

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

**For School Year**

**2015-2016**



**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**



Michael Hanley  
Leander



Caroline Daley  
Kingwood



Michael Garrett  
Missouri City



Lee Sonnenberg  
Lubbock



Mary K. Alexander  
Valley View



Bobby Druessedow, Jr.  
Glen Rose



Anne Corn  
Austin



Tobie Wortham  
Royce City



Joseph Muniz  
President  
Harlingen

### **TSBVI Administrative Staff**

William Daugherty	Superintendent
Miles Fain	Principal of Comprehensive Programs
Sarah Merritt	Principal of Short-Term Programs
Cyral Miller	Director of Outreach Programs
Kate Oehlers	Director of Human Resources
Susan Hauser	Director of Center for School Resources
Pamela Darden	Administrator for Business, Operations, and Technology

***A Message from the Superintendent***  
***2015-2016***



Last year was number 99 for the 45<sup>th</sup> Street campus of the Texas School for the Blind and Visually Impaired (TSBVI), and coming up on our 100<sup>th</sup> has us thinking a lot about the School's past as well as its future. Established in a different Austin location in 1856, TSBVI has had several campuses over the ensuing years, and none more beautiful than the recently rebuilt school we see today. But people come from all over the world to visit TSBVI not for the appearance of its buildings and grounds, but for its reputation as major contributor to the knowledge base of how to appropriately educate students who are blind, visually impaired, deafblind, or those with additional disabilities. This reputation has been a long time in the making, and thanks in large part to the consistent funding and oversight support shown by the Texas Legislature, 2015-2016 was one that added to TSBVI's legacy of innovation and excellence of service to students and all of its many stakeholders.

The mission of TSBVI is not only to serve those students enrolled in Comprehensive Programs (K-12) on our Austin campus, but to support, stimulate and collaborate with systems statewide through TSBVI's Short-Term Programs and Statewide Outreach. These systems include school districts, Education Service Centers, state service providers, universities, parents and consumer organizations. TSBVI considers all of these to be our partners in a shared mission, and we devote approximately one third of our resources to activities that are designed to help all students reach their potential, regardless of where they attend school in Texas.

2015-2016 saw great strides in individual student learning at TSBVI. The School's Service Delivery Model is to admit those students who are not learning at their full potential; to surround each student with visual impairment professionals who adapt their teaching to individual learner needs; and to transition students back to their communities as soon as they are ready to better succeed in their home schools. Upon return home, most of these students and their schools will continue to rely upon TSBVI for special-subject learning through Short Term Programs, and for programming technical assistance by Statewide Outreach. A growing number of students come to TSBVI's EXIT Program after they have completed the majority of their academic learning, and are now ready to focus on the knowledge and skills required for independent community living and careers. EXIT has shown the largest growth of any Comprehensive Program area.

The diversity of TSBVI's programs and supports has been key to its reputation as a valued partner within our state, as well as our international reputation as a resource for educational best practice. This past year saw improvements and innovation on all fronts. Short Term Programs developed its capacity to offer access to its programs on line. The TSBVI Media Team made great strides in the development of instructional and informational videos and a robust system to archive them for use by the public. The TSBVI Curriculum Department continued to publish new

books on important topics that will be on the desks of most Teachers of the Visually Impaired and Certified Orientation and Mobility Specialists statewide, nationally and even internationally. The TSBVI website [www.tsbvi.edu](http://www.tsbvi.edu) is under constant updating, and remains one of the most accessed resources of its type in the world.

It is the quantity, quality and diversity of these programs, supports and products that gives TSBVI its reputation for excellence, and sets a high bar for the School to strive for in its 100<sup>th</sup> year on 45<sup>th</sup> Street. It is the talented and dedicated TSBVI staff who will make sure we clear that bar by a good margin, and it is the wonderful students, parents and organizations the School serves that provide the sense of mission that motivates TSBVI to do good work, every day.

*William Daugherty*



# *TSBVI - Who We Are*

## **A HISTORY OF THE SCHOOL**

The School was established by the Texas Legislature as the Blind Asylum 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 re-construction 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. Other campus improvements continued from that time through the 2014-15 school year including new perimeter fencing and gates, completion of a covered walkway, construction of an outdoor pavilion, campus signage, improvements to the campuswide public address system, and installation of conference video systems.

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 productive and fulfilling 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 2015-2016 the staff of TSBVI was comprised of approximately 360 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, 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 6 times per year.

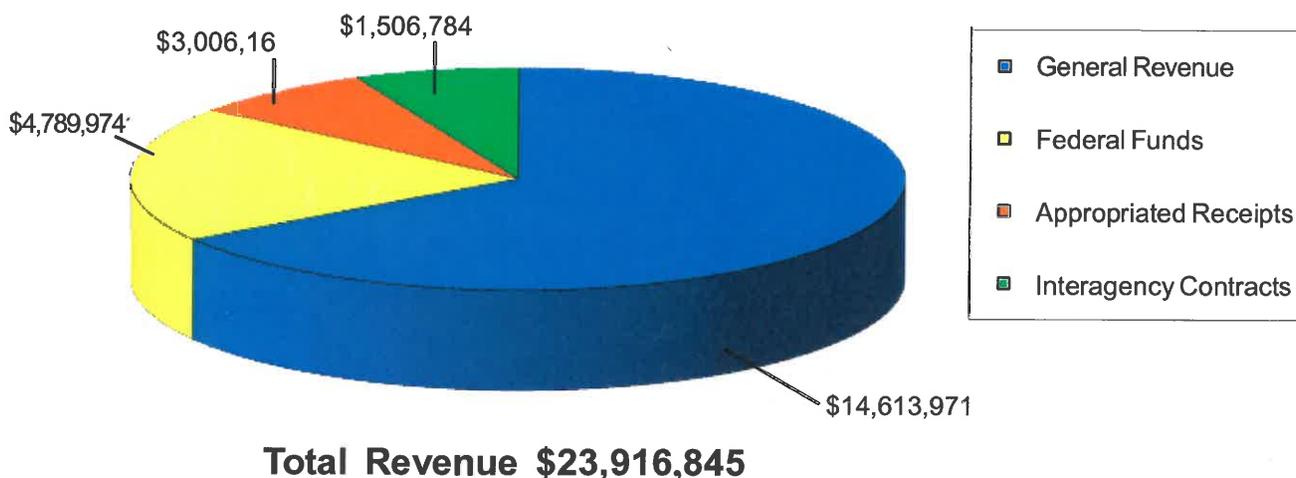
### ***Our Partnerships***

- 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

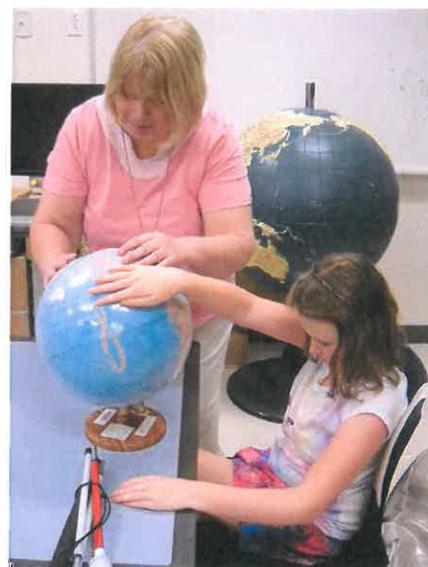
The School is primarily funded through appropriations granted by the State Legislature. Other sources of funding include federal funds, appropriated receipts, interagency contracts, and donations.

### SOURCES OF REVENUE 2015-2016



## 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.

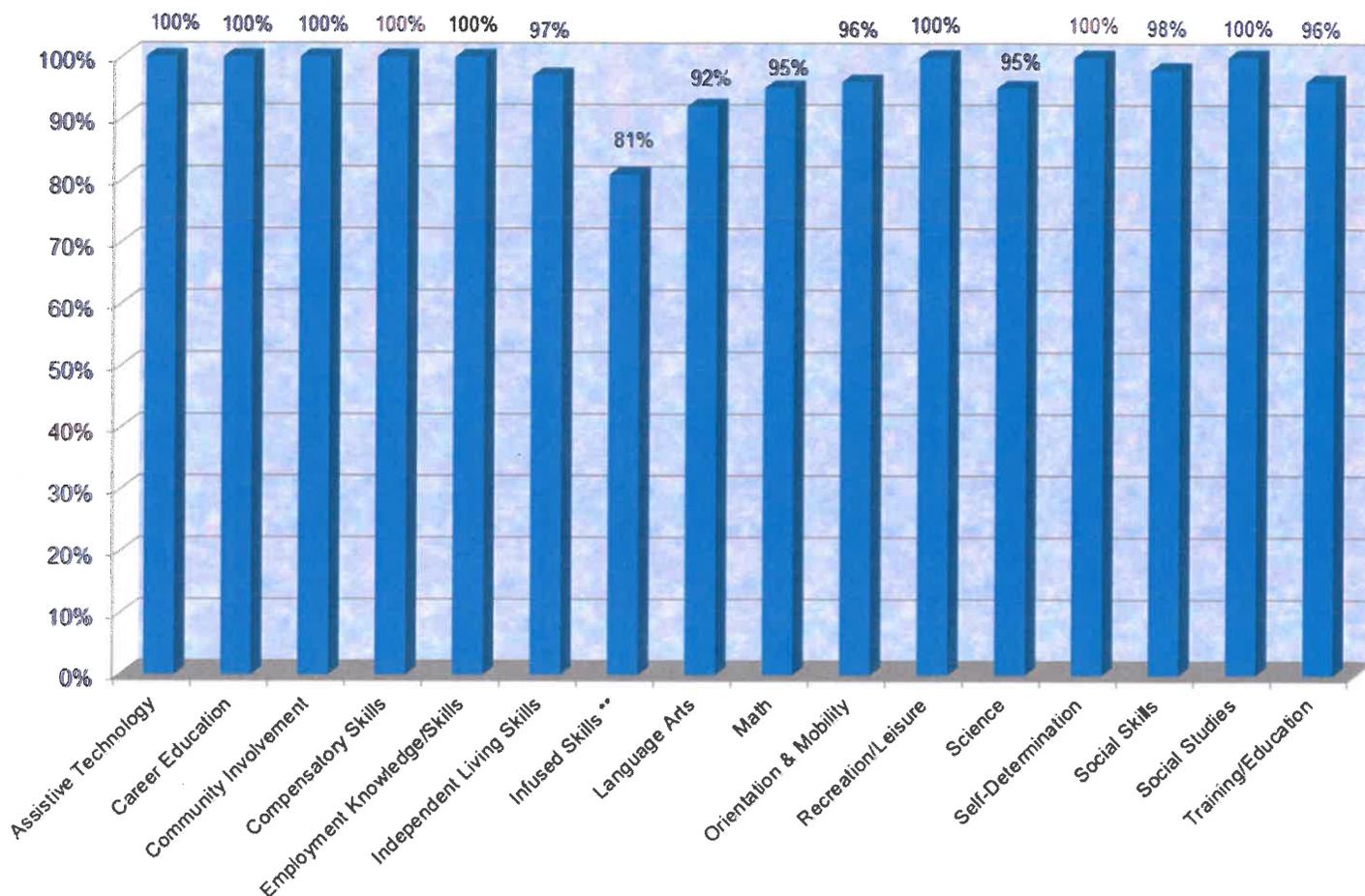


**Post Secondary Program:** This program, offered in partnership with the Texas Department of Assistive and Rehabilitative Services – Division of Blind Services, provides training for students who are legally blind and have a regular State Board of Education high school diploma or GED. Students seeking 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 2015-2016 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. 86.47% of Comprehensive Program students achieved moderate to substantial progress on every area of the core and expanded core curriculum in which they received programming. The percentages of students assessed making moderate to substantial progress by subject area were:

## ACHIEVEMENTS IN THE 2015-2016 SCHOOL YEAR

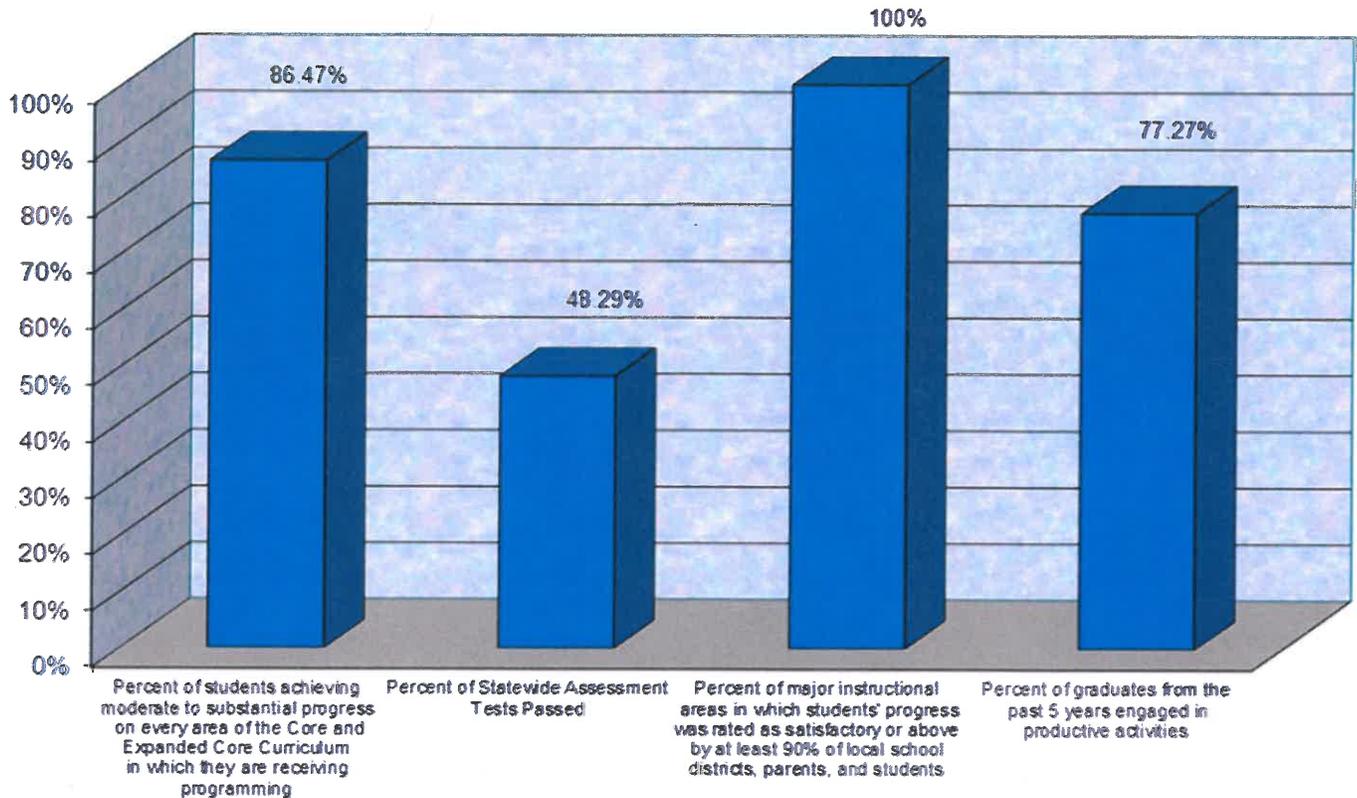


\*\* Infused Skills (for multiply impaired students) – Social Communicative Interactions, Emotional Development, Senses and Motor Skills, Basic Concepts, Representation/Cognition(including basic math and language arts skills)

- 48% of statewide assessment tests taken met or exceeded the state passing standards.
- 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.

- 77% of students surveyed who graduated from TSBVI during 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 2015-2016



### OTHER ACHIEVEMENTS

#### Systematic/Sequential Approach to Career Education

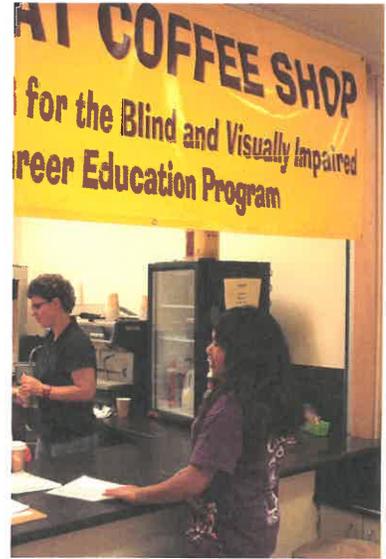
During the 2015-2016 school year, the Career Education Department continued to implement and improve the five-step approach to Career Education. This programming model consists of the following five steps:

- Step 1: General Employability
- Step 2: Methodology for Academic and Personal Success (MAPS) I
- Step 3: Work Exploration
- Step 4: MAPS II
- Step 5: Work Training



Improvements that were made during the 2015-2016 school year include:

- During the summer of 2015, two teachers with experience teaching the General Employability course created a user-friendly scope and sequence tool that serves as a guide to General Employability teachers. As part of this summer project, many of the resources used for teaching this class were scanned electronically so that teachers are able to more easily and quickly create documents that their students are able access.
- Beginning in the fall of 2015, the General Employability course was co-taught by teacher/ job coach pairs. General Employability teachers were responsible for addressing the TEKS of this course (which largely consist of “soft skills” that are essential in the workplace) while Job Coaches addressed the “hard skills” of the various on-campus worksites. By structuring the course in this way, students were able to receive instruction in foundational work concepts while getting exposure to a variety of work experiences. While in this class, students rotated through the following on campus work sites (spending six weeks in each):
  1. Gardening
  2. Housekeeping
  3. Animal Care
  4. Coffee Shop
  5. Assembly & Manufacturing
  6. Culinary Arts
- During Steps 1 and 2 (General Employability and MAPS I), students start to gain a better understanding and awareness of their interests and aptitudes related to work. In Step 3 (Work Exploration), students are given the opportunity to delve deeper into an on campus work experience.



New for the 2015-2016 school year: students in Work Exploration choose (with input from their instructional team) two of the on campus work experiences listed above in which to work, each for a full semester.



17 students participated in off-campus work training at the following sites:

- Top Drawer Thrift Store
- Appliance Associates
- HHSC (DADS) Winters Building
- Goodwill
- Little Tesoros Physical Therapy Services
- Pease Elementary School
- Dragon’s Lair Comics and Fantasy
- Fresh Plus Grocery Store
- Wheatsville Food Co-op

## **Additional Student Work Opportunities**

### Links Program

2015-2016 was the third year of our Links Program. This program is a collaborative effort between TSBVI and the Texas Workforce Commission (TWC, formerly DARS). This was our third year to partner with the Midtown Austin location of Holiday Inn for this program. Due to increasing student interest and employment opportunities in the field of "Direct Care" we established a second partnership with a retirement community called Parsons House Independent and Assisted Living Community.

Three students from the EXIT Program earned the right (through a competitive application and interview process) to have a semester-long paid work experience, one student at Holiday Inn and two at Parsons House. The students were paid minimum wage by TWC and received support from a Job Coach that was contracted by TWC.

The goal of the Links Program is to provide an in depth work experience for a specific employer with the hope of linking participants with employment opportunities for that employer (or similar employers) in their home community.

### Farmer's Market

The Farmer's Market project provides students (many of whom have multiple disabilities and/or deafblindness) with opportunities to create products for sale through activity based learning and structured work routines. Items include homemade pickles, sweets, potted succulents, bath salts, screen printed bags and much more. Students explore different areas of interest, identify likes and dislikes, practice social skills through adult and peer interactions, and work on independent living skills such as money/time management as well as shopping for any items that need to be restocked.

The Farmer's Market is held on campus one time per month. During the event, the students who created the goods help to host the event by greeting customers, marketing products, receiving payments, monitoring trash, handing out drinks, bagging items, and more. By exploring these types of work-related routines, students gain experiences that will lead to more meaningful activities in their adult lives.

### Career Education Banquet

On April 21, 2016 the Career Education Department held a banquet for Austin employers with whom we partner to provide off-campus work training experiences. Many students helped to host the event. Some of the businesses represented included Holiday Inn Midtown, TX Coffee Traders, Appliance Associates, Goodwill, Top Drawer, D.A.D.S, Pease Elementary School, Parsons House, Grace Lutheran Child Development Center, Dragon's Lair Comics and Fantasy, and Zinger Hardware.





Potential community partners were also invited to the event to explore the possibility of forming work opportunities for our students. Students, staff and representatives from community businesses shared positive stories of these community job placements while enjoying a catered meal, followed by desserts prepared by students from the TSBVI Culinary Arts program. Current partners were presented with a plaque and a gift bag filled with items representing each of the work

rotation areas from the school, assembled by staff and students. This event was planned over the course of many months. Students were included in almost every step of the preparation process.



### Residential Work Training Program

This program began during the 2015-2016 school year. It provides an opportunity for students to work on campus in an area where there is need during residential hours and where the student possesses skills unique to the job. Students earn an hourly stipend for their work and receive support from their Residential Instructors when needed. A Lead Residential Instructor along with the Career Education Department provides oversight. It is also worth noting that the work being completed is “above and beyond” what is typically expected of a student’s programming and that job duties cannot interfere with academic assignments and routine chores.

## SPECIAL ACTIVITIES IN 2015-2016

- Students participated in statewide White Cane Day activities in downtown Austin.
- The 2015-2016 Student Council provided an array of fun activities for the student body as well as service projects for the school and community. They helped with the annual Red Ribbon Week drug-free celebration by providing and serving snacks. The Student Council also took part in the annual Parent Weekend by sponsoring a fun hula-hoop and jump-rope activity. To celebrate the adoption of the Unified English Braille code (UEB), the Student Council planned and presented a very entertaining program to the student body. As in previous years, the Student Council partnered with AT&T



Volunteers to bring an Easter egg hunt (with beeping Easter eggs) to TSBVI. They also hosted school spirit week and the seventh annual student talent show, featuring 19 performers. Service is a major focus for our Student Council, and the students organized such activities as packing sack lunches for homeless persons and making care packages for men and women serving in the armed forces overseas. The Council concluded the year by sponsoring an ice cream social to celebrate the many accomplishments of our TSBVI students.

- A parent weekend conference was held with 111 students' families in attendance.
- The school hosted the Lone Star Classic Goalball Tournament on October 2-3. Ten youth advanced teams competed in the tournament. The TSBVI girls' teams took home 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> place awards as well as the tournament's Sportsmanship Award. The boys' teams placed 3<sup>rd</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup>.
- On October 16-17, in Irving, Texas 70 TSBVI students participated in the 17<sup>th</sup> Annual Sports Extravaganza for students who are blind and visually impaired. The Sports Extravaganza provides opportunities for students with visual impairments to participate in a variety of activities that encourage a more active lifestyle and lead to participation in lifelong leisure, recreation, and competitive sports activities. TSBVI students competed in Goalball, track and field, archery, geocaching and beeper ball.



TSBVI brought home more than 250 medals and ribbons. In the Goalball tournament, the TSBVI Girls' teams took first place, and the Boys' team took second Place.

- On October 28, swim team members were invited to compete in the EAAB Swim Meet held at Goucher College in Towson, Maryland. Four students competed and all four took home medals.



- The TSBVI Tennis Team competed in the 2nd Annual International Friendship Tournament in Mission, Texas in October. The team took home two 1st place medals, one 2nd place medal, and three 3rd place medals.

- Student goalball athletes participated in the 2015 USABA National High School Goalball Championship at the Florida School for the Deaf and Blind in St. Augustine, Florida, in November. The girls' team won the bronze medal. The boys' team won silver. Two students were named as high school all-American athletes.

- In November, TSBVI held a Special Olympics United Recreations and Motor Activities Training Program Day. Over 46 athletes competed in various game skill activities. One student was honored as the Torch Bearer in the opening ceremony. It was a great day enjoyed by all who participated and volunteered for the event.

- Six students, ages 12-17, participated in the annual Regional Braille Challenge competition at the Region XIII Education Service Center on February 27. These motivated students competed in Speed & Accuracy, Proofreading, Reading Comprehension and Charts & Graphs at this national competition sponsored by the Braille Institute of America. A TSBVI student took third place in the Junior Varsity Division. Most importantly, each participating student improved his or her braille literacy and love of reading.

- In February, four students from the TSBVI traveled to Crested Butte, Colorado, for ski lessons through the Adaptive Sports Center. The students enjoyed experiencing the snow, some for the first time ever.



- TSBVI held its first Golf Season in Spring 2016. The team practiced for four weeks and then went to play at an 18-hole golf course in Austin. The team learned all about technique for the game and how it is scored.

- In May 2016, the School held its fourth Triathlon Season. The Team practiced for four weeks and then held a triathlon here on campus.

- This school year students participated in Coding Club. Students with little to no computer programming experience began using a curriculum in which they use the Quorum language which was designed to be more accessible for beginner students, particularly for those with visual impairments. This group of students is working toward programming a Lego robot. An intermediate to advanced group who had already learned the basics of the Quorum language and/or have other experience with programming began using various programming languages dependent on what is useful for their current projects. Two students used Python to program; this language was chosen largely due to the relevance it

holds within industry standards. This group worked toward programming audio games, robots and other computer programs.

- Black Heritage and Fiesta Day activities were held at the School during the Spring semester.
- A senior banquet took place in the cafeteria as well as the junior/senior prom with a theme of “Hawaiian Paradise” at the Crowne Plaza Hotel.



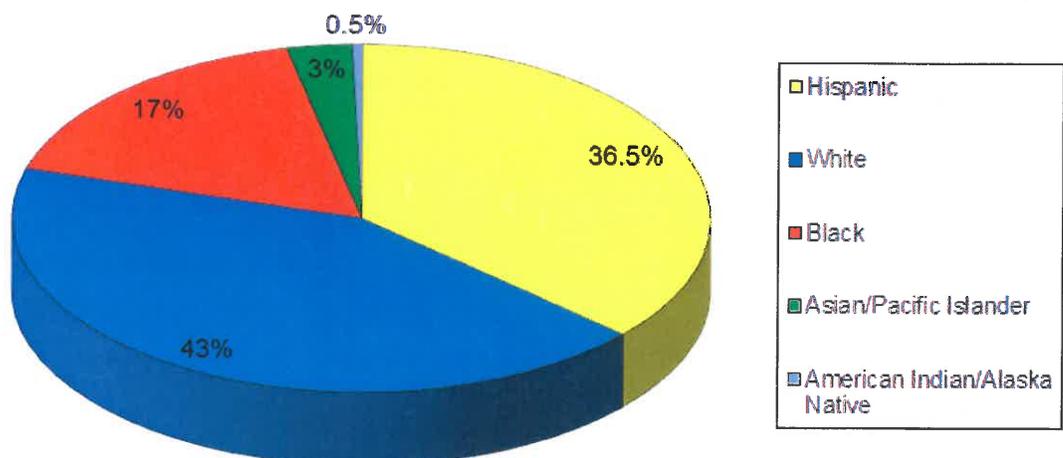
- Participation in an array of beneficial after-school activities for students included: Robotics Club, archery, rowing, stand up paddle boarding, Yearbook Club, yoga, dance, art, group games, tandem biking, horseback riding, violin lessons, jazz ensemble, Coding Club, bicycle maintenance, Music Mania, goalball, swimming, swimming lessons, music recording, scrapbooking, cooking & baking, international foods, Drama Club, Walking & Running Club, hiking, jewelry making, Pep Squad, cheerleading, wrestling, Gardening Club, Book Club, quiz night, Badger Dog Writing Club, poker night, Leo Club, basketball, weight training, judo, bowling, private music lessons, kayaking, canoeing, rock wall climbing, and 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.

## ENROLLMENT STATISTICS

In the 2015-2016 school year, 178 students representing 108 local school districts throughout Texas were enrolled in the Comprehensive Programs of TSBVI.

COMPREHENSIVE PROGRAMS	2011-2012	2012-2013	2013-2014	2014-2015	2015-2016
Elementary Program	31	32	27	21	20
Secondary Program	133	137	129	134	147
Post-Secondary Program	7	7	9	9	11
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>171</b>	<b>176</b>	<b>165</b>	<b>164</b>	<b>178</b>

## ETHNICITY OF STUDENTS ENROLLED IN 2015-2016 COMPREHENSIVE PROGRAMS



## COMPREHENSIVE PROGRAMS SURVEY RESPONSES FROM PARENTS, LOCAL SCHOOL DISTRICTS AND STUDENTS

My son has learned so much and he loves going to school and he talks about his friends. He had no friends at regularly school. I can see the change. His teacher's and dorm staff and friends have made a big impact in his change. The school has taught him things that I could not. I know my son has a future now and this is because of the school. Thank everyone - made a big difference in my son's life.

We have been very pleased with our daughter's progress during her first year in the EXIT Program. The faculty and staff have been such a pleasure getting to know and work with to accomplish her goals. It is obvious that everyone at TSBVI is dedicated to the student's success there and beyond the program. We are absolutely blessed that our daughter was accepted into this program and for the experience, life skills and friends she is gaining.



TSBVI is an amazing place that is helping my daughter become more independent. It provides an environment that can't be matched. All of our daughter's staff have been amazing in assisting her with the transition to a residential program.

We'd like to thank every single person who helped our son to get to this point that he gained a good amount of independence in doing brain tasks and completing brain activities as well as other physical and mental tasks & activities. We appreciate all your help and support for our son and his family. Thank you!

We are so thankful for TSBVI! Our daughter has learned so much in just this one year. She has become so independent and self-assured. The staff is wonderful! Very caring and hands-on.

This is an outstanding school. My child has benefited immensely since attending. I only have good and positive things to say about this place of education.

My daughter has had a great year & thanks to TSBVI she has grown into a wonderful beautiful young lady that she, her family & her school & can be very proud of. Thank you from the bottom of our hearts.



This is a wonderful school & program with many opportunities for the students. I am very well pleased & appreciate the kindness of All employee here! The school & staff – very, very pleased with everything. Thank you so much. It was a great 2 years.

We would like to thank every staff in TSBVI especially her teacher. She's amazing. Our daughter's interpersonal skill and independent skill has increased tremendously. Again, thank you for what you've done for her.



Our daughter is thriving at TSBVI. I see big changes in her when she comes home on weekends. She is more independent and she takes a bigger initiative in getting things done. She loves everything about TSBVI.

My child has improved greatly since being at TSBVI. The staff and facility has shown much care and concern for the student's education and growth. I have been and still am very pleased at how they are helping my child grow academically and socially.

We are very pleased with our student's experience at TSBVI. It appears she has made significant progress! The teachers seem to know her very well and I am sure that is why her needs are being met and she is making growth! We are very pleased with services provided.

What TSBVI does positively impacts the lives of others.

The ARD was comprehensive and all parties seemed knowledgeable about my student's needs and progress. I was delighted to hear about programs being implemented and the progress he is making. I visited with his local school district teacher upon her return from visiting him last Friday. I am impressed by the degree of individualization of programming. I am confident he is in the best setting to meet his educational needs.

TSBVI has done a wonderful job with our student. I know she has grown from the experience, and our district appreciates all the strategies and instructional practices you have taught her.

The district felt she had another great year. She seems to be very happy there and advancing academically and socially.

I can't even begin to explain the difference you all have made in my student's life. I truly feel that "outstanding" is not even a strong enough word to describe your services. He is getting what he needs to be successful and I have complete confidence in every activity and recommendation that your staff gives. Thank you, from the bottom of my heart - for all you do for him and his family. TSBVI staff - you are so appreciated by everyone here at his home campus and special education department. THANK YOU!!!!

This student has made great gains during his first year at TSBVI. As a young person who recently lost his vision TSBVI provided intense instruction in the areas needed.

My director and I observed our student in March at TSBVI. I was amazed at the new facilities and enjoyed observing/watching him participate in classroom discussions/activities/assignments. He could navigate the campus successfully on his own, knew staff and students and appeared to enjoy his educational environment. I am pleased with all services that TSBVI is providing to my student and appreciate the partnership. Thank you for all that you do for students with visual impairments!



My student has benefitted greatly from her time at TSBVI. She has grown socially and the school provided her a peer network which we could not offer in our small district. Thank you.

The EXIT program has done an amazing job of setting that foundation for transition into the community. The instruction in specialized transportation systems, life planning, money management, and time management will help him once he's in the community living independently and contributing appropriately to society.

I want to commend the staff at TSBVI for the outstanding service they have provided to our student. They are professional & truly care about helping her transition from high school to adulthood. I highly recommend your EXIT program to others. Thank you!

Our student has gained immeasurably since she started at TSBVI. The programs, the campus, and especially the staff have allowed her to improve in many ways. We are all indebted to TSBVI for all they have done for my student. Thank you!

This student's self-advocacy and independent living skills have dramatically improved. She actually asks for help, but she attempts to try some things first before asking for assistance or just waiting for help.

I haven't a clue as to how many different programs your staff work with to make an ARD happen. All I know is they are always accessible and willing to answer my many questions. The work poured into our students is greatly appreciated and our students are the better for the expertise. Thank you for your hard work.

TSBVI has been great for this student. She has improved in reading Braille and in using Nemeth. She has also improved in her assistive technology skills. The staff help her to monitor her homework. At TSBVI, she has been provided opportunities at sports that would have not been available to her at her home campus. Her teacher has been an invaluable resource in answering questions or providing information.

I am glad to be at TSBVI due to the hard working staff who really know what they're doing in almost any situation. My view of the school is "Heaven on Earth".

TSBVI is a very safe place I can learn mobility skills and other independent living skills. TSBVI has taught me to be a self-advocate for my needs. The staff has been very helpful to me during day and residential times.

I just want to say that you guys have the best school and I have been very happy to be here.

I like being at TSBVI because I love my teachers and my dorm staff and my friends.



# ***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 five different summer programs: 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 2016 SUMMER PROGRAMS**

1. This summer we combined the two programs serving secondary students into one program called Secondary Enrichment with two sections: SEA and SEB. In SEA we served students who access the general education curriculum and take the regular STAAR statewide assessment. Classes are theme oriented rather than subject matter oriented. For example, students took classes such as: Access to Adventure, Getting There, Problem Busters, Rock Band, Summer Actors' Workshop and Intro to Wrestling 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 summer 2016 we offered a range of themes, serving 120 students in 17 different classes.

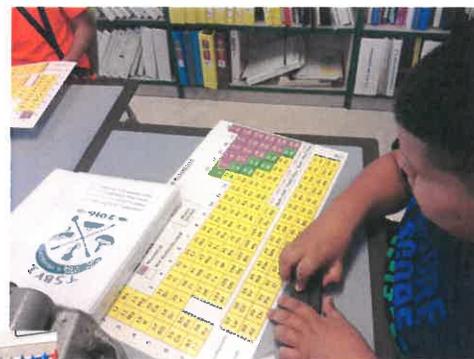
2. In SEB we served students who required modification of the general curriculum and generally take the alternate STAAR assessment. Students were grouped into self-contained classes of about five students of similar age and level of ability. Our top priority was to place students in groups that best meet their needs and interests. Within these classes, students 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 2016 we served 39 practical academic secondary students in 8 different classes.
3. 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: music, community outings, self-care, shopping, cooking, arts and crafts, and recreational activities. Examples of classroom themes were: Transition to Middle School, Science Works, Sweet Summer Time, Austin Adventure, Project STEM, Cook & Create, and Zootopia. Each summer we modify our original offerings based on requests. This year, we served 85 elementary students in 11 one- or two-week classes.
4. 29 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.
5. 51 visually impaired students with significant 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.

The Short-Term Programs web application (formerly called the STP database) was significantly upgraded by our programmer. A new feature that allowed staff to enter and submit summer reports dramatically improved the workflow of the department. The standardization of this report feature also automated the process of emailing reports to parents and TVIs. Over 64% of parents in STP now submit and receive paperwork via digital means.



## HIGHLIGHTS FROM SUMMER 2016

- ◆ 93% of responding school districts, parents and students rated their experience in summer programs as very satisfactory or above.
- ◆ Secondary academic classes were offered in four major areas:
  - Fine Arts: Summer Actor's Workshop; Art from the Heart; Rock Band; A Capella
  - Physical Education & Adventure: Individual Sports (PE for SBOE credit); Access to Adventure
  - Expanded Core Independent Living, Mobility & More: Middle School Enrichment; Getting There; Taste of Independence; Braille Adventures; Problem Busters
  - Small Business Endeavors: Wildcat Bistro & Catering
- ◆ 29 high school students participated in jobs at the following community locations:
  - **SWEAT Academic (individual job sites)**: YMCA Town Lake, YMCA North, Umlauf Sculpture Garden, Open Door Preschools, Austin Public Library, Dragon's Lair Comics and Fantasy, Double Tree Hotel, Karla's Kuisine, Austin Humane Society, Fish Gallery, Ten Thousand Villages, Lonestar Kids, Wheatsville and Zinger Hardware and General Merchant.
  - **WALIC Practical Academic (3-4 students per site)**: Top Drawer Thrift Shop, Wal-Mart, Department of Aging and Disability Services, Goodwill Industries, Wheatsville Food Coop, and TSBVI Community Garden

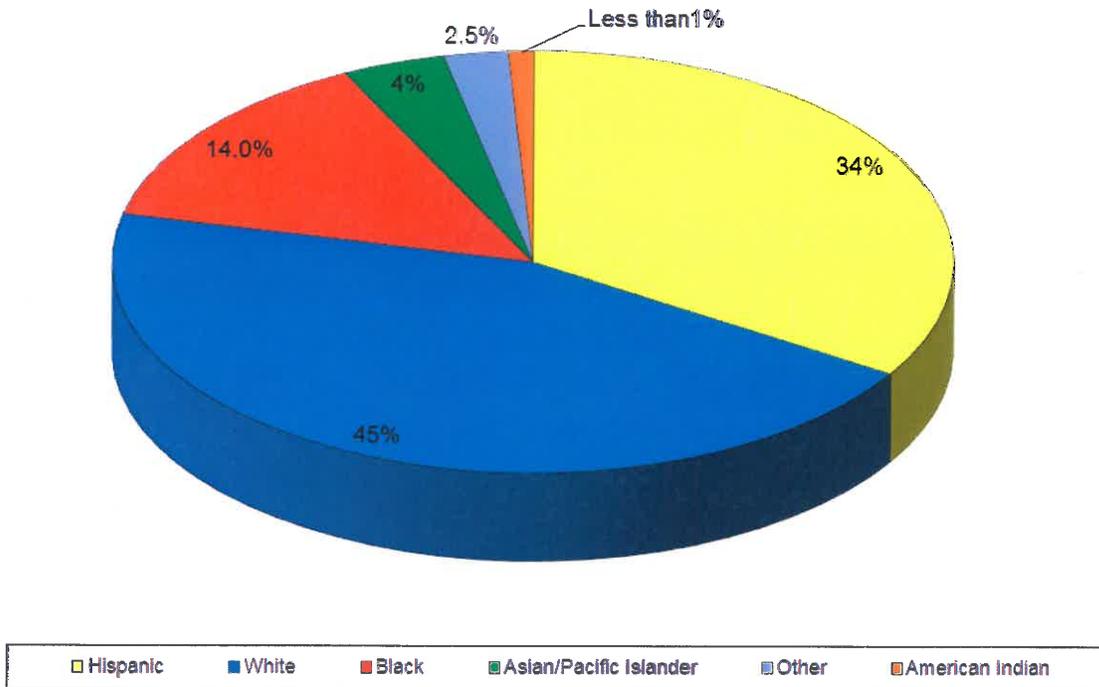


**ENROLLMENT STATISTICS**

In the 2016 Summer Programs, 321 students were served, representing 19 of the 20 Education Service Center regions and 134 local school districts throughout Texas.

YEAR	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016
<b>SUMMER PROGRAMS</b>	320	328	314	318	321

**ETHNICITY OF STUDENTS ENROLLED IN 2016 SUMMER PROGRAMS**



**SUMMER PROGRAM SURVEY RESPONSES FROM PARENTS AND LOCAL SCHOOL DISTRICTS**

The dorm staff is amazing! We are so thankful to hear how our son did, areas he can work on and how he stepped out of his comfort zone to give acting a try. The teachers and staff here are wonderful. He is looking forward to going back next year.

Dorms were comfortable, accessible, and very homey!

Everything was wonderful! He honestly came home very interested in keeping up proper grooming habits. Everyone was wonderful. All very courteous and great at addressing our needs. Thank-you all for being such a positive influence on my son's life.

Keep up the good work. Thank you for loving our kids and thank you for the hard work you do to make them successful in life.



My son loves going to TSBVI and can't wait to go back again. He's already asking when he can attend a three-week session. Thank you! We are so impressed with the patience of all the dorm room staff and teachers. It takes some really special people to help out and our family is blessed by them.

Thank you for allowing my son to participate! All the people that worked with him were awesome! Very dedicated and compassionate people! Thank you for all that you do! Amazing.

The camp my daughter attended was a life skills camp. She had the opportunity to experience self-sufficiency during her stay. She glowed when recalling her stay. I don't know if she was able to apply academics during her stay. However, the goal of life skills was achieved during her camp days. The staff was fabulous, knowledgeable and extremely kind. The reports were thorough and will help with her objectives this year. It has been a useful tool for her instructors, caregivers and parents to aide her. We are extremely grateful for everything you do in improving our child's lives. Thank you from the bottom of our hearts.

First time to camp and it was a success! The dorm staff was over the top! The check in/out staff was friendly and helpful. My daughter was ready to stay for a longer period of time for the life skills program!

We had communication with several staff and were very satisfied with their knowledge and desire to know about our son. All were very courteous and friendly. The staff made us feel completely comfortable with leaving him. They quickly returned our phone calls with answers to all our questions.

Everything was perfect ...very informative....He had a great time and is ready to come back next summer.

Our son still talks about being at camp and all the things he did! He is hoping he gets to come back next summer! We've never had a complaint. Everything seems to be outstanding.

Wonderful staff and they took very good care of our daughter while she was there. Very detailed report and it confirmed to us that TSBVI has an awesome staff and that they offer great programs that benefits the students. She has been a little more independent since the camp. She enjoyed all her adventures and meeting new friends. We were very pleased with all the different things she got to experience. TSBVI thank you for allowing our daughter to attend your awesome summer camp. It created great memories for her.



Wonderful staff and facility! Legislature should increase budget.

Really appreciate the residential instructor staff! They are so great and accommodating for my son.

Thank you for exposing our kids to activities that I've never thought of or didn't know if he would enjoy. We are so happy our son was able to experience a fantastic camp with caring staff.

The program to me is great. My son enjoyed and learned from it. He also gained friends from participants and staff. Kudos to the management and staff of TSBVI. Great job! I hope my son can be there again next summer. Thank you and God bless you all.

My daughter had the best time and she came home more independent and confident.

Everything was done great. Thanks for giving my daughter the opportunity to experience the Summer Work Experience in Austin, Texas (SWEAT) Program.

My child has always had a great and positive experience. He has always been able to use the tools he is given by TSBVI and apply them in his regular school. He is always excited about returning to any TSBVI program. Staff is always great with the children.

Thank you for all that you do. My son always has a great experience.

My daughter had a wonderful time and will be a good idea to have more days available on these summer camps. I really appreciate your time and love and caring from you all that made my daughter very happy. May God bless you all!!! Congratulations!!! You are doing a wonderful job.

We know that our daughter really enjoyed summer camp and made lots of friends!

Everything is excellent. Keep up the good work.

Very impressed with the program. My daughter loved the experience and stated that she will like to come back next year.

My student was offered a wide range of activities to integrate the skills that she has been taught in practical areas. Staff interact extremely well with all the students. My students are always very complimentary of the staff at TSBVI.

This student had an amazing time and is looking forward to next summer's camp.

I am beyond thrilled at the influence the summer staff and campers had on my student. Her experiences have helped her blossom into a happy, healthy, self-advocating young woman! If there was a step above outstanding I would choose that option!





I believe he was very satisfied with his experience this summer. Parent and TVI have seen growth in him from his experiences in Austin. All experiences with the staff have been outstanding. Thank you for all that you do!

He had a wonderful time.

Great reinforcement! New learning opportunities and adventures. My student was exposed to new experiences that we don't have in our area. She loved it! **THANK YOU ALL FOR THE GREAT EXPERIENCE YOU PROVIDED FOR MY STUDENT. SHE CAN'T**

**STOP TALING ABOUT IT AND ALL OF HER NEW FRIENDS!**

Great, positive information that clearly explained student's experiences. Student's report gave good information that student was provided with many opportunities to practice a variety of life-long skills. Thank you so much for providing my student with the wonderful experiences while at TSBVI and all of the hard work of the staff!!

My student came back home and felt so empowered! Always thrilled when my students are chosen!

I have no reservations about stating it was outstanding. He is now enrolled in the residential program, and I foresee nothing more than growth in all areas. Thank you for serving our students! It is so difficult to add Expanded Core Curriculum events into the regular school calendar in a public school environment. I appreciate all that you do.

Every summer this student becomes more independent!!!!!!!!!!!! Loves going and becoming so much more social and independent. Very satisfied with summer programming.

My student had many opportunities to demonstrate his skills as a young adult who hopes to live and work in his community at home. His ability to be successful with the carefully planned program of WALIC (Working and Living in the Community) at TSBVI will enable him to take the next step in development as an independent, employable individual.

The information received was very detailed. It outlines the strengths and possible areas of need for the student. The report was very informative. The learning opportunities were real world and real work experiences. Staff were extremely helpful. Staff and programs are ALWAYS helpful. Through these programs parents become familiar with the positive impact the programs have for the son/daughter.



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

School year Short-Term Programs (STP) provides programs to meet 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 needs 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 2015-16 school year were:

- High School Skills Workshop (math, technology topics)
- Junior Access to Academic Skills
- Science Lab Tools
- Low Vision Tools and Strategies: Elementary
- Low Vision Tools and Strategies: Secondary
- College Prep
- Health and Well Being: An Introduction to Sexuality
- Accessible Math Tools and Strategies
- City Travel (orientation and mobility in a big city)



- Elementary Technology, Literacy and Math (a 3-part series)
- In The Driver's Seat
- JAWS: Don't be Afraid with students and their TVIs (distance learning component)

### 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 2015-16 school year were:

- Outdoor Challenge (high school)
- Outdoor Adventures (elementary)
- Prom Weekend
- Iron Chef (food management and preparation)
- Empowered: Bring It On
- Game of Life: Middle School Transition
- Pioneer Times (Elementary)
- Performing Arts in Focus



### 4. Distance Learning

In January, we added a new Online Learning Developer to our department. She helped us adopt an accessible Learning Management System (LMS) called Google Classroom. This free platform is already in use in several districts across the state. Recent upgrades made it the ideal platform to create our first accessible, asynchronous, online classes. We successfully created several pilot classes to train summer staff in order to work out all of the accessibility issues before directly teaching students in the fall of 2016. We also began using the Zoom online meeting platform to directly instruct students who remain in their local schools while our instructors taught them remotely from Austin. This allowed our teachers to quickly address very specific instructional barriers to access, without travelling to Austin and missing local coursework. We continued to use the Edmodo learning platform to teach students and share information and videos with parents and teachers.

## **ACHIEVEMENTS IN 2015-2016 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; non-visual access of iDevices and apps that support the ECC; tactile graphics; skills for independent living; math tools and concepts for non-visual 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. 100% of students demonstrating progress

3. 99% of responding school districts, parents and students rated their experience in short-term programs as very satisfactory or above.
4. Short-Term programs served a total of 223 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 2015-2016**

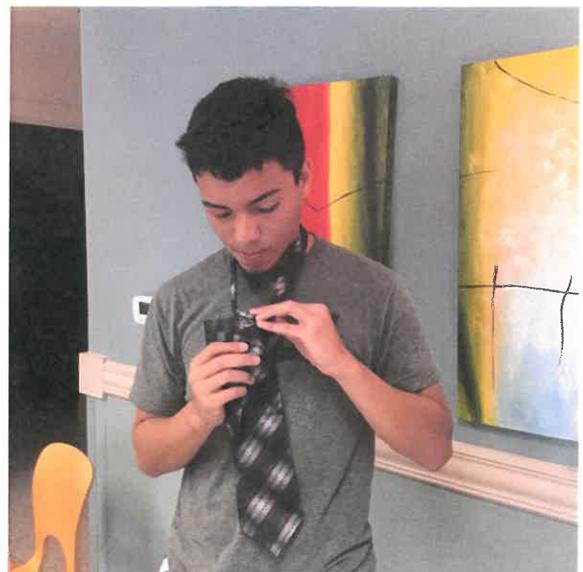
- We offered 27 classes from September through May, including two Low Vision Tools weekends that were specifically designed to serve students with low vision.
- 2015-2016 was an active year for STP teachers. Please see the list of accomplishments below:
  - Presented at TAER, the Outreach Forum, Mentor Center, West Texas Family Conference Noah, and Texas Tech University AT Weekend (BrailleNote, iOS devices & Zoomtext)
  - Attended the Distance Learning Association conference, a Project-Based Learning training, the CSUN Assistive tech conference
  - Co-created a new class called Game of Life with TSBVI Outreach.
  - Created promotional videos for website and social media purposes.
  - Served on the IPC committee.
  - Mentored a first year teacher for Region XIII ECP
  - Taught Texas Tech University's spring Braille class online (outside of school hours)
  - Departmental book studies on Crucial Accountability and Creative Confidence.
  - Created online summer training modules thus standardizing expectations for summer staff, etc.
  - Produced instructional guides for Google Docs with JAWS, iPad with Voiceover, Paths to Literacy, Paths to Tech
- The increased capability of the Short-Term Programs' web application resulted in improved accessibility for TVIs and parents across the state, as well as staff on campus. Users now can quickly submit and track referrals, applications, parent contacts, and all of our other registration forms via digital means including mobile devices. This has significantly improved the timely submission of needed documentation. STP continues to receive positive feedback from parents and TVIs about the ease of use of these new online tools.
- 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.



- Short Term Programs further expanded of the use of technology tools to improve office functioning including: Zoom, Google Classroom, Google Docs/Sheets/Groups, Adobe Pro, and Constant Contact for email marketing.
- STP began offering synchronous online instruction to students (and their teachers) using a variety of technology tools.

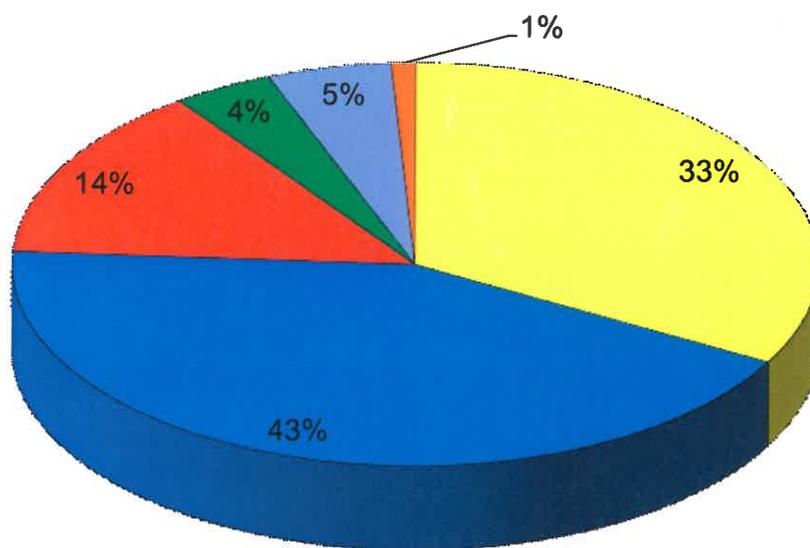


## ENROLLMENT STATISTICS

During the 2015-2016 Short-Term Program school year, 223 students were served, representing 18 education service centers and 86 local school districts.

YEAR	2011-2012	2012-2013	2013-2014	2014-2015	2015-2016
SHORT-TERM PROGRAMS	199	212	218	206	223

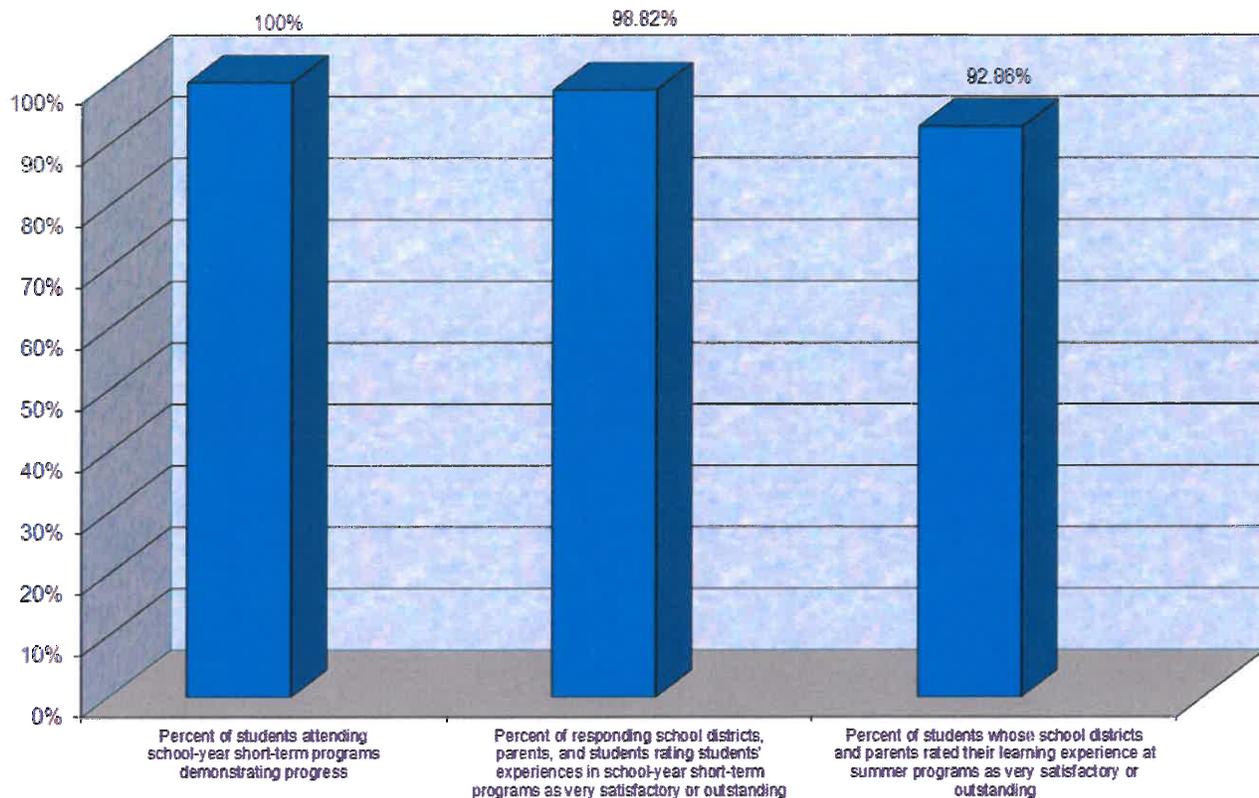
**ETHNICITY OF STUDENTS ENROLLED  
IN 2015-2016 SHORT-TERM PROGRAMS**



## PERFORMANCE OBJECTIVES FOR 2015-2016

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 2015-2016



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

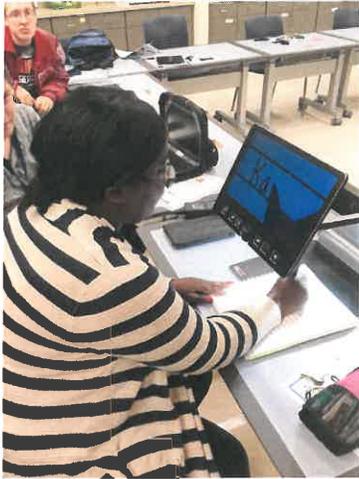
My daughter had an extremely positive experience during her week at TSBVI. She came back very enthusiastic and motivated to continue here what she learned there.

TSBVI staff have always been most professional. I was very happy and my son was too!! Thank you ALL.

Hopefully more children can join this short-term program so they can experience how life works. She has been doing really well because now she gets to know the future better.

I loved the campus. Everyone was so nice and friendly. We really appreciate the opportunity and hope to be invited again. Thank you all so much.

My daughter was not familiar with JAWS but felt she learned so very much that she could use when she gets a computer. She loved learning about the computer.



TSBVI has always provided my child with everything that she has needed as far as curriculum and programs. Overall great experience and expectations. Staff are always a pleasure!! Everyone always has a great smile! Everyone has always made us feel welcomed!! Overall great experience and expectations. Thank you for all you do.

My goal for my student was to collect information to develop her long term goal, exposure to other students who are looking toward going to college and onto professions, and motivate her to develop her long term goal. I am very satisfied by the results of her attending this program. She made progress in her self-esteem, self-efficiency, and desire to be more independent.

I cannot say enough about this short term program! The staff did an awesome job preparing my student to come (he was extremely anxious) and then planning and providing an awesome experience with like peers! Oh, and the parent was extremely complimentary as well! I have really seen a change in this student in his self-esteem. He is more willing to take chances. This is priceless :) Staff could NOT have been more accommodating to make my student feel welcome, safe and comfortable.

TSBVI is the best! Keep doing what you are doing. Thanks you for all you do. Texas is fortunate and blessed to have TSBVI as a partners to school districts and ESCs. Overall I am sure that TSBVI has the best School for the Blind in the world.

He does not cease to impress me by all he knows. He is very independent as well. His report states positive outcomes that demonstrate his potential to excel. As per phone calls and emails, staff appeared professional, very knowledgeable, and courteous when working with me.

I was glad to be able to see the pictures of all the activities and read the report of what took place. She was really looking forward to the experience and seemed to really enjoy it. Plus, it is very helpful to us in being able to document this experience when addressing the Expanded Core Curriculum, since we rarely are able to provide these types of opportunities. I have been impressed with the offerings that you have.

The teacher was very helpful in providing information about the activities which in turn helped me convince the student and parent to attend the camp. He was very reassuring and very comforting. This was a wonderful opportunity for this student to experience a world he is not very comfortable with, the outdoors. He feels a little more empowered now and is more willing to have new experiences. His learning was very beneficial. He was struggling with social interaction and finding things he had in common with peers at his school. This Camp Challenge has given him courage to step outside of his comfort zone and he is willing to open up more with peers. I have visited classrooms before. They are very well equipped to meet the needs of students.



This class focusing on team building and self-determination is just what my student needs! I was so pleased that he had fun while working on skills that will help him succeed in life. I can't say enough about the Short Term Programs staff. They have (more than once!) gone way beyond to make my students feel safe, accepted and listened to. Great job everyone!

She really enjoys being with other visually impaired students and experiencing new activities. As stated before, this was a new experience for her and she seems to improve in her maturity and acceptance of her eye condition after attending events at TSBVI.



I was very happy with how excited he was when he returned. He was eager to tell and show me all that he learned during his stay at TSBVI. I appreciate how detailed the Short Term Program Report is and that it provides me with sites I can access to further his progress.

It was very beneficial. We are now able to move forward with training her in the district. I love your school and staff!

I appreciate all administrators, teachers, and staff at TSBVI that have worked with my student. She is always thrilled to find out who will be working with her. She has had positive experiences. She has come back with having success with her learning objectives. She has been able to generalize those skills into the fast pace daily work experiences of the pressing demands of what 4th graders are

expected to learn. We see the success of why TSBVI Short-Term Programs are important for students. Again, you all are very much appreciated. So thankful!

My student was prepared for her upcoming math units. When she returned to school, she was able to learn right along with class. She already knew information that the rest of the class had not begun just yet. She has increased success with use of her abacus as well.

I am absolutely satisfied with the overall experience that my student enjoyed. I have seen her blossom, she is more outgoing and willing to explore things that she is not familiar with, she has met friends and stays in touch with them. The staff is always professional, knowledgeable and eager to help.

My student came back to school and was excited to show me her recipe book and can't wait to prepare her favorites! This was a wonderful experience for this student, who up until recently, was not allowed to visit the TSBVI campus as her mom did not want her to go. I am thrilled that this student had this experience, and I intend to recommend other programs that are appropriate for this student! I think the fact that this student stayed in the dorm was a big thing....she appeared more confident when she returned to school. I also think the fact that she met other students with visual impairments was helpful, since she is the only student with a cane where she currently attends. I liked the activity you had about exploring the kitchen and safety techniques as well. Excellent staff! Thank you for all you do!



I love the Short Term Program for my students because they do not have the same type of opportunities in our school district with same aged peers. Everyone wants to feel like they belong! On the information provided in the student's report: Awesome! Very informative especially for parents or teachers not familiar with cooking with VI students. I have found all staff always very welcoming and helpful! I have been in the TSBVI classrooms numerous times with my other students that attend TSBVI and they ARE awesome! She came back home and wanted to show her mom everything she learned about cooking. She LOVED the program.



I was very happy with how excited he was when he returned. He was eager to tell and show me all that he learned during his stay at TSBVI. I appreciate how detailed the Short Term Program Report is and that it provides me with sites I can access to further his progress. He is enthusiastic about using his new skills in class and has been carrying the Ipad and keyboard with him on a daily basis. He is already emailing assignments to teachers.

Thank you for the experience and I had a lot of fun learning how to cook and I met some cool people.

I love being at TSBVI and take every opportunity to be here when I can. I loved taking this class because I met some great people, learned new information and got to be with technology almost all day. I really liked how helpful, patient, and willing to work with our individual needs our teachers are.

I loved meeting new people and I loved learning new things. Thanks for everything – I learned a lot and I will be using what you taught me in the future may more often.

Most of the information I learned is very useful and this will help me a lot when I start to apply to colleges. I loved that I got to see my friends and learn something that will benefit me in the future at the same time. I think this class is very well done.

I chose this class because before I couldn't even check my email or even save a document; but now I can do that and a lot more. This was very helpful. I enjoyed all aspects of the program.

I've been to camp here before, and I had been in the same dorm twice before, so I knew most of the dorm staff. There were two people I didn't know, but that's ok because I got to know more amazing people. Every time I come here, I look forward to it for so many reasons. The dorm activities and the incredible dorm staff are definitely part of why I love it here so much. I think it's absolutely amazing here.

Whenever I come, it's not difficult to adjust. I can't even put into words how much I love coming here, it's my favorite part of the year. I always look forward to it more than I could say, and, I just, well, I just love it here so much.

## **OUTREACH PROGRAMS**

TSBVI Outreach Programs provide statewide resources for parents of children with visual impairments and deafblindness and the professionals who serve them, from birth through transition from school. Our focus is on supporting students in their homes all across Texas. We bring most of our services directly to local communities and programs.

Texasans can request the programs they need to support family members and professionals involved with students with visual impairments or deafblindness. We typically work in partnership with regional services. Most services from the Outreach Programs are available at little or no charge:

- Individualized local consultations to families, schools, and other related agencies or community organizations.
- Training for families, professionals and paraprofessionals through face-to-face workshops and conferences around the state.
- Distance learning options are offered via web-based live and archived webinars.
- A newsletter produced with the Health and Human Services Commission Blind Children's Program is offered online and in paper, in Spanish and English.
- Resources on visual impairments and deafblindness are posted online.
- Materials from the American Printing House for the Blind (APH) are distributed and ordered from the TSBVI Outreach Programs website.
- Assistive technology is available on loan.
- Partnering with local, state and national agencies and organizations helps build quality local programs for students with visual impairments and deafblindness.

TSBVI Outreach Programs effectively support and complement the personnel available at regional Education Service Centers. Students with visual impairments and deafblindness represent extremely low incidence populations with diverse and unique needs. Districts typically first turn to their regional ESC Consultant in Visual Impairment and/or Deafblind Specialist. Those professionals will refer to the TSBVI Outreach Programs when needed and we work together for optimal follow up and implementation. This provides for a strong statewide system to support quality educational programs for students across Texas.



## **ACHIEVEMENTS IN THE 2015-2016 FISCAL YEAR**

- 90.64% 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.
- In 2015-2016 the Outreach staff made 128 local visits for school consultation to districts and adult group home settings across Texas. These visits have documented success: 100% of respondents reported a positive change for the student, staff or family as a result

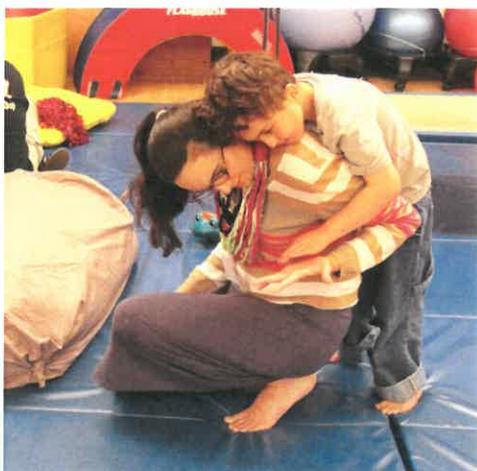
of school consultation visits by Outreach staff.

- Outreach Programs supported 82 students in 57 individual districts/programs. Consultations often involve multiple visits to a program.
- TSBVI Outreach presented or facilitated 235 conferences and/or workshop sessions at local districts, at regional service centers, and at statewide and national venues, including via distance technologies, for 6,261 participants. Requests for workshops and training come from around the state and nation.
- The campus sponsored a national conference for other Outreach Programs at Schools for the Blind around the country.
- Web-based Accomplishments:
  - The 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 31 of those presentations were offered via webinar. Web-based presentations can directly link with personal computers and mobile devices, thus increasing their accessibility. Most presentations were archived and posted on the website for later viewing.
  - Web-based study groups allowed professionals in their local communities to connect for scheduled topical discussions on cortical visual impairment, orientation and mobility topics, hearing impairment, and active learning strategies. This technology allows participants to access expert assistance and a peer group for discussion without the costs of time and travel.
  - The TSBVI On-the-Go Learning website, <http://www.tsbvi.edu/on-the-go-learning>, provides an organized venue for accessing anytime, anywhere training on VI and DB issues. Total Educational Videos Posted: 177 Programs with a runtime of nearly 50 hours have been viewed over 2,200 times. Approximately 25 hours of programming for FY 2015-16 qualifies for CEU credits with ACVREP or SBEC.
  - During 2015-2016 the video library software was updated to provide increased security and “live-streaming” capabilities. The video library is now serving all departments on campus.
  - Distance instruction is valuable for introducing new concepts and building awareness, but less effective at fostering intensive skill development. Face to face instruction can provide a more in-depth approach to a topic as well as the opportunity to meet others with like interests and skills. There were several statewide conferences sponsored by TSBVI Outreach, including: Texas Focus, Introduction to the Intervener Team Model, Braille “Boot Camp”, Active Learning, a



Low Vision Conference about students in functional academics, and Mentor Centers and Mentor Training.

- With the new push by several departments to utilize social media outlets for expanding our reach, TSBVI has received almost 5,000 visitors through Facebook, Pinterest, Blogger and Twitter. Search engines serving our pages, including Google, Bing, Yahoo and Facebook, directed over 1,500,000 visitors to our sites.
- In 2015-16, TSBVI websites received over 2,142,522 visits from over 225 countries including Mexico, Columbia, China, Republic of Korea and Japan. Over 21,217,605 pages were viewed during those visits.
- Over 50% of our visitors are accessing our websites via mobile technology such as smart phones and tablets, with 75% of those being iOS devices.
- Having garnered over 6,000,000 views last year, there continues to be an increasing number of visitors searching for content in the Spanish language each year. The TSBVI 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.
- Local teams in 3 locations practiced in-depth implementing new strategies for increasing interactions with students who are DeafBlind.
- TSBVI is an active partner in professional development of new teachers of students with visual impairments and certified orientation and mobility specialists. With the support of the TSBVI's state and federal funds and the TSBVI VI mentor program, 49 new VI professionals were employed in Texas.
- 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 Personal Family Leadership series that increased family skills to advocate for the needs of their child as well as learning how to help other parents. A statewide conference for graduates of Family Leadership Training brought together 25 family members ready to learn new techniques in leadership.
- TSBVI Outreach members are active collaborators with regional and statewide entities, including the West Texas Cluster, the Low Functioning Deaf planning committee, Personnel Preparation Group, State Leadership Services for Students who are Blind and Visually Impaired, the Texas Assistive Technology



Network, family organizations in the wider disability field such as Parent to Parent and Texas Hands and Voices as well as blindness related family groups, the Alliance of and for Visually Impaired Texans, the Texas Action Committee for the Education of Students with Visual Impairments and the Texas Interagency Task Force on Deafblindness.

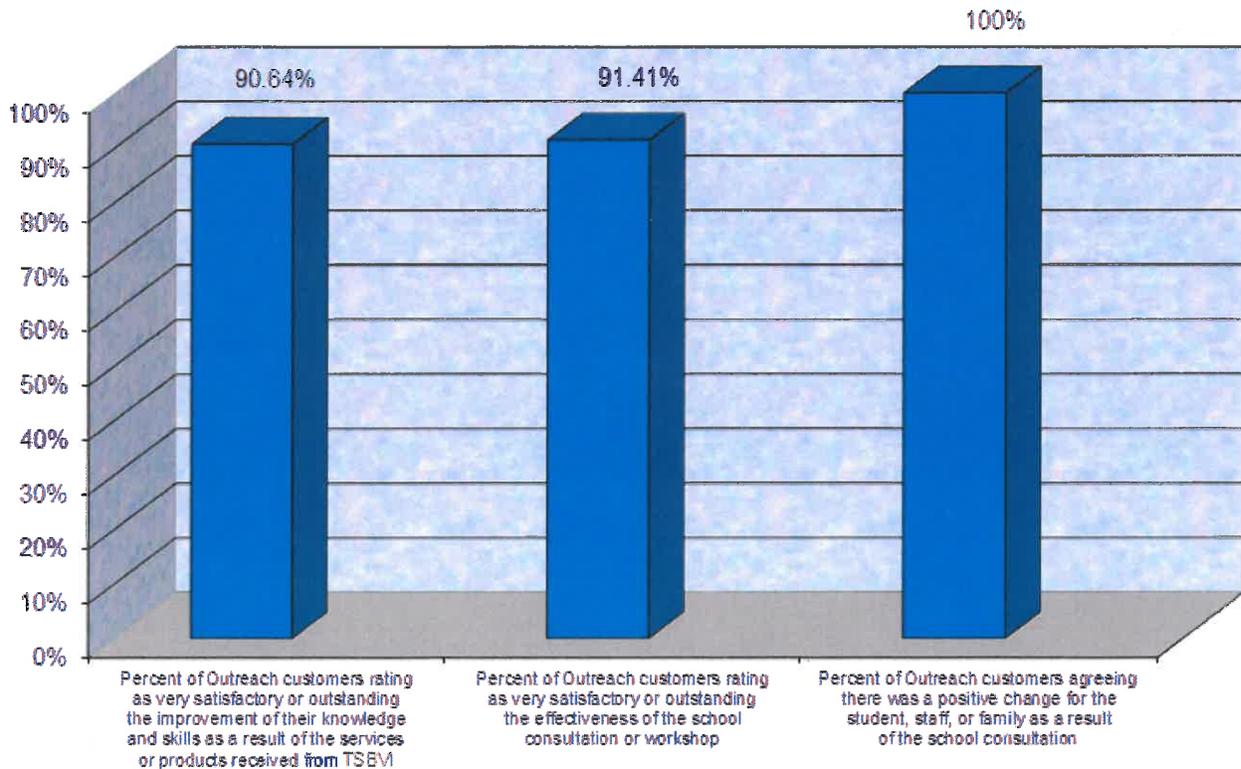
- The Texas Deafblind Project members have participated in developing web-based, open source modules for training paraeducators for the role of intervener. The Project approached community colleges to locate a college able to offer these modules so that comprehensive training for interveners can be provided across the state.
- In the 2015-2016 year, Outreach presentations range from topics related to infant massage and bonding and interaction techniques for students with deafblindness to orientation and mobility curriculum, math technology and accessible academic tools and specialized instruction in low vision devices and braille production techniques, various aspects related to literacy, legislative guidelines, transition to adult life and visual conditions.



### PERFORMANCE OBJECTIVES FOR 2015-2016 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 2015-2016



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

### School Consultations



This consultant was very knowledgeable and we received a lot of bright ideas. My student's educational program should be much better when we use all the new information.

It was a wonderful experience being able to work with the Outreach specialist. He has so much knowledge and has a great way of delivering it. His support was essential with the O&M evaluation for a student. He observed, worked with the student, and provided resources for report writing.

The consultation changed my perspective of my student's behavior. She needs to have more control. Her hands are key to opening our world and empowering her to take control.

Great insight on what I can do and change how I give this student instruction. This was a great evaluation!

The TSBVI staff was so accommodating. They were child centered and their level of knowledge and expertise was very clear. We are so appreciative of all they have done to help us support our students needs.

Very informative. Great for student to achieve more, great ideas.

The consultation gave me a better understanding on how to work with a student with a visual impairment. There is a lot of information I can implement in the classroom.

Consultation was very positive and informative. TSBVI was very professional and knowledgeable.

Wonderful to have the staff at TSBVI come to collaborate.

Very knowledgeable and informative. Thank you for explaining in a positive language that is easy for everyone to understand.

I appreciate the suggestions and observational information. It will be a positive change for techniques to be used at home.

The Outreach staff were very supportive of the team and gave practical ways to support the student. Thank you!

I am very pleased with the plan we came up with for next school year!

## Outreach Conferences, Workshops and Webinars



Very interactive. Great information and presenter.

Thanks for being so patient! Great handouts! They will be very helpful and useful in the future.

The workshop is incredibly helpful. The Outreach Specialist is a wonderful presenter with infinite knowledge on technology. Thank you!

I've had so many questions and concerns that have always been on my mind and heart. I didn't know how or when to start the next step in my son's and myself life. This class, this weekend has touched me and my family so deeply. We have learned how to move on to the next step with life changing skills for my son, myself and most of all the entire family. Please implement this program every year. Thank you Team TSBVI!

Thank you!!!! so much. Appreciate you sharing and giving of yourselves. Very helpful. So nice and smart. Everything was lovely. You've thought of everything. It was fun! Hope to do it again.

Everyone was so informative and friendly. I felt very comfortable.

Fantastic. I would recommend this to everyone.

I think and I feel that this short term school is exactly what families need. The experience is wonderful seeing our children smiling and happy for their experience.

Please continue doing these type of conferences. They are so educational and allow growth for everyone. We never stop learning. Thank you for all your hard work. It has not gone unnoticed.

Thank you, thank you, thank you. This weekend was so impactful we cannot thank you enough for the positive impact this will have on our family.

Excellent! Well prepared! Great practicing the exercises. Wonderful handouts.

I liked the opportunities to practice the skills and also the detailed handout.

I found the tactile graphics extremely interesting. Overall, I was very impressed with knowledge gained and I know it will be beneficial in my future. Thank you for a great tech weekend.

Great presenters, set up and materials. The new facilities are beautiful. Outreach has been very helpful gaining Braille supplies over the past year. Thank you!



I learned a lot of new skills and strategies that I will be using once I become a TVI. Thank you for providing this training. Thanks for sharing your expertise!

I wish my district trainings were half as good... Wow, thank you! I loved that we had the computers to practice with. All around one of the best trainings I've ever attended. Wonderful facility, outstanding trainers.

Loved your presentation and your passion in what you do.

Informative. Realistic. Extremely helpful especially due to the fact that this is a new area for myself which I expect will be useful and a big part of my new job!

The two presenters were very knowledgeable and approachable and helpful with any questions.

I thought the training was good. Very exciting, child-based and respectful of the students. I appreciate the videos and links. Thank you for coming today.

Very thorough just like the morning session. It is very clear that the presenters have a lot of practical experience to relate to the subject of tactile learning. Very good.

Very friendly and personable; shared information in an open and amiable atmosphere. Very willing to share information.

You did a wonderful job. Your enthusiasm is so contagious and held my interest. Thank you!

I enjoyed the presentation very much. It was enthusiastic and built on skills we already implement.

Very thorough and practical. I enjoyed all of the real life examples for implementing the content of the presentation. Great resources.

I worked as a specialist in Ohio before moving to Texas and the TSBVI website/resources were essential for our region in working with students with deafblindness. Still an excellent resource.

The videos and pictures and samples were so very helpful to illustrate the potential implementation. It's always great to get this information again from different people with different perspectives, stories and experiences to share. This expands my knowledge base. Excellent presentation! Thanks.

I loved the real life stories and videos. You guys were great and refreshing to listen to. You could see that you love your job!

I loved this and have so many new ideas! This was outstanding! Thank you!

This training was awesome! Presenters and trainers were very knowledgeable and it was easy to ask them questions!



Thank you so very much for sharing your information and ideas which will be great teaching for typical and atypical children and families! Great to provide face-to-face experience based training like this!

The training was very informative. Often times we may not realize what someone with disabilities is experiencing and after the scenario acting as a deafblind individual really had me change thought processes and realize that these individuals are facing challenging times. This was great training and perfectly planned!



I appreciate all the information and resources given. The presenter is a great instructor and very passionate about this topic.

The presenter is an excellent educator. I am so grateful for this training. I have a better understanding of my consumers and how to train direct care staff.

All presenters were very knowledgeable and had us engaged with lots of examples and real life occurrences. Thank you so much for offering this training.

Very informative and made me understand how I can help my student achieve goals.

I enjoyed the sessions and learned a lot about ARDs which is very important to me. I am in the process of expanding my understanding by accessing the TSBVI website. This will help me remember and expand on the subject. This has been just great to participate and learn about items/situations/policies that impact me and my daughter. Thanks. Great job. Keep it up.

Thank you for sharing your knowledge about orientation and mobility programs in other states. We are fortunate to have you and TSBVI in Texas for all Certified Orientation and Mobility Instructors (COMS).

I absolutely would recommend this training to other parents and teachers of the deafblind. Would like to attend other related training sessions. The presenters and staff were outstanding!

Every instructor that I shadowed was very professional, courteous, and all genuinely had the students best interest and safety at all times. I felt very comfortable and treated with respect. I learned so much at Mentor Center, absolutely invaluable experience for me at this time in my career change into O&M. In addition to the instructors ALL of the students were always very respectful and courteous towards a visitor shadowing their lessons. They were very good sports. I learned as much or more from the students too. Oh, do not want to forget your whole staff. Everyone I had contact with was great and helpful.



Having the opportunity to attend the Mentor Center weekend is absolutely an invaluable experience for a new TVI. It is amazing to watch how “it should be done” by the very best teachers in the state. I appreciate all the work effort that goes into making this experience possible for us. I appreciate the teachers who allow us into their classrooms and so patiently and enthusiastically answer our questions. Every time I leave, I have been sincerely invited to come back and watch and learn again!

I love Mentor Center! I would go every year for the rest of my career if I could. It is a positive, supportive environment that encourages questions and critical thinking.

We are truly blessed by the leadership provided by TSBVI and especially by Outreach. Thank you for your work.

This was one of the greatest opportunities I have had! It was my first opportunity to go to the Mentor Center since I've been in the field over 23 years. I wish I could go again!!!

I enjoyed your presentation very much. I left leaving with a plan in place and can't wait to implement it.

I think that the Active Learning Conference ranks among my most effective ever attended. TSBVI is great about providing quality workshops and conferences. Thank you!

This two day conference was beyond amazing. The concepts shared were wonderfully summarized and easy to understand and implement. I so appreciate seeing how to work with the kids and the videos helped immensely to show what not to do and what to do. Thank you so much for sharing your knowledge with us. You were a pleasure to listen to and I appreciate all that was taught to us.

Wonderful information! It targeted the need of students that I have now. I'm so excited to start implementing so many ideas.



This was a great workshop and you provided very detailed information and handouts. The opportunities to network with other family members and work together during training was invaluable.

I felt that all of the facilitators and presenters did an exemplary job in explaining and demonstrating what they do professionally. I as a graduate student was very impressed with the Mentor Center as it was my first experience attending it. I look forward to attending future workshops and conferences.

Excellent and extremely useful information. Can't wait for more lessons! Really appreciate the work that went into this and am thankful I don't have to invent it all on my own anymore!

I think that it is exciting to receive some outstanding and wonderful information that is life changing for the students and staff.

# OTHER SERVICES TO PARENTS AND PROFESSIONALS

## CURRICULUM DEVELOPMENT

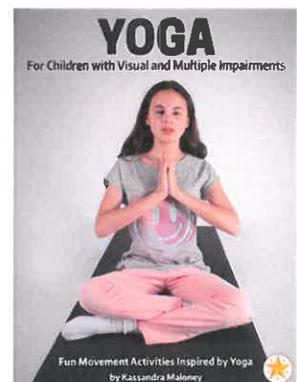
The Curriculum Department at Texas School for the Blind and Visually Impaired develops curriculum written by teachers and other certified professionals serving students with blindness and visual impairments. Curriculum and resource guides are developed, peer-reviewed, published, and sold world-wide to assist the certified teacher of students with visual impairments (TVI), the certified orientation and mobility specialist (COMS), the classroom teacher, and the 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; assistive technology; compensatory skills instruction such as concept development and braille; orientation and mobility; and sensory efficiency skills. Each guide contains evaluation tools and instructional methodology.

Expanded Core Curriculum for Students with Visual Impairments (ECC)



## ACHIEVEMENTS IN 2015-2016

- A total of 3,810 publications were sold in fiscal year 2015.
- *TAPS Orientation and Mobility Curriculum*, 3<sup>rd</sup> Edition, was at the top of our best-seller list. TSBVI sold 308 of the curriculum set, and 106 flash drives, making a total of 414.
- *Calendars for Students with Multiple Impairments* came in second at 286 copies sold. Also sold during the school year were: 259 copies of the *Learning Media Assessment* publication, and 130 copies of *Teaching Students with Visual and Multiple Impairments*.
- The curriculum department re-submitted our General Employability Innovative Course to TEA. It was approved and will be utilized to provide instruction in the Career Education area of ECC. We are continuing to teach the other Innovative Courses as well: Braille, O&M, and Assistive Technology.
- The Curriculum department provides support to classroom teachers in daily instruction, including the development of IEPs and use of appropriate curriculum.
- Curriculum is being adapted for students receiving modified instruction in Language Arts, Math, Science and Social Studies. AGS curriculum products from Pearson, and The Unique Learning System program are being used as the basis for some of these courses.
- This department is collaborating with the career education department to support the implementation of curriculum for the General Employability course, Introduction to Hospitality and Tourism course and the Methodologies for Academic and Personal Success (MAPS) courses.
- The following publications were completed during this year:
  - ◆ *Expanded Core Curriculum for Students with Visual Impairments (ECC) Resources for Evaluation and Instruction*
  - ◆ *Yoga for Children with Visual and Multiple Impairments* (designed to support O&M Concepts)



- ◆ Update of the *Independent Living Evaluation Booklet*
- ◆ *Nemeth At a Glance: A Math Resource, Grade Level Chart and Evaluation Tool*
- Development continues on the following publications:
  - ◆ Update of the Braille FUNdamentals curriculum from EBAE to UEB
  - ◆ Update of *Making Evaluation Meaningful*
  - ◆ FVE/LMA Guidebook
  - ◆ EXIT curriculum designed for students who have received credits for graduation and are working on skills needed for adult life
  - ◆ Early Intervention O&M Curriculum: *Texas Two STEPS (Successfully Teaching Early Purposeful Skills)*
  - ◆ *Paraeducator Handbook*
- The curriculum department provides training, in Texas as well as out of state, on the use our publications.
- The Curriculum Director continues to evaluate and refine the performance indicator evaluation tools that guide IEP development and instruction for TSBVI students.
- The Curriculum Director 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 the Texas Education Agency.
- The Creative Media Designer (Graphic Designer) in the Curriculum Department continues to create the TSBVI yearbook, by taking and compiling photos from events that occur during the school year.



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

TSBVI hosts several websites that are the go-to resources for parents, educators and professionals of visually impaired / multiply impaired persons around the world. The site is continuously being updated with valuable, accessible content concerning visual impairment and the education of blind and visually impaired persons.

In January 2014, we released an upgraded, redesigned that extended the level of accessibility to users with low vision and users of assistive technology, improved security, and provided a more scalable version of the. We continue to make improvements.

The websites were visited more than 2,142,000 times. Over 21,200,000 pages were viewed by users from 225 countries around the Earth including United Kingdom, India, Mexico, South Africa and China.

The most popular pages visited on the website last year were:

- Career Education
- Resources
- Current Job Vacancies and Application Information
- Tactile Symbols Directory to Standard Tactile Symbol List
- Math Project Access: One-to-One Correspondence and Counting Skills

The Alexa.com global site ranking for TSBVI.edu continues to outpace the websites of strong community allies such as Perkins and APH. In fact, alongside American Foundation for the Blind, TSBVI.edu is the highest ranked resource for persons seeking information on topics related to visual impairments. The site is one of the primary locations for VI information in Spanish, driving the increase in traffic from Spanish-speaking countries. Eight of the top 20 countries visiting TSBVI are Spanish speaking.

Gaining in popularity last year were our newly released 'On-the-Go Learning' section that is tied closely our streaming media portal.

In the coming year we will migrate the main site to the Drupal Content Management System to better meet the growing demands of TSBVI's expanding web presence.

The screenshot shows the homepage of the Texas School for the Blind and Visually Impaired. At the top, it says "You are here: Home" and "Mobile" with a dropdown arrow for "Accessibility Panel". There are social media icons for Facebook, Twitter, YouTube, and Pinterest, along with a search bar. The main heading is "Texas School for the Blind and Visually Impaired" with the address "1100 West 45th St., Austin, TX 78756 - (512) 454-8631". Below this is a navigation menu with links: Home, About TSBVI, School Year Program, Short-Term Programs, Outreach / Technical Assistance, On-the-Go Learning, Publications, Resources, and Contact Us. The main content area features a large image of the school building and a smaller image of people. Below the images is a section titled "2016 PARENT WEEKEND" with text in English and Spanish. To the left is a sidebar with "Information for..." and a list of categories. To the right is a "General Interest" sidebar with various links.

You are here: Home Mobile Accessibility Panel

f t y p

Google Custom Search Search x

## Texas School for the Blind and Visually Impaired

1100 West 45th St., Austin, TX 78756 - (512) 454-8631

Home About TSBVI School Year Program Short-Term Programs Outreach / Technical Assistance On-the-Go Learning Publications Resources Contact Us

### Information for...

- School District / Administrator
- Parent / Family Member
- VI Professional
- New VI Professional
- Job Seeker
- Teachers of Students with Deafblindness

### General Interest

- [Deafblind Child Count and VI Registration](#)
- [Human Resources \(Jobs\)](#)
- [Internal Audit Reports](#)
- [Bidding Opportunities](#)
- [Open Records](#)
- [Federal Report Card for the State of Texas](#)
- [TSBVI Annual Reports](#)
- [TSBVI Live Video Stream](#)

### 2016 PARENT WEEKEND

TSBVI Parents and Guardians, we have prepared [some useful information for you](#) as you make your way to our campus this weekend! We hope you enjoy your visit to TSBVI!

Padres y Guardianes de los estudiantes de TSBVI, hemos preparado [alguna información útil para usted](#) mientras visita a nuestro campus este fin de semana!

Read more: Parent Weekend 2016

## ***VOLUNTEER PROGRAM 2015-2016***

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 2015-16 school year, we experienced several wonderful group projects that benefited the students.

- TSBVI was again chosen to be a project of The Junior League of Austin, whose members recorded and scanned dozens of books for the library.
- Members of Delta Gamma Fraternity at University of Texas made tactile symbols, hosted a Thanksgiving dinner, a Valentine's party, and Easter party and a graduation party for the students at their sorority house, helped out at Parent Weekend with decorations, serving and face painting, and helped the students dress for the prom
- Several Delta Gamma college chapters and Alumnae chapters collected and sent the school "box tops for education" or hand-made tactile cards at holidays. Delta Gamma's national philanthropy is Service for Sight, and the close location to TSBVI affords the two university Delta Gamma chapters to spread their love, friendship and fun to the students of TSBVI.
- Delta Gamma volunteers worked with students on "Spa Day" in April teaching skills about doing hair and make-up.
- 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.
- The AT&T Pioneers provided a beeping Easter Egg Hunt for students, sponsored by the Student Council.
- The Austin Downtown Club Lions supported many student activities, including the TSBVI Leo Club, sponsored by staff member Patti Robinson, who was aided by several volunteers. They also planned and participated in planting trees in Bastrop during the school-wide Day of Service on January 18, and brought in a Humvee and motorcycles to Parent Weekend. They also helped out on White Cane Day and planted a tree on campus.
- Volunteers from Delta Gamma, Lions Club at University of Texas and the Girls School of Austin served as Guide Runners for the Fun Run
- Graduate students from the University of Texas Neuro-Outreach brought a brain activity for students to learn how nerve cells of the brain work make muscles work.



- Volunteers helped during Parent Weekend in child care, face painting, lunchroom duty and helper in many of the activities of the day.
- A group of 18 Apple employees volunteered in a mentor program supervised by a technology teacher.
- UT students participated in the new “Coding Club” after school and provided an Hour of Code training for 10 students.

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, folks living 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 in specific school or after-school assignments for at least an hour a week.

Individual volunteers performed these services during the year:

- Pitched in and helped at the 2015 Parent Weekend event in November by setting up and taking down decorations, serving and cleaning up at lunch, providing childcare, helping in many carnival activities including face painting, supervising games and helping out wherever needed.
- Future physical education teachers volunteered in the PE department, gaining valuable experience in working with visually impaired and mobility impaired students.
- Worked with students in a braille/reading class.
- Assisted in physical education classes.
- Helped in swim classes.
- Assisted in the science lab.
- Tutored math individually and in math study hall.
- Tutored physics, algebra and geometry and assisted in geometry class.
- Taught violin to students.
- Helped with arts and crafts activities in a dorm.
- Prepared materials for teachers.
- Assisted in the science lab.
- Worked with TSBVI cheerleaders and pep squad.
- Assisted in the LEO club meetings and community activities.
- Helped students memorize lines for drama class.
- Assessed with track & field practice.
- Provide music lessons in percussion, singing and piano.
- Assisted in the college prep class.



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 at 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 2015-16 school year, more than 150 individual volunteers logged in over 2000 hours working at TSBVI. Independent Sector, a leadership forum for non-profits, estimates the dollar value of volunteer time in 2015 at \$23.56 per hour; therefore, TSBVI benefited from over \$47,120 worth of community volunteer time!

## ***TSBVI Major Donors 2015-2016***

### **\$1,000 - \$15,000**

Beta Eta Chapter of Delta Gamma, University of Texas at Austin

United States Association of Blind Athletes

Gregory S. Addison

Andy MacLaurin

Fehmida Vejlani

### **\$500 - \$999**

Lesley Sokulski

TSBVI Administrators

Travis Association for the Blind

### **\$100 to \$499**

Chelsea Baldoni

Rona Rogrund

Tuft's University

Debbie Louder

Justin Newton

Barbara Stafford

Christopher Olives

Amanda Chafe

Michael Thompson

M. Ramanathan

Nakisah Dorcius

Bethea Family

Donald Howard

Mighty Nest LLC

Joann Kelso

Maria Katayama

Sanderson High School

Austin Founders Lion Club

All Blind Children of Texas

Vicente MarshDanielle Glenn

AT&T Employee Giving Campaign

Tejas American General Agency, LLC

Mike Connolly, Connolly Animal Clinic

## ***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.

