

# **Texas School for the Blind and Visually Impaired**

## **Annual Report**

**For School Year**

**2012-2013**



# Texas School for the Blind and Visually Impaired

A Center for Educational Services for All Blind  
and Visually Impaired Students in Texas

1100 W. 45<sup>th</sup> Street, Austin, Texas 78756

(512) 454-8631 + 1-800-TSB-KARE + [www.tsbvi.edu](http://www.tsbvi.edu)

## TSBVI Board of Directors



### *Parents of Persons with Visual Impairments*

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## TSBVI Administrative Staff

William Daugherty	Superintendent
Miles Fain	Principal of Comprehensive Programs
Lauren Newton	Principal of Short-Term Programs
Cyral Miller	Director of Outreach Programs
Charlotte Miller	Director of Human Resources
Barney Schulz	Administrator for Business, Operations, and Technology
Ken Miller	Director of Special Education Support

## ***A Message from the Superintendent 2012-2013***



The 2012-2013 school year at the Texas School for the Blind and Visually Impaired (TSBVI) built upon the successes that have brought us so much national and international recognition as a highly-valued center of expertise. As the year came to a close we found ourselves at 98% completion of the campus master plan that has put in place all new facilities and grounds. We now have a campus that reflects the quality of the work that goes on in our programs, and we could not be prouder on how well we have delivered on this once-in-a-lifetime opportunity given to us by the citizens of Texas.

Among the things that set TSBVI apart from many other special purpose schools of its type is the diversity of our service options and our commitment to use our resources to serve the entire state of Texas, not just the students enrolled on our campus. This model of service gives the greatest possible return on the investment our state has made in TSBVI since its establishment by the Texas Legislature in 1856. Our pledge is to continually innovate and improve these statewide services based upon stakeholder input.

Our model of enrolling on campus only those students in need of our intensive expertise, and then efficiently returning them to their home communities in a highly structured transition process designed to build upon each students newly gained skills at TSBVI, continues to improve with each passing year. While each student is enrolled at TSBVI, we are simultaneously working with the ISDs to build their local capacity to serve students locally. Through this model, more of the 9,000 students in Texas who are blind or visually impaired have an opportunity to attend school on our Austin campus.

TSBVI's Statewide Outreach Technical Assistance and Short-Term programs comprise the other two equally important areas of our three-pronged approach to serving the state. TSBVI Outreach Services have a major leadership role in improving services for all 9,000 students in the state regardless of where they attend school. Specialized training for teachers in the ISDs and ESCs is coupled with extensive parent-training efforts resulting in communities across the state increasingly able to successfully educate students at home. And for those students not enrolled in TSBVI campus-based K-12 program, our Short-Term Programs allow students from all over the state to come in for intensive week-long, weekend and summer programs designed to improve their academic success back home. Outreach and Short Term Programs are both delivering the best services in their history.

Educators across Texas, the nation and internationally make heavy use of TSBVI's curricular publications and its website [www.tsbvi.edu](http://www.tsbvi.edu). These are the two most widely accessed resources of their type in the world from a single organization, and they are among the very best in terms of quality. Educators from around the globe come to visit TSBVI, drawn to us by the expertise that is evidenced in these outstanding resources.

Our partnership with Texas Tech and Stephen F. Austin universities, training new teachers of the visually impaired and orientation and mobility specialists, is unique to Texas. These programs are producing a steady flow of new teachers filling much-needed positions in school districts across the state. On TSBVI's campus, the Mentor Program component of the partnership matches these new teachers with veteran teachers from around the state. This is the key ingredient that helps ensure these new teachers are successful in jobs where they are often the only visual impairment specialist in the districts, and therefore lack a professional peer group.

*William Daugherty*



# *TSBVI - Who We Are*

## **A HISTORY OF THE SCHOOL**

The School was established in 1856 and classes were first held at the residence of Mr. W. L. Hill in Austin, Texas. The School moved to the present day “Little Campus” in the current day Arno Nowotny Building/Custer House of the University of Texas. A second campus was established on Bull Creek Road in Austin in 1889. In 1915 the School’s name was changed to the Texas School for the Blind and the School moved to its present 45-acre campus on West 45<sup>th</sup> Street in Austin. A special program for deafblind children was initiated in 1972 and was housed in the former Confederate Widows’ Mansion on 38<sup>th</sup> Street. The deafblind program moved to the 45<sup>th</sup> Street campus in 1981. In 1989, the School was given its current name, the Texas School for the Blind and Visually Impaired (TSBVI), to reflect more accurately the population it serves. Major reconstruction of the campus began in 2008 and continued through the 2011-2012 school year. Virtually every building on the campus was replaced with new construction by the end of 2012.

The main functions of TSBVI include:

- To provide a free, appropriate public education that addresses the intense or specialized needs of visually impaired children and youth, including those with additional disabilities when the local district and parents agree that such services are not available in a local program.
- To conduct supplemental programs, such as summer and other short-term programs.
- To provide statewide services to parents of students, school districts, regional education service centers, and other agencies including training, consultation, technical assistance, and developing and disseminating materials such as curriculum, instructional methodology, and educational technology.
- To partner with Texas Tech University and Stephen F. Austin State University in preparation programs for teachers of the visually impaired.

### ***OUR VISION***

All students in Texas who are blind or visually impaired, including those with deafblindness or additional disabilities, will have high quality educational opportunities to develop the skills, knowledge and character to lead fulfilling and satisfying lives.

### ***OUR MISSION***

The Texas School for the Blind and Visually Impaired will serve as a leading center of expertise and supports, working in partnership with schools, families and organizations to improve educational outcomes for students who are blind or visually impaired, including those with deafblindness or additional disabilities.

## **OUR PHILOSOPHY**

- ◆ We believe in the strength, competence and potential for independence of students who are blind or visually impaired, including those with deafblindness or additional disabilities. All staff at TSBVI foster and celebrate these attributes every day.
- ◆ We believe that our important mission, established by the people of Texas through our legislature, is to serve all students in the state through collaboration with local educational teams. By doing so, TSBVI ensures that Texas as a whole receives the greatest value for its investment in the promising future of these children and youths.
- ◆ We believe that the extraordinary blindness expertise developed at the Texas School for the Blind and Visually Impaired since its founding in 1856, continues to grow in its leadership for the entire state. We are committed to using this expertise for innovations that will eliminate all barriers to learning.
- ◆ We believe that the State of Texas has established a statewide educational system for these students that is widely recognized as among the very best in the nation. TSBVI is honored to play a key role in the achievement of this recognition.

### ***The Staff***

In 2012-2013 the staff of TSBVI was comprised of approximately 377 full-time and part-time positions including classroom teachers, teacher aides, job coaches, related service staff including orientation and mobility instructors, speech-language pathologists, occupational and physical therapists, psychologists, behavior specialists, counselors, social workers, health services staff, residential staff who work with students after school hours, clerical staff, business office staff, admissions and records staff, technology staff, maintenance workers, groundskeepers, food service workers, custodial staff, transportation and security staff, among others.

### ***The Board of Trustees***

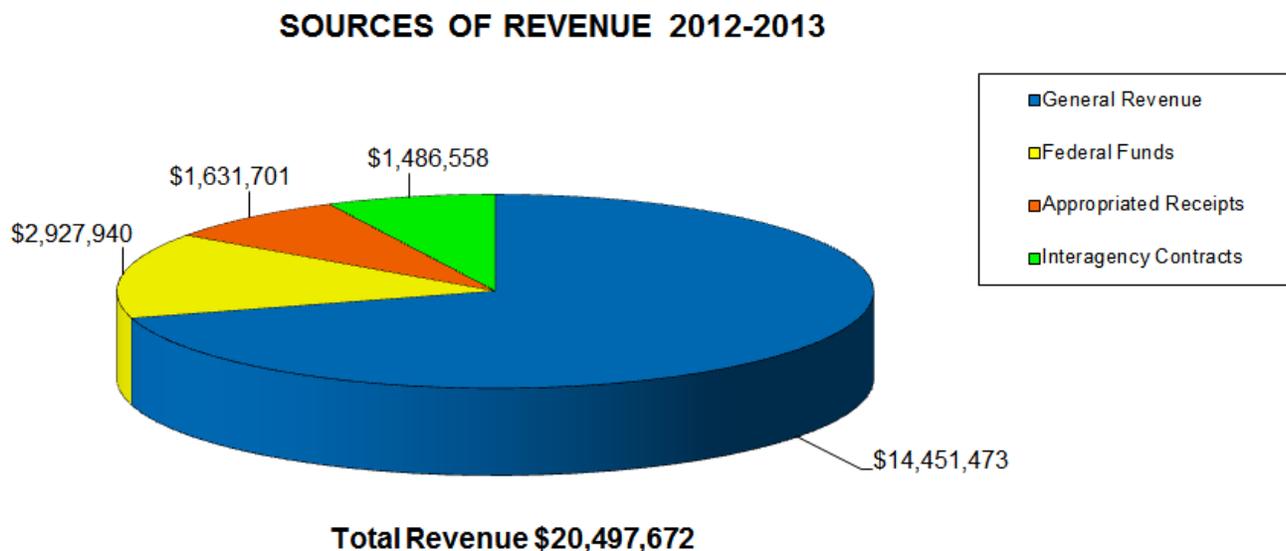
The School is governed by a nine-member Board of Trustees, which is appointed by the Governor and confirmed by the Senate. The Board is comprised of three members who are blind or visually impaired, three who have experience working in the field of visual impairment, and three who are parents of a child who is blind or visually impaired. Public meetings of the Board are generally held 5-6 times per year.

### ***Our Partnerships***

- Local school districts refer students to us for specific needs. Students are then shared between the school district and TSBVI, and information sharing and collaboration for the benefit of students is continuous.
- Education Service Centers are often a source of referrals to TSBVI, and the ESCs often are the point of contact when a student is returned to his/her community.
- Additional partners with whom TSBVI has a mutually productive and satisfying relationship are all local and state agencies and organizations of and for the blind.

## Sources of Funding

The School is primarily funded through appropriations granted by the State Legislature. Other sources of funding include federal funds, appropriated receipts, interagency contracts, and donations.



## COMPREHENSIVE PROGRAMS

**K-12 Program:** TSBVI provides full-time comprehensive programs during the regular school year to students who are unable to receive an appropriate public education from the local school district. Districts refer students for placement to acquire a student-specific set of skills that, once learned, will allow the student to return to education in the home community. At TSBVI, students receive intensive instruction in all areas of the curriculum including braille reading and writing, orientation and mobility, assistive technology, career education, social skills, occupational and physical therapy, speech therapy, daily living skills training and many other disability-specific skill areas. TSBVI is the only placement in the State where all educational staff are specially trained and certified to teach students with visual impairments and all residential staff receive ongoing training in teaching independent living skills, including personal hygiene, dressing, grooming, and home care.

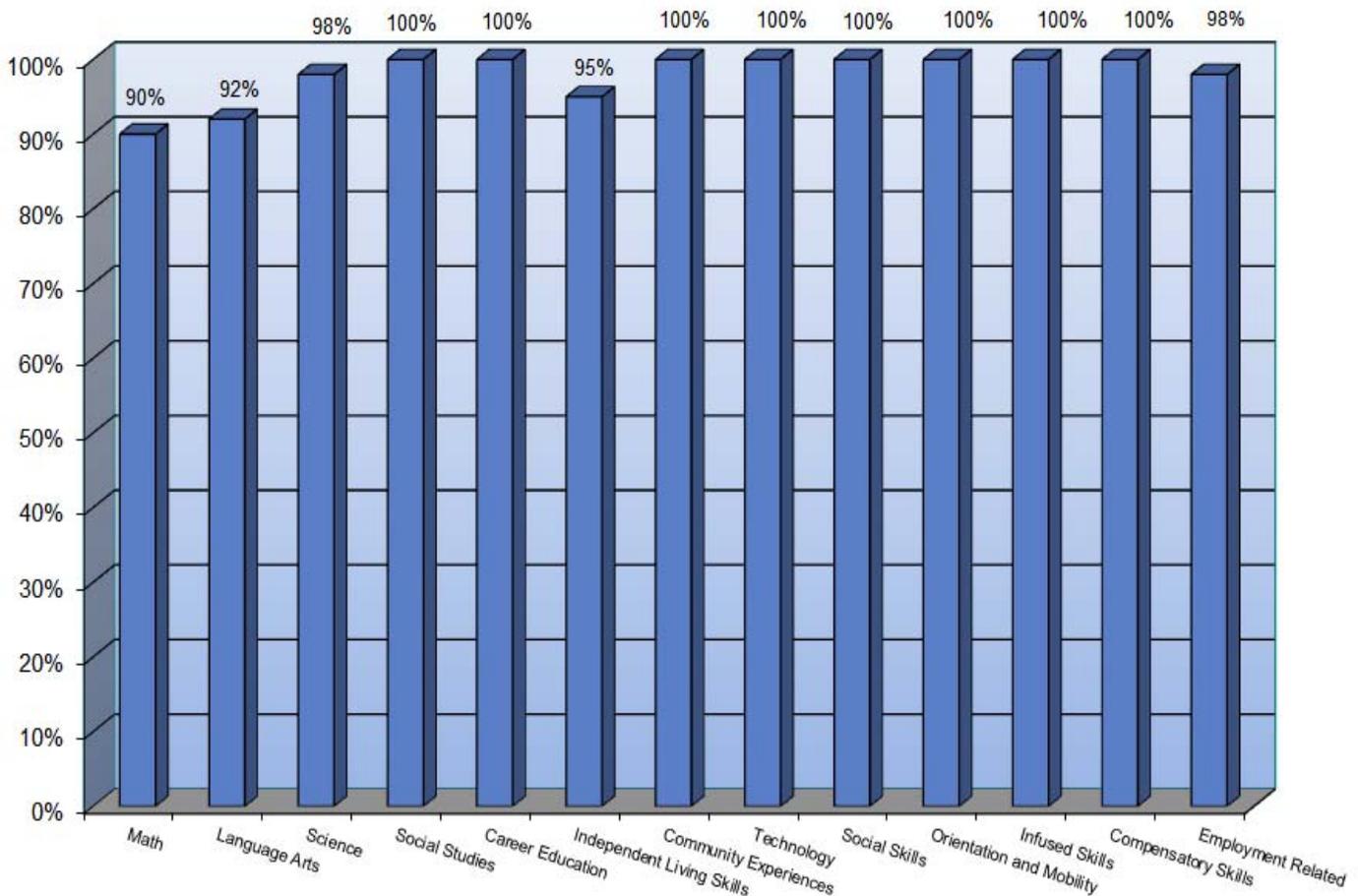


White Cane Day 2012

**Post Secondary Program:** This program, offered in partnership with the Texas Department of Assistive and Rehabilitative Services – Division of Blind Services, provides training for students who are legally blind and have a regular State Board of Education high school diploma or GED. Students seeking this post-secondary experience are in need of remedial academic, independent living and work related skills training. They will cultivate the skills, attitudes and opportunities necessary to meet the demands of competitive employment and adult living.

## ACHIEVEMENTS IN THE 2012-2013 SCHOOL YEAR

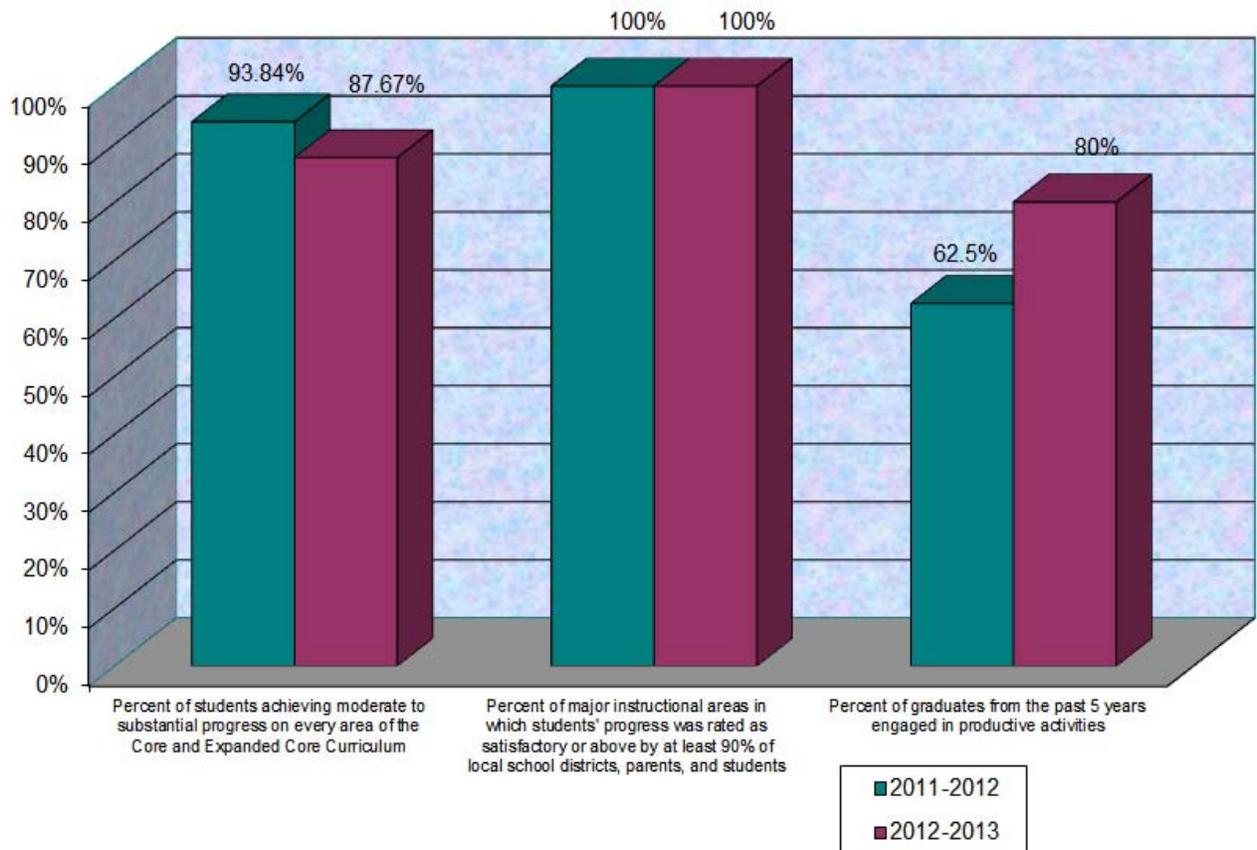
- The school met and exceeded the performance standards agreed upon with the Texas Education Agency representing significant student progress in the following curricular areas. The percentages of students assessed making moderate to substantial progress on curricular-based assessments were:



\*\* Infused Skills (for multiply impaired students) – Social Communicative Interactions, Emotional Development, Senses and Motor Skills, Basic Concepts, Representation/ Cognition

- 88% of Comprehensive Program students achieved moderate to substantial progress on every area of the core and expanded core curriculum in which they received programming.
- Student progress in 100% of the ten major instructional areas was rated as satisfactory, very satisfactory, or outstanding by at least 90% of parents, local school districts and students.
- 80% of students surveyed who graduated from TSBVI from the past 5 years were engaged in productive life activities (work, post-secondary education or training, child care, or volunteer activities).
- 100% of teachers and paraprofessionals met No Child Left Behind highly qualified standards.

## COMPREHENSIVE PROGRAMS MEASURES FOR 2012-2013



### OTHER ACHIEVEMENTS

- The Career Education Department was successful in enabling students to get off campus and experience real work demands and rigors. Since the EXIT Program and the Career Education Department are now located together, the ability to provide more off campus work opportunities has been made easier. We had a total of 25 students working at off campus sites. The sites where our students worked are as follows:
  - Texas Coffee Traders
  - Walgreen's at 45<sup>th</sup> Street
  - Dell Children's Hospital
  - DADS (Department of Aging and Disability Services)
  - Wal-Mart at Norwood Park
  - St. Vincent DePaul Thrift Store
  - Top Drawer Thrift Store
  - Faith Lutheran Day School
  - Meals on Wheels
  - Stubbs BBQ
  - Walgreen's at Burnet and Koenig
  - Pease Elementary
  - Ten Thousand Villages store
  - Walgreen's at North Lamar
  - Crestview Pre-School



Many of these students incorporated independent travel into their routines to support Orientation and Mobility goals. They were responsible for taking public transportation, communicating with work site supervisors about adaptive requirements and maintaining good productivity.

In addition to the increased number of off campus work activities, we had a large number of students who worked in on campus experiences that ranged from basic routines that focus on left to right sequencing, one to one relationships and chore completion to managing student-run businesses. The activities that our students participated in are as follows:

- Elementary Work Center (Introductory Vocational Activities/Chores)
- Customer Service Class
- Horticulture/Farmer's Market
- Wildcat Bistro
- Wildcat Coffee Shop
- Animal Care
- Hospitality/Wildcat Inn
- Embroidery
- Sound Engineering
- Recycling
- Laundry Service
- Keep Austin Beautiful (project based task)
- Learning Resource Center Aide
- Dr. Pruet's Braille Class Teaching Assistant
- Wildcat Flower Delivery
- Screen Printing



This was a very exciting year for the Career Education Department and for our students. The students experienced useful, skill-developing activities and were able to have some exposure to some “real world” demands and expectations. The Career Education Department looks to build on the successes of 2012-2013 and further expand opportunities for our students in the future.

- Participation in an array of beneficial after-school activities for students including: Robotics Club, archery, rowing, stand up paddle boarding, Yearbook Club, yoga, dance, art, group games, spin biking, tandem biking, bicycle maintenance, Music Mania, goalball, Spanish Club, radio station, swimming, swimming lessons, music recording, scrapbooking, cooking & baking, international foods, Drama Club, Walking & Running Club, hiking, jewelry making, Pep Squad, cheerleading, Gardening Club, Book Club, quiz night, Badger Dog Writing Club, Poker night, Leo Club, basketball, weight training, judo, bowling, private music lessons, geocaching, kayaking, canoeing, rock wall climbing and Boy Scouts of America



Venture Crew. Also, students were given individualized instruction in self-directed leisure activities like beading, weaving, macramé, puzzles and clay modeling. For adult-age students, emphasis was placed on development of adult-oriented community-based fitness, leisure and recreational options.

- Dorm Manager Tammy Reed was honored as the 2013 Principals of Schools for the Blind Outstanding Residential Life Staff Member.

### **SPECIAL ACTIVITIES IN 2012-2013**

- Students participated in statewide White Cane Day activities in downtown Austin.
- A parent weekend conference was held with 100 students' families in attendance.
- The 2012-2013 Student Council provided an array of fun activities for the student body as well as service projects for the community and school. They held a canned food drive and spent one morning packaging food at a food bank. In addition, the Student Council raised money to buy books for a local childcare center. They hosted the fourth annual student talent show, featuring 23 performers, as well as a Valentine's Day dance and school spirit week. The Council concluded the year by sponsoring an end of year ice cream social.
- A student holiday music assembly and play were held in the auditorium.
- Students and staff traveled to Louisiana School for the Visually Impaired to participate in the 2013 SCASB Wrestling, Cheerleading and Performing Arts Meet. At the performing arts presentations, the TSBVI choir sang and sent the crowd to a standing ovation. On Saturday the Wrestling and Cheer competition began. The cheerleaders showed everyone that they were proud to be from Texas. After three rounds of cheer and dance, the girls earned 2<sup>nd</sup> place and missed out on 1<sup>st</sup> by only four points. The Wildcat Mascot tied for 2<sup>nd</sup>. The Wrestlers did a great job. Several of the matches were down to the last second. One TSBVI student was the champion for his weight class.
- Twenty-one students, ages 9-20, participated in the Regional Braille Challenge at the Education Service Center, Region 13, on Feb. 9, 2013. These motivated students competed in Speed & Accuracy, Proofreading, Reading Comprehension, Charts & Graphs, and Spelling at this national competition sponsored by the Braille Institute of America. TSBVI students took first, second and third place in the Freshman Emerging Braille Division; first and second place in the Freshman Early Braille Division; first,



second and third place in the Sophomore Division, and first and second place in the Varsity Division. Two students in the Varsity Division competed at the National Braille Challenge Finals in Los Angeles, California, on June 22, 2013. Out of one thousand national competitors, they each made it to the top twelve in their division in order to qualify for Finals! Above all, each student improved his/her braille literacy and love of reading.

- A total of 90 TSBVI students participated in the 14th Annual Sports Extravaganza for students who are blind and visually impaired. Students competed in track and field events and a goalball tournament. TSBVI brought home more than 325 medals and ribbons. In the goalball tournament, eight TSBVI students competed in the Beginners' Tournament, with the girls' team taking first place. The boys' team came in second place.
- TSBVI's boys' and girls' goalball teams competed at the Goalball Youth National Championships along with 22 other goalball teams in St. Augustine, Florida, Nov. 8-10. Both the boys' and girls' TSBVI teams advanced to the final day and into the Quarter Finals. TSBVI girls were given the tournament's Sportsmanship Award. The TSBVI boys gave it their all, finishing in fourth place in the High School Nationals.
- TSBVI hosted the SCASB Track and Field and Performing Arts Meet, April 11-13, 2013, with schools for the blind represented from the following states: Alabama, Louisiana, Mississippi and Texas. The TSBVI girls' team and the boys' team each came in second place overall. One TSBVI student was the Class A Boys' Most Valuable Player and a second student was the Class A Girls' Most Valuable Player.
- Students participated in a Red Ribbon Safe and Drug-free Schools assembly and poster contest.
- Black Heritage and Fiesta Day activities were held at the School.
- A senior banquet took place in the cafeteria as well as the junior/senior prom with a theme of "Enchanted Garden" at the Crowne Plaza Hotel.



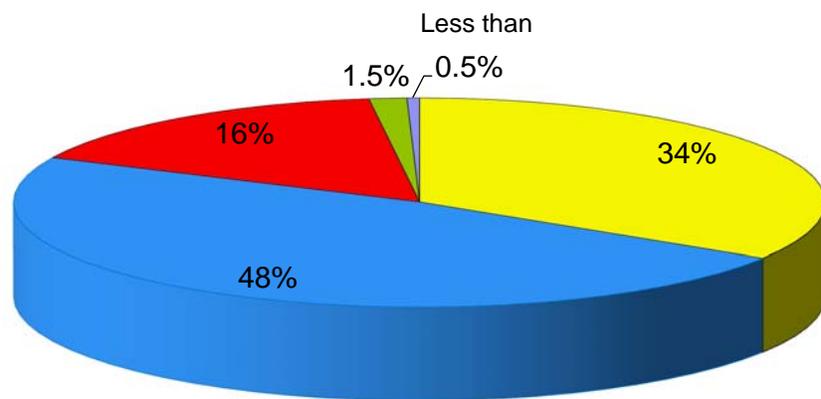


## **ENROLLMENT STATISTICS**

In the 2012-2013 school year, 176 students representing 112 local school districts throughout Texas were enrolled in the Comprehensive Programs of TSBVI.

<b>COMPREHENSIVE PROGRAMS</b>	<b>2008-2009</b>	<b>2009-2010</b>	<b>2010-2011</b>	<b>2011-2012</b>	<b>2012-2013</b>
Elementary Program	35	26	30	31	32
Secondary Program	104	117	126	133	137
Post-Secondary Program	8	8	7	7	7
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>147</b>	<b>151</b>	<b>163</b>	<b>171</b>	<b>176</b>

## **ETHNICITY OF STUDENTS ENROLLED IN 2012-2013 COMPREHENSIVE PROGRAMS**



■ Hispanic 
 ■ White 
 ■ Black 
 ■ Asian/Pacific Islander 
 ■ American Indian

## Comprehensive Program Survey Responses from Parents and Local School Districts

My daughter has had a wonderful experience this year at TSBVI. She loves all her activities and staff. It is a place where she feels accepted and secure knowing that every day she is getting closer to her goals. It is the best place for her to be, where we know that her educational and living skills are getting better with time.

My daughter has shown a great improvement across the board while attending TSBVI. I feel it is in her best interest to stay through graduation! TSBVI has so much to offer her both academically and socially. I am very proud of the improvements she has been making and am ready to watch her blossom into the beautiful young lady she will become.

My son has flourished since attending TSBVI thanks to the program and outstanding staff. The curriculum is high quality, the instruction is thorough and encourages participation not only in the classroom but in all areas of school, social life. I am so proud of his accomplishments, his high level of maturity and this commitment to succeed. All this I attribute to TSBVI. You have become family and I also ma treated with love and concern when I visit. Thanks does not seem enough but thanks very, very much.

Everyone has been doing a great job with my son! We are very pleased with all he has been doing. Keep up the great work!

I am very pleased with my daughter's progress and find everyone at the school very kind, helpful, and wonderful educators. Thanks for all the effort and hard work with my daughter. Amazing change in her and she has only been at TSBVI 1 year.

My son's educational advances have been fantastic at TSBVI. He has had excellent teachers and aides. His development has been miraculous.

TSBVI has done wonders in my child's life. She loves it at your school and has made outstanding progress in her classes and her day to day life. Thank you so much.

TSBVI is a terrific school with caring and compassionate teachers and staff. Our student has grown in her academics and social skills beyond our expectation. We know she still has a ways to go but we are so thankful for the 4 years she has had at your school. I hope she returns one day to sharpen her skills before she graduates. Thank you all for the love and patience you have shown these kids.



While the student's time in our school district has been very short, the transition between his previous school district and ours has been very successful because of the professional and caring attitude of the TSBVI staff. There was no interruption in this student's needed services and that was greatly appreciated.

My limited contact with TSBVI has been through ARD committee meetings and our ISD personnel. All

progress and communication has been outstanding. I am ecstatic about our student's progress and foresee him doing great things in his future. You have been a blessing to him and his family. Thank you for everything you do for our student! He couldn't be in a better place to work on transition to adult life.

We are excited for her. Your staff is very professional and the facility/programs are outstanding. I'm looking forward to her showing me new braille skills this summer! I think the additional year at TSBVI will enable her to be more successful and happy in our district.

I am very thankful my student has had the opportunity to attend TSBVI. There were social behaviors that really needed to be addressed in order for academic improvement to occur. She has made leaps & bounds! I am excited to continue to work with TSB staff when she returns to her home campus.

My student's progress from the beginning of the school year to the present has been outstanding. The care & patience taken by the staff goes above and beyond; which shows in my student's improved self-esteem and fewer negative behaviors and self-stimulation, and increased communication skills. I have observed him in varying settings and with varying teachers and support staff and find TSBVI provides a safe and encouraging environment to promote learning and the ultimate goal of independence. Love your new buildings and dorms which serve as functional space and are attractive and clean! Thank you for taking good care of him and helping him to achieved his goals. I am so proud of his accomplishments at TSBVI and look forward to helping to further his journey!

My student's progress at TSBVI has been continuous and focused. When he began your program he had few skills and abilities; he is now more able to care for himself and will be more successful in living in the community after leaving. TSBVI has truly made a difference in this young man's life.

TSBVI has done an outstanding job with my student. My school couldn't begin to do what you all have done for him. My hat is off to all the staff there!

I am very pleased with the program offered by TSBVI. My student has shown his most growth with his social, self-help, travel skills, and independent living skills.

Since the first time I saw my student at TSBVI two years ago, she has made remarkable progress. I am very impressed with her program. It is skillfully designed to meet all of her needs. Teacher assistants and teachers worked with her giving her gentle guidance and allowing her time to be as independent as possible. I did not know the student when she attended high school in our district, but I have heard many accounts of her struggles there. She is a totally different child/young adult who is truly being supported to reach her full potential at TSBVI.

TSBVI served a unique purpose in educating this young man. The expanded core curriculum, staff and on campus facility made a huge difference in the post-secondary outcomes for this student. Thank you for your services.

Our district and the parents have been extremely happy with the services our student has received at TSBVI. She has had great opportunities and experiences that our district was unable to provide. We appreciate all that TSBVI staff has done for her.

# ***SHORT-TERM PROGRAMS***

## ***SUMMER SHORT-TERM PROGRAMS***

Summer programs serve students who are not full-time students at TSBVI during the regular school year. They emphasize those skills from the Expanded Core Curriculum for Students with Visual Impairments that may be challenging for districts to teach during the school year. Students are served through six different summer programs: Academic Secondary Enrichment, Practical Academic Secondary Enrichment, Elementary Summer Enrichment, SWEAT (an exit level work program for academic students), WALIC (an exit level work program for practical academic students), and Life Skills Camp. Instruction includes:

- Applying academic skills within functional, real-life situations such as independent living or having a job;
- Improving skills of independent living such as personal care, home care, money management, travel, responsibility and organization, and interacting well with others;
- Introducing a range of recreational and leisure activities that might lead to future interest and skill development;
- Participating in activities on campus and in the community;
- Enhancing one's sense of confidence and well-being, self-knowledge, and self-advocacy, which can grow from being away from home on one's own, as well as from interacting with other successful visually impaired students and adults;
- Becoming familiar with concepts and skills that lay the foundation for future career exploration and employment.



Students who attend summer programs are often the only visually impaired student in their school. These summer classes introduce them to empowering experiences and ideas related to living with visual impairment, and provide a socially supportive peer group that reduces feelings of isolation, difference and loneliness. Many students develop enduring friendships and support networks that can last a lifetime. This support can be an important complement to the education they receive in their local districts, and even increase their motivation to learn more in school.

## **ACHIEVEMENTS IN THE 2013 SUMMER PROGRAMS**

1. Achievements are enumerated below for each summer program. The most significant new achievement of the past year, however, was the creation of a powerful new database for managing the complex administration of all the summer classes (also to be used in the fall for managing school year short-term programs). The database was developed through collaboration between a contracted company and staff in the Short-Term Programs Department. It greatly increases the efficiency and accuracy of student admissions and program preparation across all departments on campus. The validity of its value is measured by the high praise from all users – from teachers to transportation to health and food services.

2. Classes for academic secondary students are theme oriented rather than subject matter oriented. For example, students took classes such as Visual Arts, Wildcat Bistro, Video Production, Outdoor Education, or Space Weather, rather than Math, Science or Language Arts. The students then practice academic and vision-specific skills within the context of these appealing, real-life settings (e.g., developing a budget, shopping for goods, writing documents to advertise products, evaluating effectiveness). In our 2013 academic secondary classes we offered a range of themes, serving 121 students in 12 different classes (listed below).
3. Our practical academic secondary students also participated in theme oriented classes: Adventures in Sports, Capital City Adventures, Independence Exploration, Art and Imagination, Culinary Arts, and Career Connections. Within these real-life contexts they practiced a broad array of skills such as functional literacy and math, personal care and home management, recreation and leisure, work, social skills, and self-determination. In summer 2013 we served 47 practical academic secondary students in 10 different classes.
4. Elementary summer enrichment classes were similar to secondary classes in structure: they provided opportunities for students to practice academic and vision-related skills in activities such as thematic units, music, community outings, self-care, shopping, cooking, arts and crafts, and recreational activities. Examples of classroom themes were: Transition to Middle School, Natural Environment Investigation, Museums and Art, The World of Water, Lost in Space, and Getting There. Each summer we modify our original offerings based on consumer requests (the applications). In Summer 2013 this resulted in the provision of a larger number of one-week elementary classes than in prior summers. We served 87 elementary students in 12 one- or two-week classes.
5. 25 high-school students participated in paid jobs (stipend or minimum wage) throughout the Austin community (listed below). They received intensive training in all aspects of work – getting a job, keeping a job, workplace protocol, specific job skills, managing money, traveling independently to work, and solving problems that arise at work. They also received training in independent living at home and in the community. This included managing a house or apartment; domestic skills such as cleanliness, cooking, shopping, recreation in the community; and achieving a balance between independence and interdependence.
6. 48 visually impaired students with severe multiple impairments, including deafblindness, were provided the opportunity to be away from home (often for the first time) in our Life Skills Camp, participating in skills of independent living and recreational activities in the community.



## HIGHLIGHTS FROM SUMMER 2013

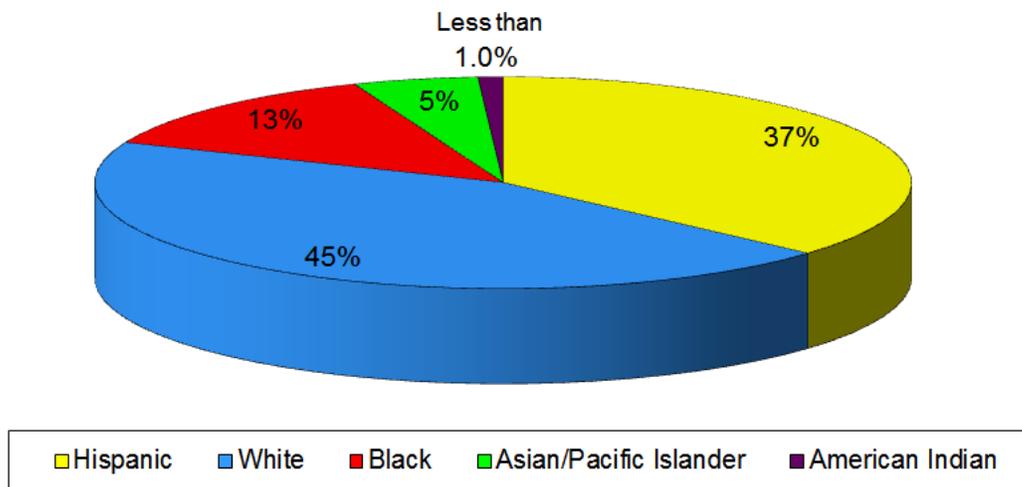
1. Secondary academic classes were offered in five major areas:
  - Fine Arts: Camp Fine Arts; Visual Arts & More; Video Production; Performing Arts Intensive
  - Physical Education & Adventure: Adventure/Outdoor Education (PE for SBOE credit); Camp Challenge
  - Expanded Core Independent Living, Mobility & More: Middle School Enrichment; Community Independence
  - Small Business Endeavors: Wildcat Bistro & Catering
  - Science and Technology: Problem Busters (introduction to engineering); Catching Some Rays: Space Weather
2. Our procedure is to advertise a large variety of classes in our application form, and then provide only those that best match actual student selections. Several classes were offered for Summer 2012 that did not receive enough applications to create a viable class. In 2013, however, all advertised classes filled and were offered.
3. Our programs for academic middle school age students were in very high demand. We served 14 students in our two-week Middle School Enrichment (MSE) classes, and 14 students in our one-week MSE classes. We served 16 students in our Transition to Middle School classes.
4. The Transition to Middle School classes are offered each summer to the oldest elementary students who are about to move into a middle school setting. This is an especially difficult transition for students with visual impairments. The summer classes address issues such as personal organization (managing lockers, organizing materials and day timers, retrieving information, dealing with time and deadlines); self-advocacy (explaining your needs to teachers and other students); social skills (caring for personal appearance; initiating conversations and meeting new people); adaptive tools and technology (exposure to scanning software, magnification systems, and homework and classroom aids); orientation and mobility (changing classes, negotiating crowded hallways).
5. During Summer 2013 we collaborated with two university professors to provide special programs for students. Each co-taught an academic secondary class with teachers from TSBVI. Dr. Cris Schwartz, from the Iowa State University Department of Mechanical Engineering, co-taught Problem Busters. Dr. Patricia Reiff, Director of the Rice Space Institute at Rice University in Houston, co-taught Space Weather. Both of these professors, experts in their respective fields, brought unique and invaluable experiences for our students.
6. 25 high school students participated in jobs at the following community locations:
  - SWEAT Academic (individual jobsites): Dragon's Lair retail store, Austin YMCA, Texas Department of Aging and Disabilities Services (DADS), Garbo A Salon and Day Spa, Holy Roast Coffee Shop at the Dell Children's Medical Center, Animal Care services, Texas Coffee Traders, Easter Seals, Open Door Preschool, 10,000 Villages retail store, Perks Coffee and Gift Shop at the Dell Children's Medical Center.
  - WALIC Practical Academic (3-4 students per site): Top Drawer Thrift Shop, Wal-Mart, Department of Aging and Disability Services, Capital Area Food Bank.

## ENROLLMENT STATISTICS

In the 2013 Summer Programs, 328 students were served, representing all 20 Education Service Center regions and 144 local school districts throughout Texas.

YEAR	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013
<b>SUMMER PROGRAMS</b>	311	298	335	320	328

### ETHNICITY OF STUDENTS ENROLLED IN 2013 SUMMER PROGRAMS



### Summer Short-Term Program Survey Responses From Parents and Local School Districts

I am grateful for any time my daughter has at the school. She enjoys it very much herself and has grown during her times at the school. It has made her more open about her visual impairment and not so angry about it. That is huge! Thank you so much.

Very thankful to have such great opportunities for our VI daughter. The variety of programs offered are diverse to meet a wide range of interests and needs plus the social interactions embedded within the programs provide a nice balance.

Our child thoroughly enjoyed the program, made many friends and is looking forward to returning. She learned many things that will help her in the future in being independent.

My daughter had a great time and enjoyed being around kids that were like her. She learned a lot about her disability and how to live with it. Thank you very much. I think it's the best program ever!



My son had a wonderful experience at camp. He would like to return next year. This was the first time he saw children with nystagmus and it helped him be more secure. It was surprising to see him so confident after only 5 days away from home. Thank you for making my son feel at home. He can't stop talking about it. He is looking forward to next year.

My son absolutely loves TSBVI summer program. He grows and matures from it. I see so much confidence gained by him. I love the program because it makes him very happy!!!

The staff was very positive and my son was left in a safe and friendly environment. I feel we learned more about his needs after attending summer camp than a full year in a public school.



My camper would come for the whole summer if you let her! This program provides a safe and interactive way for kids in Life Skills to have a place of their own – to have fun. The friendships here are like nowhere else and that is to be treasured.

This four days experience was incredible for the children. They learn to live away from home. This is very important for us, the parents. All my family, especially my son were very happy with this experience. Thank you very much for giving us the opportunity. We hope we will see you next year.

I love this program. It has shown my daughter she can do a lot of things on her own. She has really grown to a beautiful young lady since she has been in this program the last two year.

Our daughter enjoys her experience at TSBVI. While she is generally happy and positive, spending time with peers like her really motivates her! I love all the things she learns and teaches me when she returns home! Thank you all!!!

My son thoroughly enjoys the TSBVI program which he has benefitted from for the past 2 years. We would really love to reinforce his newly learned skills and behavioral modifications year-round. Thanks for this continued growth opportunity!!

I feel that every time my child goes to TSBVI, she learns a lot, feels comfortable, enjoys herself, and is always treated very well. She always loves her teachers, and all the people she works with during her time there. She absolutely loves it. Her face lights up when she learns that she will be going. She enjoys every minute of her time there, and always has a wonderful time.

This was my son's first time away from home (with a non-relative). As parents of a low vision child, we tend to over shelter him, which we are finding out is NOT in his best interests. This program is EXACTLY what he and we needed. He enjoyed his first real taste of freedom in an environment that we knew to be safe. He came back with more confidence and able to do things that we had not let him try for fear that he would get hurt due to his low vision. He came home bursting with news of programs that are out there for him, of how he learned to ride a city bus and request a stop and of how he learned how to cook for himself - he has made the family omelettes several times since his return from camp. This is an outstanding program for both the low vision individual AND their parents/caregivers. TWO THUMBS UP! The staff was AWESOME. Many were low vision individual, which helped both parents and the children see that it is possible to be VERY independent no matter the level of vision. Outstanding program. I wish we had known of this

YEARS earlier. As our son told us on the way home from summer camp with y'all, "BEST SUMMER EVER"! We look forward to next year.

Our daughter made remarkable progress over the course of her time in the program and has continued to progress since. You could see that she gained a better understanding of how to live in the context of her own set of abilities, and she has a confidence now that is owed in large part to her time at TSBVI. She made great gains from her time at TSBVI; greater than we could communicate here. It is our hope she will attend this or another program in summer 2013 to continue the progress made. Thank you for developing and offering such an amazing experience for our daughter and the many other children who benefit. Thank you again for giving her a life-changing experience.

TSBVI HAS THE BEST STAFF EVER!!! Everyone is so caring, and willing to help teach new skills, and build on existing ones. We are SO at ease when our daughter is at camp (of course we miss her) but we know she is in excellent hands. Seriously, wonderful staff!!!

The TSBVI staff is second to none. I have always had positive interactions and felt that the student was always considered first. Great guidance and services provided! Without a doubt the experience expanded his own image of himself and generated positive reflection of his experiences. He was grateful and happy to be lucky to be part of the summer program. He shared his perception of the other students, staff and challenges. He felt the staff cared about him and enjoyed being with the kids. He has requested for me to seek further learning opportunities for him at TSBVI! Thank you for offering these programs. These small windows of time may be some of the best and only positive experiences of significance for our students. I speak very highly of TSBVI to parents and peer professionals and I put a lot of stock in the human resources at TSBVI. Again thank you for all the planning, and time sacrifices made for these programs.

This is the first camp experience my student has had away from home. This experience was a really beneficial one for him. I believe he made a friend that lives close and he is now interested in participating in more Expanded Core Curriculum activities in the future.

My student reported that he had an awesome experience. He would like to participate in a 3 week program next year. He returned to school with more self-confidence and more organizational skills. He is determined to try to make this year better than ever and to apply strategies to make himself most successful.

My student has attended several summer programs at TSBVI. It really has enriched her life. She is always excited to attend and always ready to talk about her experiences when she comes home. Overall my student had a great time. Her social skills have really improved. She was excited and was able to talk about the activities that she enjoyed. Great learning experience for her.

Keep on doing what you do! I think TSBVI provides excellent opportunities to allow students to take advantage of being with similarly abled peers in a safe environment where there are high expectations for independence. It is difficult to provide such experiences in the home school districts, and short term programs and summer programs provide a great stop-gap!

## ***SCHOOL YEAR SHORT-TERM PROGRAMS***

School year Short-Term Programs (STP) were initiated in September 1999 in response to local districts' requests for assistance with the unique needs of students who are academically successful and near grade level, but need to learn special adaptive skills in order to access the core curriculum and participate fully in the learning and social environment. Between September and May we offer intensive classes, from three to five days in length, in areas such as adaptive technology, math tools and strategies, low vision tools and strategies, etc. In addition to working on the objectives for which they are referred, students receive instruction in other aspects of the Expanded Core Curriculum (ECC) for Students with Visual Impairments.

This includes access skills related to independent living, travel, recreation and leisure, social interaction, and self-determination – in the company of peers with visual impairments who are also practicing these skills. Instruction begins when students wake up (e.g., breakfast preparation before class) and ends at bedtime (with residential activities such as domestic and personal care, food preparation, community access, organization and responsibility, homework, self-knowledge and self-advocacy). Participants also meet other students and adults with visual impairments, which is often the significant ingredient contributing to a change of attitude that can impact their educational, vocational, and social success.

TSBVI provides four types of short-term classes during the school year:

1. Individualized instruction to promote access to and success with the core curriculum (TEKS)

Local districts refer students to work on aspects of the ECC that support academic success. Each student's individualized objectives are jointly determined between STP staff and the local Teacher of the Visually Impaired. Parents may also contribute to the selection of objectives.

2. Special topic classes

Classes are offered on specific topics pertinent to students with visual impairments.

Special topic classes offered during the 2012-13 school year were:

- High School Skills Workshop (math & technology topics)
- Low Vision Tools and Strategies: Elementary
- Low Vision Tools and Strategies: Secondary
- College Prep
- Accessible Math Tools and Strategies
- Looking Good (self-care, physical presentation, social skills)
- City Travel (orientation and mobility in a big city)
- Elementary Tech for Tykes (a 3-part series)
- Elementary Math for Munchkins (a 3-part series)
- Safe Driving with Low Vision

3. Independence weekends

Students participate in theme-oriented classes that provide opportunities to apply and practice skills of independent living, mobility, academics, self-determination, communication, recreation and leisure. Classes offered during the 2012-13 school year were:

- Camping (high school)
- Austin City Limits (the Austin music scene)
- Texas Pioneers (elementary)

- Outdoor Adventures (elementary)
- Prom Weekend
- Iron Chef (food management and preparation)
- Capitol Experience (state legislative process)

4. Off-campus classes

Since the 2008-09 school year, Short-Term Programs has offered to travel to large districts or regional service centers to provide the on-site class “Low Vision on the Road.” This class teaches students with low vision about their vision, as well as strategies for maximizing use of vision. The four-phase program includes a distance education teacher training component, a student folder review, an on-site day for teachers and students, and continuing support to participating teachers on request. During the current school year we collaborated with several service centers and one district in an effort to provide this class, but no region or school was able to gather the resources to support it.

Each spring the STP staff reviews the prior year and develops creative ways to make improvements or add new types of programming. For example, when only 3 students enrolled in our 2012 weeklong “High School Access to Academics” class, we turned it into a 3-day weekend “High School Skills Workshop” with a conference format. In 2013 that class grew to 11 students. Similarly, when we realized that our youngest students could not learn technology or math skills in a one-shot 5-day program, we changed it to a 3-day program that the students would attend for three times in the fall.



## ACHIEVEMENTS IN 2012-2013 SHORT-TERM PROGRAMS

1. Students were instructed in a broad range of skills related to visual impairment, including: accessing the computer for word processing, presentations, spreadsheets, email, and internet access; nonvisual access of iDevices and apps that support the ECC; tactile graphics; skills for independent living; math tools and concepts for nonvisual learners; low vision adaptations, strategies and use of optical devices; use of the portable notetaker; travel in the community including driving with low vision; social skills and self-determination. Students were taught how to evaluate and match the use of adaptations to meet various needs that arise.
2. 94% of students met the objectives for which they were referred.
3. 93% of responding school districts, parents and students rated their experience in short-term programs as very satisfactory or outstanding.
4. Short-Term programs served a total of 212 students from across the state of Texas, ranging from the Panhandle, to the Valley, and from the western to eastern parts of the state. During this school year, we served students from 18 of the 20 educational regions in the state.

## HIGHLIGHTS FROM SHORT-TERM PROGRAMS 2012-2013

1. Short-Term Programs provides classes that are uniquely tailored to both visual and tactile learners. Students with low vision comprise approximately 85% of the academic VI population in Texas, yet their unique needs may not be addressed when resources are limited and they appear to “get by.” Furthermore, their needs can be more difficult to determine than those of blind students because they vary so much from one student to another. We therefore offer certain classes that are specifically designed to serve students with low vision.
2. STP teachers are advanced professionals who are expected to support pre-professional training for future teachers, as well as inservice for current Texas teachers. In that capacity, presentations and training were provided in various locations:
  - Development of a 3-part national webinar on *Instruction in the Use of Optical Devices* in collaboration with the Kansas School for the Blind, the Lions Clubs International, and TSBVI (Cindy Bachofer and Chrissy Cowan)
  - *JAWS: Don't Be Afraid*. TAER Conference, Dallas, TX. (Jenny Bae and Nina Wibbenmeyer)
  - *Long-Term Use of Optical Devices by Young Adults with Low Vision*. TAER Conference, Dallas, TX. (Cindy Bachofer)
  - *Selling Optical Devices to the Tough Customer*. TAER Conference, Dallas, TX. (Cindy Bachofer and Chrissy Cowan)
  - *Keeping an Eye on Cooking: Developing Cooking Skills for Students with Low Vision*. TAER Conference, Dallas, TX. (Kathi Garza and Cindy Bachofer)
  - *She Reads Funny: Psychosocial Aspects of Reading with Low Vision*. Envision Conference, St. Louis, MO. (Cindy Bachofer)
  - *Looking Good: It's not Beauty School*. Envision Conference, St. Louis, MO. (Cindy Bachofer)
3. New classes were added that infused various aspects of the Expanded Core Curriculum:
  - “Math for Munchkins”: This class was modeled on a similar class piloted in 2012, “Tech for Tykes.” Both classes serve young elementary students who have difficulty attending, learning, remembering and being away from home for a traditional 5-day class. Students

were required to attend three 3-day classes to work on a set of math skills. The three classes were scheduled one month apart during the fall. Local TVIs committed to work with our teacher before, between and after the classes. This offered continuity, which is one of the most difficult challenges faced by staff providing Short-Term Programs.

- “High School Skills Workshop”: As described above, this shorter, more intensive workshop replaced an earlier 5-day high school class that had poor attendance. The class size jumped from 3 to 11 students.
  - “Elementary Independence Weekend #3”: This third weekend class was added in order to accommodate the large number of elementary referrals to the class. All three classes were full, serving a total of 24 elementary students in weekend programs alone.
4. As described above STP staff together with an outside contract completed the gargantuan task of developing a new database to track all the students and all the program functions related to school year and summer Short-Term Programs. The database functions will continue to expand in subsequent years of use.



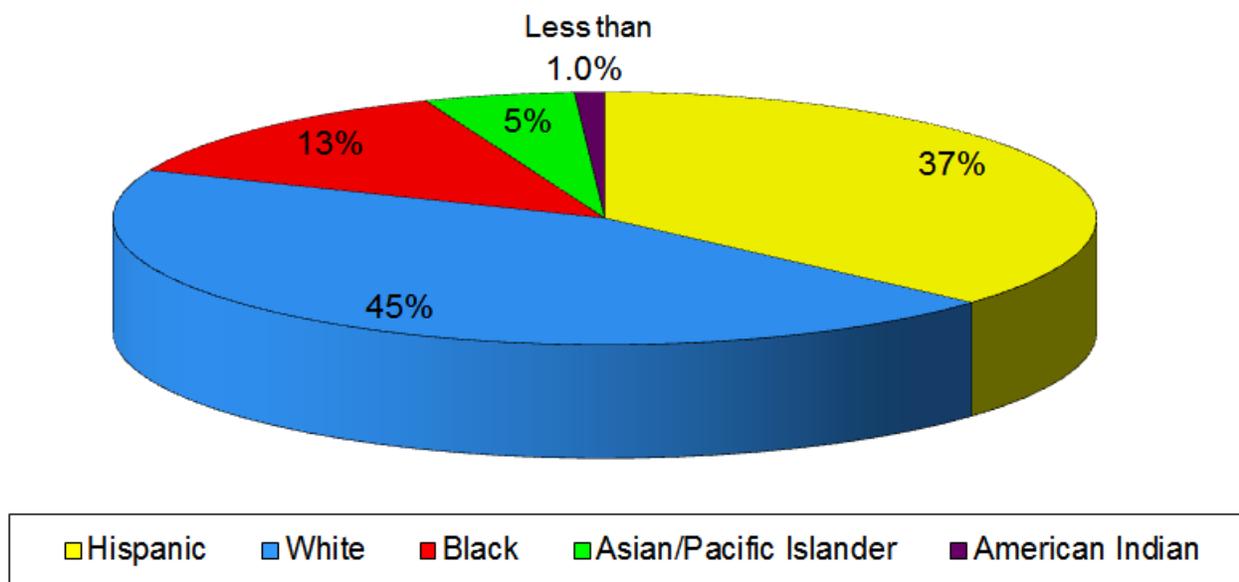
5. After-school residential programming provides essential training and practice in areas of independent living, which academic students are often unable to receive during their busy school day. Instruction includes: planning, budgeting, shopping, and cooking related to meal preparation; using the internet to locate restaurants, menus, and other information; applying math concepts in practical activities such as shopping, measuring ingredients, making payments, calculating tax and tip; cleaning, setting the table, using table manners; understanding issues related to good hygiene; asking for information at stores; identifying bills and coins and effectively completing cash transactions; using appropriate etiquette in various settings; accessing public transportation; understanding effective inter-personal communication and conflict resolution strategies; and choosing appropriate community recreation-leisure activities. Healthy food (including discussion about nutrition), as well as exercise options, are encouraged and provided (e.g., swimming, canoeing, yoga, hiking, dancing,

playground). Students are also encouraged to participate in some form of creative self-expression (e.g., art, music). Self-determination is encouraged and taught throughout all activities.

6. Procedures were implemented to expand the use of Google Docs for shared departmental information, including ongoing work on current projects, email distribution lists, forms and templates, meeting agendas, inventories, etc.
7. Progress was made in supporting students and their teachers after they complete participation in a STP class. This is probably the most challenging aspect of short-class instruction.
- Creation and sharing of short video clips of students participating in instruction; creation of a class web page to describe the class, provide supportive resources, and show each student participating in instruction.
  - During pre-attendance interviews, TVIs formally select the level of collaboration they are willing to participate in. This helps us apply our resources more efficiently and effectively.

- Work with selected TVIs before, between and after their students attend a sequence of three classes (“Tech for Tykes” and “Math for Munchkins” classes).
- Additional resources listed in final reports.
- Telephone conferences with district personnel, family and Outreach (when applicable) regarding students who have attended several classes with no follow-up to maintain skills.
- Some high school students have communicated directly with STP teachers regarding their follow-up needs.

### ETHNICITY OF STUDENTS ENROLLED IN 2012-2013 SHORT-TERM PROGRAMS



### ENROLLMENT STATISTICS

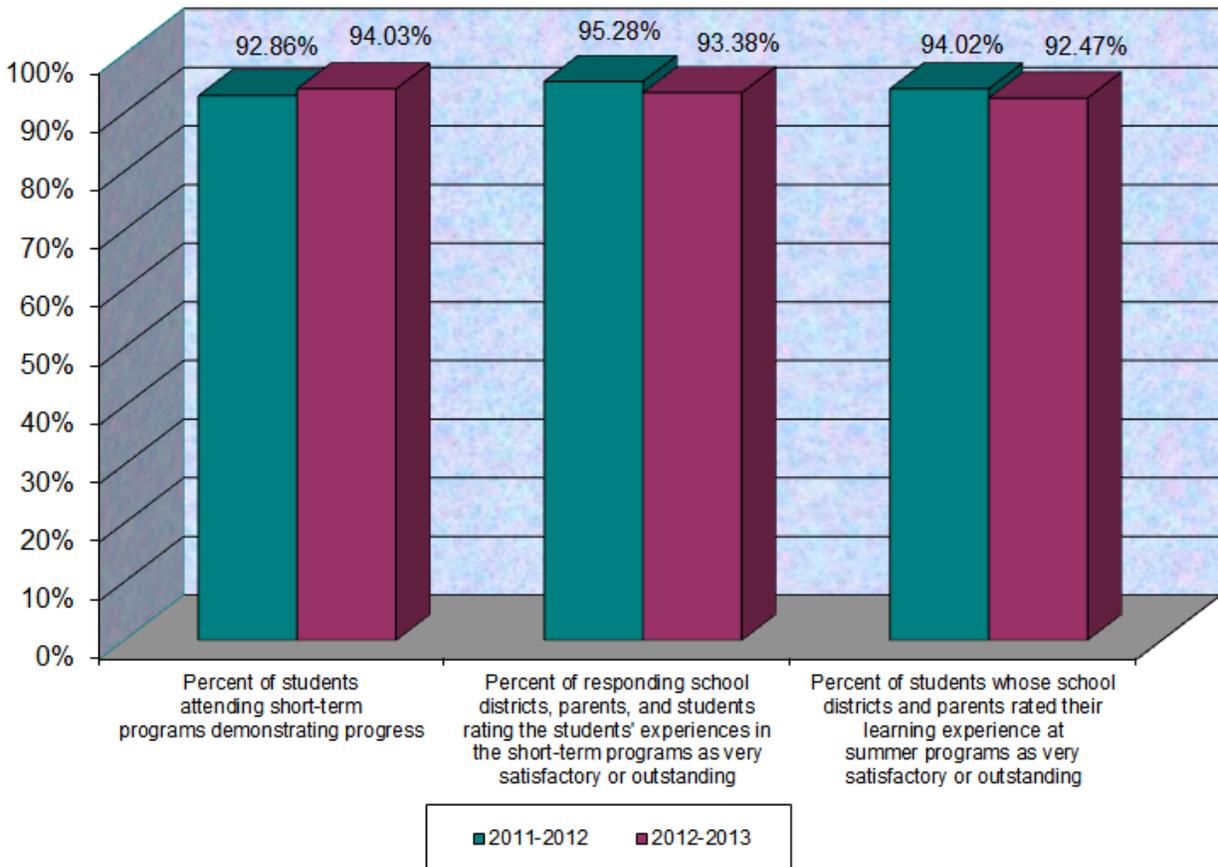
During the 2012-2013 Short-Term Program school year, 212 students were served, representing 18 education service centers and 82 local school districts.

YEAR	2008-2009	2009-2010	2010-2011	2011-2012	2012-2013
<b>SHORT-TERM PROGRAMS</b>	148	184	194	199	212

## PERFORMANCE OBJECTIVES FOR 2012-2013

The following graphs display the achievement of Short-Term Programs in meeting objectives set out in the School's Agency Strategic Plan and in the School Improvement Plan.

### SHORT-TERM PROGRAMS PERFORMANCE MEASURES FOR 2012-2013



### SCHOOL YEAR SHORT-TERM SURVEY RESPONSES FROM PARENTS AND LOCAL SCHOOL DISTRICTS

Our child definitely benefitted from participation in this program. I also learned things that are of benefit to us as parents of a low vision student.

Our daughter learned about new tools which we don't currently use. The interaction with VI peers honestly is one of the most valuable experiences. TSBVI is just amazing. Our daughter loves to attend sessions and can't wait until she can come back.

Being a parent of a child who is visually impaired can be difficult, scary and lonely. For our daughter, these feelings are doubled! So having an opportunity to go someplace like TSBVI is a blessing. Thank you!

My daughter learned so much about the importance of college and the steps needed to prepare. She is excited about the opportunity!



We cannot thank you all enough. Our daughter feels like she belongs, she is “normal” and she said that being in school at TSBVI makes her feel good about herself. We hope that she will have more opportunities to attend TSBVI! As her parents we have seen positive changes in her as a result of her experiences.

She absolutely loved the dorm staff. As a parent this was so comforting to know! They were awesome with her.

My child loved it so much she was not ready to leave. She liked the experience of meeting new people and learning new independent tasks with others like her.

Staff have always acted respectfully in the best interest of all students. The programs fill a gap in services for VI students and help build confidence and self-sufficiency.

We are so thankful for TSBVI and the short-term programs offered for students who are not enrolled full time at the school. Thank you so much for all you do to support, encourage, and build confidence in our kids!

My son loved the experience and the people he met. He talked about the experience for several days and often said he wished he was still there. Thank you so much for this experience and allowing my son to attend. It is one of the only settings he feels people really understand that he does not have typical vision.

When my daughter came home I heard stories for days. Each story made me giggle, smile, and even made me grateful for the whole experience! It was the first time that she could sit around and talk with other kids that have experienced the same things that she has in school, and in public.

My child absolutely loves going to TSBVI. She enjoys getting to be with other students like her and the independence from mom and dad helping her at home.

Our daughter had another outstanding experience with/at TSBVI. Thank you for such a positive impact on our daughter. She always comes home a different child. We see growth in confidence, maturity and comfort with who she is. Thank you.

This course was one of the best events that has happened this school year. She is still smiling and talking about all she did and learned. Thank you so much for literally changing my student’s outlook on life. I am not sure HOW it was accomplished, but the experience at TSBVI has made a marked difference in her attitude about herself, her confidence, and her general happiness. She looks forward to her next TSBVI visit-which we hope is this summer!! The TSBVI experience has given her hope for her future-immediate and long term. Do not underestimate the impact ya’ll have!!

This program addressed some areas of the ECC that my student was needing. The added benefit of being with other peers who have a visual impairment was also a bonus. He came back from the program more confident and excited about his weekend in Austin.

The short term programs are very helpful. They provide an experience that cannot be replicated in the small community my student lives in. It helps for him to be with other visually impaired peers.

Parents and student were excited upon return about how beneficial and family-inclusive the conference was. Student developed some much-needed contacts with other academically successful students with visual impairments. Relationships have been maintained. Student consequently became interested in participating in additional DARS sponsored activities. Parent said TSBVI pointed her in the right direction on every issue regarding a person with VI driving.

She had a wonderful opportunity to participate in activities she would otherwise never had done on own due to availability of resources

I think it's unbelievable how people have made it possible for blind and visually impaired students to be able to access educational and recreational opportunities at no or very little cost to the students or parents. Some of the things these children get to do through TSBVI would never have happened without you. It also helps them dream bigger because they are exposed to so much than their normal environment. I feel that caring for others is one of the greatest gifts. Keep it up because you're causing many kids to smile a mile.

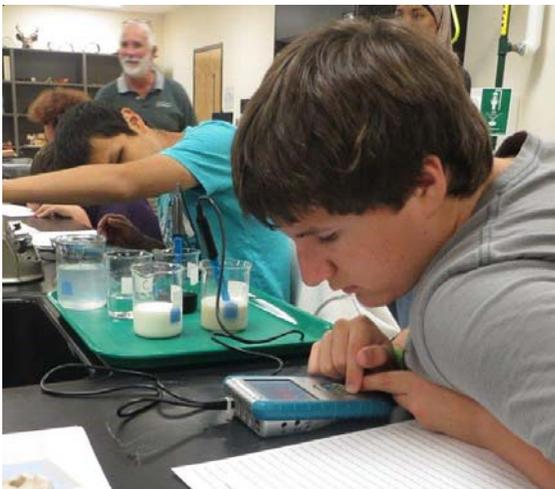
This space is not big enough to say all I could say about staff knowledge, professionalism, and courteousness.

My student was quite excited about her visit to TSBVI. She enjoyed the classes; she stated she learned a lot from her teachers. Thank you very much for teaching her. Outstanding program.

He had a wonderful experience. He seems to have learned a great deal, and I think it was very good for him to be around other students with visual impairments his own age.

I have always been impressed with the TSBVI staff. I admire all of the knowledge that they have about assistive technology — JAWS, braille note, etc. Staff has always been courteous.

TSBVI Special Programs are extremely beneficial for my students. It's very unfortunate that some students do not take advantage of the opportunity to attend TSBVI Special Programs.



## ***OUTREACH PROGRAMS***

The Texas School for the Blind and Visually Impaired demonstrates its strong commitment to supporting all students with visual impairments through a comprehensive set of services available across the state. Families, school districts, regional education service centers (ESCs), and other agencies serving students with visual impairments and/or deafblindness, including those with additional disabilities, in their local communities may take advantage of training and support from the Outreach Programs including:

- (1) Local, regional, and statewide training opportunities for family members, paraeducators and professionals, provided in person and via multiple distance technology options;
- (2) Consulting with educational teams regarding individual student programs;
- (3) Creating original reference materials for dissemination by publications in paper and TSBVI websites;
- (4) Providing information related to adapted materials, current research, technology resources, and teaching, assessment, and transition of students with visual impairments;
- (5) Loaning assistive technology equipment for trial use or while a student's technology is being repaired;
- (6) Facilitating recruitment of new VI professionals and supporting teacher preparation programs;
- (7) Implementing a Federally funded deafblind technical assistance grant and the statewide Deafblind Child Count;
- (8) Conducting a mentorship program for new VI professionals;
- (9) Coordinating with the Education Service Center VI network to ensure accurate registration of students with visual impairments and distribution of adapted materials available through a Federal Quota account from the American Printing House for the Blind.

### **ACHIEVEMENTS IN THE 2012-2013 FISCAL YEAR**

- Over 88% of Outreach customers rated the improvement of their knowledge and skills as very satisfactory or outstanding as a result of services received from the Outreach program.
- TSBVI Outreach Programs effectively support and complement the personnel available at regional ESCs. Students with visual impairments and deafblindness represent extremely low incidence populations with diverse and unique needs. Districts typically are first assisted by their regional ESC VI consultant or Deafblind Specialist. Those professionals in turn often refer to the TSBVI Outreach Programs. Outreach training and local support is provided in coordination with the ESC for optimal regional follow up.
- In 2012-2013 the Outreach staff made 175 local visits for school consultation to districts and adult group home settings across Texas. Staff provided this intensive consultation support, often with multiple visits to a program, for over 86 individual students in 54 separate districts plus one home school setting. These visits have documented success: 93.75% of respondents reported a positive change for the student, staff or family as a result of school consultation visits by Outreach staff.

- Requests for workshops and training were strong: TSBVI Outreach presented or facilitated 225 conferences and/or workshop sessions at local districts, at regional service centers, and at statewide and national venues, including via distance technologies, for over 8000 participants. Increasing use of distance training tools supports access to quality training for people who might otherwise not be able to attend, and wider dissemination of training materials.
- This past year TSBVI continued its extensive use of distance technologies, providing 21 videoconference and web-meeting presentations. In addition to using the TETN statewide system the videoconference and web-based broadcasts can also directly link with personal computers and mobile devices. The Outreach Programs piloted new uses of web based training for supporting individual districts and study groups of professionals in their local communities connecting for scheduled topical discussions. This technology allows participants to access expert assistance without the costs of time and travel.
- In its second year, the TSBVI Distance Learning website, <http://distance.tsbvi.edu/>, linked to the main TSBVI webpage, was greatly expanded and revised. It provides an organized venue for accessing anytime, anywhere training on VI and DB issues. Videos, courses, tutorials and more are added to this site regularly.



- Distance instruction is valuable for introducing new concepts and building awareness, but less effective at fostering intensive skill development. Also, evaluation data clearly indicates higher levels of satisfaction with in-person workshops where questions can be answered immediately and more in depth training can occur. The Outreach staff continued to present in person training at the local, regional and statewide levels. In the 2012-2013 year, Outreach presented on tactile symbols, interactions and routines for students with multiple disabilities and deafblindness, the intervener team model, liability issues for orientation and mobility specialists, technology to support hearing, the role of a teacher for students with deafblindness, a new website on literacy for students with visual impairments, special education law for family members, accessible science equipment, braille production, math braille symbols and rules, specialized technology for science and mathematics, serving students in the preschool age group, presentations, at job fairs for prospective VI professionals, presentations at family weekends around the state and the Quality Programs for Students with Visual Impairment series for local districts. TSBVI Outreach also co-sponsored a 2 day Active Learning conference in Houston in collaboration with the statewide Low Incidence Disabilities ESC group.

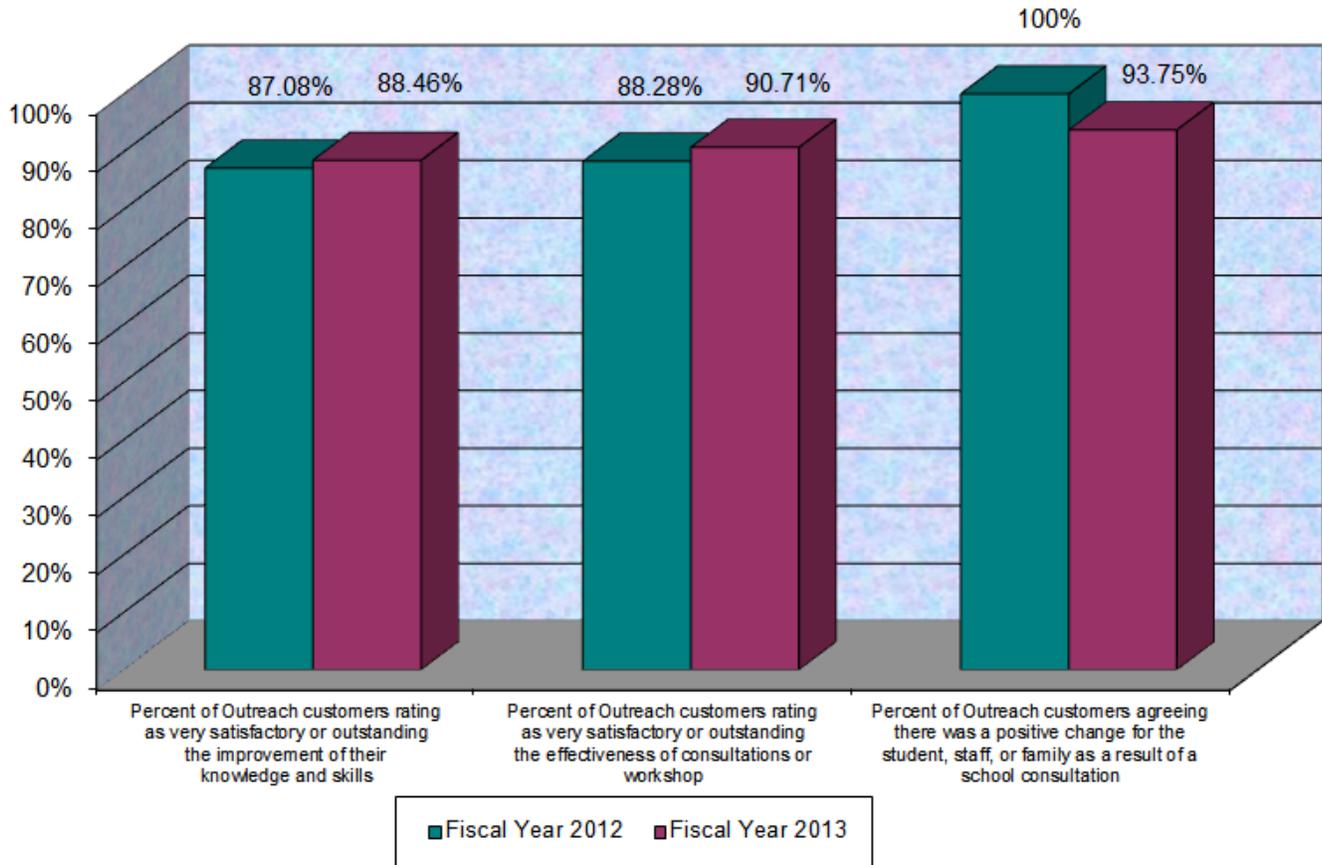
- TSBVI is an active partner in professional development of new teachers of students with visual impairments and certified orientation and mobility specialists. TSBVI manages a comprehensive mentor program, with training and 3 Mentor Centers annually held at the TSBVI campus, resources to support recruitment and retention of staff, and ongoing collaboration with university training programs.
- TSBVI expertise is well regarded: Staff were requested to present not only in Texas but across the nation and internationally this past year, with sessions presented via webconferencing or in person at state and national conferences with participants in Virginia, Nevada, North Carolina, Colorado, California, Alabama, Mississippi, Maryland and Indiana.
- Families have a long term impact on the outcome of their children with disabilities' educational programs. In collaboration with the Division of Blind Services, TSBVI Outreach Programs were key partners in a 3 day family workshop held in San Antonio that included participation in workshop training and a day of activities at Morgan's Wonderland, an accessible family park.
- TSBVI extended family leadership training for families of children with deafblindness and/or visual impairments in the central Texas area with added resources and training opportunities.
- The Deafblind Project collaborated with ESC 4 and two RDSPD programs in the Houston area in a second year piloting a project to develop and recognize specialized teachers of students who are deafblind. Data collected clearly demonstrate positive outcomes for teachers and students when designated staff receive specific training on interventions for students with dual sensory impairments.
- The National Consortium in Deaf-Blindness developed new modules for online training for paraeducators in the role of intervener for students with deafblindness. The Texas Deafblind Project staff actively participated in key roles in developing this national resource.
- The TSBVI website continues to provide valuable information and support to people across the globe. The most recent survey results of TSBVI customers indicates that 99% of them rated TSBVI's website as satisfactory, very satisfactory, or outstanding. The site is one of the primary locations for VI information in Spanish, as the listing of countries accessing [www.tsbvi.edu](http://www.tsbvi.edu) documents shows.



## PERFORMANCE OBJECTIVES FOR 2012-2013 FISCAL YEAR

The following graphs display the achievement of Outreach Programs in meeting objectives set out in the School's Agency Strategic Plan and in the School Improvement Plan.

### OUTREACH PROGRAM MEASURES FOR 2012-2013



### OUTREACH PROGRAM SURVEY RESULTS FROM PARENTS AND LOCAL SCHOOL DISTRICTS

#### Outreach Workshops

The conference was very good . Enjoyed everything about it. Very informative. I learned things that would be very helpful Thank you very much.

This was a great conference overall. I wish I would have known about this before now as I would have been implementing these strategies with the young children I previously worked with. I am moving up to the High School level now and would like to hear and understand how these can be implemented for this new age group as well.

It was eye opening! I attended a workshop on Active Learning many years ago but it was great to see the program now. So much information!

It was novel and informative to meet the needs of our children.

The symposium was well organized, great location with staff on hand to answer questions. The best part - having other OMs to discuss their techniques and sign language strategies.

The symposium was very well organized. The general session presenters were phenomenal. I learned so much. Thank you.

As always, the symposium was spectacular!

I loved the speakers. They sparked interest and information in such a short amount of time.

WOW! It was obvious that the planning committee worked diligently to put together top speakers, meaningful topics, and meaningful information. The staff from TSBVI is remarkable. How do you put together a meaningful presentation for such a large cross section living with, serving, and teaching persons with deafblindness? They came up with it!

The presenters were very good. I appreciated the practical techniques that were presented, along with the honesty of the challenges that are present with deaf/blindness. The location was good and TSBVI staff were very helpful.

Well done...as usual...and always so many good ideas to use.

The symposium was great as far as explaining the why behind things. The videos that were shown and created were fabulous.

Super job. This conference is a HUGE undertaking and it was AMAZING.

I thought the symposium was very well organized. The speakers were well qualified and brought with their experience value information to be shared. The knowledge I learned at the Symposium will be successfully used in our classroom.

The presenters were very knowledgeable and seemed to be in tune with what persons in the field actually experience.

I am so glad that programs like the exit program are out there. It is great to know that our students will have the opportunity to learn those things that they need to know to become successful adults. Thank you for all that you do.

So much info thanks for all the resources that you have given me.

This was one of the most useful presentations we have had. My teachers that attended were very complementary and expressed their appreciation for the information presented.

This topic was VERY good and timely with what I happened to need at this time! Thanks!

The workshop was great. It will be very helpful when my high school student is in Geometry. Thank you so much for presenting.



Exceptional presentation - such positive and even joyful energy on a topic that is not easy for everyone. Very accessible and so respectful of the range of abilities in the room! Very present and attentive to questions, relevant and timely responses. Great presenters/trainers are actually rather rare, I think. This event - the presentation and the presenter - was a delight!

This was one of the best presentations I have been to in a long time. I am not a math person but I understood it all. The presenter was excellent and very knowledgeable.

Well presented. I was engaged and learning the entire time. Thank you!

I thought the level of personal emotion interjected into the presentations was beautifully balanced with the level of professionalism. It felt both warm and inviting and also informative and straightforward. I loved how open it all was.

Super speakers and information. Thanks for a great conference.

Presenters did a terrific job of relaying their experiences, wisdom, and tools with attendees. Thank you!!!

It is said if you take away one or two things from a conference it was good. I learned something from all the sessions and a lot from two. I thought this was one of the best conferences I have been to.

This was the best conference I have been to in a long time. The speakers were informative and engaging. I was not bored once.

I enjoyed and learned a great deal at all the sessions I attended. I only wish that there had been more time (as usual). Thanks to all presenters!!!

## School Consultations

The suggestions made by the Outreach team were very relevant for members of the entire team serving the child. The time spent demonstrating, explaining, listening, and brainstorming with us was invaluable guidance and support. The professional focus and personal sensitivity to help us meet an array of need was a great learning experience!

This was some OUSTANDING information!! Thanks.

Excellent advice from two fantastic educators.

Loved the feedback by experts in the field. Also appreciated link to current research and suggestions for materials and strategies. Thank you all for your support and enthusiasm!

Great information for those with minimal experience working with children who are deafblind.

The consultation helped me collaborate as a team and it improved my ability to work with students that are deafblind.

The ECI staff and family really benefitted from meeting the Outreach consultant and all of her information. She was very knowledgeable about this child's etiology and had very on target comments and suggestions. I feel more confident now with my services because of her advice to me. I don't have her background with toddlers or with this etiology so it was a big help.

Thank you for making it so easy to get the help the family, ECI and I needed. The conference that the family attended last weekend was the first time they had met other families with a visually impaired child so you can just imagine what that meant to them. It was nice seeing Outreach from the other side. It works!

This service is priceless. Having an expert provide direction to the team AND the family is superb.

I love having the consultant come and value her input very much. She comes with a wealth of knowledge and ideas that are very helpful.

Being a private school student my son receives very limited TVI services from our district. We are so thankful TSBVI has an outreach program that was able to help us immediately and accurately. We can now move forward with a plan from our 6 year long struggle.

The Outreach consultant was a delight to work with and had such a natural connection with my math-minded student. I feel the information that she shared increased the student and family's confidence in her ability to master the demands of an honors math program.



# OTHER SERVICES TO PARENTS AND PROFESSIONALS

## CURRICULUM DEVELOPMENT

The Curriculum Department at Texas School for the Blind and Visually Impaired develops curriculum written by teachers and other certified professionals serving blind and visually impaired students in all curricular approaches. Curriculum and resource guides are peer-reviewed, published and sold world-wide to assist the TVI, the classroom teacher, orientation and mobility specialist and family in the delivery of instruction in the areas of the Core Curriculum and Expanded Core Curriculum (ECC). ECC programming includes independent living, career education, technology, Braille instruction, orientation and mobility, and low vision. Each guide contains assessment and instructional methodology.



## ACHIEVEMENTS IN 2012-2013

- A total of 4,672 publications were sold in fiscal year 2013. This includes print and Braille (4,506), videos (38) and CDs (128).
- Our newest publication, the 3<sup>rd</sup> Edition of *TAPS Orientation and Mobility Curriculum* was at the top of our best-seller list. We sold 766 of the curriculum set and 507 of the evaluation booklet, making a total of 1273.
- *Calendars for Students with Multiple Impairments* came in second at 797 copies sold.
- Almost 250 copies of *Making Evaluation Meaningful*, 172 copies of the *Learning Media Assessment*, and 149 copies of the EVALS publications were sold during the school year.
- A curriculum for the EXIT\*\* program is in development. Six of the ten modules have been completed.
- The *Career Education Handbook* is being updated.
- The curriculum department provides training, in Texas as well as out of state, on the use our publications.
- Curriculum for Practical Academics\* Language Arts, Math, Science and Social Studies is being developed to prepare students for the STAAR exams. AGS curriculum products from Pearson are being used as the basis for some of these courses.
- The Curriculum Coordinator continues to evaluate and refine the performance indicator evaluation tools that guide IEP development and instruction for TSBVI students.
- The Curriculum department provides support to classroom teachers in daily instruction, including the development of standards-based/measurable IEPs and appropriate curriculum.
- The Curriculum Coordinator continues to submit a report to TEA detailing the yearly progress made by our students as determined by our Performance Indicator Evaluations. As in the past few years, TSBVI exceeded the expectations set by Texas Education Agency.

\* *Practical Academics: students who are functioning several years below their chronological age*

\*\* *EXIT: students who have received credits for graduation and are working on skills needed for adult life*

## ***TSBVI's WEB SITE*** [www.tsbvi.edu](http://www.tsbvi.edu)



The School hosts a web site that is recognized throughout the world for content concerning visual impairment and the education of blind and visually impaired students. The entire website is accessible to blind and visually impaired persons.

In 2012-2013 there were over 1.85 million visitors, with over 7.3 million page views, to the web site from more than 200 countries including Mexico, Spain, the United Kingdom, Canada, Columbia, Argentina, China, Venezuela, India, and Australia.

The most visited pages were on central auditory processing disorders, sensory integrative dysfunction in young children, Preschool Children with Visual Impairments, The Sense of Smell: A Powerful Sense, teaching math to visually impaired students, downloadable braille materials, and teaching strategies.

The largest number of file downloads included the Outreach Services Catalog, the Math Continuum, Guidelines for Teaching Students with Visual Impairments, and See/Hear newsletter in English and Spanish.

## ***BOND PROJECTS AND CONSTRUCTION DURING 2012-2013***

The beginning of a master plan was started in 2005-2006 and was expanded to replace most of the buildings that were constructed in 1917. That master plan began to come to fruition as the legislature approved additional capital funding of \$68,287,208 to finance the master plan. That brought the total funding over the past two sessions to over \$104 million for new construction, remodeling and deferred maintenance for the campus.

In the spring of 2008 construction was completed on a residential facility in the Pecan Grove, the Elementary Residential Complex and a new four-unit independent living (learning lab) facility. They were designed to facilitate learning for our students, provide a homelike environment, maintain a high level of security and provide the school and State with buildings that can be maintained for many years.

In 2009, work began on an additional seven residential facilities. Three of them were completed in 2009 for the fall semester and four were completed in early 2010. The units have been modified to include a number of new features including larger bedrooms, a new student study room and a dorm manager's office. Operations-wise, the new facilities include more hard-floor surfaces than in the original, a simplified roof design and insta-heat hot water heaters.

The main instructional building, cafeteria, student activity center were completed in August 2010 and school started in these new buildings. The fine arts and pool were completed in the spring of 2011.

In August of 2009, the Texas Facilities Commission (TFC) sought proposals for the career education, outreach, business/IT facilities and campus infrastructure utilities. In October, the TFC commissioners approved the recommended general contractor. The new business/IT building was completed in July 2010 and the Outreach/Conference Center was completed in October. The career education building was completed in June of 2012.

A contract for a new elementary school, gymnasium, track, greenhouse, warehouse/operations building, road, parking lots and utilities was signed in August 2010. The new warehouse/operation building was completed in October of 2011. The elementary school was completed in June of 2012. The gymnasium, greenhouse, horticulture/animal husbandry class room and track were completed in late 2012 or early 2013.

The school has had multiple projects from multiple phases of the bond program occurring simultaneously and all major projects have been completed.

Now that we have finished the major construction of building and infrastructure we now have the task of completing all those items which are needed to complete the project such as fencing, gates, coordinating life safety equipment, video surveillance equipment, landscaping, public address systems, networking, cabling, signage and other projects. The commissioning process really never ends as we find things that can be improved upon as we put into place the teaching of our students and their needs.



727.520.8181  
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TSBVI

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## *Volunteer Program 2012-2013*

TSBVI has an active volunteer program with participation by many members of the Austin community both individually and in groups. TSBVI works with community groups who want to perform a community service and chooses to do so at Texas School for the Blind and Visually Impaired. During the 2012-13 school year, we experienced several wonderful group projects that benefited the students.

- The Junior League of Austin recorded and scanned several hundred books for the library.
- Members of Delta Gamma Fraternity at University of Texas made tactile symbols, hosted a Thanksgiving dinner and a Valentine's party for the students at their sorority house, helped out at Parent Weekend, and helped the students dress for the prom. Delta Gamma members at the University of North Texas made tactile Valentine's Day cards for the students and several Delta Gamma chapters collected and sent "box tops for education."



- Gardeners from Austin Community Gardens work with TSBVI students in the garden.
- Volunteers pitched in and helped serve lunch to families and provided childcare at the 2012 Parent Weekend event.
- Future physical education teachers volunteered in the PE department, gaining valuable experience in working with visually impaired and mobility impaired students.
- Many bicycle riders from the community joined the students each Monday evening in early fall and late spring on the "Lend Your Legs" bicycle ride.'
- Employees of Rulesware, a Business Process Management company, spent a day cleaning TSBVI busses.
- UT student and regular volunteer Kristan Schiele organized a Science Fun Day Camp at the school with Women in Natural Sciences Organization and teacher Laura Hospital.
- Kupira Rattletree Marimba performed a concert of traditional African music



- TSBVI hosted a travelling museum from the American Printing House for the Blind, “Child in a Strange Country: Helen Keller and the History of Education for People Who Are Visually Impaired” with several volunteer docents conduction tours and answering questions.
- The AT&T Pioneers provided a beeping Easter Egg Hunt for students, sponsored by the Student Council.

The individual volunteer program involves members of the community who choose to spend some time out of their personal lives to provide a service to students and staff at TSBVI. University of Texas students, people who live in the area around the school, and others who just have a desire to serve are among those who volunteer here each semester. Volunteers are placed as tutors or staff helpers in specific school or after school classes for at least an hour a week. Several volunteers gave music lessons – piano, trumpet, drums and violin – assisted in PE classes in the gym and the pool, prepared materials for teachers, assisted cheerleading and pep squad practice, and accompanied class off campus. A yoga instructor provided classes for students and sculptors worked with students in the art room. Many volunteers worked each afternoon as guide runners for the students who were earnestly training for the upcoming SCASB track meet. In addition, over 20 students from Dr. Ward’s University of Mary-Hardin Baylor class helped out at the SCASB Track Meet in April.

Students and staff benefit from the program by getting help, often one-on-one, from a member of the Austin community. Volunteers benefit from getting to know our students, learning from and observing our staff and work, and providing an appreciated service to the School. Evaluations at the end of each semester often indicate how much the volunteers enjoyed working at TSBVI and how much they learned from the experience.

During the 2012-13 school year 47 volunteers during the fall semester and 72 during the spring semester logged in over 4,165 hours working at TSBVI. Independent Sector, a leadership forum for non-profits, estimates the dollar value of volunteer time in 2012 as \$22.14 per hour; therefore TSBVI benefited from over \$92,213 worth of community volunteer time!



## ***TSBVI Major Donors 2012-2013***

**\$25,000**

Professional Contract Services, Inc.

**\$5,000 to \$13,000**

Junior League of Austin

Delta Gamma Fraternity, University of Texas

American Council of the Blind of Texas, Inc.

**\$1,000 to \$5,000**

Point Venture Lions Club

Delta Gamma Fraternity, Texas State University

Jackie & Jimmy Fitzgerald

Austin Downtown Lions Club

**\$500 to \$1,000**

Tommy Cowan

All Blind Children of Texas

Betty Schultz (Brenda Boland Memorial Scholarship Fund)

Austin Council of the Blind

Debbie Louder

**\$100 to \$500**

M. Ramanathan

Gerald R. Uek II

Martha Boethen

Twinkle Marilee Morgan

David Brown (TX Chargers, Inc.)

Ellen Magenheimer

## ***CONCLUSION***

The Texas School for the Blind and Visually Impaired is widely referenced wherever groups of blindness professionals are gathered, and stays that way through a process of continuous improvement and innovation in all of its programs. Moving forward, TSBVI is positioning itself to reach wider audiences through new media approaches, and to facilitate greater growth among the students, families and educational organizations we serve. It has been the consistent and informed support given to our school by the Texas Legislature that has been the largest single factor in our success, because it has allowed us to recruit and retain people who have a passion for TSBVI's mission and who have expertise that is second to none.





