

**TEXAS SCHOOL FOR THE BLIND AND VISUALLY IMPAIRED
BOARD PROGRAM COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES
MAY 24, 2024**

1. Call to Order

Brenda Lee called to order the meeting of the TSBVI Board Committee on Programs at 8:11 a.m. on May 24, 2024, from the Texas School for the Blind and Visually Impaired, 1100 West 45th Street, Austin, Texas.

Board members Brenda Lee, Beth Jones, and Maghan Gautney were in attendance. Brenda Lee was present in-person and Beth Jones and Maghan Gautney were present via Zoom.

TSBVI staff members participating in the meeting were: Angela Wolf, Curriculum Director; Sara Merritt, Principal of Short-term Programs; Kate Borg, Outreach Director; and Jenny Wells, School attorney.

2. Consideration of Approval of Minutes of the April 3, 2024 Meeting

Brenda Lee asked for consideration of the minutes from the April 3, 2024 Program Committee meeting. Beth Jones motioned to approve the minutes and Maghan Gautney seconded the motion. The motion passed.

3. Report on TSBVI's School Health Advisory Council's (SHAC) Activities and Recommendations

Sara Merritt was asked to review the School Health Advisory Council report from Ria Ferich, school counselor, who was unable to attend. Ms. Merritt stated that the School hosted health-related events throughout the year including Jingle Bell Run, Duo Dash, and the Special Olympics. The Council met throughout the year, where the Health Center Director and Safety Officer gave regular updates. The SHAC newsletter went out to families once a semester. Ms. Ferich will be leaving her position at TSBVI, but Sally Freeman and Angela Wolf plan to continue serving on the Council and, in August, the Board will need to approve the new members of the Council.

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

A. Short-Term Program Update

Sara Merritt reported that the department served 259 duplicated students and 132 unduplicated students throughout the school year. She noted that, through individualized instruction, they have been able to increase the intensity and depth of instruction and students have been able to retain more skills.

B. Update on Summer 2024 Programs

Ms. Merritt stated that the team is excited about summer programs! There are 237 students who have been accepted and the programs begin June 9th.

5. Report from Outreach Director, Kate Borg

Kate Borg highlighted the conferences and events that took place throughout the year. The Low Vision conference was held on May 10th and was a success. Outreach is already planning for the Deafblind Symposium Conference scheduled for February 2025. The SWOMA (Southwest Orientation and Mobility Association) Conference is essentially planned, and the department is looking at adding a couple of new study groups next year including on Early Childhood and Deafblind. In June 2025, Outreach will be hosting an Active Learning conference in Education Service Center Region 11. Coffee Hour and Tea Time online sessions continue to be popular. The first semester for both have been planned. Ms. Borg reported that Erica Cairns from Education Service Center Region 13 has been hired to take the Outreach Director position.

6. Consideration of Approval of Board Policies CKC and FFAF

Jenny Wells reviewed amended policies CKC (Safety Program/Risk Management: Emergency Plans) and FFAF (Wellness and Health Services: Care Plans). New proposed language in Policy CKC addresses the fact that the Texas Education Agency (TEA) has created templates for schools to use to notify parents and others in parental relations when a violent activity has occurred or is being investigated on campus or at a school-sponsored activity. Additionally, school districts must provide the Department of Public Safety (DPS) and local law enforcement and emergency first responders with maps of the campus and buildings and provide an opportunity for them to conduct a walk-through using the maps. Additional language is added to the policy stating that schools within 1,000 yards of a train track must have an emergency plan in case of train derailment. Even though TSBVI is not within this distance currently, policy language is included proactively as Austin is growing.

The significant change in Policy FFAF is related to care plans, specifically student seizure management and treatment plans. The plan must be on a form provided by the TEA. Health Center Director Sally Freeman requested that language be added to the policy related to staff training on this topic and her recommendation appears in the amended policy.

Beth Jones made a motion to amend both policies as presented and Maghan Gautney seconded the motion. The motion passed.

7. Adjournment

Beth Jones made a motion to adjourn the Program Committee meeting and Maghan Gautney seconded the motion. The motion passed and the meeting adjourned at 9:02 a.m.