate whether the information should be shared and with whom it should be shared. Bob Kresmer stated he would contact the sender of the survey and inquire whether it could be shared.

Jared Kittelson stated that Foundation for Blind Children (FBC) would begin the TVI classes through ASU the following week with 12 students. Jared Kittelson stated the difficulty in recruiting students because unless an individual has a personal connection, most students are aware of the TVI option. Mr. Kittelson stated the coursework would start with a Foundations course, O&M, and clinicals. Julie Urban inquired whether the courses would be offered virtually. Jared Kittelson stated students would have the option to attend courses virtually and noted that some students preferred to attend classes in person, some preferred a hybrid model, and some preferred to attend all classes virtually. Jared Kittelson stated FBC would be closed until at least October 12th. Bob Kresmer inquired whether any of the students were from rural or outlying areas. Jared Kittelson stated his understanding that all of the students were local. Jared Kittelson stated the students were also taking courses through ASU in addition to the courses offered through FBC. Bob Kresmer inquired whether the students were Juniors. Jared Kittelson stated the students enrolled in the program were Juniors.

ASDB Update

Bob Kresmer stated that Arizona State Schools for the Deaf and Blind (ASDB) was offering AT calls for teachers. Lisa Yencarelli stated ASDB was offering AT Drop In calls, which were 1.5 hours and the teachers with the most AT experience could answer questions regarding AT. Lisa Yencarelli stated the teacher would demonstrate a device or a resource and would then answer questions. She noted the recent calls focused on the accessibility of different virtual platforms and the shared drives that teachers were using.

Ms. Yencarelli stated that 25 teachers attended the first call and 17 teachers attended the second call. Bob Kresmer inquired whether the calls were occurring weekly or monthly. Lisa Yencarelli stated the calls had been scheduled weekly, although she anticipated the calls would be scheduled monthly once school started. Julie Urban inquired whether the calls were only for ASDB staff. Lisa Yencarelli stated she was not able to open the calls up to all TVIs yet. Bob Kresmer stated the ASDB co-operatives would include many of the TVIs working in Arizona. Julie Urban stated there were many teachers in Phoenix that were not part of the co-operatives.

Bob Kresmer stated the GCBVI AT Committee was developing a one-day virtual training for TVIs in October or November to learn more about various AT topics. Mr. Kresmer stated he would appreciate if an Education Committee member would attend the upcoming AT Committee meeting. He noted that any interested committee members could contact him to express their interest in participating.

Bob Kresmer stated the GCBVI Full Council would be meeting on August 21st, and he anticipated the council would inquire regarding ASDB's plans for the beginning of the school year. Lisa Yencarelli stated ASDB would remain closed at least until Labor Day. Ms. Yencarelli stated ASDB students that attended classes at ASDB would begin instruction virtually. She noted that students served through co-operatives would follow the opening rules of each district. Lisa Yencarelli stated ASDB had developed a manual which included removing furniture to ensure social distancing measures, ensuring that each classroom had enough materials so students would not have to share, and developing rules for lunch time and the playground. Lisa Yencarelli stated ASDB would implement temperature checks and procedures for everything. Ms. Yencarelli stated that approximately half of the residential program students were attending classes virtually in the dorms. Bob Kresmer inquired regarding the number of blind and visually impaired students that were attending classes in the dorms. Lisa Yencarelli stated she would inquire about that information. Julie Urban inquired regarding the security of the dorms. Lisa Yencarelli stated that each student would have their own rooms and instructions were sent so that families and students knew how to maintain social distancing. Bob Kresmer inquired how ASDB was ensuring that students in the rural areas were obtaining the necessary technology to attend classes virtually. Lisa Yencarelli stated if the student was attending classes through the local school, it would be the responsibility of the school district to provide the necessary technology to the student. Julie Urban inquired whether the families preferred the students to attend classes virtually. Lisa Yencarelli stated that families indicated they would prefer students to attend classes virtually. She noted that if any student required low or high technology, ASDB would send the necessary technology

to that student. Lisa Jackson inquired regarding the number of contact hours of teaching for students. Lisa Yencarelli stated she was unsure regarding the number of contact hours at ASDB. Ms. Yencarelli noted that her children were attending classes virtually, and the classes were broken up so that students were not on Zoom all day.

High Stakes Testing Discussion

Lisa Jackson stated she would be attending a meeting in September regarding high stakes testing and would be able to offer an update after that meeting.

Date and Agenda for Next Meeting

The next meeting of the Education Committee will be determined. Agenda items are as follows:

- ASDB Update
- VRATE Update
- High Stakes Testing Discussion

Announcements

Bob Kresmer stated the Vision Rehabilitation and Assistive Technology Expo (VRATE) would be held virtually on November 13th.

Public Comment

A call to the public was made with no response's forthcoming.

Adjournment of Meeting

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