

**TEXAS SCHOOL FOR THE BLIND AND VISUALLY IMPAIRED
BOARD MEETING MINUTES
AUGUST 7, 2025**

The scheduled meeting of the Board of Trustees, Texas School for the Blind and Visually Impaired (TSBVI), was held in the Board Meeting Room, Building 600, located at 1100 West 45th Street, Austin, Texas on August 7, 2025.

Call to Order

Lee Sonnenberg, Board President called the training session for a new board member of the Texas School for the Blind and Visually Impaired to order on August 7, 2025 at 2:01 p.m.

Introduction of Board Members and Audience

Board member Belinda Rudinger was present. Julie Prause, Board Vice President was present via Zoom.

Audience members present were Emily Coleman, Superintendent; Jenny Wells, General Council; Susan Houghtling, Planning and Evaluation Coordinator; Ann Du, CFO; Jeannette Hawrylo, Accounts Payable; Raksha Ribeiro, Accountant and Veronica Keating, Executive Assistant.

TSBVI staff members present were: Emily Coleman, Superintendent; Susan Houghtling, Planning and Evaluation Coordinator; Ann Du, CFO; Jenny Wells, General Counsel; and Raksha Bode; Travel Coordinator.

New Board Member Orientation Session

New Board member Belinda Rudinger received an orientation to Texas School for the Blind and Visually Impaired by Board President Lee Sonnenberg and Julie Prause, Board Vice President.

Ms. Coleman welcomed the Board. She stated the School serves 11,000 students statewide and explained the primary ways students are served on campus. She listed the board meeting dates and discussed examples of topics that may be considered.

Mr. Sonnenberg gave an overview of how to prepare for and participate in board meetings including voting and placing items on the board agenda. He also discussed expressing the proper protocol for sharing concerns or complaints about school staff, programs or operations.

Ms. Houghtling gave an overview of the board orientation manual, board responsibilities, their activity calendar, the board's governing role vs administration of the School, evaluation of the Superintendent, internal audits and timelines, and board training requirements and opportunities.

Ms. Wells gave an overview of protocol for communicating with other board members, implications of open records/open meeting requirements when communicating school topics through personal accounts/services, communicating with the public and with school staff, best practices on board member conduct during public comment periods, the Board's role in handling complaints and grievances, advocacy/lobbying guidelines for board members, and board operating procedures and policy development.

Ms. Du discussed how the School is funded – sources of revenue (include Broday trust and timelines for Board decisions on pay-out), the Board's role and timelines in developing budgets and the Legislative Appropriations Request, and current issues with the budget and working with the Legislature.

Ms. Ribeiro and Ms. Hawrylo gave the Board an overview of the School's travel guidelines while on school business.

Adjournment

It was 3:07 p.m. and Lee Sonnenberg adjourned the August 7, 2025 new Board member orientation session.