

**Texas School for the Blind and Visually Impaired
BOARD MEETING MINUTES**

October 1, 2021 Meeting

Call to Order

Lee Sonnenberg called the meeting of the Governing Board of the Texas School for the Blind and Visually Impaired to order at 10:17 a.m. on Friday October 1, 2021.

Introduction of Board Members and Audience

Board members present were: Lee Sonnenberg, Board President; Beth Jones, Elaine Robertson, Brenda Lee and Mike Hanley.

Board members present via Zoom were:

Maghan Gautney, Julie Prause and Ernest Worthington.

Dan Brown was unable to attend the meeting.

Audience present were:

Students who received rewards, family members of students who received awards; Staff supporting students; Emily Coleman, Superintendent; Miles Fain, Principal; Sara Meritt, Principal; Alex Arguello, Head of Community Engagement; Dan Hampton, Information Resources Director; Cheryl Williams, Human Resources Director; Kate Borg, Outreach Director; Eden Hagelman, Assistant Principal; Brian McDonald, Support Services Director; Susan Houghtling, Planning and Evaluation Coordinator; Pam Darden, CFO.

Audience present via Zoom were:

Cyrenna Villegas, Janet Bean, Amy Reina, Elsie Ramirez, Rosa Nicholas, Bryan Maffet, and Celine Prosomo.

Recognition of Students for Outstanding Performance on Statewide Assessments

Mr. Sonnenberg recognized and presented awards to students for their STAAR testing accomplishments.

Public Comments/Open Forum

There were no public comments.

Consideration of Approval of Minutes of August 5 and 6, 2021 Board Meetings

Ms. Lee motioned to approve the minutes from the August 5 and 6, 2021 board meetings. Ms. Robertson seconded the motion and the Board voted unanimously to approve the minutes.

Report from the Finance Committee

a. Consideration of approval of board policies:

CBB (TSBVI) State and Federal Revenue Sources: Federal
CHE (TSBVI) Purchasing and Acquisition: Vendor Relations
Lee Sonnenberg reported that the Finance Committee recommended the approval of the policies. The motion came from the Committee therefore no second was required. The Board voted unanimously and the motion to approve policies CBB and CHE passed.

b. Consideration of approval of Investment Report

The Finance Committee recommended the approval of the investment report. The motion came from the Committee therefore no second was required. The Board voted unanimously and the motion to approve the investment report passed.

c. Consideration of approval of receipt of gifts and donations of over \$500

Mr. Sonnenberg stated that TSBVI received a donation for \$35,507.00 from Dr. Carlos Gonzales. Alex Arguello explained that Dr. Gonzales would like to start a broadcasting program for TSBVI's students. Mr. Worthington asked were there any conditions. Mr. Arguello answered that the donor would like for the program to be named after his late mother.

The Finance Committee recommended the approval of the receipt of gifts and donations. The motion came from the Committee therefore no second was needed. The Board voted unanimously and the motion to approve the donations of over \$500 passed.

d. Consideration of approval of request for expenditure of gifts and donations

There were no requests. No action was taken on the approval of request for expenditure of gifts and donations.

e. Review of budget reports

- Operating Budget Expenditure Report
- Legacy Revenue Budget Report
- Legacy Operating Expenditure Budget Report

Mr. Sonnenberg went over the budget report information. He stated that the total operating budget expenditure for in state treasury was used at ninety-five percent. The Legacy revenue budget report actual totals received for the 12-month period were \$1,312,574. Lastly, he stated that 58 percent of the Legacy operating expenditure budget report was used as of August 31, 2021.

f. Report on Public Funds Investment Act training received by TSBVI Investment Officers

Mr. Sonnenberg reported that Ms. Darden and Joshua Splinter received the Public Funds Investment Act training on behalf of TSBVI.

7. Report from the Program Committee

a. Report from Comprehensive Program Principal

- Statewide Assessment results

Ms. Lee reported that there were a fewer number of students that took the tests. She said she thinks that was the case statewide. She stated that the students that did take the test, did well.

- Plan to promote academic excellence

Ms. Lee stated that HB 4545 passed requiring a plan to promote academic excellence. She added that Mr. Fain and his team were doing well to ensure students were participating in tutoring.

- Report on English as a Second Language (ESL) Program Analysis

Ms. Lee stated that the name had changed to Emergent Bilingual. She said that 16 of 27 teachers were ESL certified. She added that the School found out they needed school signage translated in Spanish around campus. Mr. McDonald stated that the School posted the Spanish signs on campus.

- TSBVI Student Performance Indicator results

Ms. Lee reported that the School passed with 80 percent which was 10 percent higher percentage than required. She stated that the School was doing well.

- Consideration of membership to the School Health Advisory Council

The Program Committee recommended the approval of membership including, as co-chairs, parents; Patty Bushland, Barbara Knighton, and Amy Heatherton, and as TSBVI members Ria Ferich and Debra Sewell to the School Health Advisory Council. The recommendation came from the Committee therefore no second was needed. The Board voted unanimously and the motion passed.

b. Report from Short-Term Programs Principal

- Short-Term Program update

Ms. Lee stated that in January the Game of Life, a collaboration between Short-Term Programs and Outreach, was going to be held in person. She stated that the School and its programs were running well.

c. Report from Outreach Director

- Outreach Program update

Ms. Lee stated that the SWOMA (Southwest Orientation Mobility Association) conference was going to be held in the near future.

d. Consideration of approval of board policies:

AIA (TSBVI) Accountability: Accreditation and Performance Indicators

AIB (TSBVI) Accountability: Performance Reporting

AID (TSBVI) Accountability: Federal Accountability Standards

EHBAA (TSBVI) Special Education: Identification, Evaluation, and Eligibility

EKB (TSBVI) Testing Programs: State Assessment

FFC (TSBVI) Student Welfare: Student Support Services

The Program Committee recommended the policies AIB, AID, EHBAA, EKB, and FFC. The recommendation came from the Committee therefore no second was needed. The Board voted unanimously and the motion passed.

Mr. Sonnenberg asked about the College Readiness section of EKB and who TSBVI partnered with. Mr. Fain answered it was Austin Community College.

Consideration of Approval of New Contract Staff

Ms. Coleman stated that the School was delighted to add Jennifer Amanda Parrott in the teacher role. Teacher Elizabeth Zavala asked to be released from her contract and the School agreed.

Ms. Robertson motioned to approve the new contract staff Jennifer Amanda Parrott. Ms. Prause seconded the motion and the Board voted to unanimously to pass the motion.

Consideration of Approval of TSBVI Organizational Chart

Ms. Coleman stated that there was a shift of supervision of the Health Center from the CSR director to Sara Merritt, Principal of Short-Term Programs.

Mr. Hanley motioned to approve the TSBVI organizational Chart. Mr. Worthington seconded the motion and the Board voted unanimously to approve the motion.

Final Update on Completion of Action Plans in the 2020-2021 Annual Improvement Plan

Ms. Coleman stated that no action was needed. She stated that action plans were changing because last year's activities were restricted due to COVID. She was happy to report that more and more activities were being offered to students because they were safe. She stated that Cheryl Williams, Human Resources Director had worked diligently from the beginning with the COVID screening for the School.

Report from the Superintendent

a. Campus activities

Ms. Coleman stated that student registration went smoothly. White Cane Day is scheduled for October 13th. TWC (Texas Workforce Commission) will hold an online activity from 11:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. She said there are five boys' teams committed to come to TSBVI for Goalball. Outreach will hold Mentor Center on campus.

b. Superintendent activities

Ms. Coleman stated that she would like for the School to be more visible with the Legislature. Ms. Darden provided a list of offices that are crucial to our school's budget. She stated that Mr. Arguello went to the Capitol to hand out flyers and invite them to visit our school and have lunch in the cafeteria. She said she visited some Legislative offices in Houston in 2020. She hopes to show them more about the School.

Ms. Robertson stated that while she attended the TASA/TASB conference there were regions approaching her to inquire about TSBVI.

Consideration of Superintendent’s Formative Evaluation

Mr. Sonnenberg announced the Board would recess the open session and convene in a closed meeting to discuss the following item listed under agenda item #12 – ‘Consideration of Superintendent’s Formative Evaluation’ in conformance with Texas Government Code Section 551.074 – Personnel Matters.

No voting would take place in the closed meeting. Any action the board wished to take as a result of discussions in closed meeting would take place after the board reconvened in the open meeting. It was 11:35 a.m.

At 12:25 p.m. the Board convened in open session.

Discussion of Future Board Meeting Topics and Training Dates

Mr. Sonnenberg stated that the Texas Education Code Update training is now available online. There will not be a board training meeting held on November 18, 2021.

Ms. Coleman stated that Debra Sewell was asked to give an update and she would do that at the next Program Committee meeting.

Announcements

Ms. Lee said it was her twin grandsons 1-year birthday. Mr. Sonnenberg stated that his daughter had pieces of art on display in Dallas and he was driving home to see them.

Adjournment

Ms. Robertson motioned to adjourn the October 1, 2021 meeting. Ms. Jones seconded the motion and the Board voted unanimously to adjourn the meeting at 12:30 p.m.

Lee Sonnenberg, Board President

Date

Dan Brown, Board Secretary

Date

Veronica Keating, Recording Secretary

Date

