

TEXAS SCHOOL FOR THE BLIND AND VISUALLY IMPAIRED

BOARD PROGRAM COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES

May 25, 2023

1. Call to Order

Brenda Lee called to order the meeting of the TSBVI Board Committee on Programs at 8:06 a.m. on May 25, 2023, from the Texas School for the Blind and Visually Impaired, 1100 West 45th Street, Austin, Texas.

Board member Beth Jones was present for the meeting and board member Maghan Gautney participated remotely via Zoom.

TSBVI staff members participating in the meeting were: Ria Ferich, School Counselor for Comprehensive Programs; Sara Merritt, Short-Term Programs Principal; Kate Borg, Outreach Director; and Jenny Wells, School Attorney.

2. Consideration of Approval of Minutes of the April 3, 2023 Meeting

Brenda Lee asked for consideration of approving the minutes from the April meeting. Beth Jones motioned to approve the minutes and Maghan Gautney seconded the motion. All Committee members were in favor of the motion.

3. Consideration of Approval of Board Policies

Jenny Wells reviewed Policy FFG – Student Welfare: Abuse, Neglect, Exploitation, and Improper Child Care Incidents that was presented for review only with no suggested changes. Changes to the policy will be implemented in the future following the outcomes from a recent audit review of the policy.

Beth Jones moved to approve the policy as presented with no recommended changes. Maghan Gautney seconded the motion and all Committee members were in favor of the motion.

4. Report from Comprehensive Programs Principal, Miles Fain

a. School Health Advisory Council's activities and recommendations

Ria Ferich explained that the School Health Advisory Council's (SHAC) membership includes students' families and school staff. She reported on SHAC activities during the past school year including those related to student physical and mental health. These included the Family Day and Wellness Fair, Turkey Trot, Jingle Bell Run, and Jump Rope for Heart. The members discussed adding the *My Rights, My Life* curriculum for students who are currently using materials related to empowering education and random acts of kindness. SHAC members published two newsletters. Stacy Correa, TSBVI Safety and Security Supervisor joined the committee during the school year and provided them with information about emergency drills.

Next school year, SHAC parent members Barbara Knighton and Amy Potts will be stepping down. Board Committee members expressed gratitude for their work.

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

a. Short-Term Programs Update

Sara Merritt reported that the last Short-Term Programs class of the school-year, Elementary Outdoor Explorations, was held this past weekend. She added that Short-Term Programs are now fully staffed.

b. Summer Programs

Ms. Merritt stated that 240 students have been accepted for the summer 2023 programs. Student withdrawals and replacements are occurring daily.

6. Report from Outreach Director, Kate Borg

Kate Borg reported on Outreach Department's involvement in various committee work including the following:

- a. Personnel Prep Advisory Group (PPAG) - The Committee met in May and discussed teacher attrition and licensing.
- b. Texas Action Committee for the Education of Students who are Blind and Visually Impaired (Ed Action) - This Committee also met in May.
- c. Committee on Teachers of Students who are Deafblind - A stakeholder feedback meeting was held in May and their recommendations will go to SBEC (State Board for Educator Certification).
- d. Child Find Committee – This group focused on exploring why blind, deafblind, and deaf babies have to be enrolled in the LEA or RDSPD (Regional Day School Program for the Deaf).

Ms. Borg provided an update on Coffee Hour sessions. In order to provide high quality professional development, some of the structures are changing. There will be a monthly topic and each week there will be opportunities provided for practice between sessions.

Ms. Borg reported that there are three Outreach staff positions to fill.

7. Adjournment

Beth Jones motioned to adjourn the meeting. Maghan Gautney seconded the motion and all Committee members were in favor of the motion. Brenda Lee adjourned the meeting at 9:07 a.m.

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