

TEXAS SCHOOL FOR THE BLIND AND VISUALLY IMPAIRED
BOARD PROGRAM COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES

April 8, 2022

1. Call to Order

Beth Jones called to order the meeting of the TSBVI Board Committee on Programs at 8:03 a.m. on April 8th, 2022, from the Texas School for the Blind and Visually Impaired, 1100 West 45th Street, Austin, Texas. Board members Lee Sonnenberg, Maghan Gautney, and Elaine Robertson were also present.

TSBVI staff members participating in the meeting were: Miles Fain, Comprehensive Programs Principal; Sara Merritt, Short-Term Programs Principal; Kate Borg, Outreach Director; and Susan Houghtling, Planning and Evaluation Coordinator.

2. Consideration of Approval of Minutes of the February 18th, 2021 Meeting

Beth Jones shared the minutes and suggested minor edits of the February 18th, 2022 meeting be approved. Lee Sonnenberg motioned to approve the minutes with minor edits and Elaine Robertson seconded the motion. The motion passed.

3. Consideration of Approval of Board Policies

Elaine Robertson motioned to approve the policy below. Ms. Guatney seconded and the motion passed unanimously:

EIC – Academic Achievement: Class Ranking

4. Consideration of Approval of the School’s Calendar for 2022-2023

The Committee heard discussion about the fact that TSBVI tries to follow Austin ISD’s calendar as much as possible when developing its school calendar. Also reported to the Committee was the fact that the calendar displays the minimum required number of teacher contract days and instructional minutes for students.

Elaine Robertson moved to approve the 2022-2023 school calendar and Maghan Gautney seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

5. Report from Comprehensive Programs Principal, Miles Fain

- a. Austin Bat Cave Writing Programs update - Patrick Healy, TSBVI teacher, brought two students who are participating in the Austin Bat Cave program, a non-profit organization focused on student writing. He shared a PowerPoint presentation about the program and students spoke about their experiences.
- b. Consideration of approval of recommendations of the Instructional Materials Committee – Mr. Fain presented the recommendations from TSBVI’s Instructional Materials Committee and recommended approval of the materials for the 2022-2023 school year.

Elaine Robertson moved to accept the recommendations of the Committee and Meghan Gautney seconded the motion. All Committee members were in favor of the motion.

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

- a. Short-Term Programs update – Sara Merritt explained that an in-person Health and Well-Being Class was held last week. On April 21st an in-person class, City Travel Plus will be held. This class is a collaboration with Outreach and will include families. Parents will attend with their students and both will stay in the dorm without TSBVI staff. This new feature was created to problem-solve the staff shortages in the residential department and still allow in-person programming for students.
- b. Update on the Summer 2022 program – Summer programs will be held in-person and on campus. 264 students were invited to attend summer, both in-person and online programs. So far, 122 students have confirmed attendance. The deadline for acceptance is April 15 and families are being contacted to encourage them to accept.

7. Report from Outreach Director, Kate Borg

- a. VI Registry/Deafblind Child Count Report

Kate Borg presented data from the 2022 statewide VI registry and deafblind child count report:
Total number of VI/DB students: 10,639, down from 10,892 students
Total number of DB students: 708, down from 804
Total number of SpEd VI students: 8,388, down from 8,559
Total number of VI/DB students ages 0 through 2: 291, down from 312
Total number of 504 students: 2,301, down from 2,333
Total number of primary braille readers: 338 (no change from 2021)

- b. Outreach Program update:

Ms. Borg reported on past and upcoming events in the Outreach Program:

- Several Outreach teachers attended and presented at the TAER Conference
- The Discovering the Future workshop is scheduled for the end of April and 6 families have registered so far
- The City Travel workshop is scheduled in about two weeks
- The Mental Health Symposium is scheduled for April 28 and 29

8. Adjournment

Elaine Roberts motioned to adjourn the meeting, Maghan Gautney seconded the motion and the meeting adjourned at 9:46 a.m.

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