

TEXAS SCHOOL FOR THE BLIND AND VISUALLY IMPAIRED
BOARD PROGRAM COMMITTEE MEETING
September 22, 2023

1. Call to Order

Brenda Lee called to order the meeting of the TSBVI Board Committee on Programs at 8:03 a.m. on September 22, 2023, from the Texas School for the Blind and Visually Impaired, 1100 West 45th Street, Austin, Texas.

Board members Brenda Lee, Beth Jones, Elaine Robertson, and Maghan Gautney were present.

TSBVI staff members participating in the meeting were: Miles Fain, Comprehensive Programs Principal; Angela Wolf, Curriculum Director; Janet Bean, Testing Coordinator; Sara Merritt, Principal of Short-term Programs; and Kate Borg, Outreach Director.

2. Consideration of Approval of Minutes of the August 4, 2023 Meeting

Brenda Lee asked for consideration of the minutes from the August 4th meeting. Beth Jones motioned to approve the minutes and Maghan Gautney seconded the motion with the correction of the spelling of her name. The motion passed

3. Report from Comprehensive Programs Principal, Miles Fain

Miles Fain introduced TSBVI testing coordinator Janet Bean to review the 2023 student assessment results and the English as a Second Language Program analysis.

- a. Statewide assessment results: Janet Bean reported on the Statewide Assessment Analysis including the 2023 STAAR test results that were newly redesigned tests. STAAR test results were reported late for the entire state due to a variety of factors. TSBVI only had 13 students in grades 3-8 and parents of two students opted not to test. Ms. Bean also reported on STAAR EOC tests and passing rates and STAAR ALT II test results.
- b. Report on English as Second Language (ESL) Program Analysis: Janet Bean reviewed 2023 TELPAS scores for students who were Emergent Bilinguals (EB). She provided statistics on the number of teachers who are ESL certified in elementary, middle school and high school programs and discussed the challenge of new teachers who are not certified as well as students enrolled who have almost no English skills.
- c. Plan to promote academic excellence: Miles Fain reviewed the Plan to Promote Academic Excellence and improve Student Performance on the STARR. He reported that new highly skilled TSVI (Teachers of Students with Visual Impairments) professionals were hired to lead the student tutoring program.
- d. Comprehensive Programs update: Mr. Fain reported on new initiatives including the implementation of Restorative Practices and Universal Design for Learning based on training staff received from Education Service Center Region 13.

4. Report from Curriculum Department Director, Angela Wolf

- a. TSBVI Students Progress Measures results: Angela Wolf reported on school year 2022-2023 achievement of the School's accreditation standards set with the Texas Education Agency. TSBVI exceeded each of the three criteria that Ms. Wolf described in detail.
- b. Consideration of approval of use of the Houghton Mifflin Harcourt Into Reading Program (phonics program): Ms. Wolf explained that districts are required to provide for the use of a phonics curriculum that uses systematic direct instruction in grades K-3 to ensure literacy skills. She recommended the Committee's approval of the Houghton Mifflin Harcourt Into Reading Program. Beth Jones motioned to approve the recommendation. Maghan Gautney seconded and the motion passed.

5. Report from Short-Term Programs Principal, Sara Merritt

Sara Merritt provided information related to summer programs and short-term programs.

- a. Short-Term Programs (STP) update:
 - Summer Attendance: In 2023, 329 applications for enrollment were received. Between March and June, 276 of those students were offered a class at some point and 215 students attended:
 - 99 Secondary
 - 93 Elementary
 - 10 SWEAT
 - 13 WALIC
 - Short-Term Programs is beginning summer planning very early this year and would like to offer PE and Art for credit this summer.
 - Currently there is one TA vacancy in STP. With such a small department, this vacancy has a big impact. Administrative assistants and administration are providing transportation and student supervision.
 - The Health Center has two vacancies.

6. Report from Outreach Director, Kate Borg

Kate Borg provided an update on activities in the Outreach Program:

- a. Outreach Program update:
 - There have been 68 requests for trainings/consultations so far this year.
 - QPVI (Quality Programs for the Visually Impaired) is happening in two districts this year: Klein ISD and Pasadena ISD.
 - Coffee Hour sessions:
 - New monthly themes are going really well. Coffee Hour numbers remain high—350 participants so far (5 sessions)
 - Tech Tea Time:
 - Continues to be a big hit; following the same monthly themes.
 - Study groups:
 - Active Learning and CVI (Cortical Visual Impairment) sessions continue.
 - Added new group for "If you can see it you can support it" for Deafblind.
 - New Brailenote Touch+ course is getting a lot of traction.
 - 2,000 individuals engaged with the post on social media.
 - There were almost 100 new registrations on the Bridge learning platform; 80 this week and 40 people have started the course.
 - Family Recharge Zone sessions:

- Still happening monthly
- Offering ASL (American Sign Language) and Spanish translation each session
- Upcoming Events:
 - October
 - DB (Deafblind) intervener training
 - Mentor Center
 - White Cane Day
 - November
 - SWOMA (Southwest Orientation and Mobility Association) Conference:
 - 218 people registered so far
 - registration is capped at 500

7. Adjournment

Beth Jones motioned and Elaine Robertson seconded the motion to adjourn. The motion passed and the Committee adjourned at 9:54 a.m.

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